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Spanish Art Icon Salvador Dali's Work Showcased in New Exhibit in Cuba, NYC

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27/02/2015



From brush stroke to his early etchings, Dali was a master at his craft regardless of the medium he used.

Currently, The National Arts Club in New York is presenting a rare collection of work from the Spanish surrealist. The month-long free exhibition, which kicked off on Feb. 2 and runs until Feb. 28, entitled "Dali: The Golden Years," is a unique exhibition of drawings and prints from Dali that range from the 1930's to the 1970's.

"This is one of the finest exhibitions of Dali's printmaking skills you will ever see anywhere around the globe. The National Arts Club proudly shows this body of work that so brilliantly shows the genius of Dali," Dianne Bernhard, Director of Office of Fine Arts told Latin Post in an exclusive interview.

Also considered "one of the most significant and instructive graphical displays of Dali's genius," 'Dali: The Golden Years' had "a triumphant showing" at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Havana, Cuba, according The National Arts Club, whose mission is "to educate, engage, and enrich its circle of creative-minded individuals."

"We are especially proud to be a part of this traveling exhibition," added Bernhard. "It was in Cuba for several months. The response in Cuba was great. Dali is really an international figure in painting. He belongs to the world. ... Anything you read, you will learn that he had 'strange' work, but he was a man before his time."

Dali's legacy wouldn't be complete without the work he produced as a graphic artist.

"His bold experimentation with printmaking techniques allowed the artist to explore even further his landscape of dreams," NAC added. "This unique show allows us to revisit the importance of this twentieth century giant and to celebrate the compelling quality of his imagination."

What is on display at the NAC in NYC?

The New York exhibition on Dali features 65 pieces in total, including never-seen-before early works on loan from three private collectors who are also based in New York. Early drawings and prints make up three full collections including; 'The Les Chants Maldoror' (1934), '12 Tribes of Israel' (1971), and 'Memories of Surrealism' (1973). Each collection marks "a major graphic series in Dali's career, while four never-before-seen pieces and an iconic photo of the artist himself by Anton Perich provide invaluable insight into Dali's creative process."

"It's a fascinating show, it shows a wide range of his work," Bernhard reiterated.

Early drawings and prints from the 1920's and 1930's have been drawn from the private collections of Dali's friends, including NY art dealer, Walter F. Maibaum and art publisher and dealer, Lawrence Saphire. Dali aficionados should also note that here is a double-sided proof impression of the surrealist's first etchings: "Head of a Young Girl" and on the verso, "Portrait of Dali's Father" dated from 1924. Two important preliminary drawings for "Corpus Hypercubus" (1953) will also be included.

There was a whole lot more to Surrealism than meets the eye, it was a liberating movement that continues to leave its mark today.

"Surrealism was an intellectual and artistic movement that was grounded in the psyche of man. Dali expressed what the unconscious mind was thinking in order to simultaneously liberate and expand culture," Bernhard added. "The works in this exhibit are a product of that thought process, free of restraints. To have these four pieces that have not been shown anywhere before, is a big honor for The National Arts Club."

According to NAC, In 1930, Dali was invited to illustrate Les Chants de Maldoror, an 1869 text rediscovered by the Surrealists in the 1930s that told a tale of an evil protagonist. Dali worked in a method he called "paranoiac-critical" and used a stream-of-consciousness process to access hallucinations and delusions and these personal visions then became the subjects of his illustrations.

The complete 13-print collection of "12 Tribes of Israel," from one of the original 250 sets, will be displayed in full. Commissioned by Israel to celebrate their 25th anniversary, they continue to hang in the Israeli Presidential palace this day. Through this collection, Dali immortalized the Israeli civilization at its roots, and gave concrete expression to the existence and development of its mystical characters.

Commissioned in 1971 by Dr. Alex Rosenberg, Governor at The National Arts Club, "Memories of Surrealism" consists of 12 hand-signed prints on paper. This suite is the quintessential example of Dalian symbolism and surrealism. Included in these works are crutches, clocks, butterflies, Gala and Dali himself, of which all are important symbols that describe Dali's artistic progress.

"Dali was the definitive artist of The Golden Years of Surrealism during the decade of the 1930's. The commercial appeal of his surrealist vocabulary of subject matter clearly shows us that he was a man before his time," Bernhard explained. "He provided a link between dream and reality. That link continues to stimulate collectors, curators, and critics alike. The human psyche is far more complicated than any technological advances. Dali knew that..."

Check out "Dali: The Golden Years" soon as it runs until Saturday, Feb. 28, 2015 at The National Arts Club located at 15 Gramercy Park South, New York, NY. (The NAC is open from Monday to Sunday from 11am to 5pm.)

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