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Columbia Museum of Art - Dalí

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iconoclasm propelled him into the international spotlight.

“Salvador Dalí’s showmanship and genius made him one of the most iconic figures, let alone artists, in modern history,” says Karen Brosius, CMA executive director. “We are excited to give our audience an opportunity to see a side of this avant-garde superstar that they might not have experienced.”

Original prints are a major part of Dalí’s body of work. The inherently populist medium lent itself perfectly to courting the masses, an activity in which he took great delight. True to form, his work in this medium ably demonstrates his hallmark irreverence, innovation, and versatility. Dalí approached the processes of printmaking in the same manner as all else in his life - unconstrained by the boundaries of convention. He experimented with an assortment of outlandish lithographic techniques to dramatic effect. Using a 15th-century musket, he fired bullets of color at point-blank range at the large stones, a method he dubbed “bulletism.”

Running these stones through a press created an imprint he called “realism of quantified spots.” He dipped snails in ink so that they would leave trails as they crawled over the stone. He stuffed rhinoceros horns with French bread soaked in ink and crushed them onto the stone. He filled lightbulbs and eggs with ink, gravel, and pulverized sea urchin and threw or dropped them onto the stone. These unusual methods, coupled with Dalí’s figurative drawing, resulted in extraordinary illustrations that have enchanted readers and inspired artists for generations.

“Historically, critics and art historians have drawn a distinction between illustration and fine art, with illustrators being somehow inferior,” says Will South, CMA chief curator and creator of the exhibition. “This is why an artist like Norman Rockwell, for example, was for so long not taken seriously by museums. That discrimination



Salvador Dalí (Spanish, 1904–1989), “Down the Rabbit Hole”, 1969. “From Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland”, Maecenas Press-Random House, New York.

has ended, and important artists such as Salvador Dalí are part of the reason why: Dalí saw nothing inferior at all about illustration. For him, it was another creative realm to explore, and explore it he did.”

The incredible worlds conjured by authors such as Lewis Carroll, Cervantes, and Hans Christian Andersen were ideal inspirations for Dalí, who deemed these books to be early examples of surrealism. In fact, in the 1930s, influential literary critic William Empson wrote: “Alice [in Wonderland] has, I understand, become a patron saint of the surrealists.” Published in 1969, the artist’s illustrations for *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* have become one of the most sought after Dalí suites of all time. These fantastical images reveal the vision of an artist who was one of the most sensational and creative minds of the 20th century.

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Published at the turn of the 17th century, Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* is considered one of the earliest novels and one of the most influential works of literature of all time. The story follows the adventures of the titular protagonist, a middle-aged man who, having lost his grip on reality, decides to become a knight to revive the lost tradition of chivalry. Full of import and nonsense, *Don Quixote* is a perfect match for Dalí’s sensibilities.

The fairytales of Hans Christian Andersen are among the most iconic stories in Western literature. Those who don’t know him by name are still likely to recognize featured tales such as *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *The Snow Queen*, upon which the blockbuster Disney film *Frozen* is based.

To further establish the critical relationship between illustration and literature, the exhibition incorporates other editions of these literary classics courtesy of the Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections at the University of South Carolina’s Thomas Cooper Library.

“Dalí had many artistic heroes, from the classical Renaissance painter Raphael to the great modernist Picasso,” says South. “Having books in our exhibition from USC’s wonderful collection of rarities helps us to see some of the illustrators who came before Dalí and who, like him, worked to make dreamlike stories into visual images. Dalí benefitted from the work of his predecessors and found ways to add something new and different to the world of illustration.”

Salvador Dalí’s Fantastical Fairy Tales is presented through the generosity of our

sponsors and grantors. Presenting Sponsors: Joyce and George Hill. Supporting Sponsors: Susan Thorpe and John Baynes. Contributing Sponsor: Smith Family Foundation. Friend Sponsors: Mary and Preston Spivey. This project is supported by grant awards from Richland County Government and the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism. Additional support for the CMA exhibition program is provided by Lipscomb Sponsors: SCE&G and Marcia and Allen Montgomery.

The Columbia Museum of Art is a charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to lifelong learning and community enrichment for all. Located in the heart of downtown Columbia, SC, the CMA ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and creative educational programs. At the heart of the CMA and its programs is its collection, which encompasses 7,000 works and spans 5,000 years of art history. Established in 1950, the CMA now welcomes more than 150,000 visitors annually and is a catalyst for community creativity and education, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds. It is the recipient of a National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a National Art Education Association award for its contributions to arts education, a National Park Foundation Award, and two Elizabeth O’Neill Verner Governor’s Awards for the Arts for outstanding contributions to the arts in South Carolina.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 803/799-2810 or visit (www.columbiamuseum.org).

Columbia Open Studios Tour Takes Place - Apr. 1-2, 2017

701 Center for Contemporary Art (701 CCA) in Columbia, SC, welcomes a roster of 64 local artists for the free, self-guided Columbia Open Studios tour on Saturday, Apr. 1 and Sun., Apr. 2, 2017. The weekend-long, daytime driving tour is free

for guests of all ages and gives attendees the opportunity to explore working artists’ studios across the City of Columbia, and Richland and Lexington Counties. Plan your free #ColaOpenStudios tour at

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