

THE Salvador Dali

COLLECTORS QUARTERLY®

FOR THE DALI AFICIONADO AND SERIOUS COLLECTOR



In Search of Dali's DNA

by Michael F. Rieders, Ph.D., Forensic Toxicologist,
Chief Science Officer, The Forensics Mentors Institute

Ever since I was old enough to appreciate art, I enjoyed Salvador Dali's surrealist style. I was given an art book with a number of his paintings and illustrations and would regularly look through it and admire the extraordinary work and imagination of this great artist.

Because I am now a forensic scientist, and perhaps because I was interested in science when I was younger, I've especially admired his work depicting DNA in addition to his magnificent illustration of a world that was deep inside his, and probably inside all of our minds. DNA is that magic and mysterious code from which we are all created as individuals, and I always wondered what it was about Dali's DNA that made him such a creative genius. I regret that I never met Dali, and began to consider that maybe the next best thing would be to find a way to meet his DNA. I wondered if traces of Salvador Dali DNA might have been left on any of his work.

I pondered the notion that at some future time, the secret to Dali's creative genius might be found somewhere in his DNA and be revealed to the world. I hoped to find the DNA, identify that it truly belonged to Dali, then go about properly preserving it. By preserving Dali's DNA now, we would have an example of it to use if in the future there is a way to examine DNA for the genes for creative artistic genius. Dali's DNA could serve as a model, and in addition



A double helix of DNA molecules

to some of the more fantastic uses of Dali's DNA, simply having the appropriate forensic identity code for his DNA might be useful in authenticating his artwork.

I was fortunate to become acquainted with Bruce Hochman, director of The Salvador Dali Gallery in California and one of the leading experts in authentication of Dali's works. I talked

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Dali's nasogastric tube ... pictured left to right are Bruce Hochman, director, The Salvador Dali Gallery; Michael F. Rieders, Ph.D., forensic toxicologist; and Nicolas Decharmes, world-renowned Dali expert.



Dali in Living Color!

After 16 years of publishing *The Salvador Dali Collectors Quarterly* in black & white with a color accent, we've decided to slick up our act and start producing a full-color newsletter for your reading and viewing pleasure.

After all, we're talking about art here, and not just any art, but the works of one of the most "colorful" creative minds of the 20th century. We slap ourselves on the wrist for doing Dali a disservice by displaying images of his work in black & white all these years.

With humble apologies and great enthusiasm, we introduce you to our first color issue, and promise to make each issue as dazzling and delightful as we can. 



Niccol Framing Dali for Room 9

From *The Hollywood Reporter*, November 3, 2006 by Borys Kit

Andrew Niccol is attached to direct *Dali & I: The Surreal Story*, a film from Room 9 Entertainment about Spanish surrealist painter Salvador Dali that will serve as the company's follow-up to the successful political satire *Thank You for Smoking*.

Room 9 originally acquired Dali as a spec written by John Salvati, based on Stan Lauryssens' autobiographical book *Dali and I*. Niccol is doing a rewrite on the script and the company is eyeing a shoot next spring.



Room 9's David O. Sacks, Daniel Brunt and Michael R. Newman will produce.

The movie will cover the life of Dali through the eyes of Lauryssens, a young art dealer who knew Dali and his wife Gala. The movie will span the 1960s-1980s, covering Dali's later period when most of this great work was behind him while he became more flamboyant, and focusing on a mentor-protégé relationship between Dali and Lauryssens.




David O. Sacks

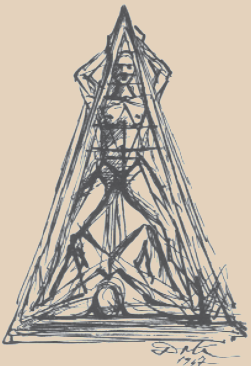
"What I think is interesting about this period in his life is that he painted less and sold more, just as modern art became more commercialized," said Sacks. "There are pictures of him turning his mustache into dollar signs. He became very obsessed by money and this was spurred on by Gala."

Gala, a Russian immigrant 11 years his senior, was his muse and inspiration, and the artist was very dependent on her though their relationship was tempestuous.

"We don't want to do another artist biopic," said Sacks. "We want this to ask questions like 'What is modern art? Does it have value? Is it worth the millions of dollars that people are paying for?'"

