

Surrealism & Conceptual Illustration

Conceptual illustration and surrealism challenge our perception of reality, inviting us to explore ideas, dreams, and the subconscious through visual metaphor, symbolism, and abstraction to communicate complex themes.

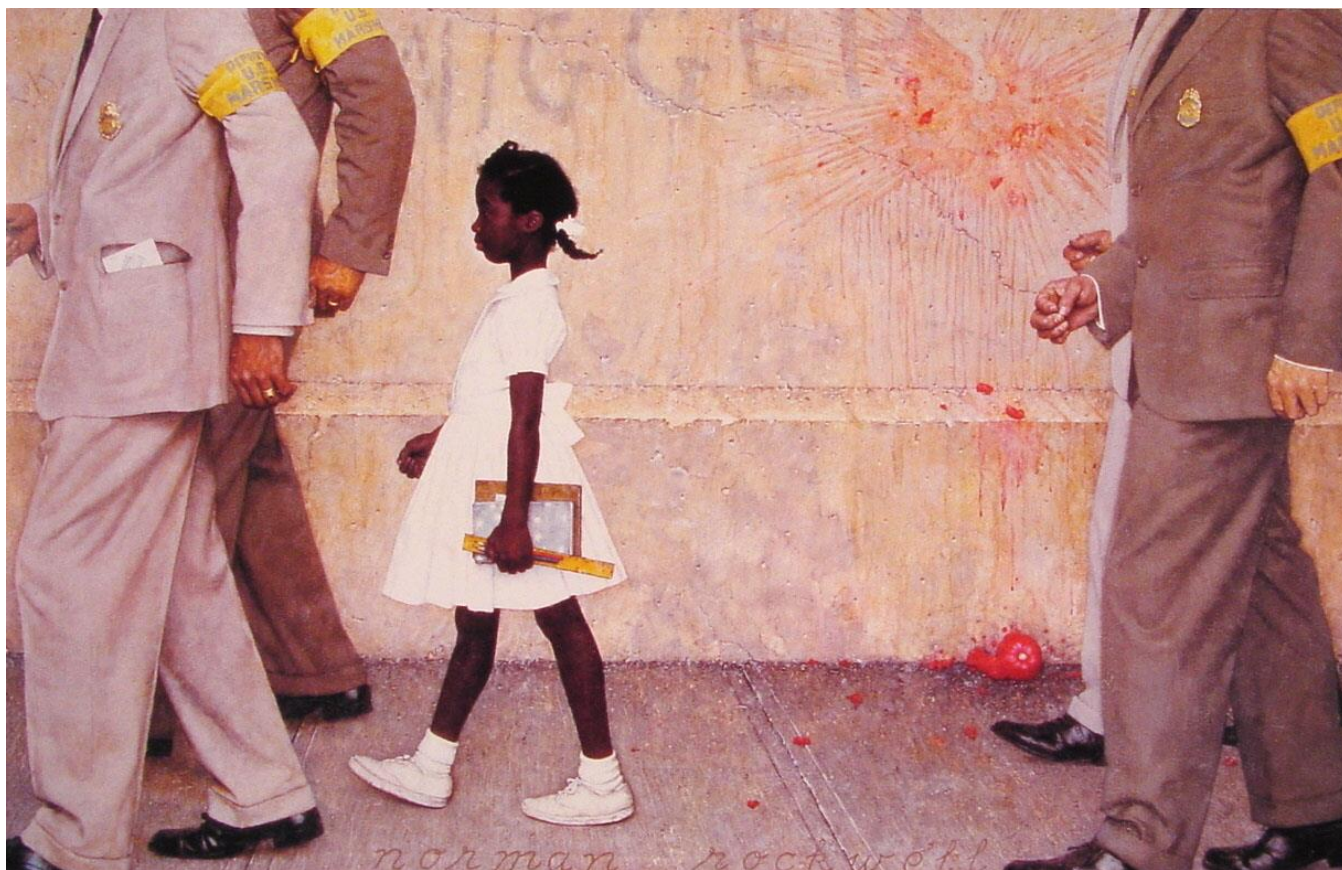
Realism

Illustration in the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century was defined by Realism.

Illustrative Realism was not meant to be
grittily real, but romantically real.



Norman Rockwell



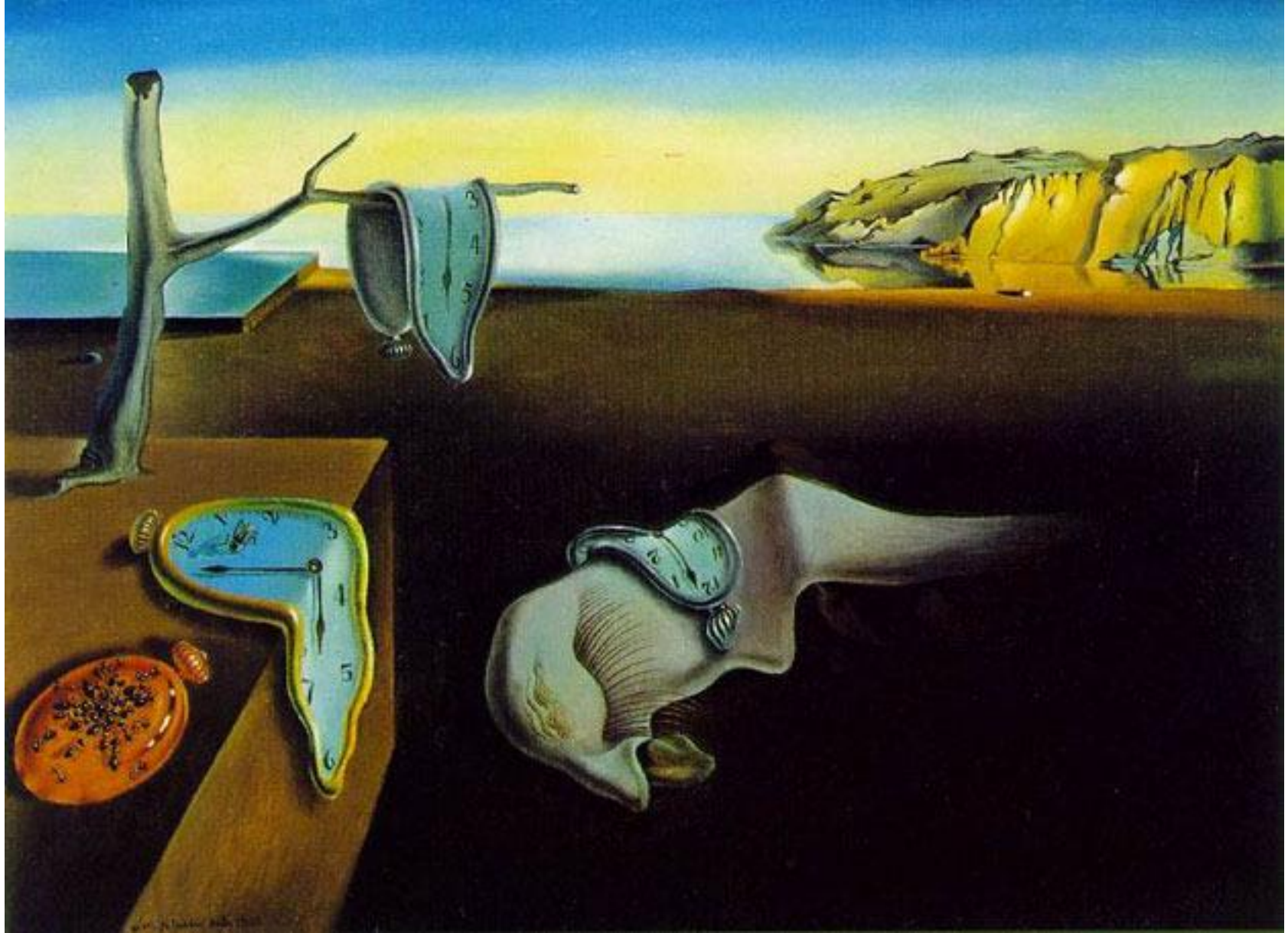
Conceptual Illustration emerged prominently in the 1960s as part of the broader conceptual art movement.

Surrealism 1924 – 1945

And as a lesser movement until 1966

Surrealism was founded by poet and critic André Breton (1896–1966) in 1924, the year of the publication of the first Surrealist Manifesto. The movement itself finished around the mid-1960s, but its influence continues today.

Surrealism sought to unlock the unconscious mind and explore the world of dreams. Heavily influenced by psychoanalysis and the writings of Sigmund Freud, surrealist artists created fantastical works that blurred the boundaries between reality and imagination. Their art invited viewers to question logic, embrace the bizarre, and delve into the subconscious.



Salvador Dali (1904-1989)

The Persistence of Memory, 1931



Rene Magritte (1898-1967)
La Reproduction Interdite, 1937

However, surrealistic Illustration was created long before the term, and the movement, Surrealism was coined.



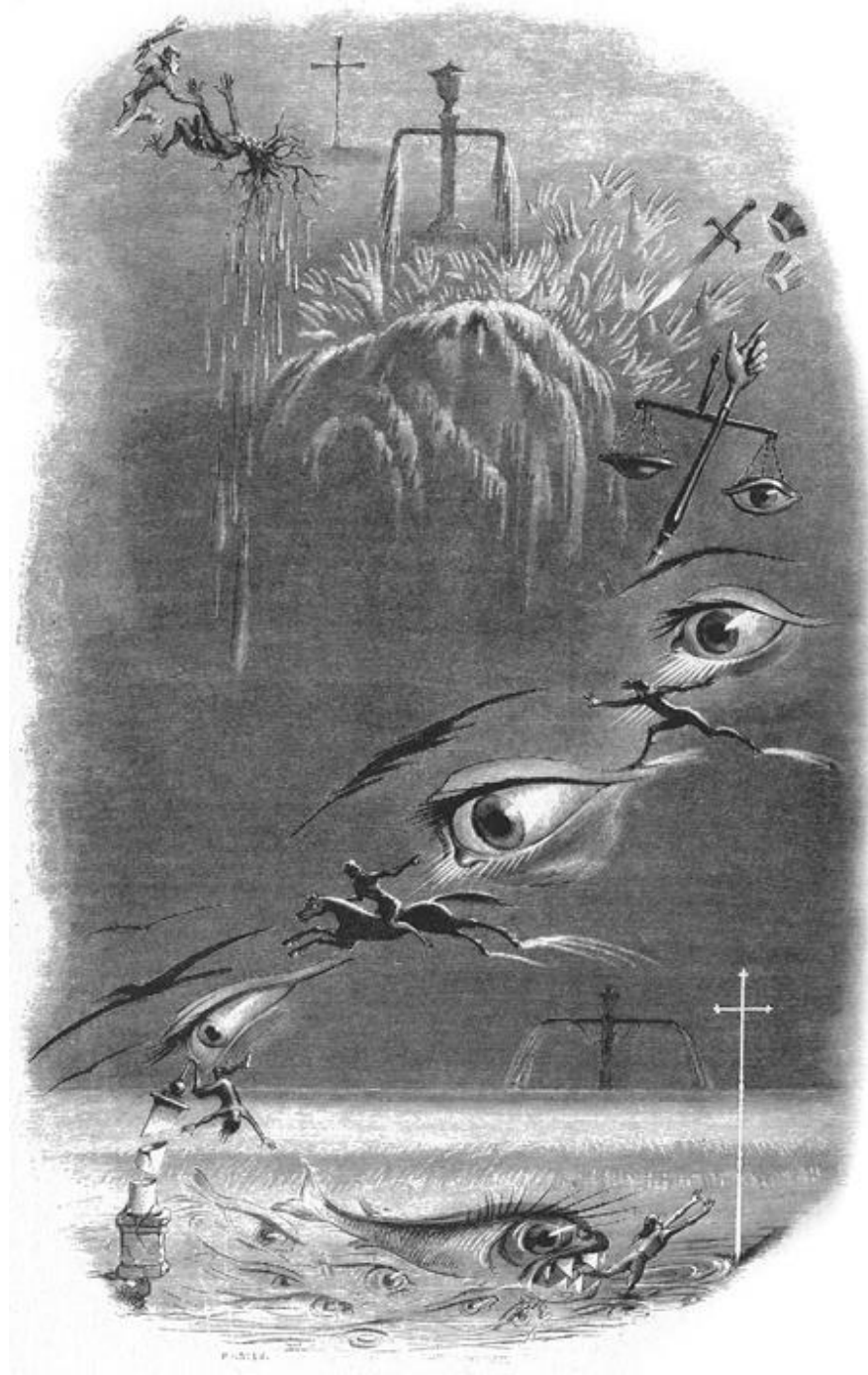
Grandville (1803-1847)

