



FUNDACIÓ
GALA-SALVADOR DALÍ

Press release

Exhibition in Pisa about the influence of Italian Classicism on Dalí

It shows paintings from the 80s

Rome, 29th September 2016. The Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí is pleased to announce that tomorrow 30th September a temporary exhibition will open at Palazzo Blu, in Pisa, Italy. It is devoted to the influence of Italian Classicism on Dalí's work. The show is curated by Ms. Montse Aguer, director of the Dalí Museums, at the Dalí Foundation, and Mr. Thomas Clement Salomon, scientific coordinator at Mondo Mostre, organizer. It will be on from 1st October to 5th February 2017.

Exhibition Contents of *Dalí. Il sogno del Classico*

The show focuses on the importance of Italy and Renaissance in Dalí's work. It includes 149 artworks which comprise from 1945 until 1982: 145 works come from the Dalí Foundation, 3 from the Salvador Dalí Museum in Saint Petersburg (Florida) and 1 from the Vatican Museums. There are 22 paintings, 100 pieces of graphic work from *The Divine Comedy* series and 27 illustrations for *The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*.

The exhibition's core starts from a selection of little known oil paintings, four of which are unpublished: *Untitled. After "Crouching Child" by Michelangelo*, *Untitled. Moses after "Giulio II's tomb" by Michelangelo*, *Untitled. Christ after "La Pietà" by Michelangelo*, and *Untitled. Giuliano de Médici after "Giuliano de Médici's tomb" by Michelangelo*. These paintings belong to the last works Dalí did in the 80s. It's a time when he reinterprets Michelangelo's Works in his particular way. For the first time, they are presented as a whole in terms of style and subject. This allows us to explore Dalí's technique and knowledge at that time and shows us how Dalí's ideas become artistic creations. It gives us an insight into Dalí's last period, a period that has been very little explored. We see a peculiar imaginary and a creative process which look for immortality. Dalí, through the reworking of Michelangelo's pieces, shows an absolute respect for tradition and the past and also warns us of the need to overcome them by means of a constant innovation and always facing the contemporary.

From the moment when he was expelled from the Surrealist group onwards, in the early 40s, the Catalan painter leads a new classicist attitude and the defence of Renaissance. Dalí's intellectual interests continue to expand in the manner of a Renaissance humanist. He is considered the precursor of a new phase of Renaissance. It is in this context that he made the illustrations for *The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*, one of the most influential artists of the Florentine Renaissance. Dalí admired him because he was a rebel and controversial. Dalí also did illustrations for *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri.

In the exhibition, paintings from the Dalí Museum in Saint Petersburg (Florida) will also be on show, as well as a work coming from the Vatican Museums. These are works executed in the 50s and 60s and are good examples of Dalí's mystical period where religious themes combine with the inspiration of old great Masters.

Dalí and Michelangelo



Two of the four unpublished works:

Untitled. *Moses after "Giulio II's tomb"*
by Michelangelo, 1982

© Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí/
VEGAP, Figueres, 2016

Untitled. *Giuliano de Médici*
after "Giuliano de Médici's tomb"
by Michelangelo, 1982.

© Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-
Salvador Dalí/VEGAP, Figueres, 2016

The series of paintings inspired by the creations of Michelangelo correspond to Dalí's last period. They are works created throughout 1982, shortly before and after the death of his wife and muse Gala, which occurred in June. Most of them belong to the Dalí Foundation. This allows us to carry out a significant study on the technical and creative process of the painter in this last stage. Those years, Dalí reinvents himself stylistically once again.

Dalí reinterprets Michelangelo's figures, he takes them out of their original context, presents them alone and gives them strength by standing on their own. Dalí borrows titanic tension from Michelangelo's sculptures and paintings, character who have got a great muscular strength and giant dimensions.

With these works, the artist invites us to take a unique journey in search of one's own self, one's philosophical, artistic and humanist DNA.

The study on technical procedures and working methods of the artist confirms that the implementation of this set of paintings was fast. In something more than a year, Dalí painted about 25 works inspired in Michelangelo's themes, plus 13 others on Velázquez. Antoni Pitxot, first director of the Dalí Theatre-Museum, described this vital and creative phase with very interesting words: "it's pure expression, pure communication."

The Divine Comedy

This set was commissioned by the Istituto Poligrafico from the Italian State as a commemoration of 700 years of Dante's birthday. Dalí started this project in the summer of 1950 in Cadaqués. Two years later, he finished 102 illustrations using a combination of different techniques: mainly watercolour, gouache and sanguine ink on paper in a sheet format. Finally, a hundred illustrations were reproduced between 1959 and 1963 through a relief photogravure process with wood-grain screen. These prints are seen in the exhibition divided into three Songs: Hell, Purgatory and Paradise.



Illustration for *The Divine Comedy*
© Salvador Dalí,
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VEGAP, 2016

The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini

In 1945, Dalí is commissioned by publisher Doubleday & Company the illustrations of a new English series of *The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*. The technique of these illustrations is watercolour and ink on paper. The artist freely chooses moments of narration that allow him to maximize his creativity and fantasy. The artist shows great admiration for Cellini and his ability in multiple artistic fields. Cellini, who was a sculptor, goldsmith and writer, embodies the multidisciplinary artist Dalí dreams at. This series was so much appreciated by Dalí that he saved it for himself. This is why the Foundation has got the originals in its collection. A selection of 27 illustrations can be seen in this exhibition.



Illustration for
The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini
© Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres, VEGAP, 2016

Catalogue

The catalogue, published in Italian by SKIRA, includes texts by Montse Aguer, director of the Dalí Museums, Lucia Moni and Carme Ruiz, from the Centre for Dalinian Studies, Irene Civil and Juliette Murphy from the Conservation and Restoration Department of the Dalí Foundation, and Thomas Clement Salomon, scientific coordinator at Mondo Mostre. The articles offer new perspectives about the influence of Classicism on the artist throughout his career. It's illustrated with many images which were unpublished until today of preparatory material as well as photographs of the artist.

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