

DALÍ – FREUD

October 23, 2020 to March 7, 2021
Orangery, Lower Belvedere

London, autumn 1938 – Salvador Dalí meets Sigmund Freud, newly arrived after fleeing Vienna. This one and only meeting of the artist and the idol of Surrealism had been brokered by Stefan Zweig and Edward James. In a profound show, the Belvedere examines this momentous encounter and highlights the influence of Freud on the art of Salvador Dalí.

Surrealism's central motifs from the subconscious and the world of dreams are obvious references to psychoanalysis. From October 2020, a comprehensive exhibition at the Belvedere Orangery will show the extent of Dalí's engagement with Freud's theories and the striking appearance of many of these in his work. It will encompass 150 paintings, including high profile loans, sculptures, photographs, films, books, magazines, letters and other documents. Freud exerted a magnetic pull on the great Surrealist. The exhibition will shed light on this and also illuminate two of the twentieth century's most important movements.

In addition, the exhibition will feature the first presentation of new research showing the connection between psychoanalysis and the physiology of nerve tissue as an influence on art.

Salvador Dalí was introduced to translations of Sigmund Freud's theories in the early 1920s and immersed himself in these writings. From 1926 he also explored the poetry of Surrealism, fashioning a new pictorial language that still defines his oeuvre as unique. But he only met the Viennese psychoanalyst on one occasion – in London. The exhibition examines this and other compelling encounters for the artist, for instance with the poet Federico García Lorca and with the filmmaker Luis Buñuel at the Residencia de Estudiantes in Barcelona. Histologist and Nobel Prize winner Santiago Ramón y Cajal and his drawings of nerve tissue were another source of inspiration. These figures all helped to shape Salvador Dalí's Surrealist art. Another focus of the show will be the defining influence of Dalí's family background: The artist's complicated youth formed the basis for his self-examination and recurs as a leitmotif in his paintings.

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