Niccol is the filmmaker behind *Gattaca*, *Simone* and last year's *Lord of War*. He also wrote *The Truman Show*, which garnered him an Oscar nomination for best original screenplay. He is repped by CAA and attorney John LaViolette. 

"The difference between false memories and true ones is the same as for jewels: it is always the false ones that look the most real, the most brilliant."



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Dali's DNA (continued from p. 1)

with Bruce about how I might go about acquiring an object onto which Dali might have transferred some DNA so that I might be able to recover and preserve it.

I convinced Bruce to help me find a sample of something that might contain traces of Dali's DNA. He turned to his friends and colleagues, Robert and Nicholas Descharnes, who were very close to Dali throughout his years, and especially during the later years of his life. To our surprise and delight, Nicholas Descharnes told Bruce that he was in a possession of a nasogastric tube which had been used on Dali while he was hospitalized. I knew that if we could get that tube, we could sample it and identify whether there was a single, male DNA identity print present on the tube.

As a forensic scientist, I know how important it is to identify whether or not an artifact has been contaminated by another individual. I worked with The Forensic Biology Team at NMS Labs, a world renowned DNA identity testing laboratory in Willow Grove, PA., to carefully examine the tube and found one spot that appeared to have blood on it. We tested a tiny flake of that spot and discovered that, in fact, there was blood there. Further tests revealed that there was DNA present, and additional testing throughout the length of the tube showed that there were many spots that contained DNA, all of which matched each other.

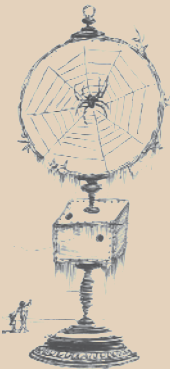
The method of matching relies on a technique of single, tandem repeat segments or STRs of DNA. This portion of DNA is like an individualized, personal bar code. Only identical twins have the same STRs. By looking at many of these STRs throughout the entire strand of DNA, one can be reasonably, scientifically certain that one spot that has DNA that matches another spot is, in fact, the same identical person. This depends on how many of these STRs one can



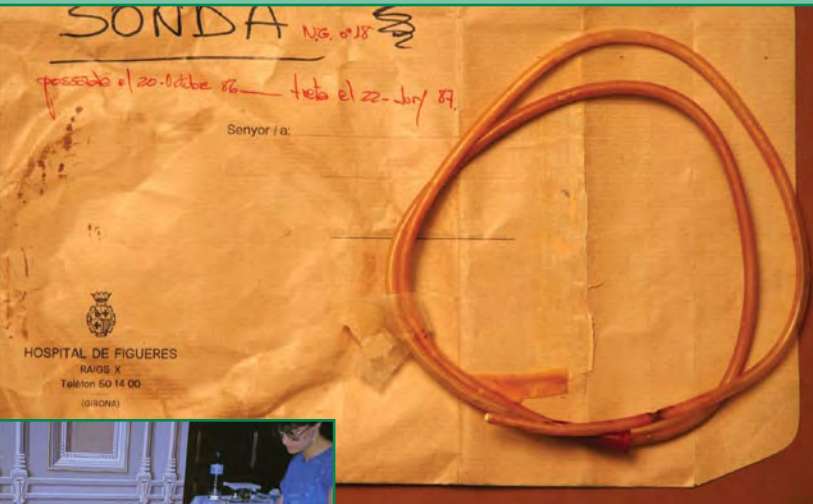
*Butterfly Landscape with DNA
1957-58*

recover and match. Based on this match throughout two individual artifacts, I've concluded that both artifacts have on them DNA from the same individual and throughout each artifact, which is the tube, all of the DNA matches up.

This gives me confidence to state that the DNA from the tubes which Nicholas Descharnes sent to me under established chain of custody, came directly from Salvador Dali and we can conclude that the DNA that we have recovered is from Salvador Dali.



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*A nasogastric tube used on Salvador Dali while he was hospitalized in the late 1980s
© DESCHARNES / daliphoto.com*





Dali - Between Madness and Genius

From www.Artline.ro



The Dream of Venus
1939

Breaking with other surrealist artists in the 1940s, Dali's later paintings were more realistic and filled with religious and scientific imagery. Famous for his flamboyant personality as well as his art, he worked in several media, including film: he collaborated with filmmaker Luis Bunuel on *Un Chien Andalou* (1929), *L'Age d'Or* (1930) and designed a dream sequence for Alfred Hitchcock's *Spellbound* (1945).


