

DALÍ'S DROOPING DREAM ART

Blog 'n' Craft Blueprint



The Persistence of Memory
Salvador Dalí — Oil on Canvas — 1931

"I am not strange.
I am just not normal."

— Salvador Dalí

Meet the artist who painted
drooping dream art and
made a BIG splash in
the world of art!
THEN have oodles of fun
creating your own version
of the surreal droopy
pocket watches!

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Art historians around the world agree that Salvador Dalí's drooping dream art entitled, ***The Persistence of Memory***, is his most famous piece of artwork. With its strange subject matter and dream-like quality, this work of art is undoubtedly one of the most recognizable paintings of the 20th century and has taken its place in the annals of art as an iconic symbol for the Surrealism movement.

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Surrealism is an art movement in which objects within the artwork are combined in an unexpected way — like in a dream.

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The Persistence of Memory by Salvador Dalí is a quintessential example of surrealism! Some words that might come to mind when attempting to describe this art work and art movement are peculiar, bizarre, odd, and possibly weird! Within artistic circles, the Surrealist movement of the early 1900s is often referred to as '**avant-garde**' — meaning new and unusual.

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Surrealists claim to create their art while in, or just emerging from a dream-like state. They seek to release their inner subconscious mind and in some cases, even their unconscious mind — both of which refer to the part of the mind lacking awareness or thought.

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Salvador Dalí was the master of gathering dream-like images from his subconscious mind and arranging them onto canvases in very unexpected juxtapositions — in other words, arranging them in strange and unusual ways. The most obvious of which is Dalí's use and positioning of the drooping pocket watches. When was the last time you saw a drooping pocket watch hanging from a dead tree branch?

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Beyond using his actual dreams as inspiration, Dalí, in fact, claimed to be able to control his dream states. One technique he often

used was to take a very brief nap — less than a quarter of a second long. He felt this short snooze allowed him to reach the transitional state between wake and sleep. It is but for a split second as you're just falling asleep. You're not wide awake; but, you're not quite sound asleep either. Have you ever experienced this feeling?

The scientific term for this transitional state is the hypnagogic state of consciousness. It's where the brain reprocesses life sensations and perceptions from the waking moments of your day. Dalí, in his mind, was able to harness these hypnagogic hallucinations and creatively include them within his masterpieces of fine art! It makes perfect sense that you would need a strange technique to create such strange art!

Based on Salvador Dalí's famous quote, "I am not strange. I am just not normal," we can't be sure Dalí would have considered his artwork 'strange' — rather, he may have referred to it as 'just not normal.' What is your opinion? Strange or not normal?

Being 'strange' or 'not normal,' was oddly typical for Surrealism — what one might call a far-from-typical art movement. Most admirers of dream art would agree, you can scarcely think of the term 'Surrealist' without conjuring up an out-of-the-ordinary image in your mind.

And such is the case when we look at ***The Persistence of Memory*** by Salvador Dalí. There is indeed quite a bit of strange abnormality to see!

• What better way to explore this painting than with a little game of



I Spy in the Art! Try to find the following objects of oddity in this painting — three drooping pocket watches, a non-drooping pocket watch, rock cliffs, a dead tree, water, sky, a creature with long eyelashes and its tongue hanging out, beach, large rocks under the creature, a tiny rock, platforms, and dirt. How did you do? Were you able to find all the oddities?

Perhaps the most curious elements in this painting are the drooping pocket watches. Even more curious, is Dalí's 'cheesy' explanation of them. When asked about the meaning of the drooping pocket watches seen within his famous masterpiece — he claimed that they had been inspired at an outdoor cafe when he saw a wheel of Camembert cheese melting in the hot sun.

The truthfulness of his explanation, however, is often up for debate among art historians. Many spec-

ulate that the drooping pocket watches are Dalí's interpretive symbol of Albert Einstein's 1930's groundbreaking 'Theory of Relativity' — which scientifically quantified the relationship between space and time. Others believe that Dalí's melting pocket watches simply represent the time which escapes us while we are sleeping or the 'persistence' of time in the eyes of the dreamer.