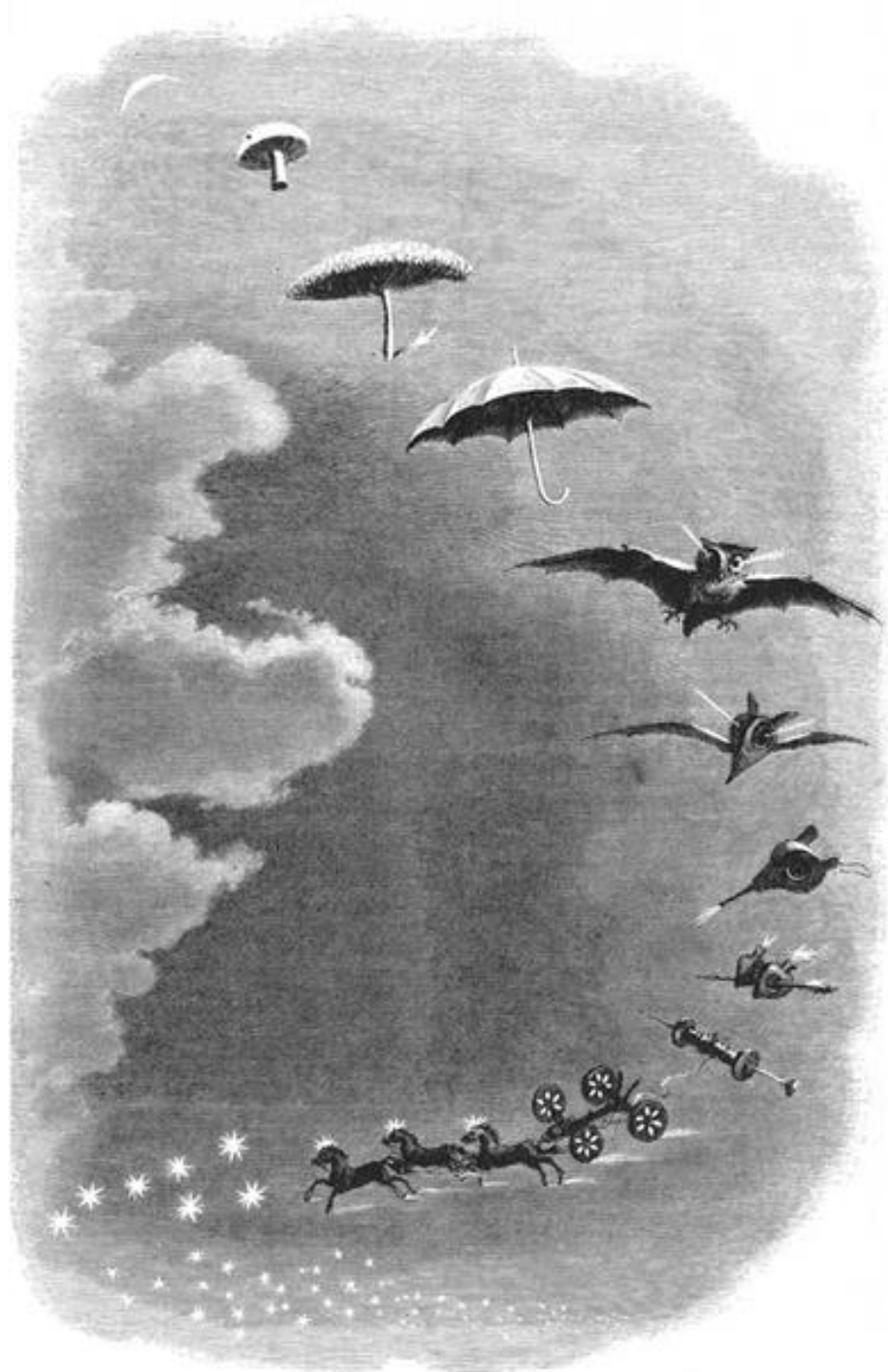


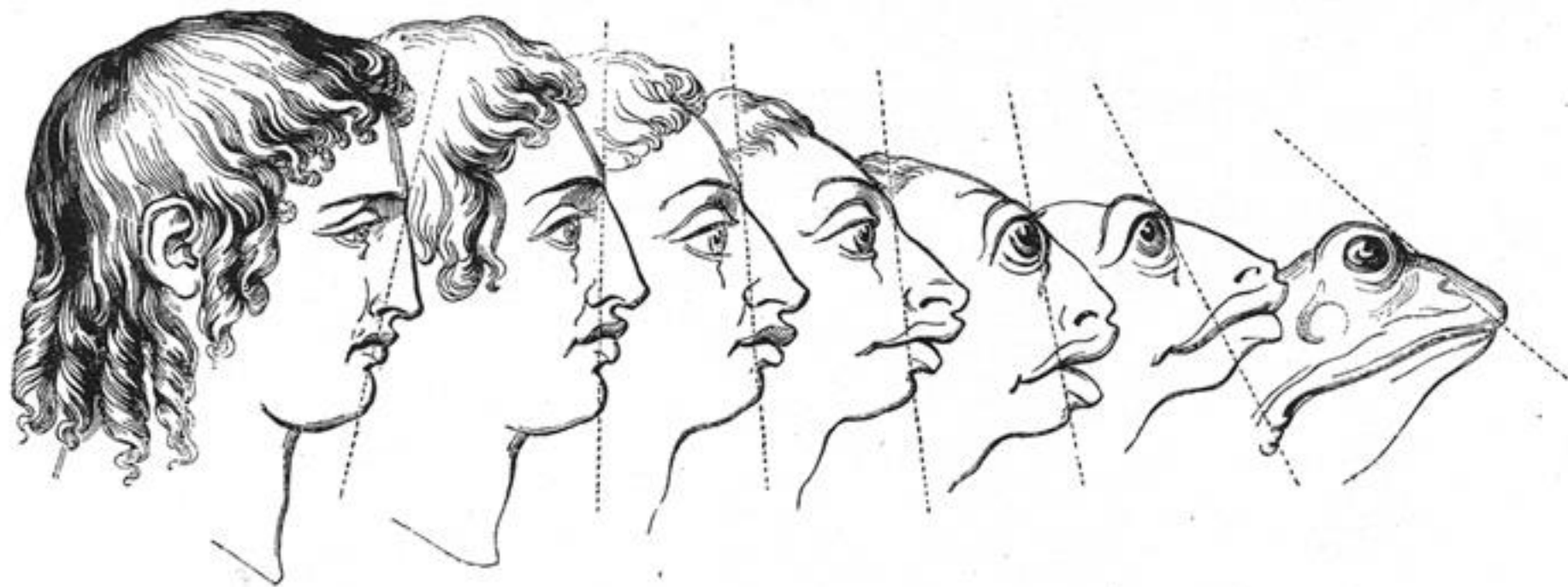
Jean Ignace Isidore Gerard

















Hieronymus Bosch 1450 -1569

The Garden of Earthly Delights













Death of the Reprobate



Pieter Bruegel 1525 - 1569

The Seven Deadly Sins - Lechery



The Peasant Wedding



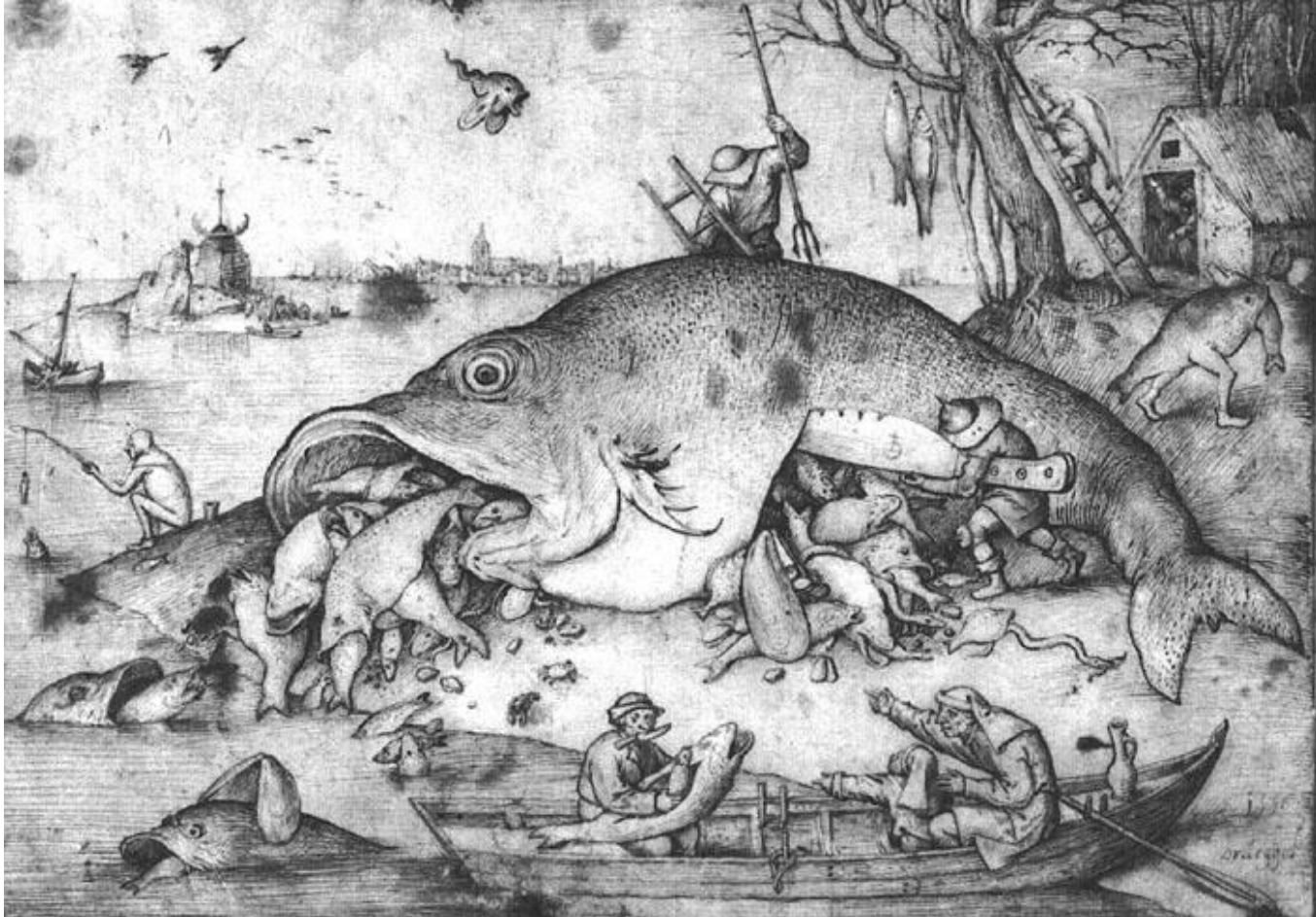
Greed



Gluttony



Sloth

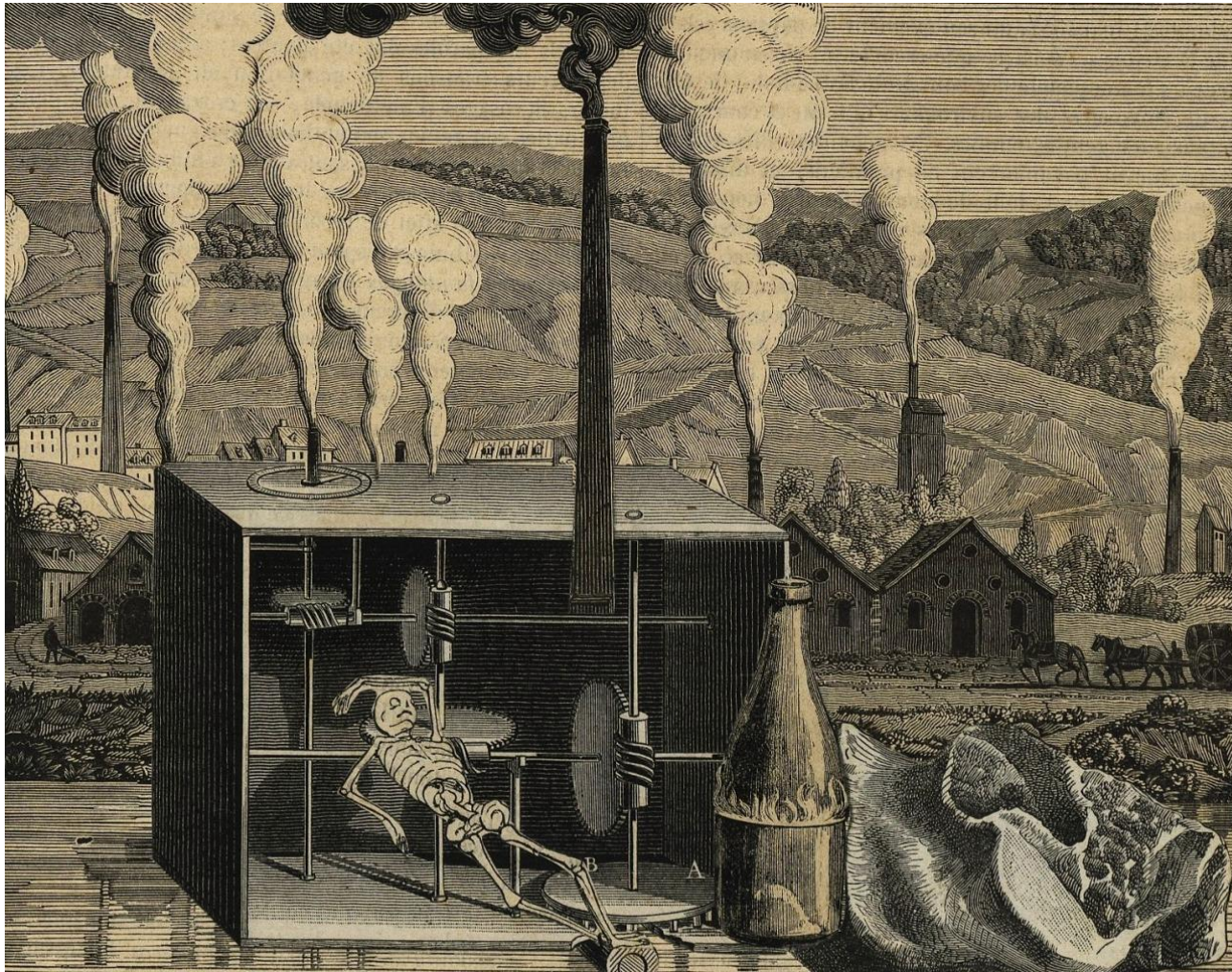


Big Fish Eat Little Fish

Surrealism



Max Ernst (1891-1965)
Collage from *A Week of Kindness*, 1934







The Great Forest, 1927



