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other surrealisms

One hundred years after the publication of André Breton's *Surrealist Manifesto*, the present moment is undoubtedly a good one to revisit the artistic movement to which it gave rise, possibly the most popular of the 20th-century avant-gardes. With this aim in mind, *1924. Other Surrealisms* goes beyond a mere tribute to Surrealism on the centenary of its official birth. Rather, it makes use of the clarity granted by hindsight in order to reassess the traditional idea of the movement in the light of the varyed reception and reinterpretation of Breton's proposals in the different places and among the different artists who affiliated themselves with it. These diverse readings gave rise to "other Surrealisms"; approaches to the "canonical" movement determined largely by their geographical distance from Paris where it first arose, or by specific aspects such as the role that the Surrealist group assigned to women.

The *Surrealist Manifesto* thus functions as the exhibition's starting point in order to analyse some of the key aspects of Surrealism through more than two hundred works.

Marcel Jean
Surrealist Wardrobe, 1941

Musée des Arts Décoratifs, París
© Marcel Jean
Photo: © París, Les Arts Décoratifs/Jean Tholance

René Magritte
The Double Secret, 1927

Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, París. Acquisition, 1980
© René Magritte; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Georges Meguerditchian

As Estrella de Diego, the exhibition's curator, has pointed out, it is possible to refer to the existence of a "canonical" Surrealism, the one associated with André Breton, "among the most extraordinary French writers", the official start of which is located after the publication of the *Manifesto;* but also to "other Surrealisms", such as those that arose far from Paris, the epicentre of the avant-garde in the 1920s and 1930s, for example in Spain and Latin American countries, which can be studied as unique cases in terms of the reception of the canonical movement, and which also possess their own characteristics; and finally, to that of the Belgian artists, who were among the first to challenge Breton's ideas and their primacy.

For this reason the exhibition's structure has been designed to present both the work of great artists who have always been linked to canonical Surrealism (René Magritte, Max Ernst, Salvador Dalí, Paul Delvaux and Yves Tanguy), as well as that of other creators who are often not as well known or not habitually associated with the group, with the aim of exploring the wealth of responses and interpretations that emerged in the light of canonical Surrealism.

The exhibition is divided into three large thematic blocks. The first presents its overall argument through an analysis of different readings of Surrealism determined by the proximity to or distance from André Breton's proposals. Following this, the remainder of the exhibition offers a reflection on the major themes and strategies that concerned the group: dream, desire, psychic automatism, relationships with nature, the new vision of the city, the cosmos and alchemy... These are some of the components of this originally literary movement, which spread internationally to almost all fields of the visual arts: photography, cinema, painting, etc.

1924. Other Surrealisms is part of the international celebration of Surrealism organised to mark the centenary of the publication in Paris of André Breton's *Surrealist Manifesto* in 1924. The exhibition has been reinterpreted at the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels, and at the Centre Pompidou, Paris. Following its presentation in Madrid, it will travel to the Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.

Leonora Carrington
Darvaux, 1950

Private collection
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Photo: Willem Schalkwijk

