

Masters of Surrealism

August 2 - September 7, 2025

Zeedijk 759 & Kustlaan 90, 8300 Knokke



Salvador Dalí

Jeune fille au cerceau et montre molle, c. 1932

pen and black ink on paper

13.8 x 19.4 cm | 5 7/16 x 7 5/8 in

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© Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, courtesy of Maruani Mercier



Max Ernst

Paysage aux coquillages, c. 1927-1928

oil on canvas

64.8 x 81 cm | 25 1/2 x 31 7/8 in

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© Max Ernst, courtesy of Maruani Mercier



Man Ray

Trompe l'œil - Trompe l'œil, 1930-1963

Bakelite, original photograph, wood, plexiglass

60 x 50 x 8 cm | 23 9/16 x 9 10/16 x 3 2/16 in

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© Man Ray, courtesy of Maruani Mercier

This summer, MARUANI MERCIER's annual homage to the icons of modern art turns its lens to Surrealism, not as a single vision, but as a shifting terrain shaped by artists like Salvador **Dalí**, Paul **Delvaux**, Max **Ernst**, René **Magritte**, **Man Ray**, Joan **Miró**, Francis **Picabia** and Yves **Tanguy**, each of whom made the movement unmistakably their own. Far from a fixed style, Surrealism emerged as a field of tension between collective ideals and radical individuality. Rooted in dreams, desire, and psychic liberation, and rising from the ashes of Dada, its influence has long outlasted the conditions that gave rise to it.

Officially inaugurated with André Breton's Manifesto of Surrealism in 1924, the movement sought to free thought from the shackles of reason and morality. Inspired by Freud and Marx, its adherents, poets, philosophers, and painters, ventured into the irrational, the erotic, and the fantastic. Together, these visual artists forged a shared language of dreamscapes, unconscious impulses, and uncanny juxtapositions, each in radically individual terms.

At the heart of *Masters of Surrealism* are these eight artists who, each in their own way, laid claim to the movement. While their approaches diverged, they were united by a common ambition: to transcend logic and convention through personal vocabularies of illusion, metaphor, and transformation. In 1936, Dalí famously declared with characteristic bravado, "*Le surréalisme, c'est moi*," claiming the movement as an extension of his own psyche and imagination. While his version was certainly the most theatrical, the same fiercely personal approach drove Magritte's quiet subversions, Ernst's technical innovations, Picabia's irreverence, and Miró's lyrical abstraction.

Their methods reveal just how distinct those worlds were. Dalí's paranoiac-critical method was both admired and controversial. Magritte challenged perception with poetic clarity. Tanguy conjured biomorphic landscapes of eerie stillness. Ernst invented automatic techniques like *frottage* to probe the unconscious. Picabia shifted fluidly between abstraction, figuration, and satire. Delvaux created hushed, theatrical scenes populated by classical architecture and enigmatic women. Man Ray moved between photography, sculpture, and film, fusing Surrealism with Dada and modern design. Miró wove dreamlike symbols into a floating, abstract vocabulary.

Masters of Surrealism gathers eight artists who each bent the movement to their own image, forging singular visions from shared ideals. Their works speak in different tongues, each distinctly original yet deeply inspired by one another in a shared quest for meaning beyond logic. A century later, the conversation continues.

The exhibition opens on August 2nd, 2025 at Zeedijk 759 and at Kustlaan 90, 8300 Knokke. For further information, please get in touch with: press@maruanimercier.com