The Robing of the Bride, 1939

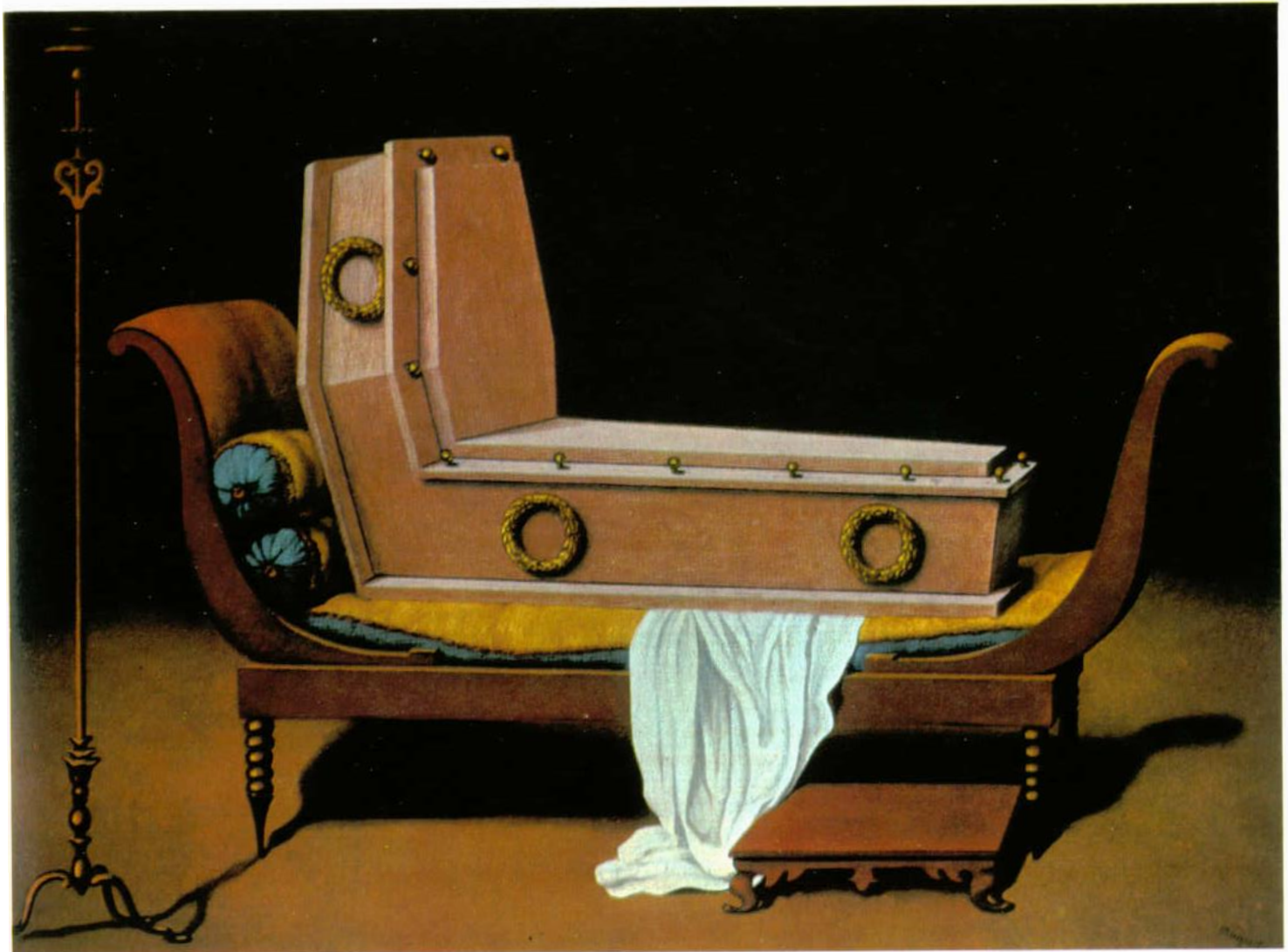


Oedipus Rex



Rene Magritte

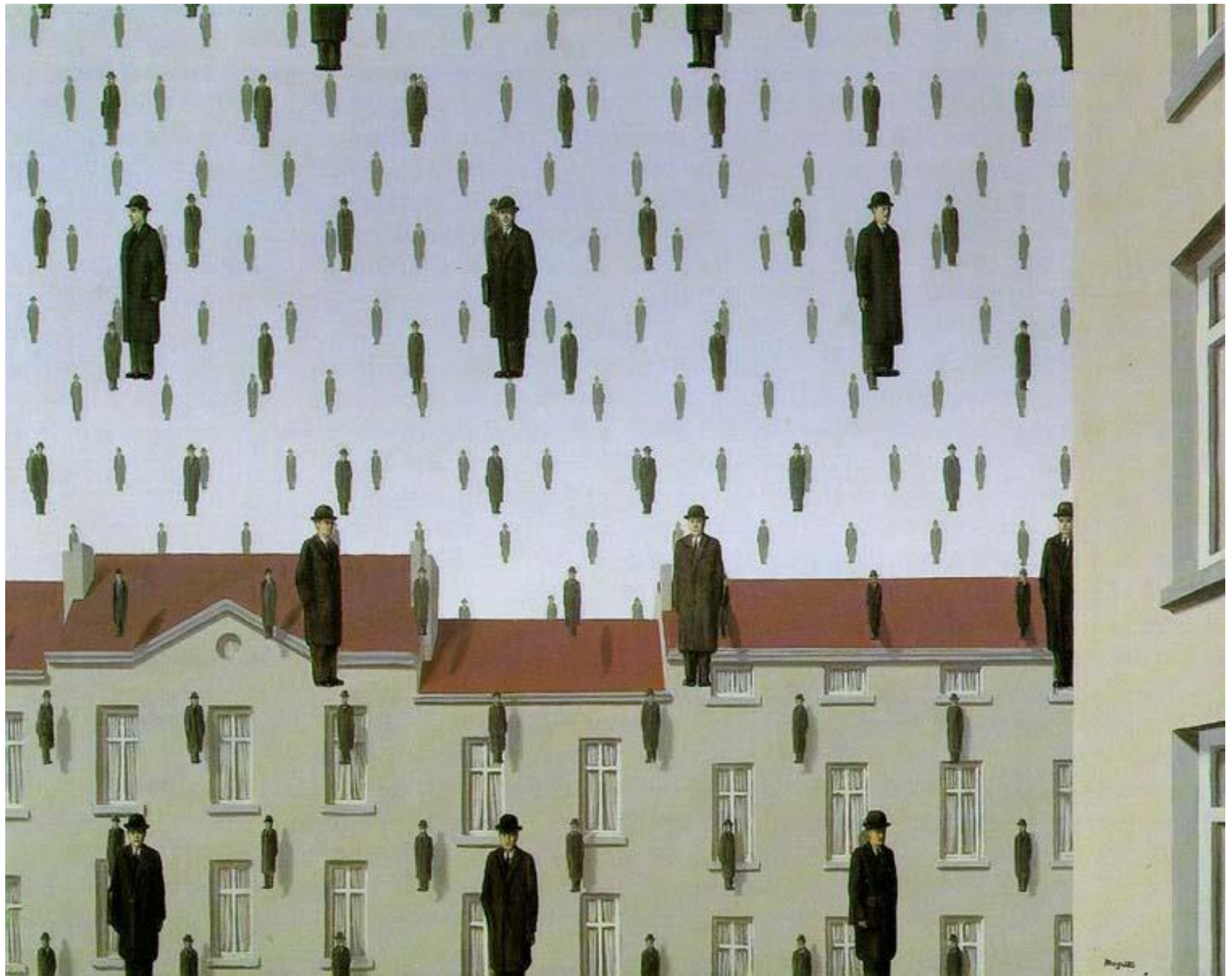
Ready-Made Bouquet, 1957

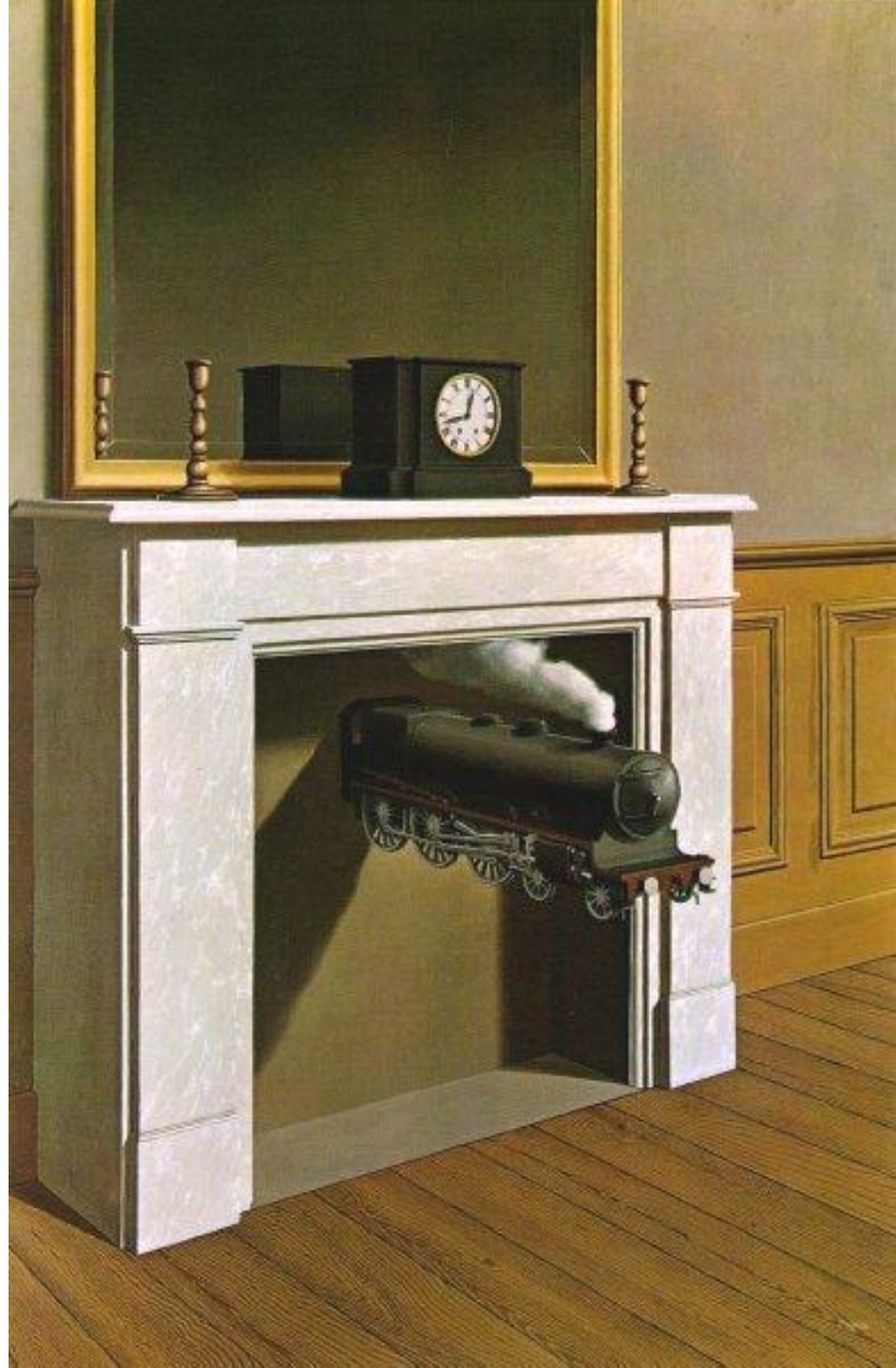


Perspective: Madame Recamier by David, 1951

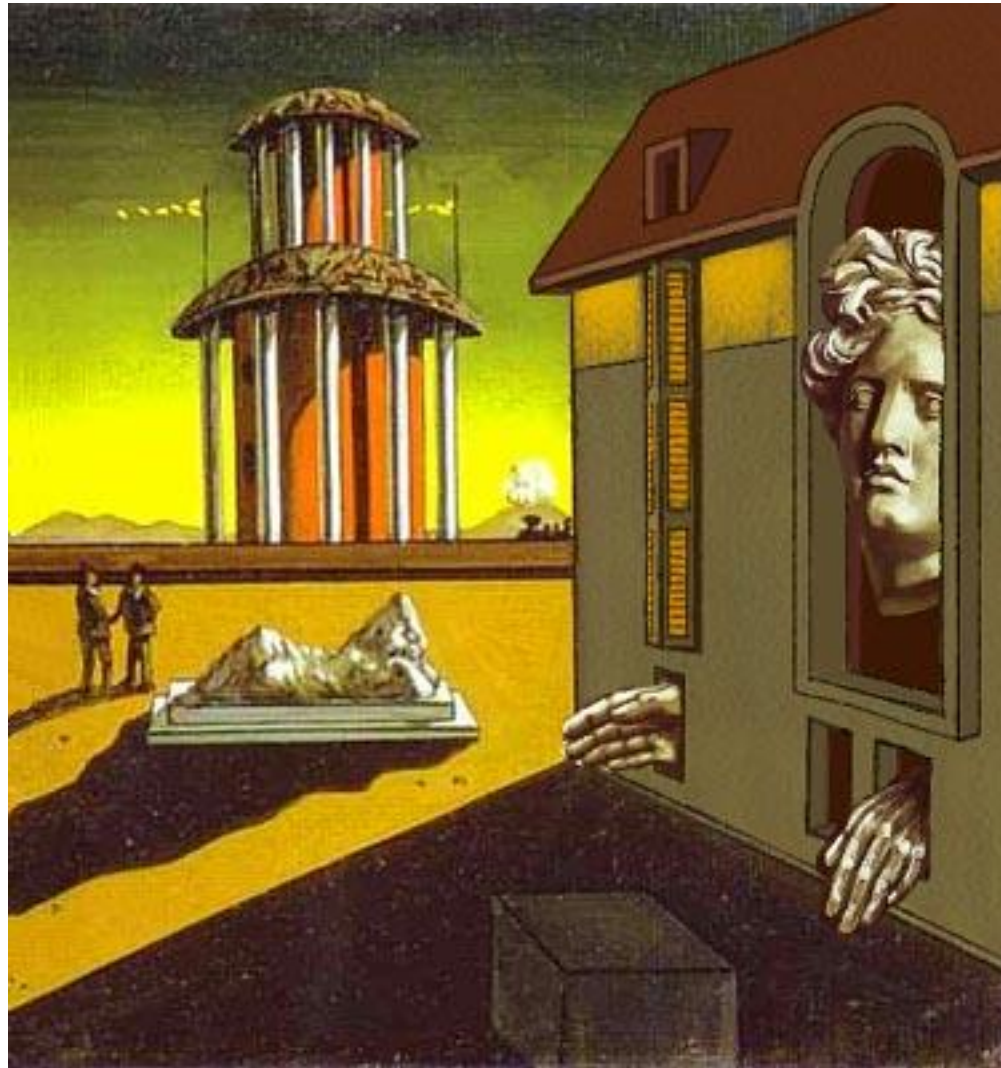


Magritte



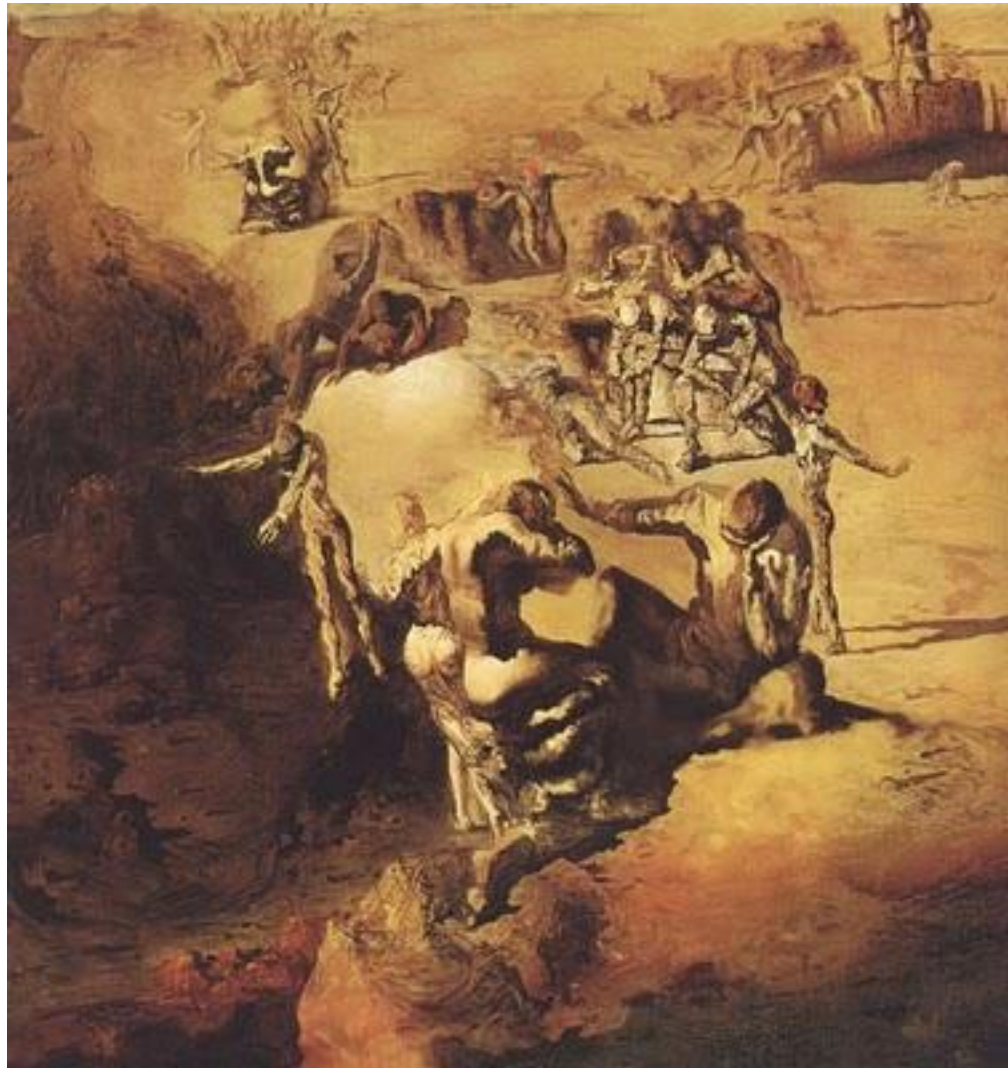






Georgio de Chirico (1888-1978)

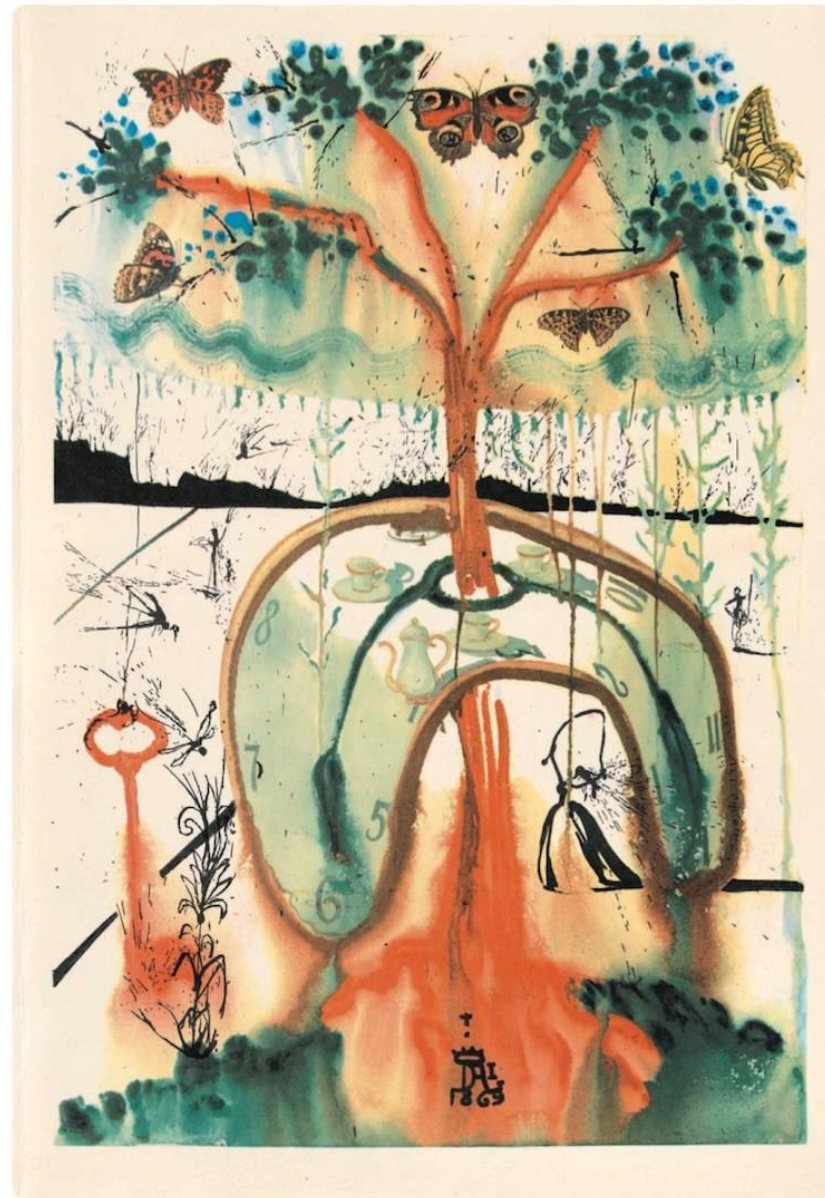




Salvador Dalí
Le Grand Paranoiac



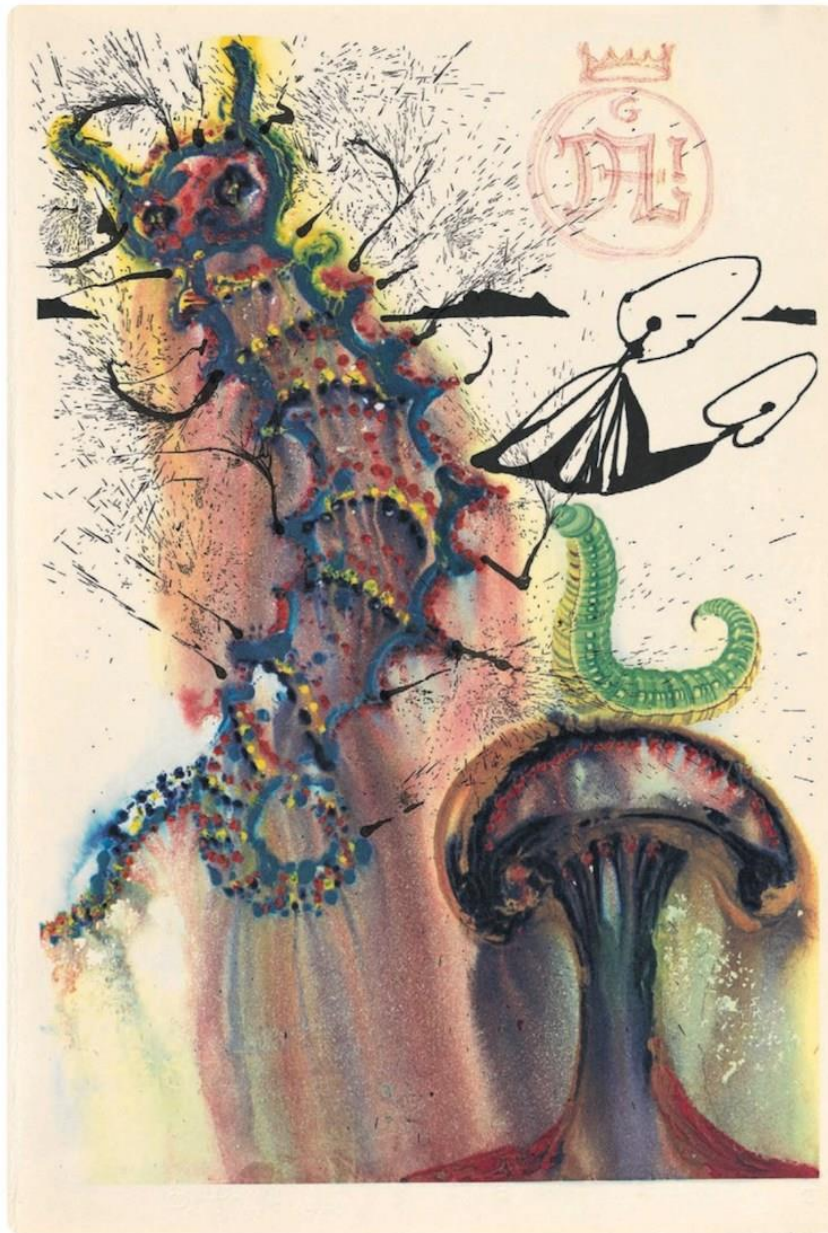
Frontispiece for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*