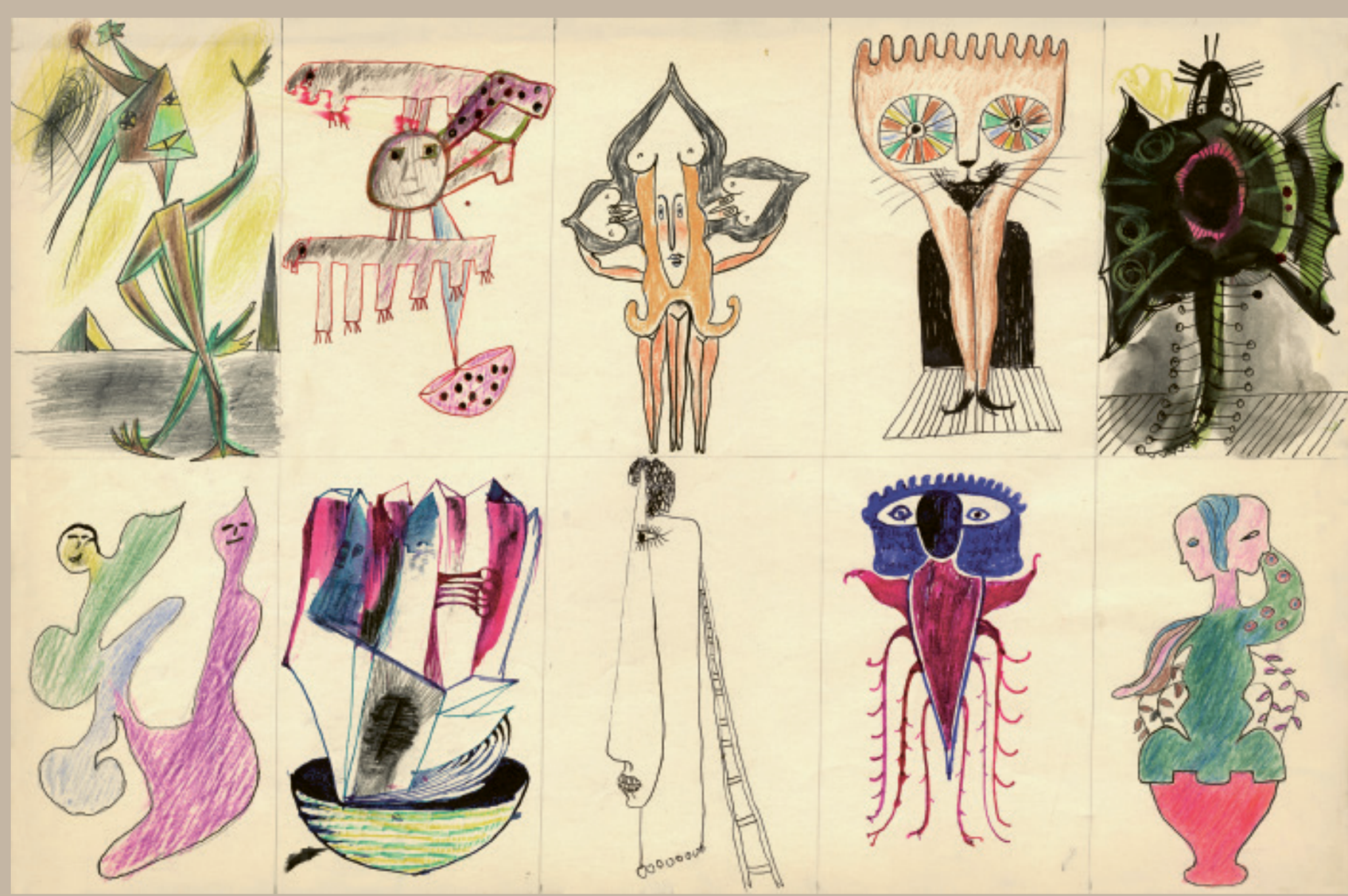
Centre and periphery

Salvador Dalí
Aphrodisiac Telephone, 1938

Minneapolis Institute of Art, The William Hood Dunwoody Fund
© Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025
Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art

Probably written as a prologue to the book *Poisson soluble* [Soluble fish], on 15 October 1924 André Breton published the *Manifeste du Surréalisme* [Surrealist Manifesto]. In his text the writer set out the bases for a movement which sought to translate into words and images the true functioning of thought, liberated from the ties of reason and aesthetic and moral issues, as a means to respond to the reality of the moment. Breton focused on dreams as the natural terrain of the unconscious and on psychic automatism as a strategy to express its functioning.
When viewed and reassessed from a current perspective, the French Surrealism championed and imposed by Breton reveals a considerable number of contradictions. It also suffers from exclusions, both of places and regions distant from Paris - the cradle of Surrealism and the principal centre of avant-garde art - such as Spain, Belgium, Brazil and Argentina, as well as of creators who participated in the movement, particularly women, who were not taken into account by the canonical core group that emerged around Breton. These topographical and human peripheries reveal the richness of an avant-garde which, far from becoming extinct, still survives among us today.

