

Wednesday 4 March 2009

Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire

13 June – 4 October 2009

National Gallery of Victoria, St Kilda Road, Melbourne



The first comprehensive retrospective of the work of Salvador Dalí ever to be staged in Australia is coming exclusively to the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) as the sixth exhibition in the Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series.

Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire will bring together more than 200 stunning works by Salvador Dalí in all media including painting, drawing, watercolour, etchings, sculpture, fashion, jewellery, cinema and photography.

The exhibition will be drawn from the two largest collections of Salvador Dalí in the world, the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí in Figueres, Spain and the Salvador Dalí Museum in St Petersburg, Florida.

Dr Gerard Vaughan, NGV Director, said this panoramic exhibition will surprise and delight viewers.

“Salvador Dalí’s life spanned almost a century of dramatic social and artistic change. *Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire* traces the extraordinary innovation Dalí brought to his art at every stage of his remarkable career, from his earliest years as an exceptionally talented 14-year-old to the final majestic paintings created when the artist was in his seventies.

“This is now the sixth instalment of the hugely popular Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series and is testament to the NGV’s first class reputation for staging and managing exhibitions of international significance. It has been an absolute pleasure to collaborate with our colleagues in Figueres and Florida to bring this fantastic exhibition to Australia,” said Dr Vaughan.

Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire will explore the brilliance of Dalí through chronological sections with visitors first encountering the artist as an accomplished young Impressionist painter with what is widely considered to be his first masterpiece, *Self-Portrait with Raphaelesque Neck*.

The exhibition will then move through Dalí’s experimentation with Cubism, Abstraction, Neoclassicism and New Objectivity during his student years and his leadership of the Surrealist movement in Paris during the 1930s.

Dr Ted Gott, Senior Curator International Art, said Dalí’s artistic imagination was constantly fed by the ruggedly romantic landscapes of his native Catalonia.

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“These stunning landscapes, infused with his unique imagination, informed the classic Surrealist paintings with which Dalí astonished the art world in the early 1930s and for which he is so well known for today. A strong group of paintings from the period of Dalí’s involvement with Surrealism in Paris will be included in the exhibition,” said Dr. Gott.

Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire will also include the most significant Dalí work held in an Australian collection, the *Lobster Telephone* from the National Gallery of Australia, arguably one of the most famous sculptures of the twentieth century.

A highlight of the exhibition will be the return to Australia of the artist’s 1932 painting *Memory of the Child-Woman*. This was the first Dalí painting ever to be seen in Australia in 1939 and was met with great controversy.

Viewers will also be introduced to Dalí’s contribution to 20th century cinema, from his early collaborations with the Spanish film-maker Luis Buñuel to his involvement with Alfred Hitchcock and other directors in Hollywood during the 1940s.



“One of the great innovators in the history of 20th century art, Dalí’s extraordinary artistic output extends far beyond Surrealism. He was a true genius in every respect; a giant on the international stage whose art has influenced more than just his own generation. There was nothing the man could not do,” said Dr Gott.

This exhibition is organised by the National Gallery of Victoria with the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres, Spain and the Salvador Dalí Museum in St Petersburg, Florida.

An audio guide will be available and a range of public and education programs will coincide with the exhibition. Admission fees apply: Adult \$23.00 / Concession \$18.00 / Children \$11.00 / Family \$60.00.

Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire will be open daily from 10am-5pm from 13 June until 4 October 2009 and until 9pm every Wednesday from 17 June for art after dark.

This year Melbourne Winter Masterpieces includes *Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire* at the National Gallery of Victoria on St Kilda Rd, and *A Day in Pompeii* at Melbourne Museum. This exhibition is supported by Arts Victoria and the Victorian Major Events Company.

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IMAGE CREDIT: Salvador DALÍ Spanish 1904–89, worked in United States 1940–48, *Self-portrait with Raphaelesque neck* (c. 1921), oil on canvas, 40.5 x 53.0 cm, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres Dalí Bequest © Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, VISCOPY, 2009 / Salvador DALÍ Spanish 1904–89, worked in United States 1940–48, *Memory of the child-woman*, 1931–32, oil on canvas, 99.1 x 120.0 cm. The Salvador Dalí Museum, St Petersburg, Florida Worldwide Rights: © Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, VISCOPY, 2009. In the USA: © Salvador Dalí Museum Inc., St. Petersburg, FL, 2009