Salvador Dali apparently led a perfectly normal childhood, albeit the perfectly normal childhood of an artistic prodigy. He

was spoiled and temperamental, but not obviously the raving loon that would emerge in his later life. He began to draw and paint at an early age.

Dali's fascination with Hitler was predictably problematic in pre-World War II America. The artist told a biographer, "I saw Hitler as a masochist obsessed with the idee fixe of starting a war and losing it in heroic style. In a word, he was preparing for one of those actes gratuits which were then highly approved of by our group."

The strife over Hitler eventually led Dali to break with the other Surrealists, who were incongruously conformist among their own peer group. Dali's work progressed on several fronts. He also began working with the image of melting clocks, which became a recurring theme in works like *The Dream of Venus*, and *The Persistence of Memory*, his most famous work.

The images were produced using what he called the "paranoiac critical" method, which Dali explained as a "spontaneous method of irrational knowledge based on critical and systematic objectivation of delirious associations and interpretations." The paranoiac-critical method was simple. The artist tricks himself into going insane, while somewhere deep within remembering that the reason for the insanity is to create a great work of art. Dali chose to do it the hard way -- by actually going mad, rather than simulating madness through chemical means. "I don't take drugs. I am drugs," he once explained.

By the 50s, Dali was more of a gadabout than a traditional artist. He appeared on TV game shows such as "What's My Line?" where he engaged in good natured, if somewhat bizarre, banter with fellow guests. He did commercials for Alka Seltzer and designed hats shaped like lobsters. He designed furniture, took up sculpture, created perfumes, wrote PR copy and even worked as a hairdresser. 

"Take me, I am the drug; take me, I am hallucinogenic."



A Newsletter Subscriber's Holiday Dali Poem

In a world of folly
we can still be jolly,
'neath the Christmas holly,
with a book by Dali.

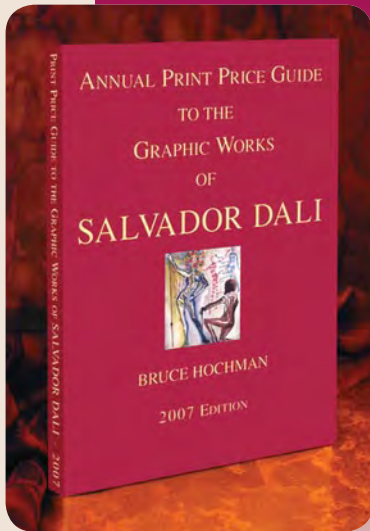
Eugene Seger
Detroit, MI 



Noel - Dali's cover illustration for the holiday issue of VOGUE 1946

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Dali on the Warpath

From *NewYorkTimes.com*, November 5, 2006 by Michael Pollak

In March 1939, Bonwit Teller, at Fifth Avenue and 56th Street, commissioned Salvador Dali to create two window displays, "Night" and "Day." Dali worked throughout the night and then retired, thoroughly exhausted.




When the store opened the next morning, shoppers gazed at "Day," a mannequin clad only in red hair and green feathers, poised in the act of stepping into a bathtub lined with Persian lamb fur. "Night" was a bed with a water buffalo as the headboard. A mannequin slept in the bed on a mattress stuffed with glowing coals.

Words were exchanged, not all of them complimentary, and the store's staff made quick changes. The skinny-dipper in "Day" was quickly replaced by an attired mannequin. Out went the sleeper in "Night"; in went a standing model.

When Dali returned to check out his installation, he stormed about, protesting loudly in both French and Spanish. Bonwit's lawyer tried to mollify him, to no avail. Saying he had been hired to do art, not window dressing, Dali went inside one window and stomped around so forcefully that he smashed through the plate glass and toppled onto the street.

Nobody was injured, but the artist was arrested on a charge of malicious mischief.

The charge was later changed to disorderly conduct, and a judge issued a suspended sentence, saying of Dali's actions, "These are some of the privileges that an artist with temperament seems to enjoy." 

"The thermometer of success is merely the jealousy of the malcontents."