And speaking of the dreamer — in this case, Dalí — take note of the creature lying atop the rocks on the beach with a drooping pocket watch draped over its top. This abstract form — with its large nose and over-exaggerated eyelashes — made frequent appearances in Dalí's art, which leads us to surmise that the monster is a self-portrait in profile of the artist himself. And if you look very close-

ly, you'll notice that the creature has one eye closed, suggesting sleep and a potential dream-state for it as well.

- The creature is also the only object painted abstractly within the surreal landscape. Everything else in the painting — although unnaturally arranged in juxtaposition — is created with intricate detail. Therefore, the abstract form also symbolizes the fleeting or fading parts of dreams, those that we can't recall in realistic detail when we wake up.

- People are very different when it comes to dreaming. Some people would describe their dreams as being real and remember the whole dream vividly and in great detail. Others might call their dreams surreal. Would you describe your dreams as real or surreal?

- And speaking of real — the craggy rock cliffs in the background

of Dalí's landscape represent a tip of Cap de Creus peninsula, north-eastern Catalonia — in Spain, where Dalí was born. So they are very real!

- Now, back to our game of *I Spy in the Art!* You should be able to spy lots of bugs within ***The Persistence of Memory***. Count as many bugs as you can. You should see ants, on the orange pocket watch and a fly, on the large drooping pocket watch next to it.

- Salvador Dalí was fixated on bugs stemming from a childhood fear and often integrated bugs into his dream art. When Dalí was five years old, he saw an insect that had been eaten by ants, and nothing remained except the carcass. He carried this memory with him throughout life. For Dalí, ants were a symbol of decay. In this case, the orange watch at the bottom left is covered in ants and not only alludes to the decaying of time

but serves as a reminder that time greatly affects human existence.

- Here is a fun little 'bug' fact for you about Surrealist, Salvador Dalí. As the story goes, Dalí was so fearful of a grasshopper one evening in his abode, that he jumped from a second story window to elude the tiny green creature.

- Now we're going to leave the wacky world of bugs and get back to ***The Persistence of Memory*** for a moment!

- After the original gallery showing of ***The Persistence of Memory*** at the Museum of Modern Art — New York City — in 1934, a patron of the arts bought the piece and donated it to the museum for permanent display. It's a highlight of MoMA's fine art collection and an all-time favorite attraction.

- ***The Persistence of Memory*** is larger-than-life dream art that has always garnered critical acclamation in the art world. However, visitors at MoMA are often surprised when they see the masterpiece in person and learn that the actual oil painting measures only 9-1/2 inches by 13 inches! Think about that — it's just slightly larger than a piece of notebook paper. Can you even imagine such a tiny canvas — from an artist who painted the surreality of his dreams — making such a BIG splash in the world of art?

- The following fun, hands-on artsy craft will have you making your very own artistic splash with a cool paper plate version of the droopy pocket watch as seen in Salvador Dalí's drooping dream art,



The Persistence of Memory.

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To get the surreal juices flowing, you might even consider a little cat nap — just like Dalí — before starting your artwork!

Surreal Creature Craft



Create a **Surreal Creature Craft** for hands-on fun with Surrealism!

MATERIALS

- 9-3/4" White Paper Plate
- 8-1/2" X 11" White Cardstock
- **Coloring & Cutout Sheet** (see **Blog 'n' Craft Blueprints** in the **Dalí** section)
- Ruler
- Crayons
- Markers
- Scissors
- Common Pin
- Brass Brad*
- White School Glue
- No. 2 Pencil