Spain, Latin America



Óscar Domínguez, André Breton, Victor Brauner, Jacques Hérold, Remedios Varo, Jacqueline Lamba, Wifredo Lam
Collective drawing, 1941

TEA Tenerife Espacio de las Artes. Cabildo Insular de Tenerife
© Oscar Domínguez; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025 / © André Breton; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025 / © Victor Brauner; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025 / © Jacques Hérold; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025
© Remedios Varo; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025 / © Jacqueline Lamba; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025
© Wifredo Lam Estate, Adagp, Paris 2025

In the 1920s and 1930s Spain was located in cultural terms on the margins of the European avant-garde centres such as Paris. Nonetheless, it was the birthplace of some of the most representative names in Surrealism: Salvador Dalí, Luis Buñuel, Óscar Domínguez and Joan Miró. Other Spanish artists who learned about the movement through the group's magazines or through accounts from those close to Breton and his circle have not received the recognition they deserve. This is the case with Nicolás de Lekuona, José Alemany, Maud Bonneaud, Ángel Planells, Joan Massanet, Delhy Tejero and Amparo Segarra, among others. A large part of Latin America can be seen as comparable to Spain in this sense; in addition to Mexico, countries such as Argentina and Brazil - often reception centres for artists fleeing the Civil War and subsequent Spanish dictatorship or from Nazism - proposed interesting "Surrealising" readings. Names such as Raquel Forner, Maria Martins, Horacio Coppola, Antonio Berni, Lino Enea Spilimbergo and Grete Stern thus speak to us from a periphery in which the echoes of Surrealism had a major impact.

Surrealist women

Maruja Mallo
The Magician / Pim Pam Pum, 1926

Art Institute of Chicago. The Lacy Armour Endowment Fund
© Maruja Mallo; VEGAP, Madrid, 2025
Photo: The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY/ Scala, Florence

In 1985 the American art historian Whitney Chadwick published the first book on Surrealist women. Many years had passed since the birth of the movement and although numerous women artists were affiliated with the group, Breton (who in his 1924 manifesto described them as "beautiful and nameless") limited himself to assigning them the role of mediums - of the unconscious in its purest state, of guides - a seemingly privileged position which ultimately became a mere vehicle for exclusion. In addition, women located furthest from Paris, the epicentre of Surrealism, have been the last to be added to the cartography of the movement. However, many of them - the majority completely relegated by the movement itself - are gradually succeeding in occupying the place they deserve: Gala (who took the surname of her partner, Salvador Dalí), Remedios Varo, Maruja Mallo, Leonora Carrington, Grete Stern, Jane Graverol, Maria Martins, Amparo Segarra, Toyen, Rita Kernn-Larsen, Ithell Colquhoun and numerous others whom the present exhibition is aiming to highlight and celebrate.

The exhibition includes the work of thirty-five female creators in an attempt to return them to their rightful place within the evolution of the Surrealist group. To draw attention to this fact, the different sections of the exhibition all open with the work of a woman artist so that, one hundred years later, each of them literally adopts that role of guide or medium assigned to them by Breton.

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Dates
From February 6th to May 11th 2025

Opening hours
Mondays (except public holidays): 2 pm to 8 pm
Tuesdays to Saturdays: 11 am to 8 pm
Sundays and public holidays: 11 am to 7 pm
(Last entry 30 minutes before closing time.
Visitors must leave the galleries 10 minutes before closing)

Admission
Standard: 5€
Reduced: 3€
Free entry: Mondays (except public holidays)

Guided tours
7€
Times and booking: on this website

Educational visits for schools and families
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Audio guide
Spanish and English

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Cover: Dorothea Tanning. *Birthday*, 1942

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This exhibition is part of the international celebration of Surrealism organised to mark the centenary of the publication of the movement's First Manifesto. The exhibition was reinterpreted at the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels, from 21 February to 21 July 2024, and at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, from 4 September 2024 to 13 January 2025. Following its presentation at Fundación MAPFRE, Madrid, from 6 February to 11 May 2025, it will be shown at the Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, from 13 June to 12 October 2025 and at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, from November 2025 to February 2026