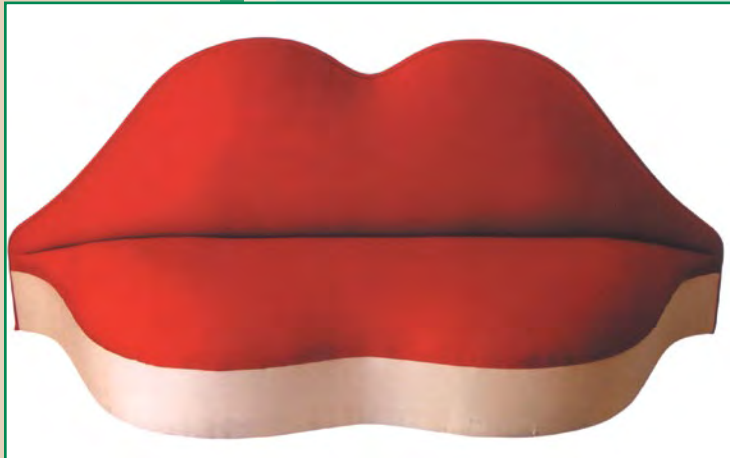
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Events and Exhibitions



Mae West Lips Sofa

Victoria and Albert Museum, London Other Surreal Things

March 29 to July 22, 2007

Surreal Things examines art's impact on architecture, design and the decorative arts, focusing on the creation of surrealist objects. From the sensuality of Dalí's Mae West Lips sofa to Schiaparelli's disturbing Tear dress, Surrealism produced some of the most extraordinary objects ever created. The exhibition will explore how Surrealism evolved from radical avant-garde beginnings to become one of the most influential movements of the century and a common visual language of modernity.

Tel. +44 (0)20 7942 2000 web: <http://www.vam.ac.uk>

The Tate Modern, London

Dalí and Cinema

June - September 2007

This exhibit will have Dalí retrospectives with more than 100 works including films, scripts, photographs and paintings, all designed to explore the central role the Lumiere brothers played in the formation of the Spanish artist, and the links between cinema and Dalí's work.

The Cervantes Institute Auditorium, New York

The drawings of *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*

Through January 2007

The 128 drawings being presented are the originals used by Dalí to illustrate his autobiography, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, published in 1942. Most of the drawings are executed in India ink on paper. Some include a title, instructions, or penciled notes, intended for the publisher. They are signed, as was the artist's custom, in varying ways and with varying dates, from 1920 to 1942.

Tel: (212) 308-7720

The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo

Dalí: Centennial Retrospective

Through January 4, 2007

This retrospective includes 60 oil paintings and 30 drawings from two museums: the Dalí Theater-Museum in Figueres, Spain, and the Salvador Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida. The exhibition invites visitors to a "theater of mystery" where they can take trace the artist's transformation in style from his early works ca. 1918 onward to 1983.

Tel: 03-5777-8600 Web: www.Dali2006.jp



The Salvador Dalí Museum, St. Petersburg, Florida

Dalí & the Spanish Baroque

February 2 - June 24, 2007

The exhibition will present Spanish master paintings alongside works by Dalí from the Museum's permanent collection. The exhibition demonstrates Dalí's incorporation of elements from Baroque painting to which Dalí made frequent reference in his writings and in the titles of his work.

Dalí by the Decades

August 4 2006 - January 2007

A chronological exhibition of oil paintings, drawings, watercolors and objet from the Museum's permanent collection cast against interpretive material including photographs, text and graphics showing the changing context - personal life and cultural times - in which Dalí lived and created.

"The first man to compare the cheeks of a young woman to a rose was obviously a poet; the first to repeat it was possibly an idiot."





Dali Zodiac

Through January 2007

Exhibiting the Dali Zodiac print suite, supplemented by information specific to each astrological sign. This is complimented by Dalí's own Zodiac, based on Dalí's biographical information from the main galleries. Included also is a historical perspective on the Zodiac and origins of Catalan Mysticism.

Illumined Pleasures: Dalí and Early Cinema

Through January 2007

Exhibition outlines connections between Dalí and the cinema of the early 20th century. It provides a glimpse into the cinematic world of Dalí's youth, presenting fantastic, comedic and animated work by filmmakers who influenced Dalí in his formative years. They paved the way for the cinematic style of his Surrealist canvases and his successful cinematic collaborations with Luis Buñuel, Walt Disney and Alfred Hitchcock. Both Dalí and Buñuel's *Un Chien Andalou* and the artist's revolutionary dream sequence for Hitchcock's *Spellbound* are shown.



The Century of Dali

50 of the Best Dali Stories

by Jean Christophe Argillet

Last winter we published a story from *The Century of Dali*, a compilation of intimate, revealing anecdotes from Dalí's life. The author, Jean Christophe Argillet, grew up in Dalí's world as the child of art publisher parents, and the stories contained in his books introduce us to a deeper, more real version of Dalí. In the story below, Argillet comments on Dalí and Gala's fashion sense.

