



History's Greatest Artists: The Life and Legacy of Salvador Dali

Charles River Editors

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*Includes pictures *Includes Dali's quotes about his life and art *Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading *Includes a table of contents “Each morning when I awake, I experience again a supreme pleasure - that of being Salvador Dali.” – Salvador Dali In his review of Salvador Dali’s first autobiography, George Orwell declared that “One ought to be able to hold in one’s head simultaneously the two facts that Dali is a good draughtsman and a disgusting human being.” Whether or not one agrees with the famous author’s assessment, Orwell captures the polarizing nature of Salvador Dali, and the extent to which his undeniable technical virtuosity often brushed against his penchant for provoking his audiences (not to mention provoking long-entrenched standards of “proper” taste). Dali, after all, was unafraid to eschew Renaissance perspective, thereby incorporating often graphic subject matter. In other words, if Dali stands as one of the canonical figures of modern art, this involved holding both a seminal role in the canon of cutting-edge art but also a tendency to challenge audiences, challenging the contours of “Art with a Capital A.” While Orwell may have separated Dali the master technician from Dali the person, it would be more accurate to acknowledge that the virtues of Dali’s art cannot be dissociated from its provocative nature. Always a showman, Dali’s very public persona was predicated on pushing the boundaries of artistic form, content, and professional identity. He was also not alone in this regard, and Dali’s career cannot be separated entirely from important modern art movements, particularly surrealism. Indeed, Dali’s genius lay not only in his undeniable gifts as an artist but in his savvy ability to market himself and befriend major figures in the art movements of his historical moment. His friendships with Luis Bunuel and Federico Garcia Lorca deserve particular mention within the contexts of his career and European modernism more broadly. Perhaps it’s no surprise that Dali’s life and art took many turns and was quite diverse. The foundations for both his love for art and his public persona came from his background growing up, but at the same time, the showmanship with which Dali carried himself was in many respects a façade; his upbringing brings to light the insecurities and anxieties that were not just contained within his childhood but informed his personal and professional lives as an adult. History’s Greatest Artists: The Life and Legacy of Salvador Dali looks at the personal background that led to Dali becoming an artist and the cultural climate in which he rose to fame. Dali’s technique and artistic legacy are also analyzed, including his working methods and artistic education. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about Dali like never before, in no time at all.

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