***No brass brads on hand?
NO PROBLEM!**

For printable **Paper Fastener Cutouts** check **Artsy Craftsy Ideas!**

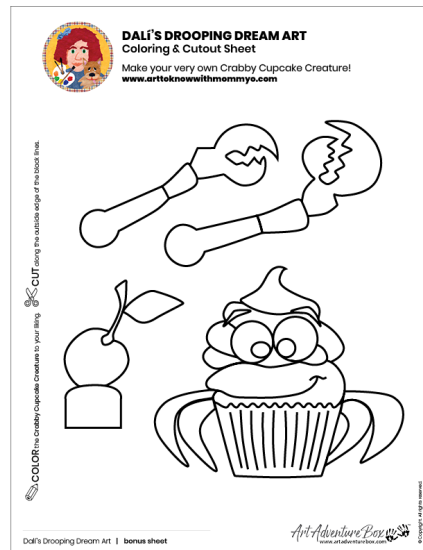
www.arttoknowwithmommy.com



Everything you need to create a **Surreal Creature Craft!**

DIRECTIONS

***Age Option:** Younger children may prefer to use our printable **Coloring & Cutout Sheet** to make a 'Crabby Cupcake Creature,' which can be downloaded from our website in the **Dalí** section of **Blog 'n' Craft Blueprints** and printed out onto white cardstock. Older children may enjoy drawing their own surreal creature onto plain white cardstock for the center of their paper-plate pocket watch.



As they would appear on a watch face — draw the numbers 1 through 12 on the rim of the paper plate. Sketch them first with the No. 2 Pencil; then fill, using the markers or crayons. You can even make your numbers droopy — like

Dalí's pocket watches! You may color the rim and the center of the paper plate too — if you'd like! As homage to Dalí, we chose to add



some ants to our pocket watch. Be sure to get creatively surreal with your paper plate pocket watch.

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If you choose to draw your own surreal creature, measure the center of your paper plate to determine an approximate size. Remember that the creature must fit within the center of the paper plate and have body parts that can function as the hands of the pocket watch. And don't forget a winding knob for the top of your pocket watch!

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Outline your surreal creature and pocket watch parts with a heavy black line; then, color the pieces with crayons and/or markers.



Now, using scissors, carefully cut out all the colored parts and pieces of your surreal creature. Cut to the outside edge of your heavy black lines.



With a small amount of glue, attached the winding knob to the top of your pocket watch — where you have drawn the twelve o'clock (12:00) point on the ridge of the paper plate.



Line up the parts for your surreal creature the way in which you'd like them to be positioned on your pocket watch. Using the common pin, carefully make a small hole in the center of your surreal creature that continues through the other moving body parts. Line this up centered on the flat portion of your paper plate — where you would like to position the creature — and create a hole in the paper plate as well.



Align the small holes up with one another and gently push the sharp points of the brad through the holes. Spread the metal prongs to secure the pieces onto the paper plate. Then display your **Surreal Creature Craft** for all to enjoy — in the spirit of Salvador Dalí and *The Persistence of Memory*.



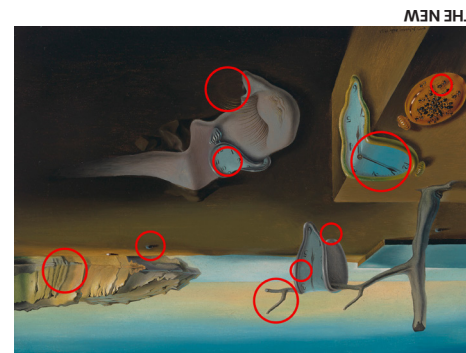
SHARE YOUR CREATIVITY!

Post a picture of your artsy craft on social media using **#fineartfunart**.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCES SOLUTION



How many differences did you spot?



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DALÍ'S DROOPING DREAM ART

Spot & Count the Differences Puzzle

Spot and count the differences between the original version of the painting titled *The Persistence of Memory* by Spanish Surrealist painter, Salvador Dalí and our 'new' version.

www.arttoknowwithmommyo.com

THE ORIGINAL



THE NEW

How many
differences
did you
spot?