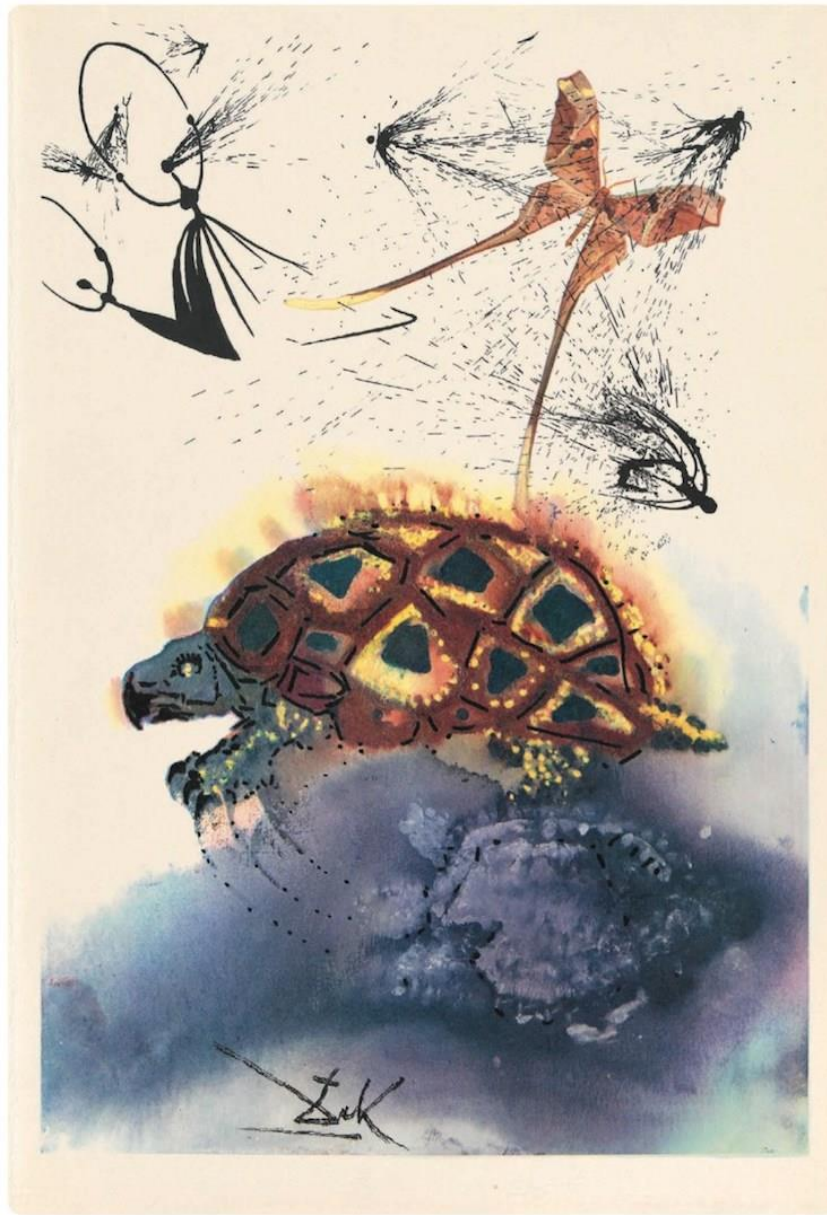
Mad Tea Party



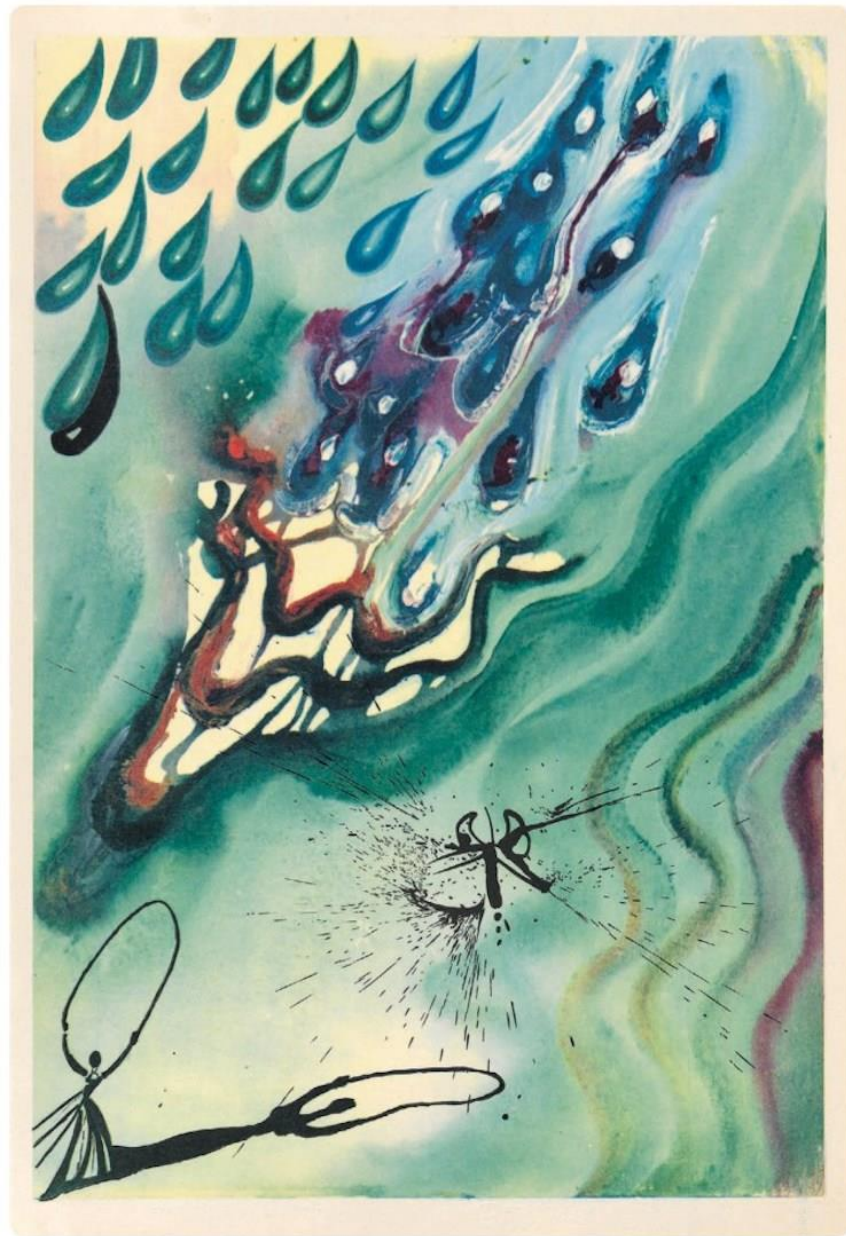
The Queen's Croquet Ground



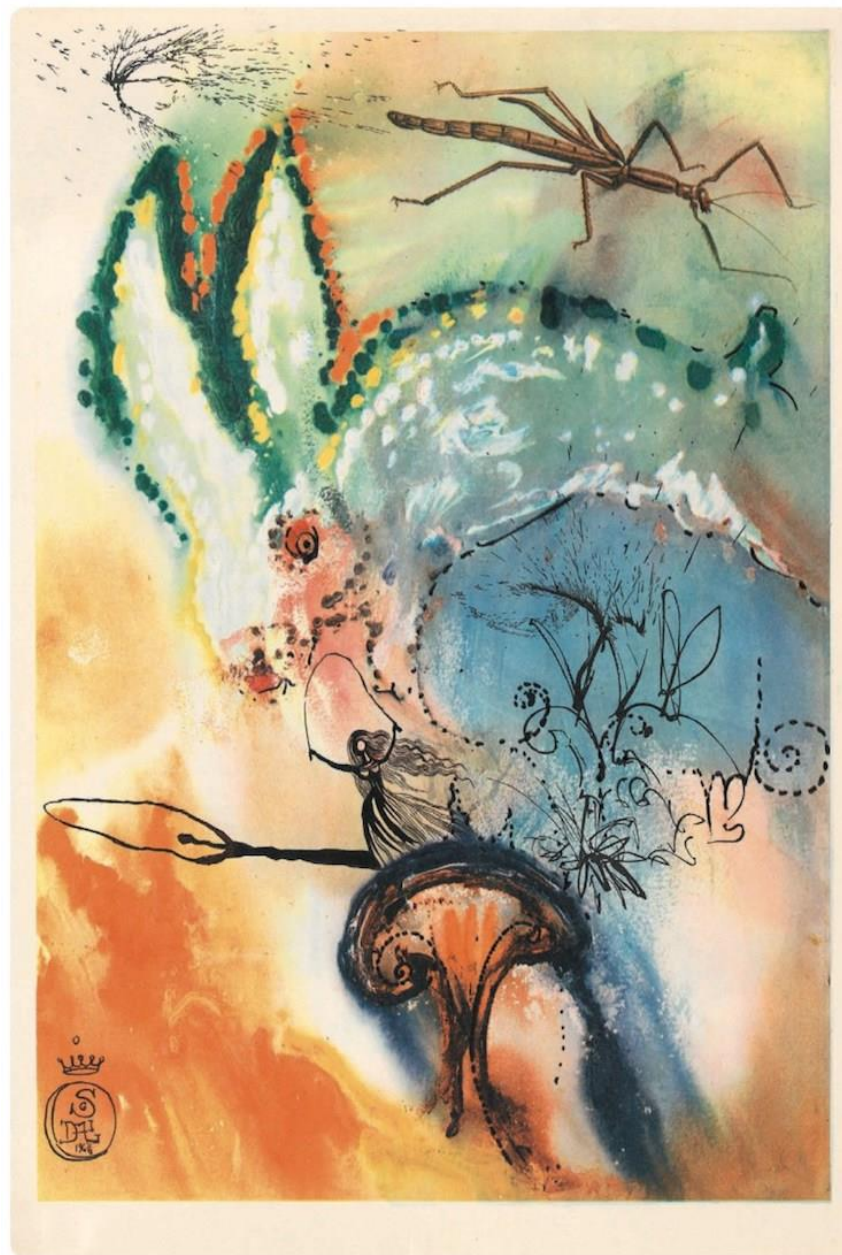
Advice From a Caterpillar



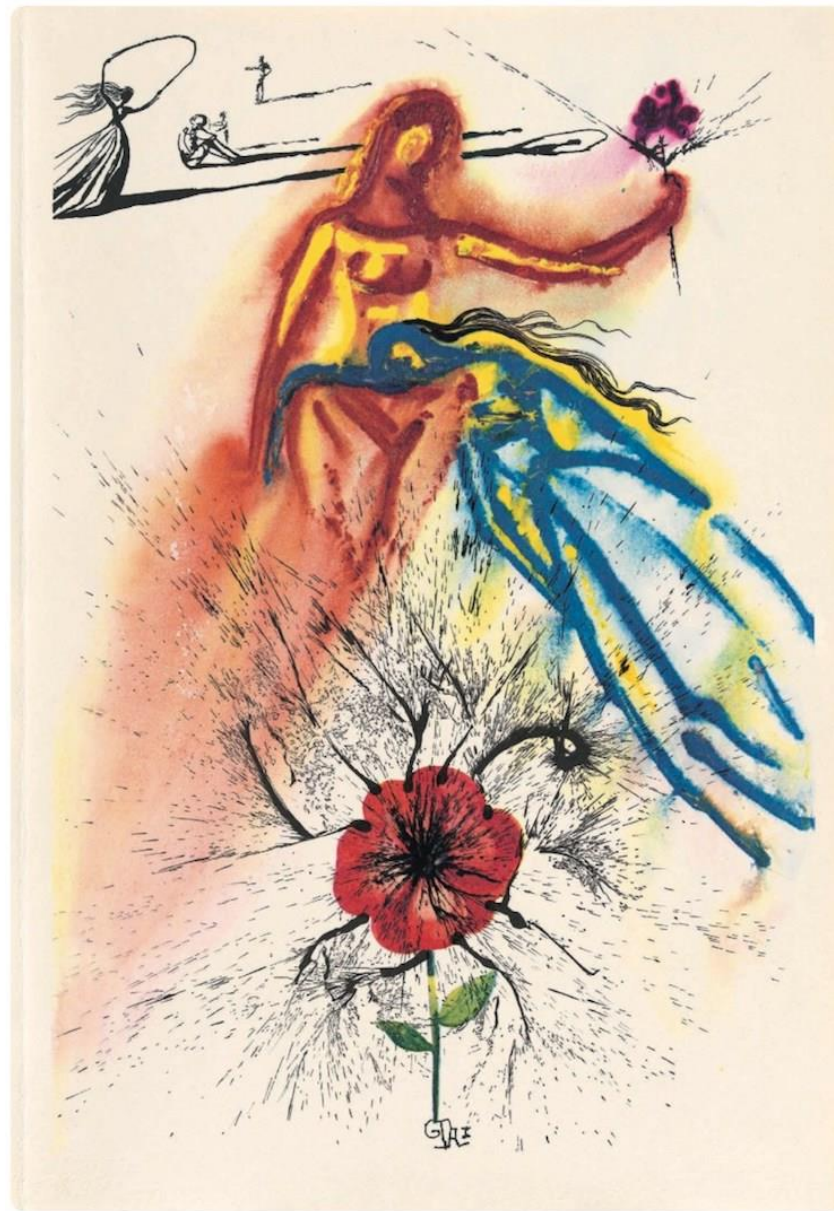
The Mock Turtle's Story



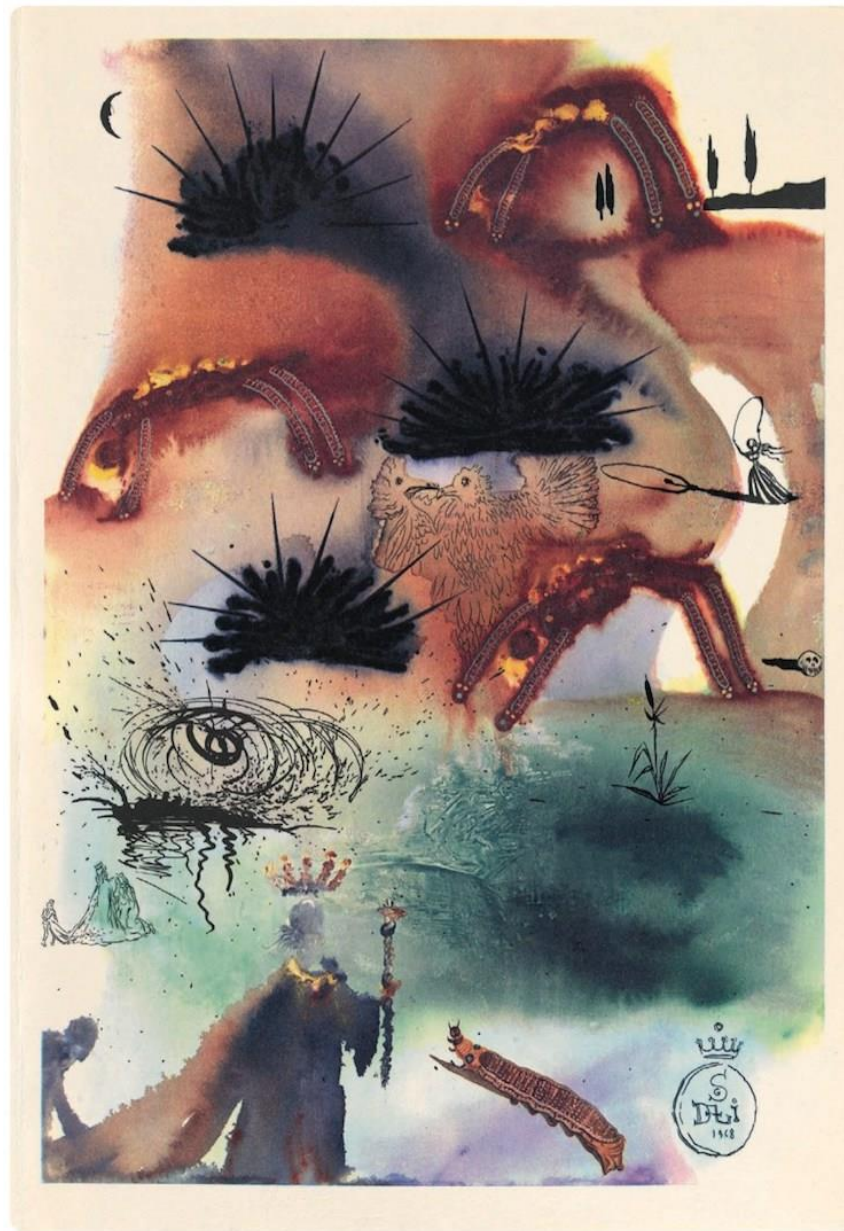
The Pool of Tears



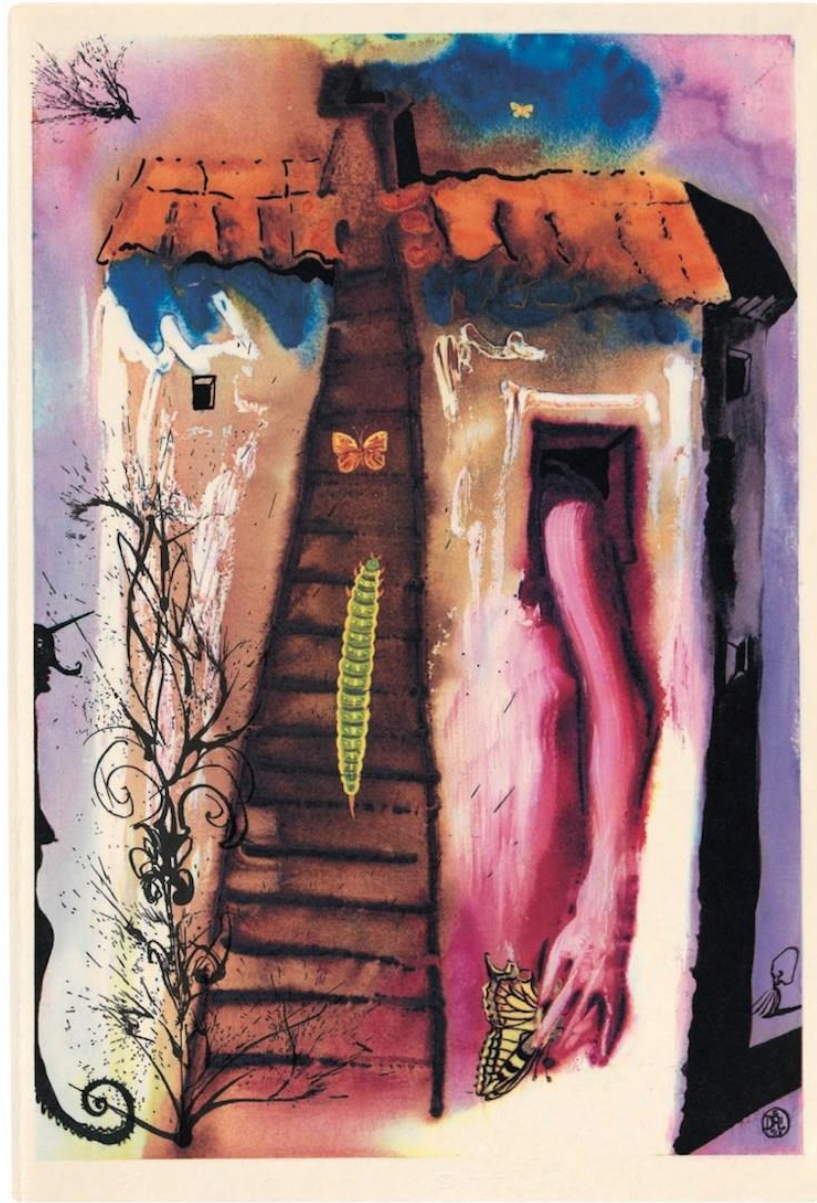
Down the Rabbit Hole



Alice's Evidence



The Lobster's Quadrille



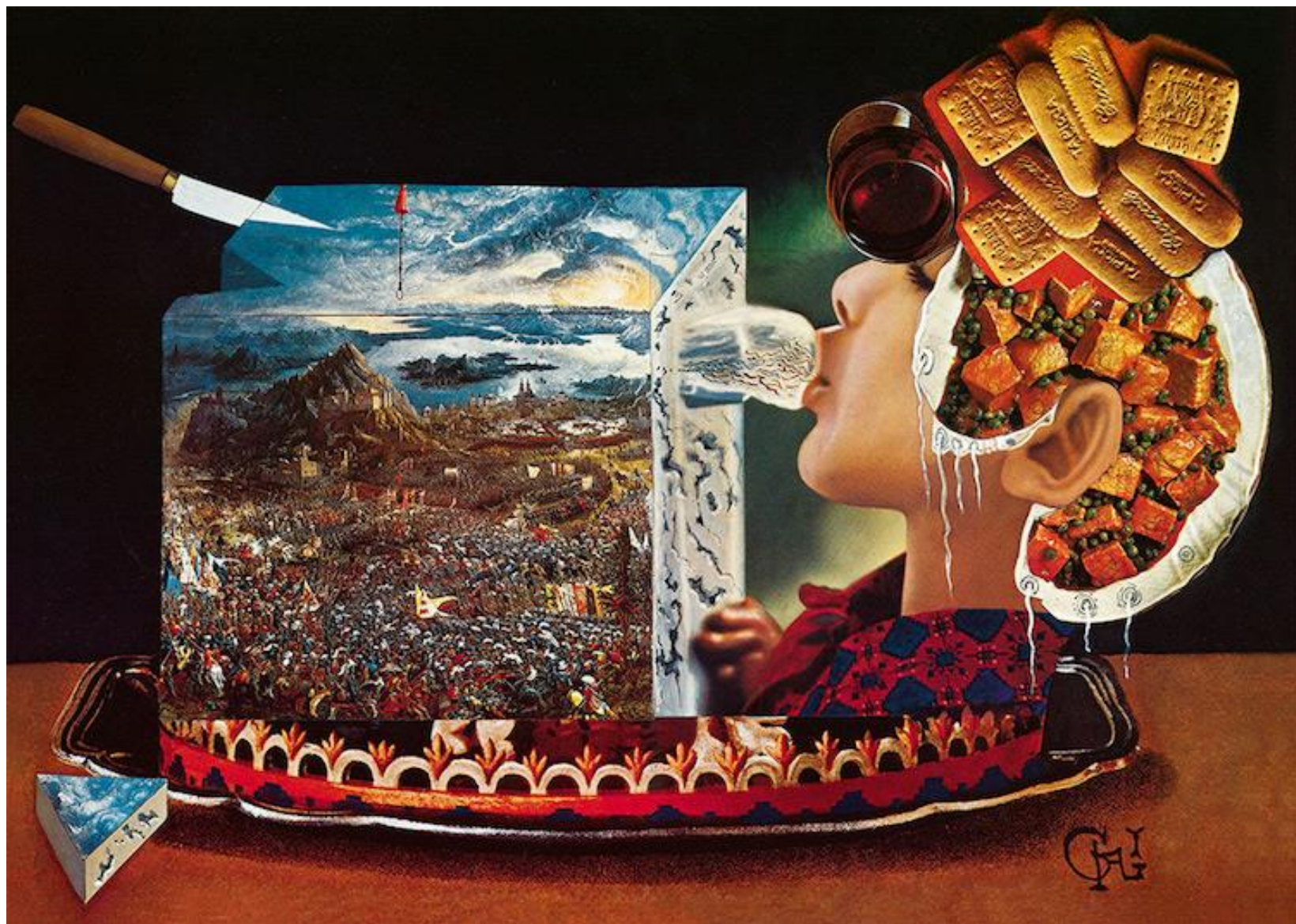
The Rabbit Sends in a Little Bill



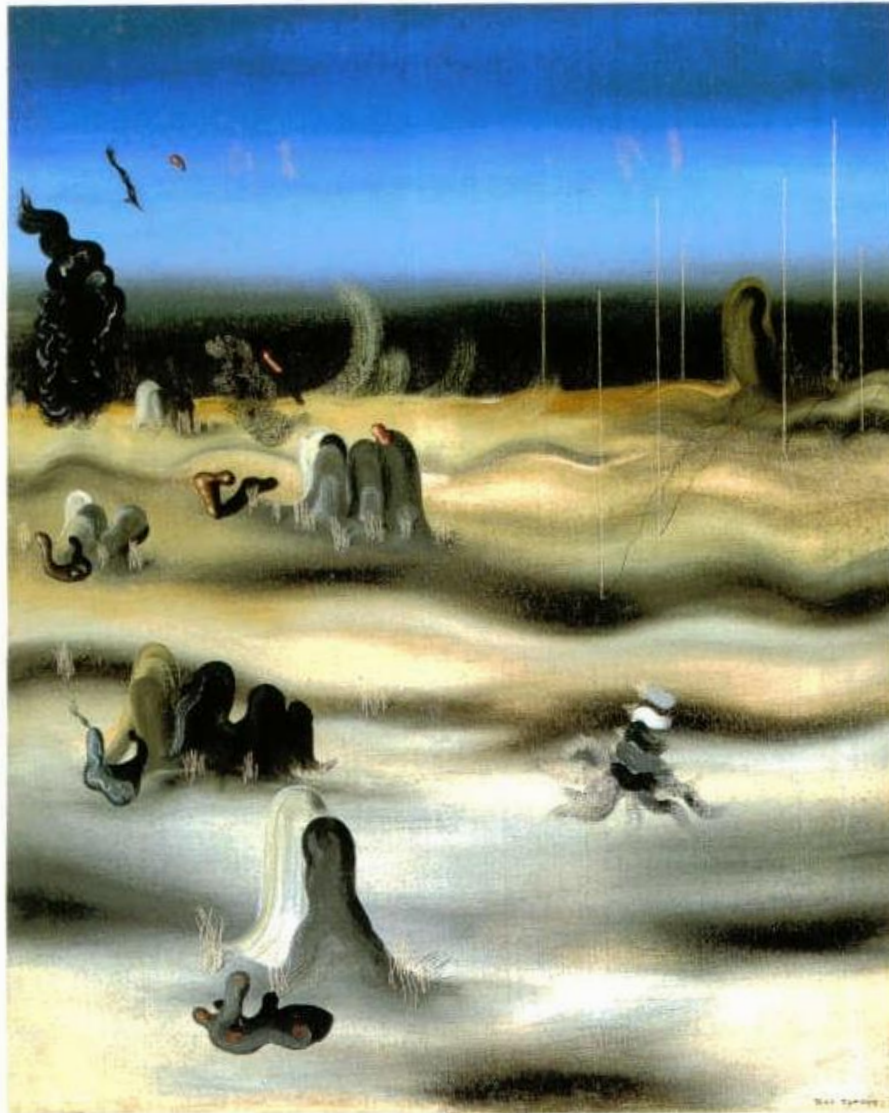
The Caucus Race and a Long Tale



Pig and Pepper







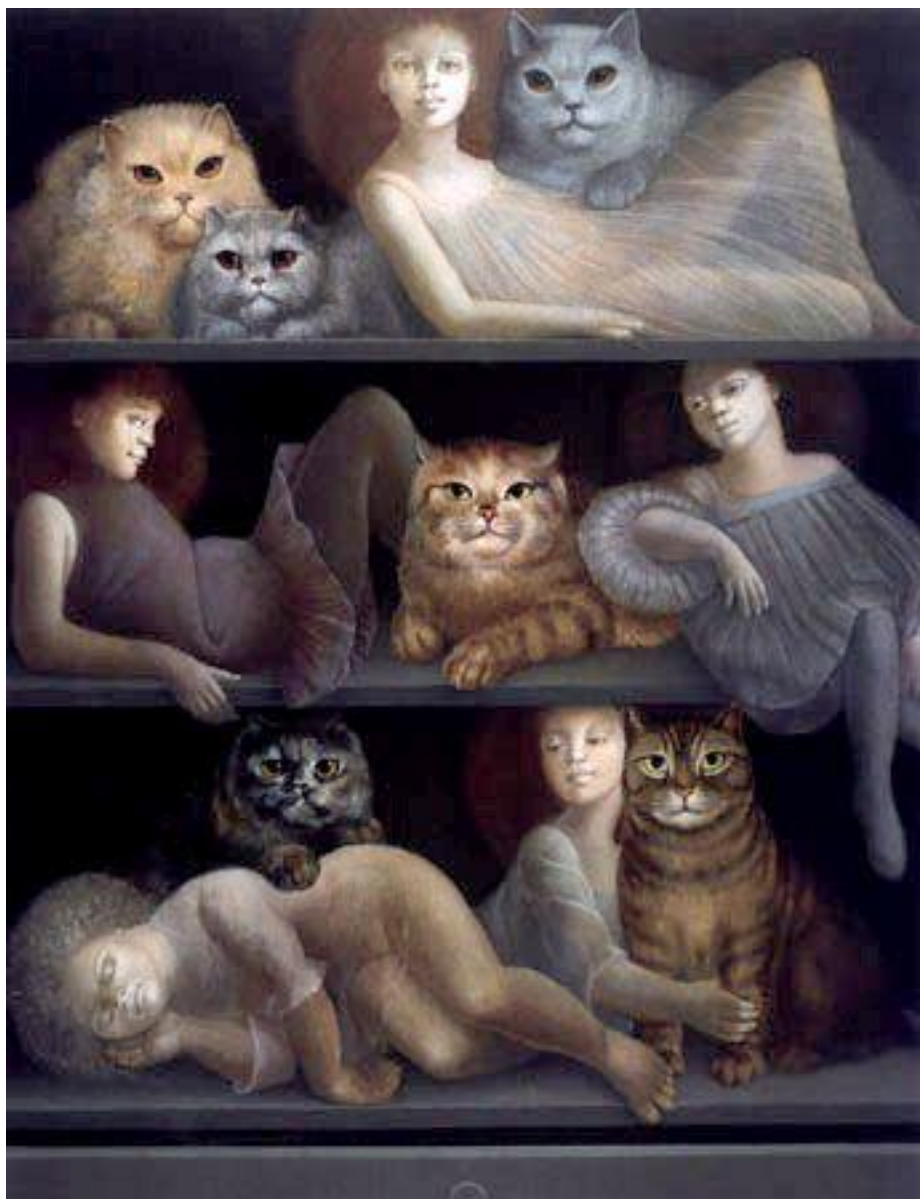
Yves Tanguy (1900-1955)
Shadow Country, 1927



Promontory Palace

When we think of Surrealism Spaniards with lobster telephones and handlebar moustaches and Belgians with bowler hats, green apples and pipes come to mind...and usually male artists!