In Cadaques, Gala would invariably be in a blouse and jeans or cotton pants, and her famous husband in a kimono, shorts or espadrilles. But in New York and Paris, they always dressed with the utmost elegance; Gala in a Chanel suit with a dark mink in cold weather, always the same one, and Dalí in a double-breasted suit, pinstriped or not. Only at certain happenings did the master wear eccentric clown outfits or underwater diving gear.

But Dalí added his own unique and immediately identifiable touch to the couple's elegance.

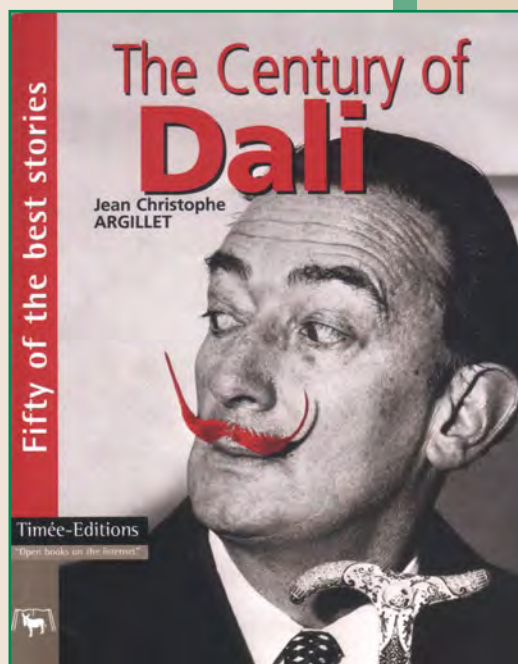
His illustrious moustache was grown at the age of 28. Originally as fine and horizontal as two pencil strokes, it was only while in the States during the war that he let it become fatter and curve upward. The secret of these cosmic antennae? A scrupulous daily waxing with Hungarian balm.

They gave him a penetrating look, perhaps equaled only by Picasso. Add a collection of short canes with chiseled silver knobs, brandished on each public occasion, and a speaking voice accentuated by exaggeratedly long syllables, and you got the 20th century painter with the most public appeal.

But sometimes this charismatic personality, able to freeze the noisiest crowds to attention, was put to the test. One evening on his way back to the hotel, a professional photographer stops him and asks for a picture. With a gesture that became second nature to him, he fixed the camera, staring wide-eyed, and brandished his cane.

The surprise came when the photographer gave him a ticket to go pick up his souvenir in a shop around the corner! He ripped it up in a rage, wondering if anyone else on the planet didn't know the Divine Dalí.

THE CENTURY OF DALI: Fifty of the Best Stories can be purchased through The Salvador Dalí Gallery on line at: www.DaliGallery.com, or by phone at 1-800-275-3254.



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AUCTION NEWS




La Lune (Manhattan Skyline), 1971 (pictured at left)
Gouache over photomontage on paper, signed "Dali"
Estimated: \$40,000 - \$60,000
Sold for \$60,000 at Christie's New York, November 9, 2006

Sans Titre (Femme a' tete de fleurs tenant une fleur de pissenlit, symbole de la connaissance), 1939
Gouache, brush and ink on pink paper,
signed and dated "Gala Salvador Dali 1939"
Estimated: \$120,000 - \$160,000
Sold for \$132,000 at Christie's New York, November 9, 2006

Reve de Venus, 1938
Gouache and watercolor on paper,
signed and dated "Gala Salvador Dali, 1938"
Estimated: \$100,000 - \$150,000
Sold for \$120,000 at Christie's New York, November 9, 2006

Grand Opera, 1957 (pictured at right)
Oil on canvas, signed and dated "Dali 1957"
Estimated: \$500,000 - \$700,000
Sold for \$1,528,000 at Christie's New York,
November 9, 2006

Le Chevalier, 1954
Watercolor and black ballpoint pen on paper,
signed and dated "Dali 1954"
Estimated: \$100,000- \$150,000
Sold for \$192,000 at Christie's New York,
November 9, 2006

The House Without Windows, 1946
Watercolor, gouache and pen & ink on paper;
inscribed "Gala Dalí" (lower right)
Estimated: \$30,000 - \$40,000
Sold for \$90,000 at Sotheby's New York,
November 8, 2006 



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