Female Surrealists



Leonor Fini (1908-1996)





The Ends of the Earth



Leonora Carrington







Dorothea Tanning
The Birthday



Le Chambre d'Amis





Remedios Varo
The Creation of the Birds

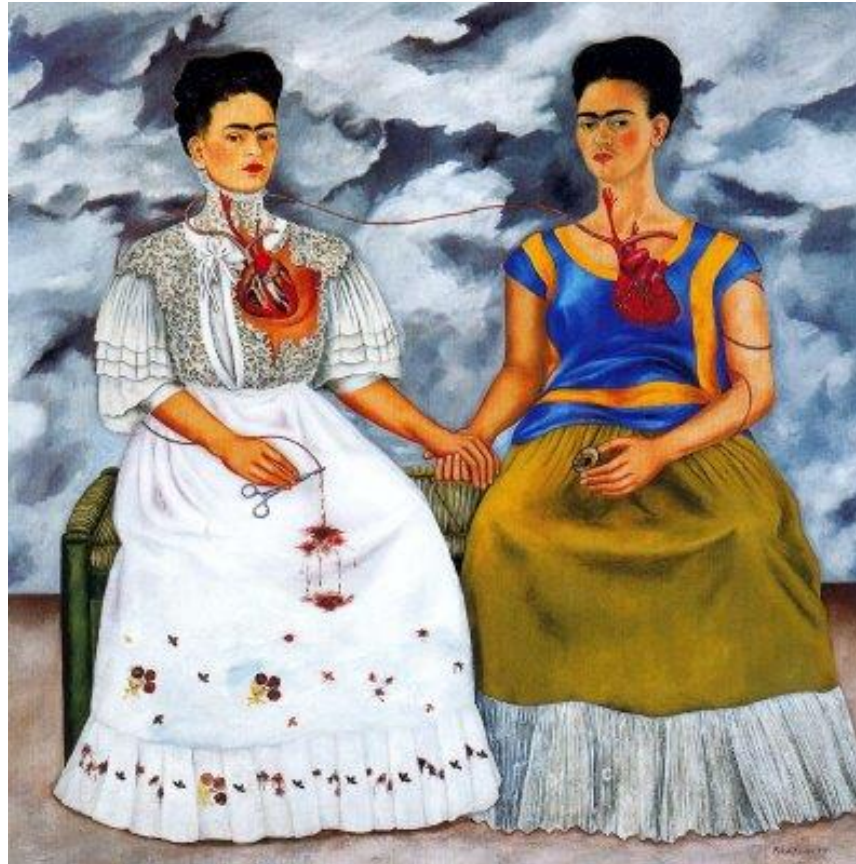


Kay Sage

I Saw Three Cities

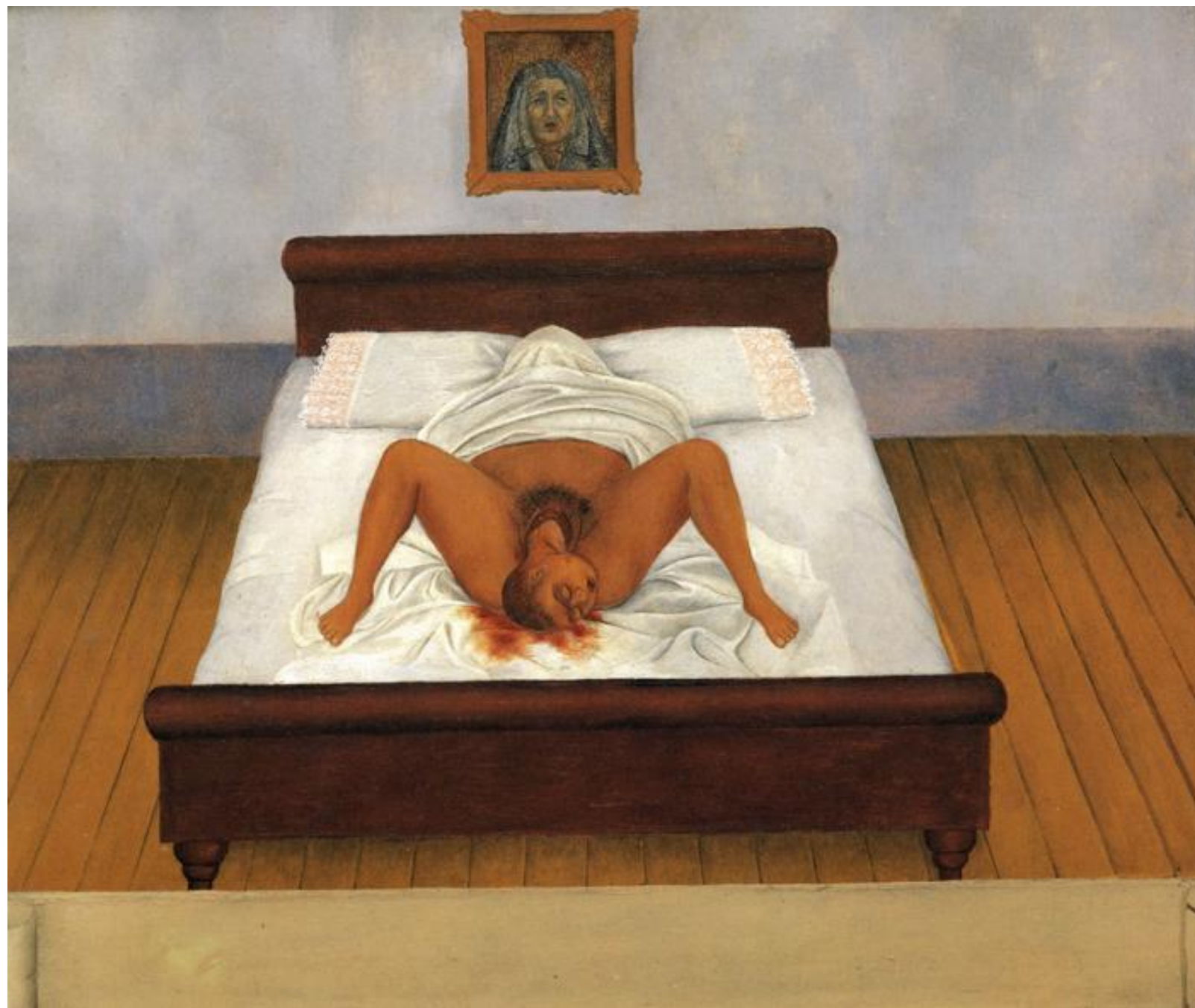


Small portrait



Frida Kahlo
The Two Fridas







Louise Bourgeois

Characteristics

Dream imagery.

Illogical scenes rendered with photographic precision.

Strange juxtapositions (e.g. a fish flying through a desert).

Automatism: drawing without conscious control.

Surrealism encourages artists to think beyond conventional boundaries and tap into their imagination. By delving into the subconscious, surrealism connects with universal human experiences of dreams and imagination.

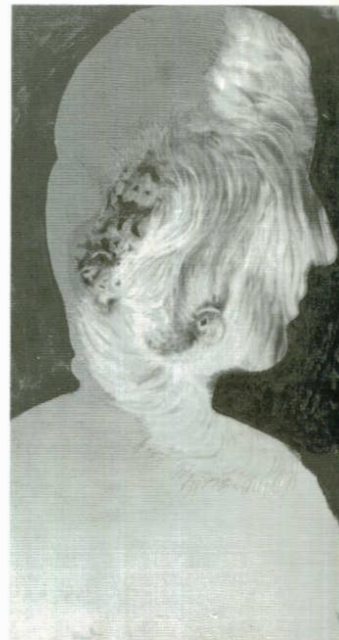
23

Eileen Agar

Woman's Head, 1942

Ink on velour, 12½ x 8¼"

Private collection, courtesy of Guillaume Gallozzi, New York



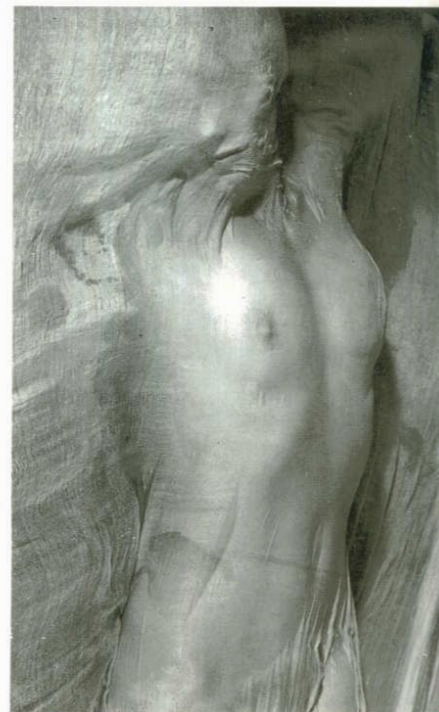
22

Eileen Agar

Ladybird, c. 1936

Photograph, ink, gouache, 29½ x 19¼"

Collection of Andrew Murray



24

Erwin Blumenfeld

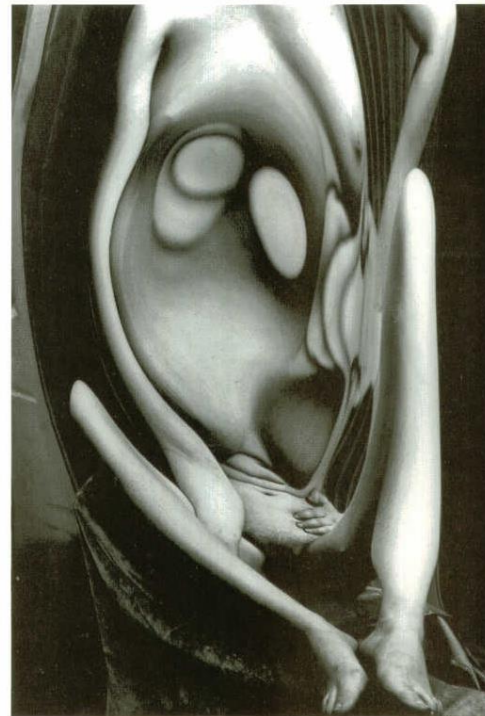
Nude Torso under Wet Silk, 1937

Solarized gelatin silver print, 11¼ x 9½"

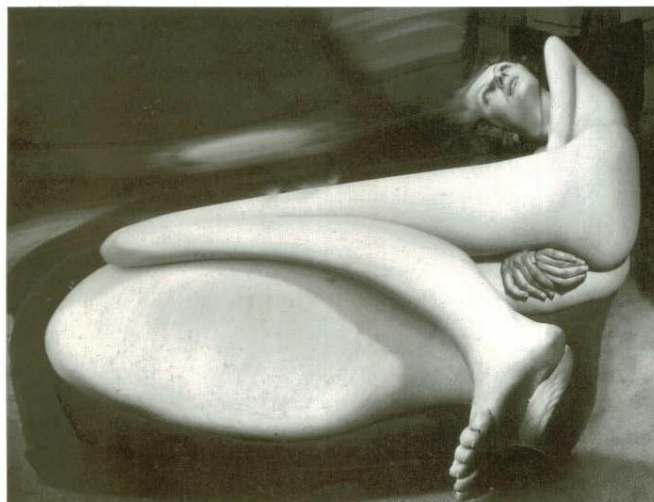
Collection of Marina Schinz



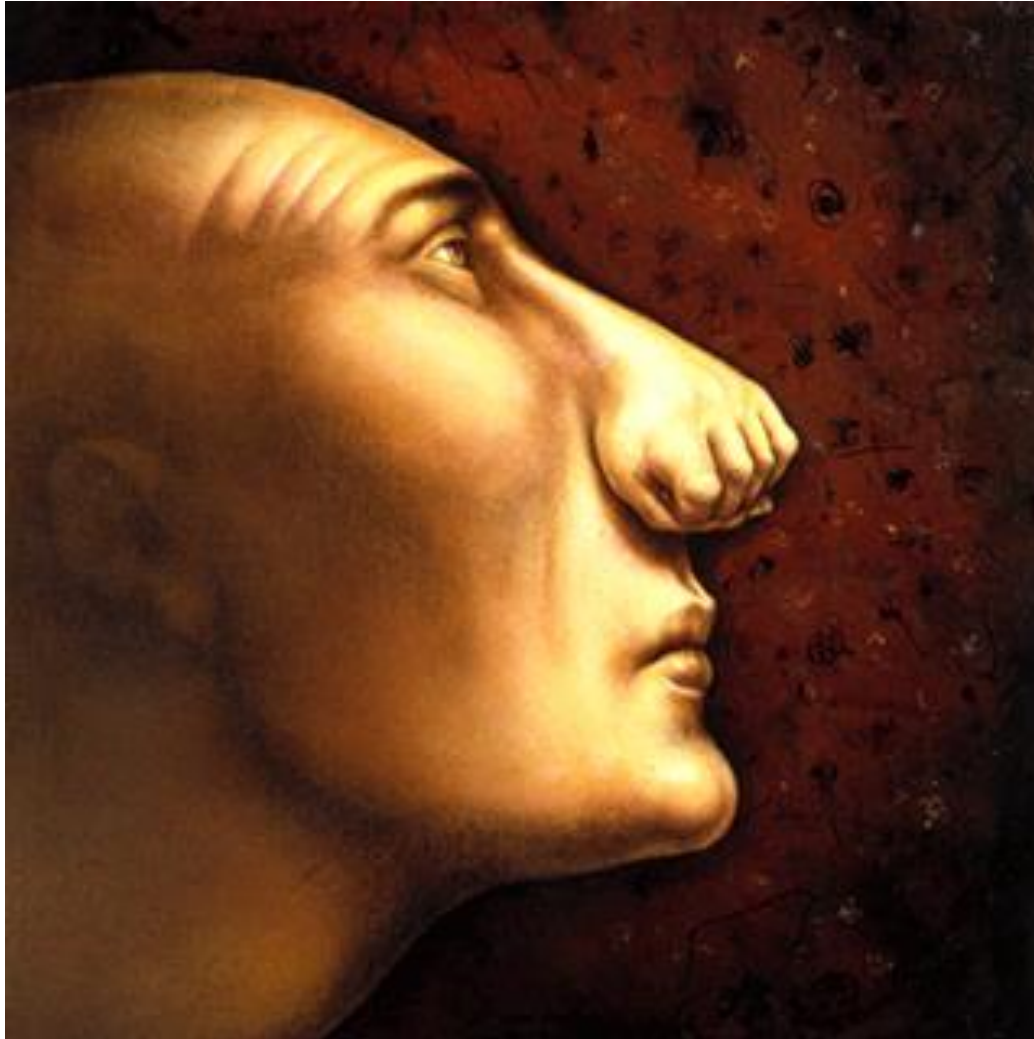
26
André Kertész
Distortion #102, 1933
 Gelatin silver print, $9\frac{1}{16} \times 7\frac{1}{16}$ "
 San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, gift
 of Graham Nash



27
André Kertész
Distortion #117, 1933
 Gelatin silver print, $13\frac{1}{16} \times 9\frac{7}{16}$ "
 Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco

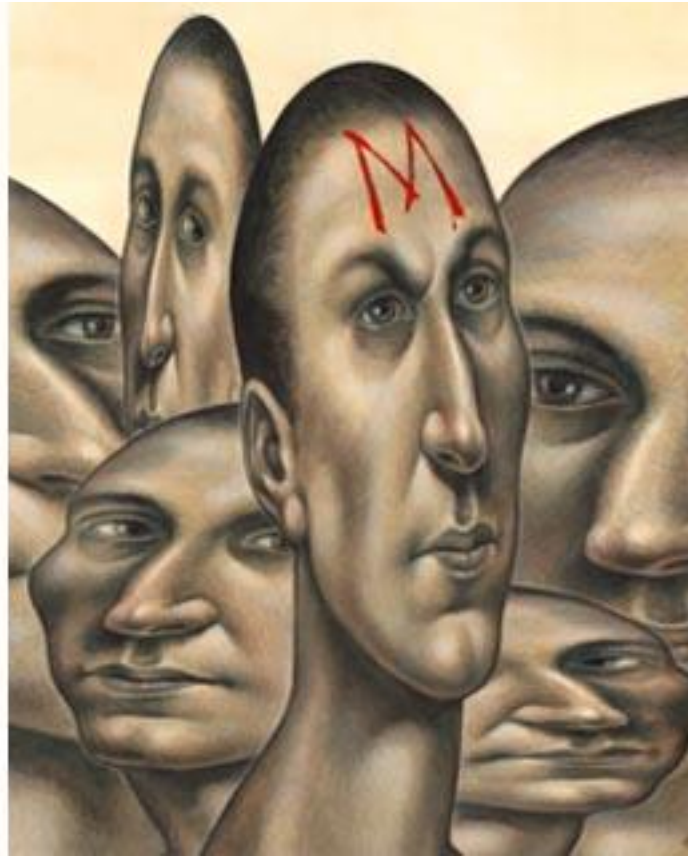


28
André Kertész
Distortion #40, 1933
 Gelatin silver print, $7\frac{1}{16} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ "
 J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California



Anita Kunz







Conceptual illustration is a form of visual storytelling where the *idea* behind the image is more important than its aesthetic or technical execution. It often uses visual metaphor, symbolism, abstraction and juxtaposition of unrelated objects to communicate complex themes.

They provoke thought, challenge norms, and express abstract themes or philosophical ideas.



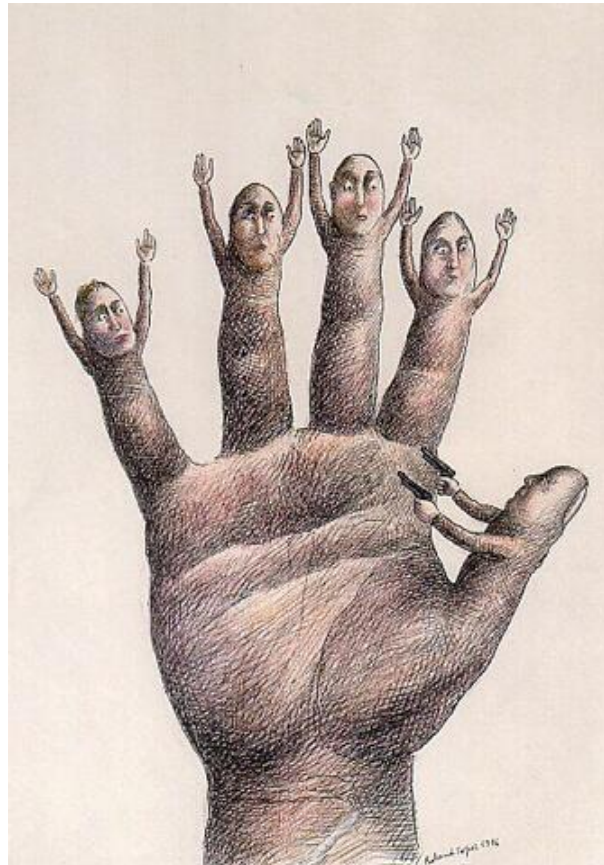
Stasys Eidrigevicius



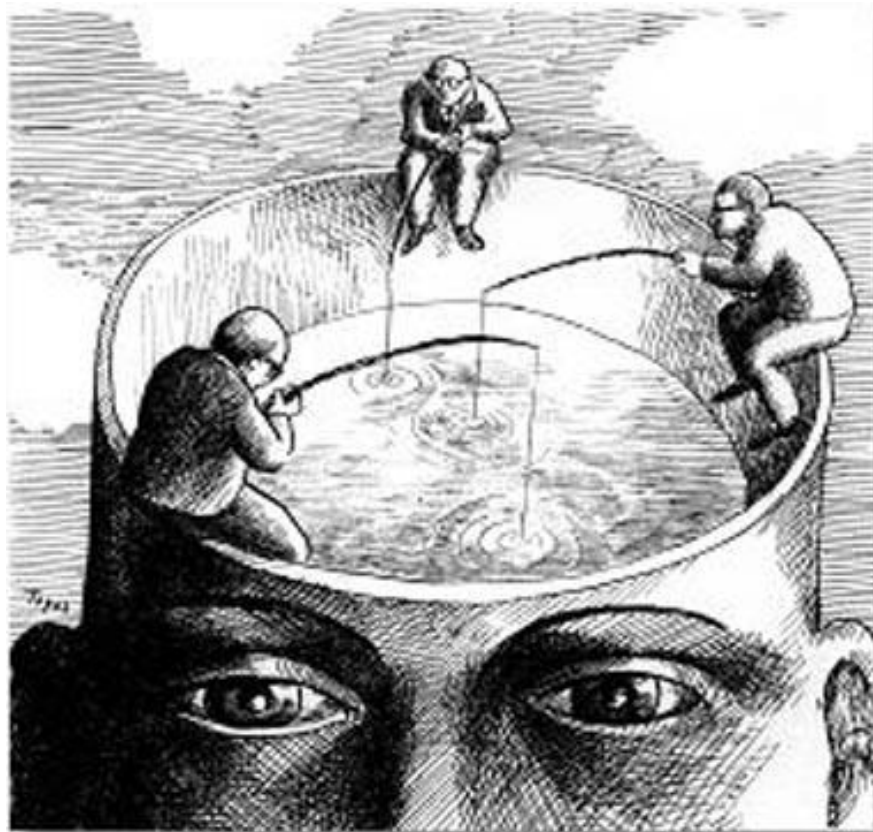
LINDENHOTEL

Aus der Geschichte eines Gefängnisses. Ein Film von ANDREAS FISCHER und FRED JUNGnickel 16mm 3/4 Zoll 80/000 mm

2013



Roland Topor



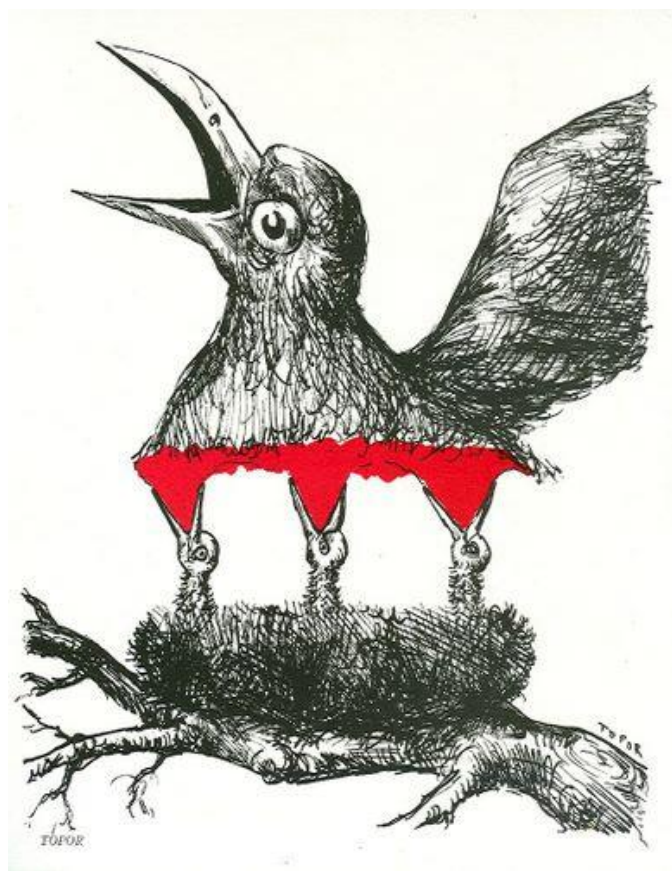
Roland Topor

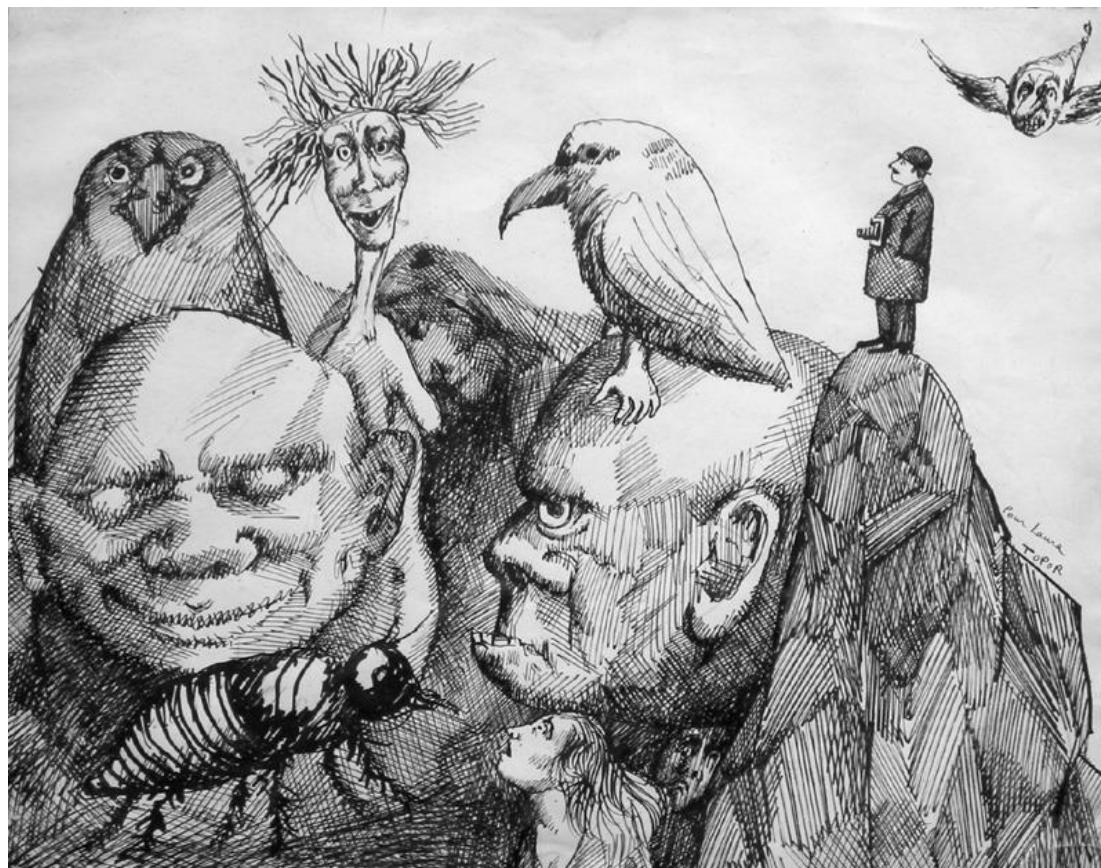
The Tenant

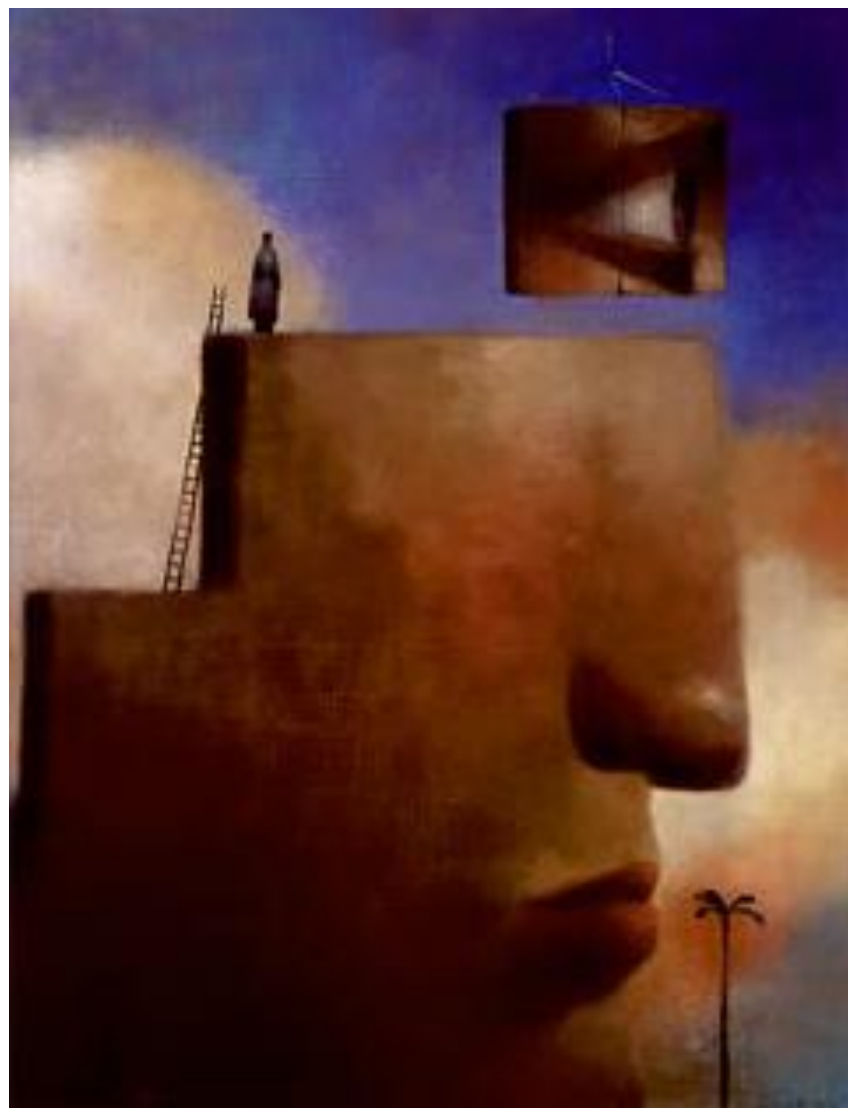
introduction by Thomas Ligotti



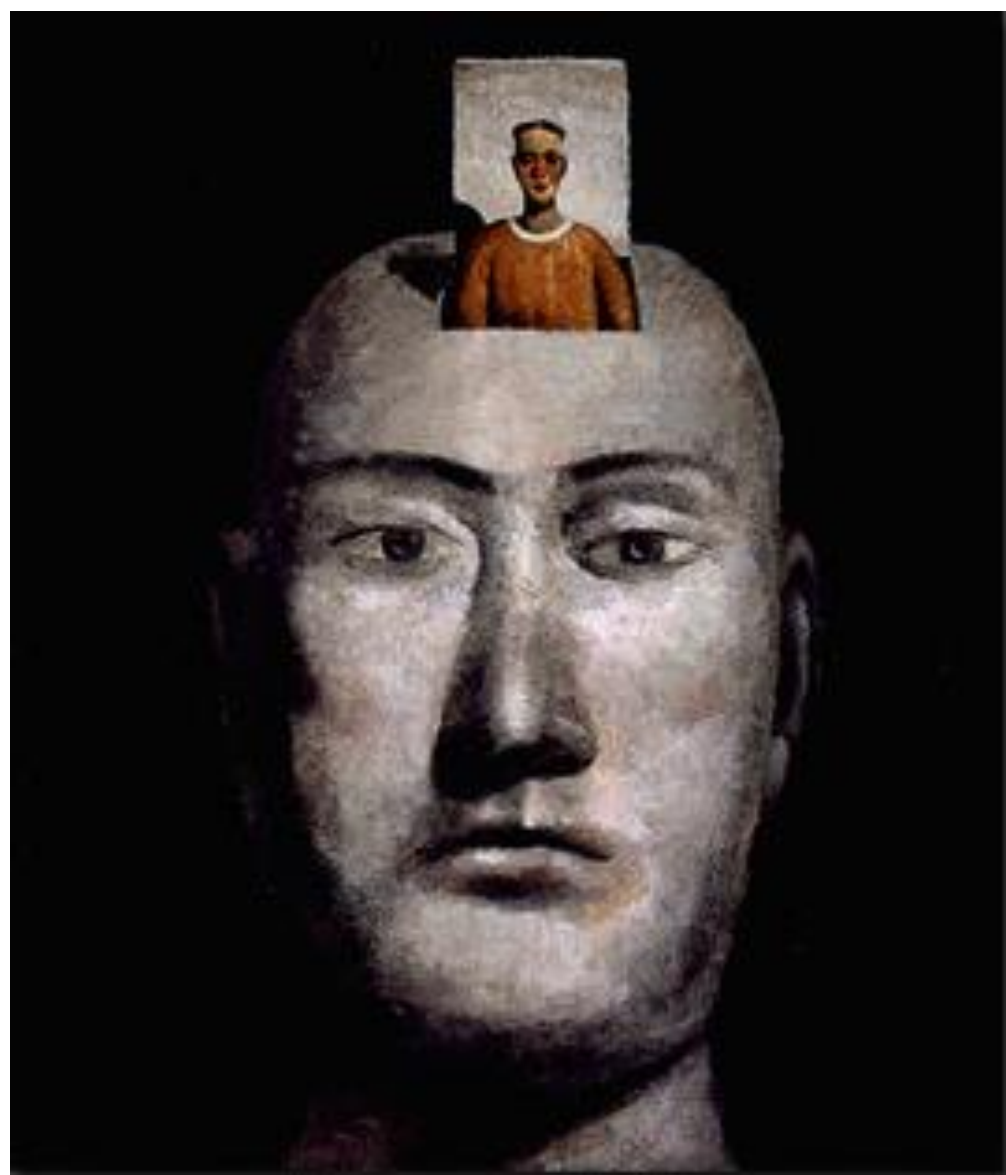


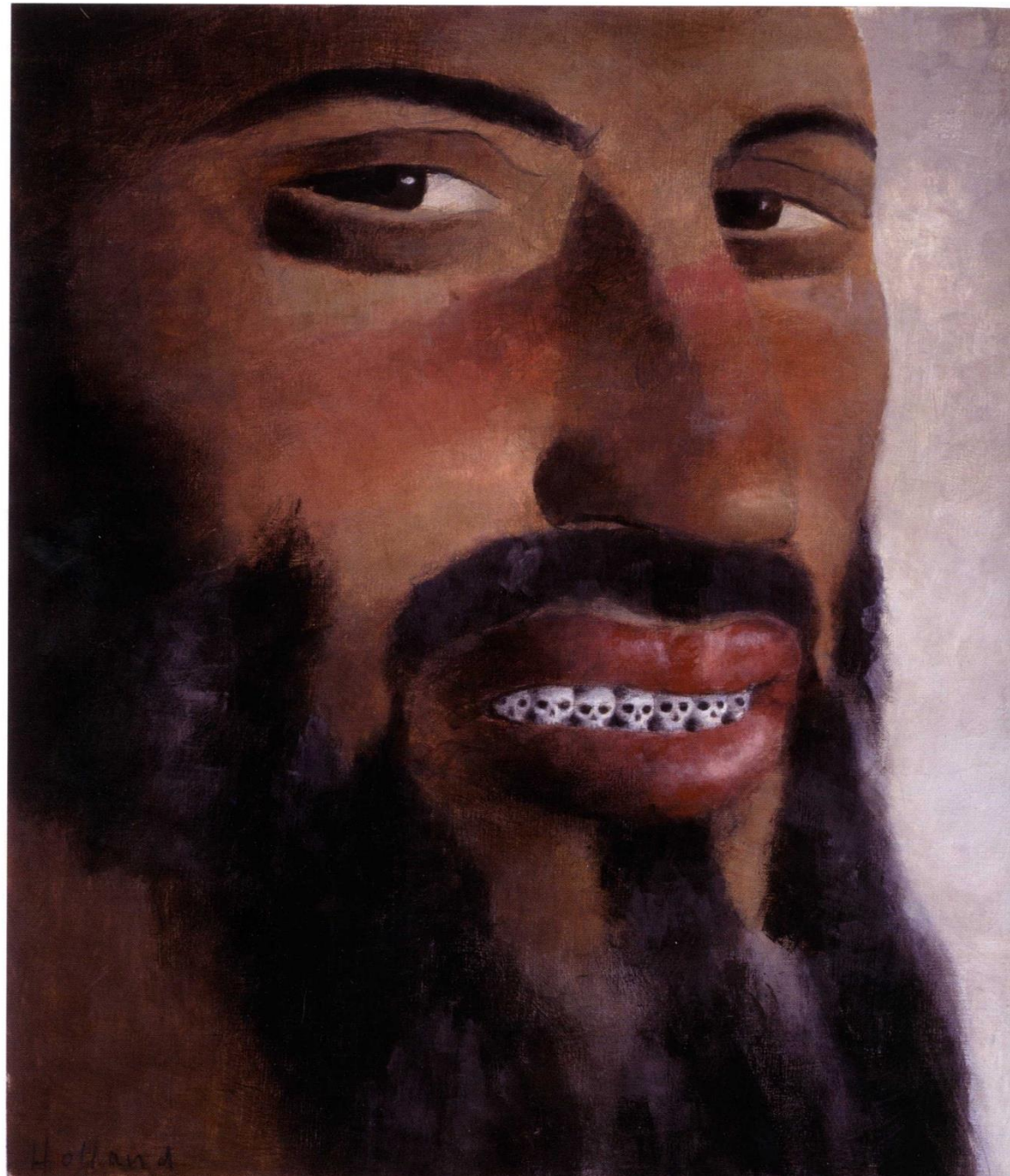






Brad Holland





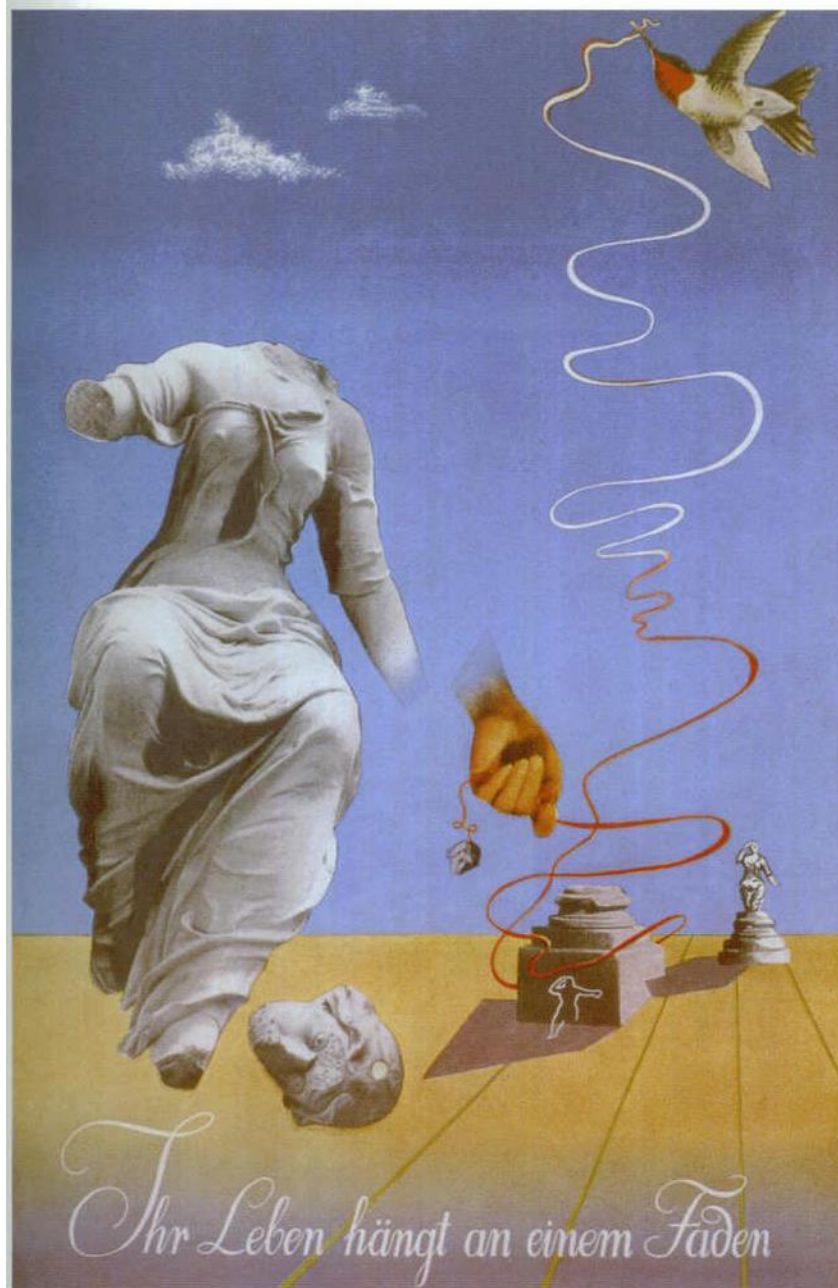


Marshall Arisman

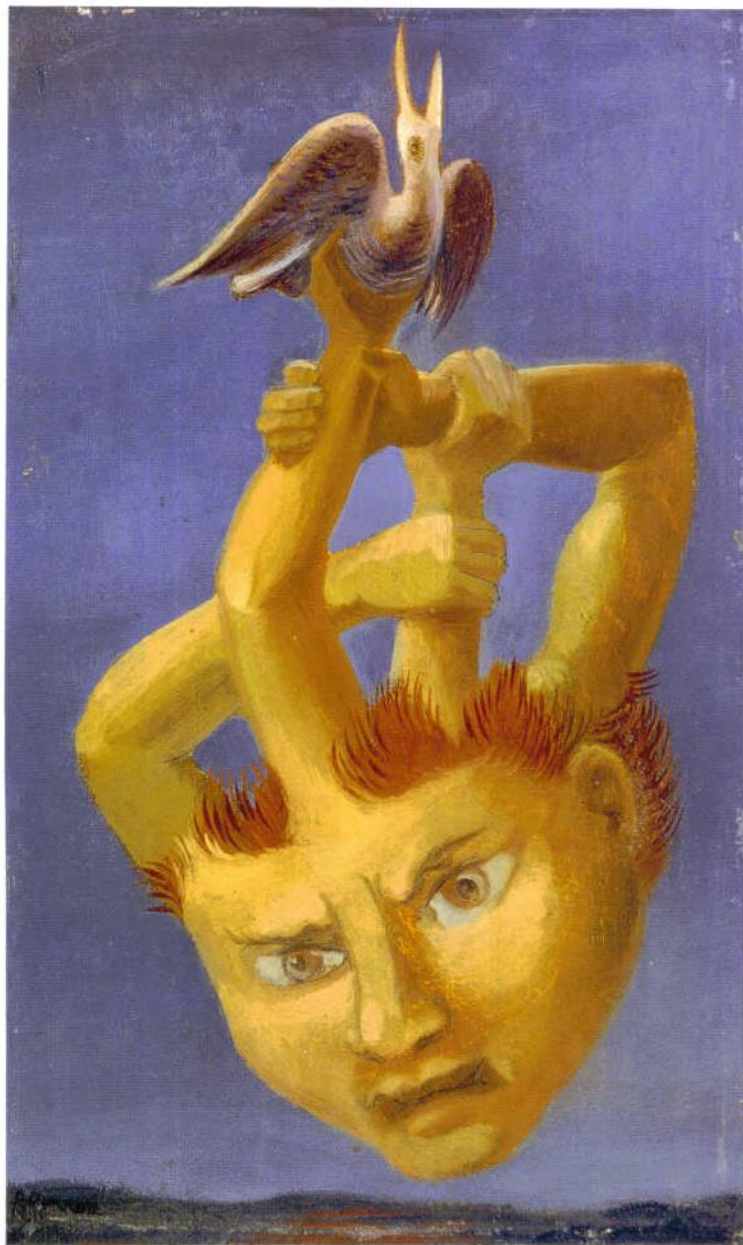


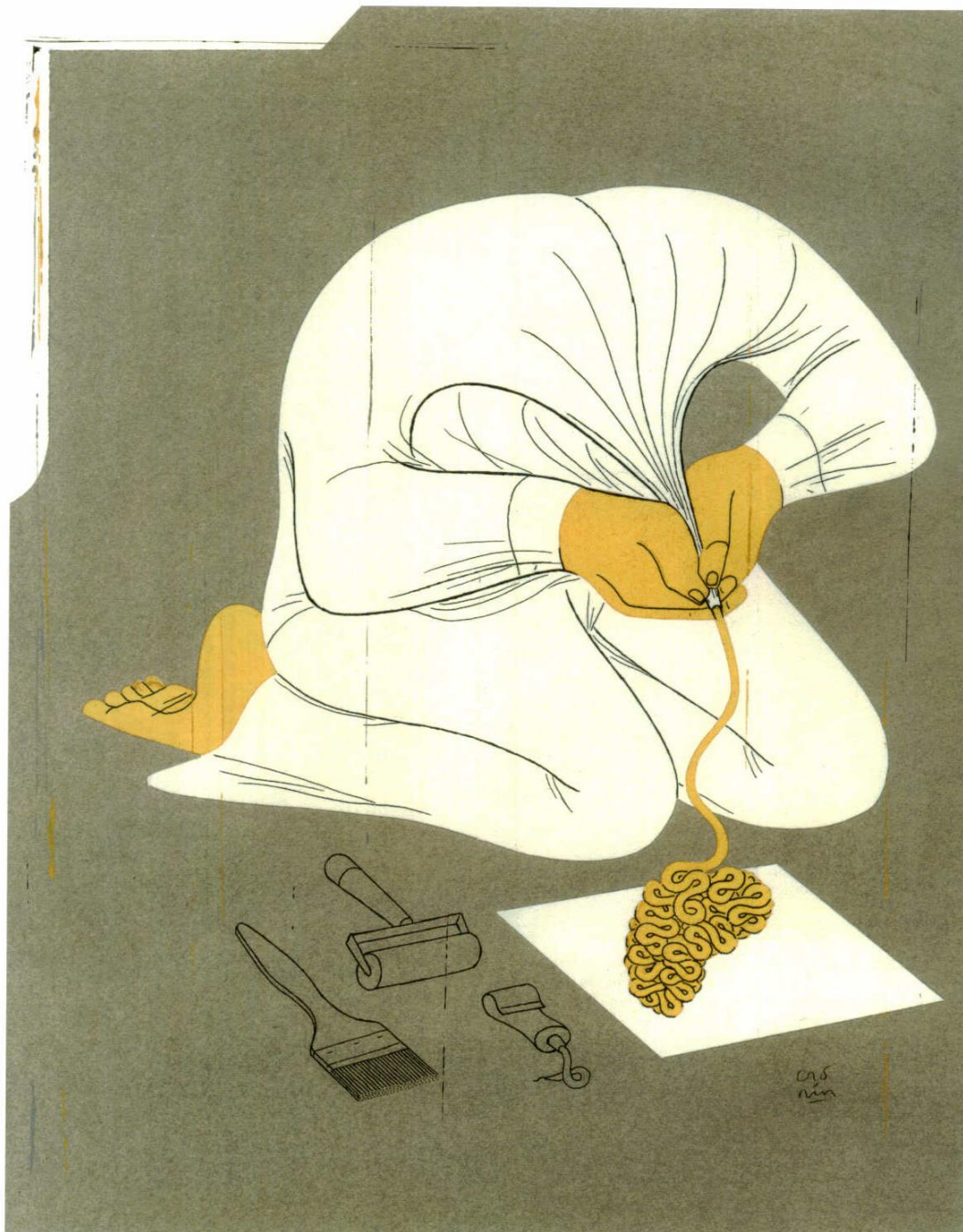
Penthouse magazine



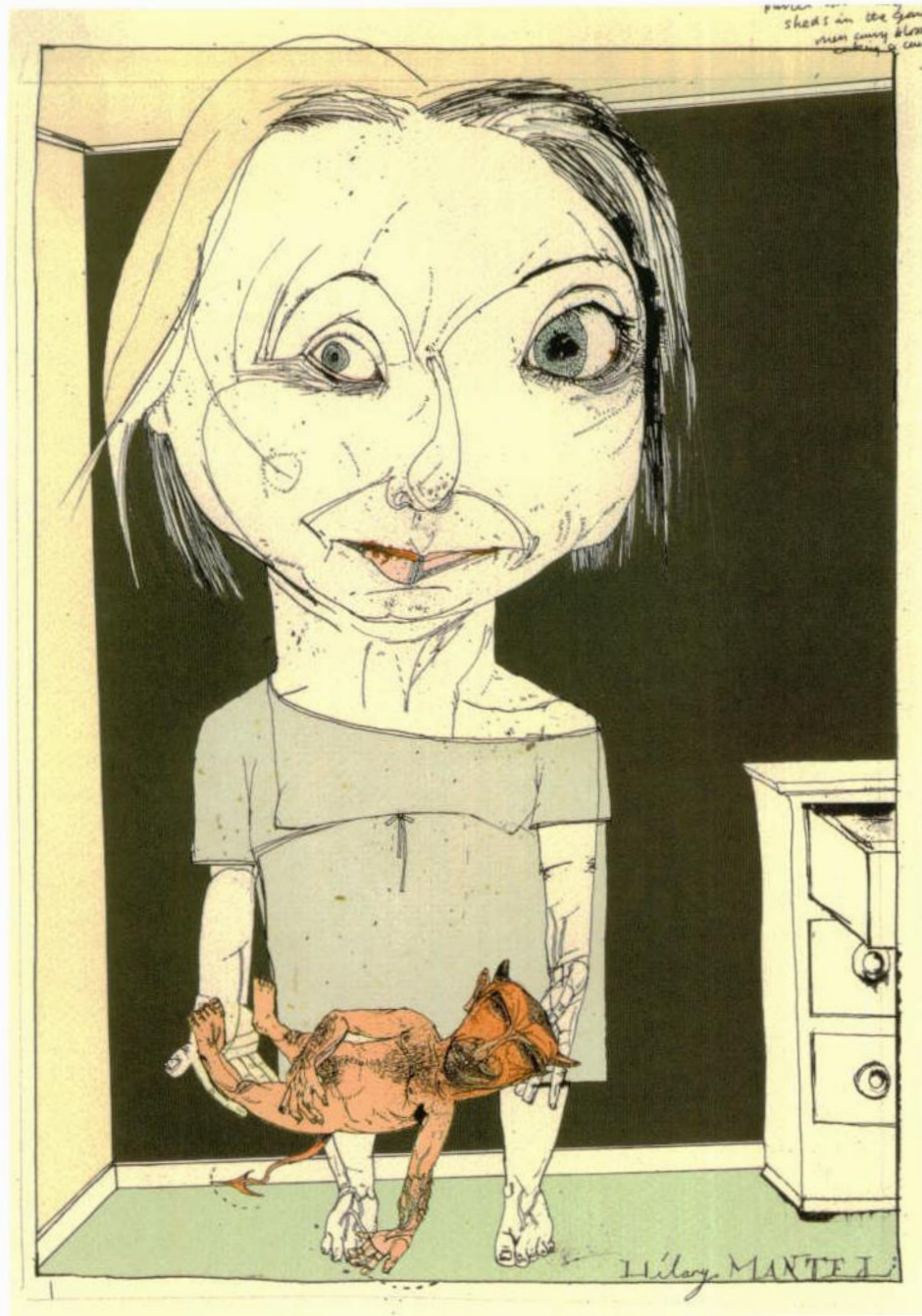


Herbert Bayer, 1937





Brian Cronin



David Hughes



+ SANJI 15

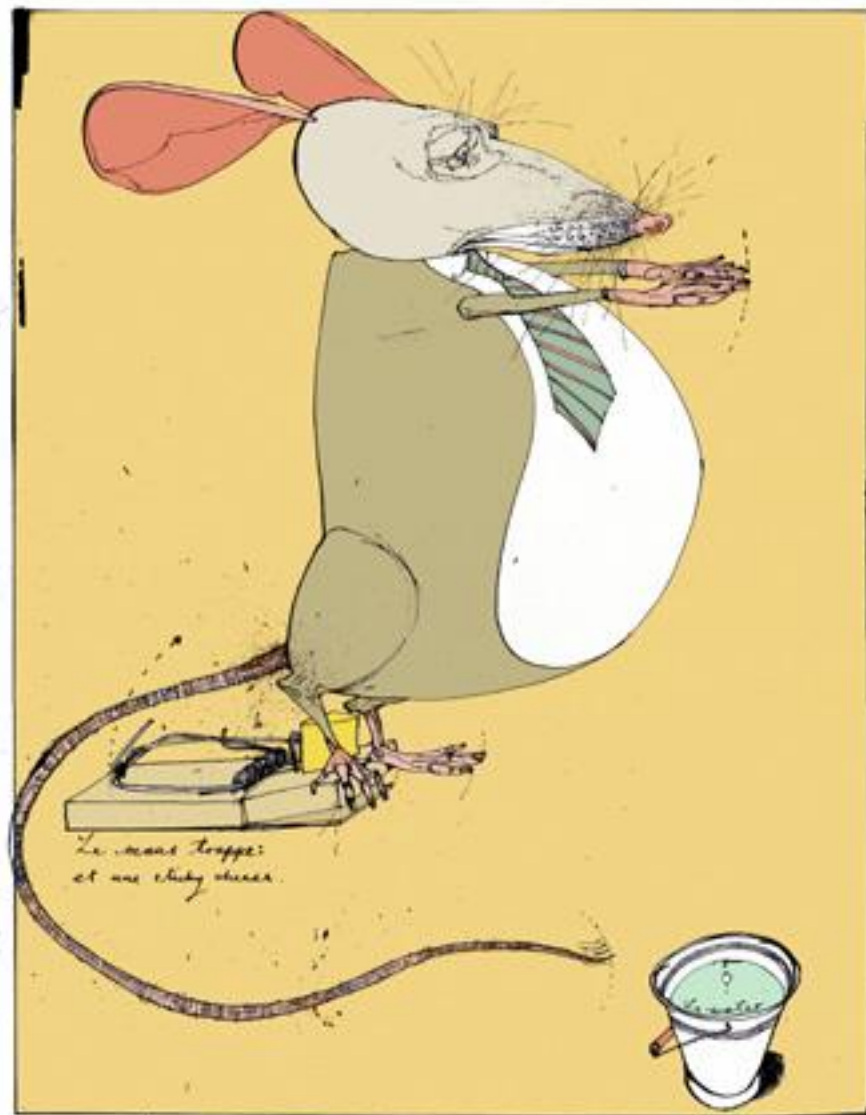


Six Crit Boc Par

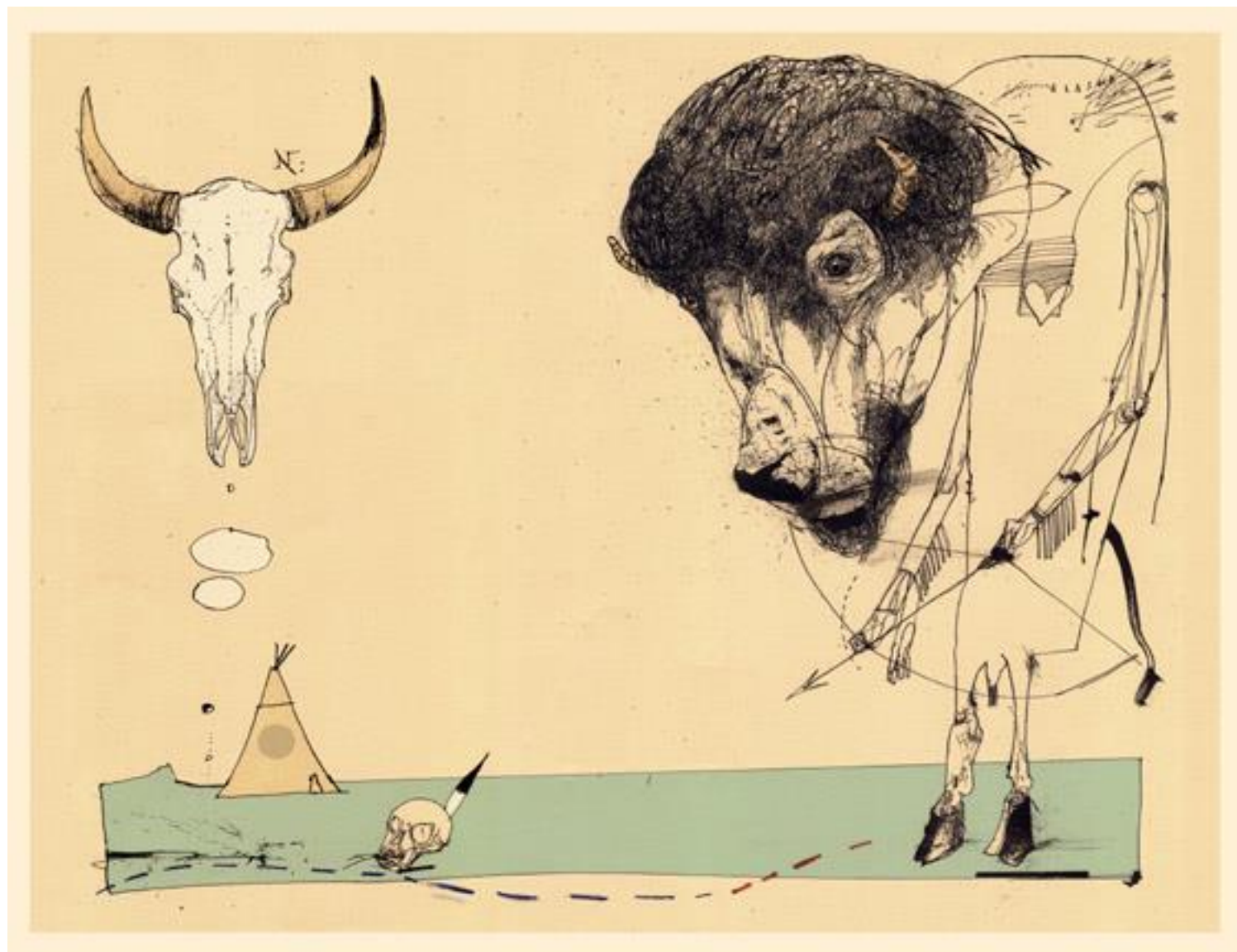
E

human body, and its more on many other fluids than, for one quality. Here are six still make all the difference

MOST UNDERRATED VITAL STATS: Weight women, about ten-eight inches by six. Dark reddish-brown. **NICKNAME:** Super 1. **VALUE:** Not only is it it is also more complicated just a pump, and and-death functions clean up toxic waste substances absorbed (verting them to harm the food we eat into and stores the body glycogen, which it is to the bloodstream) if that weren't enough clotting substances: leucorol, itself an and stance that is instant



Le mons troppe:
et une chiky chene.



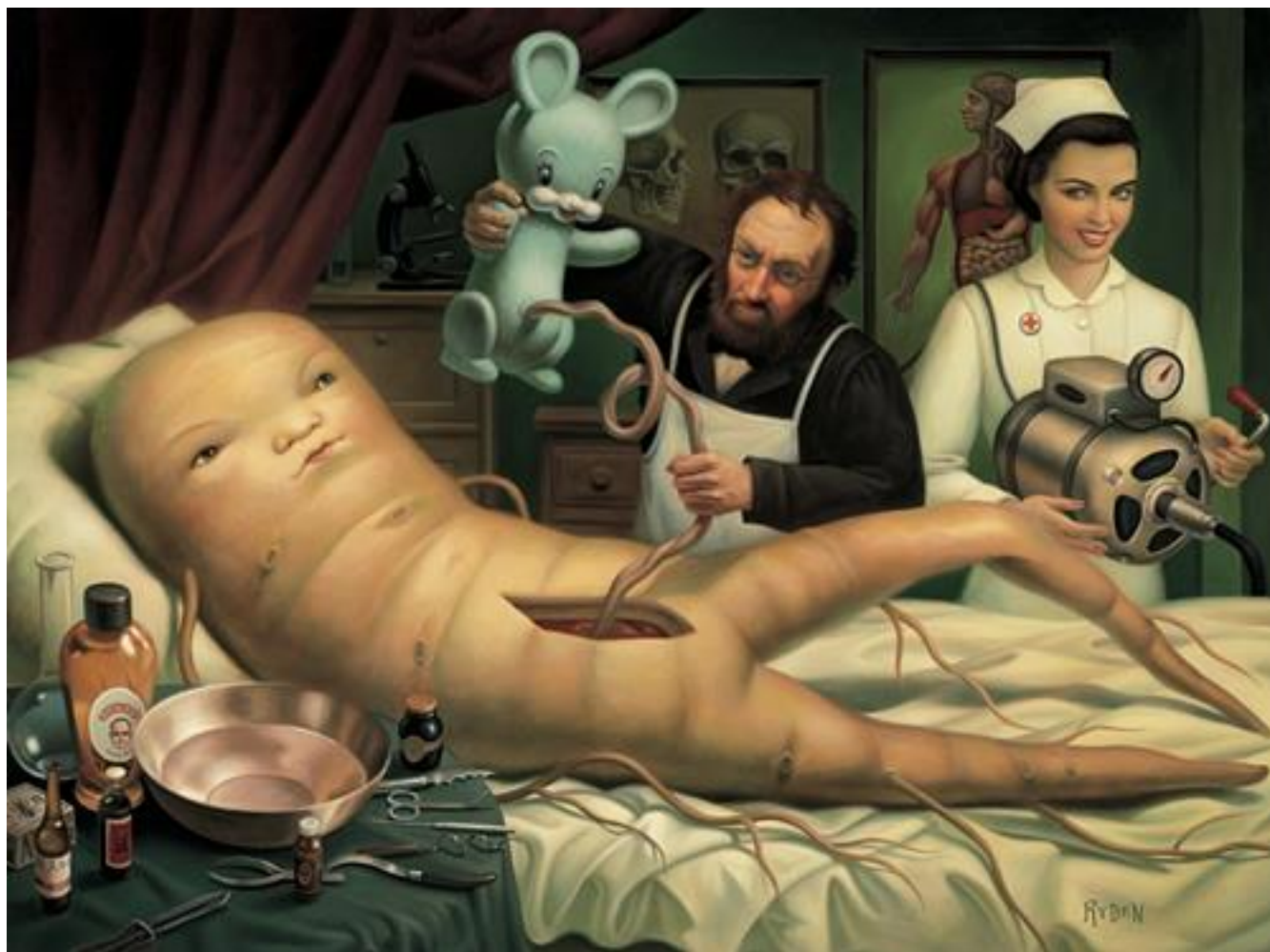


Russel Cobb



Mark Ryden







Niccoletta Ceccoli



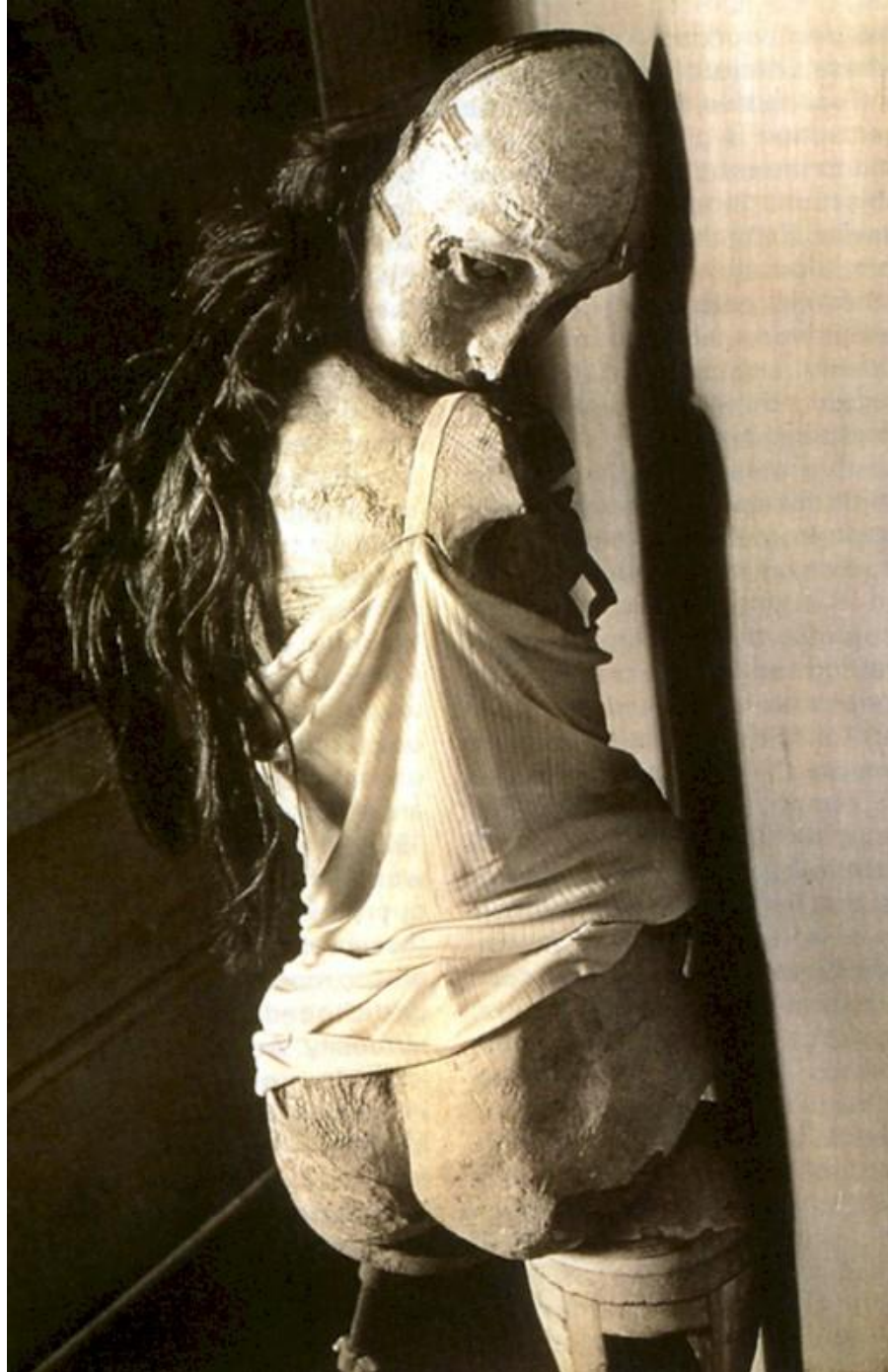


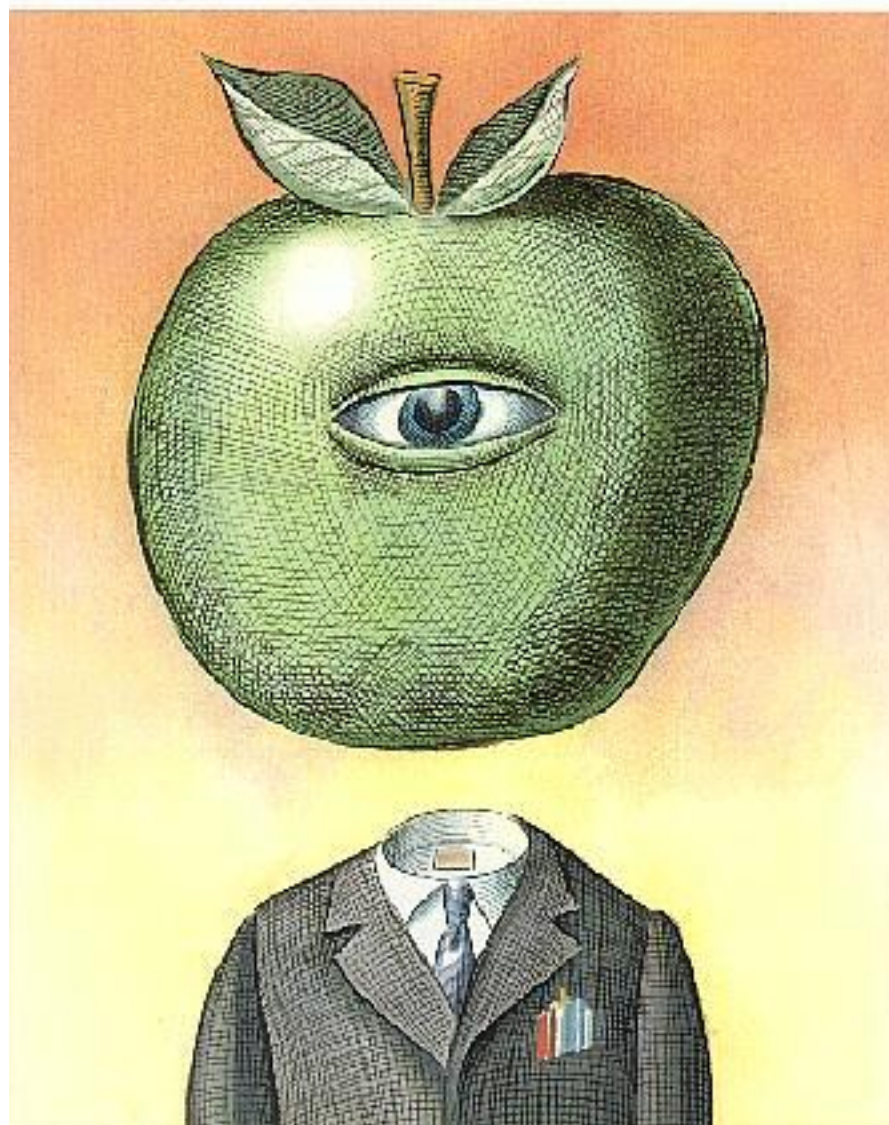




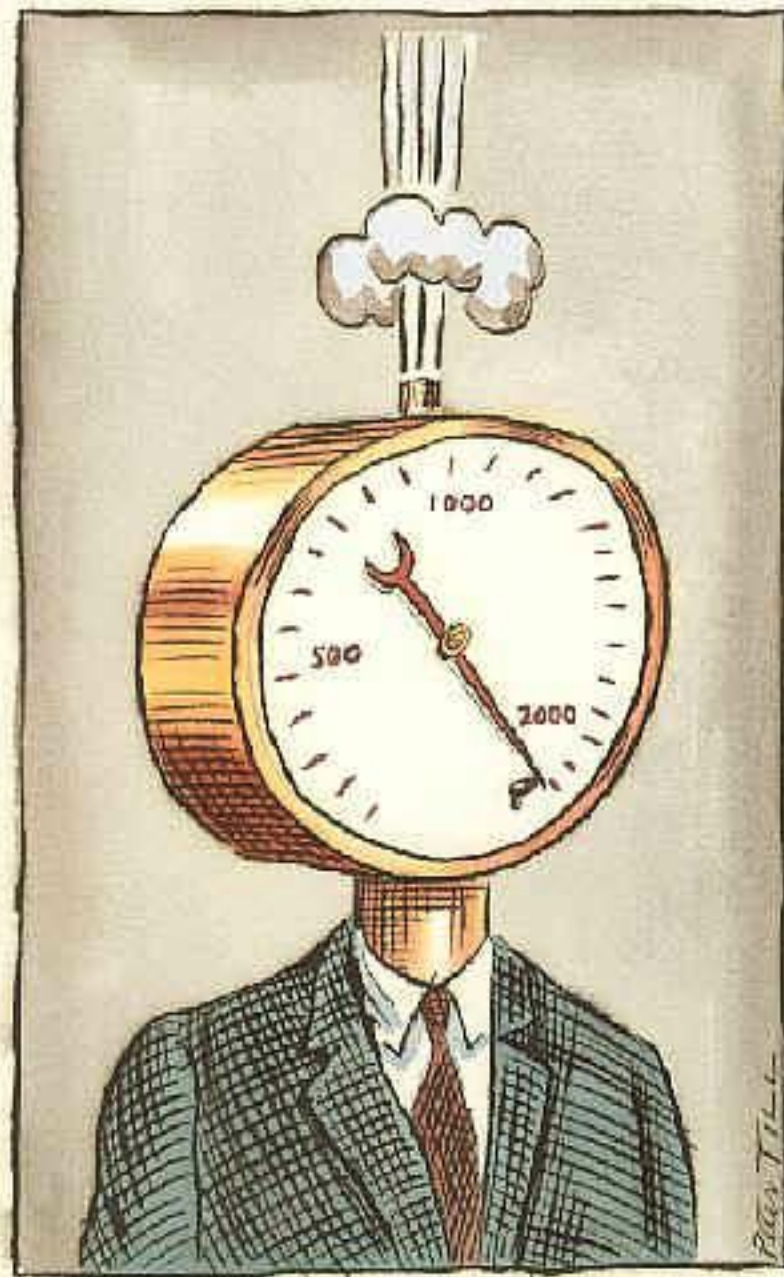


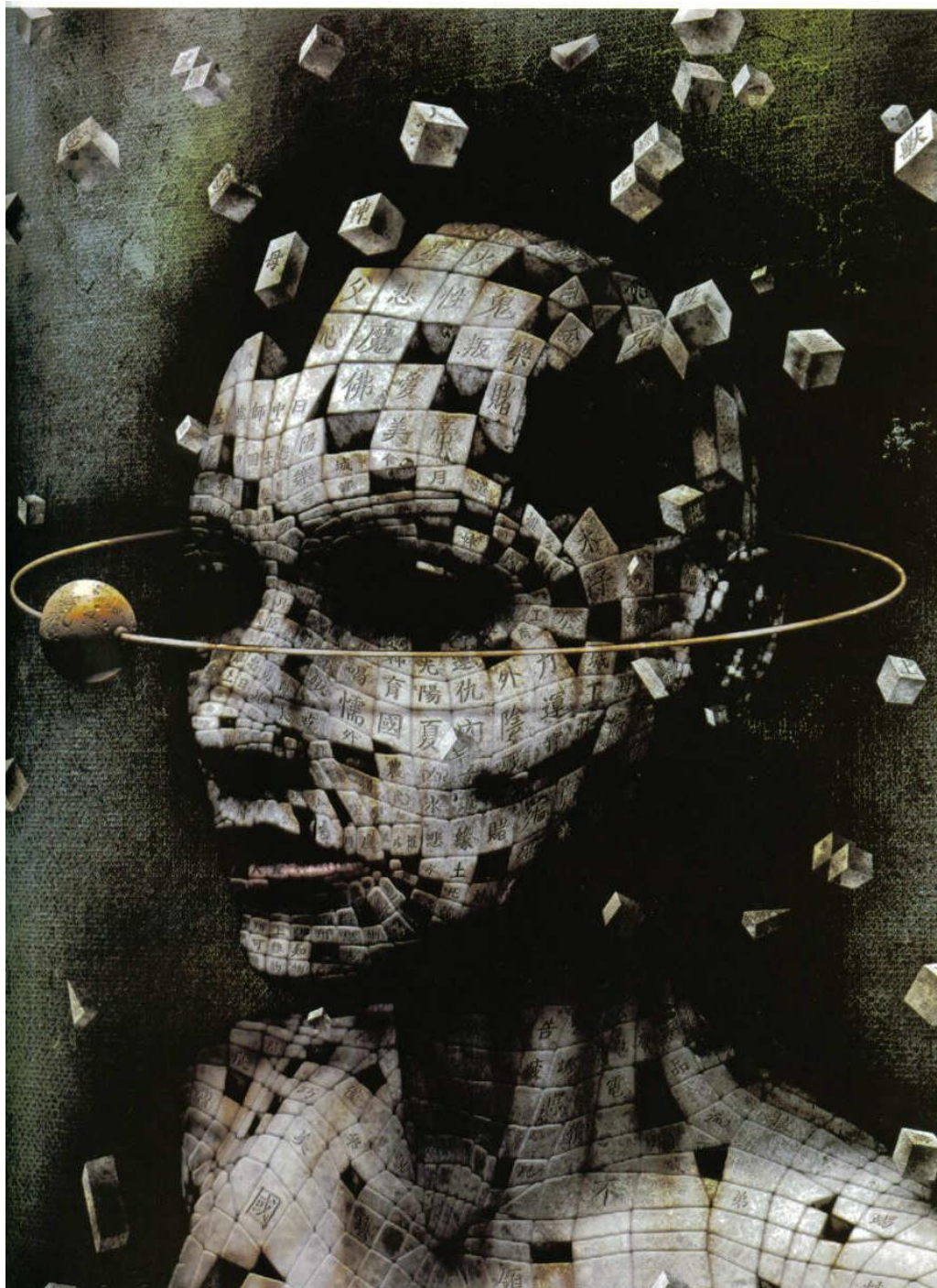
Hans Bellmer (1902-1975)





Peter Till





David Ho
The Way



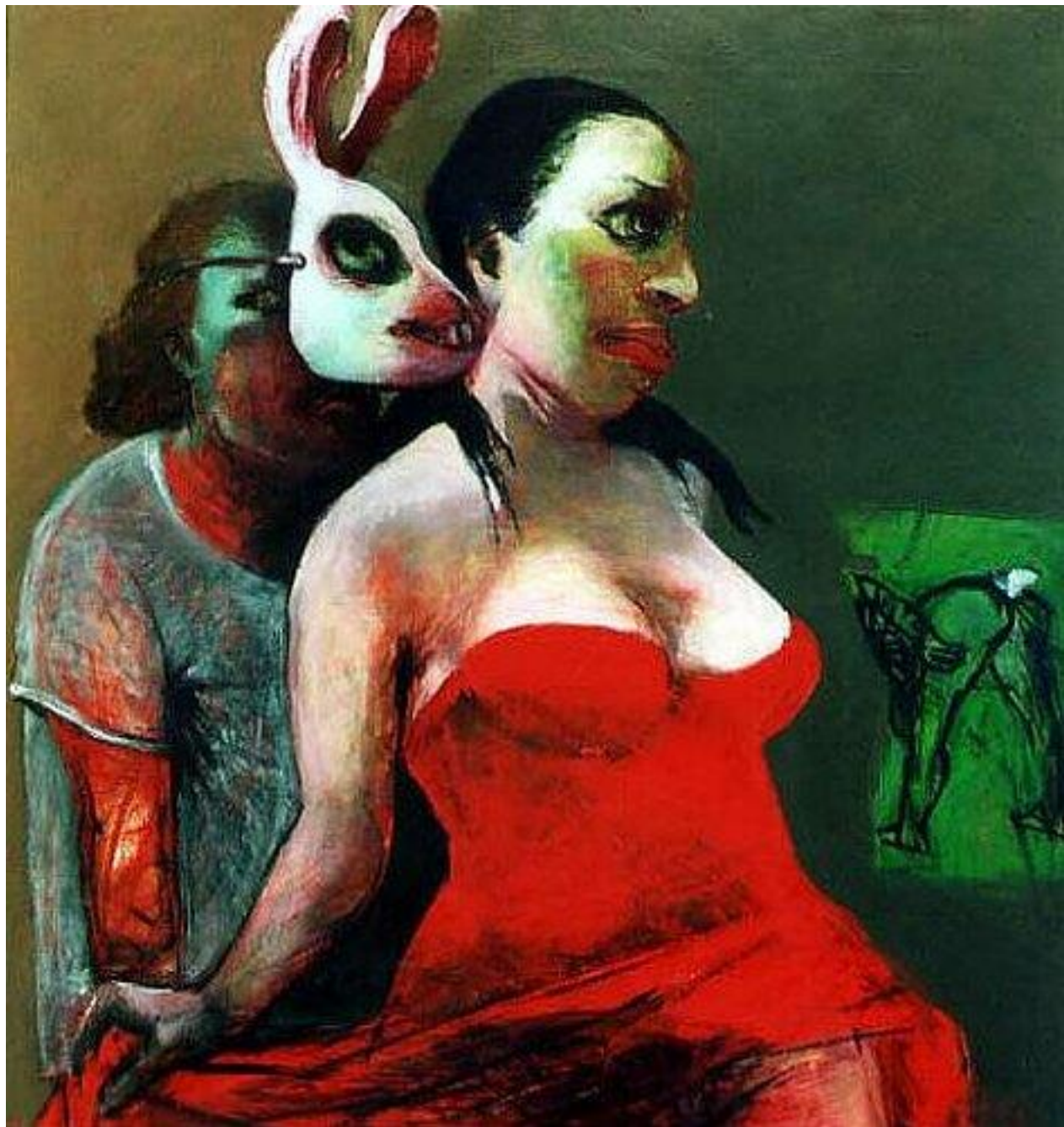
Richard Borge – 'the state of censorship'



Marcelle Hanselaar









Anthony Browne
How do YOU feel? from *Willy the Dreamer*

Conceptual illustration and surrealism are powerful tools for exploring the unseen — whether it's a philosophical idea or a subconscious dream. They remind us that art isn't just about beauty; it's about meaning.