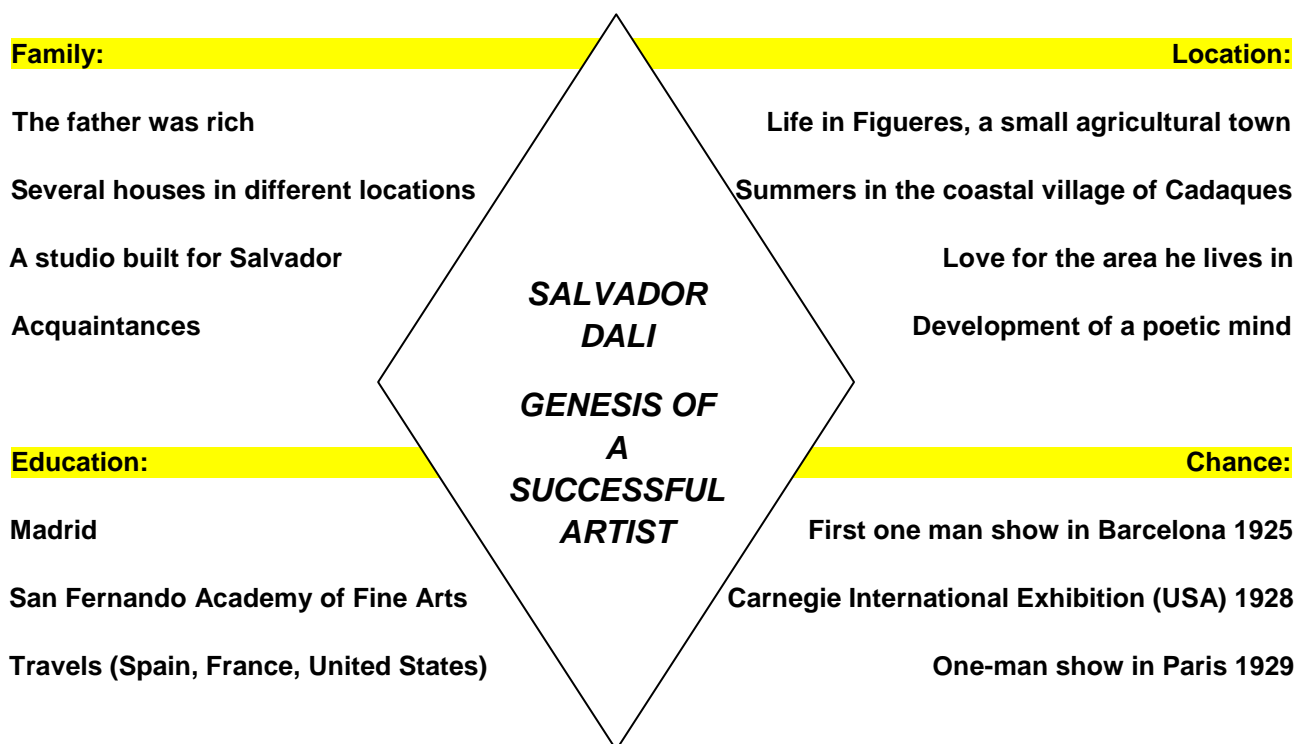


SALVADOR DALI

CHILDHOOD AND EARLIEST PAINTINGS

Salvador Felipe Jacinto Dali I Domenech was born in 1904 in the small agricultural town of **Figueres**, Spain.

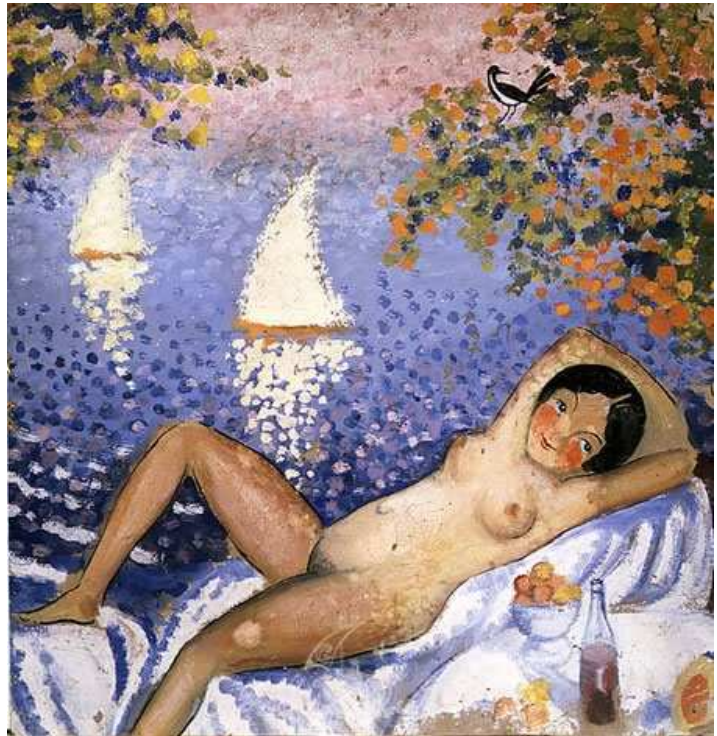


Young Dali's art is well represented by one of his earliest masterpieces: "The smiling Venus."

The Smiling Venus

Temper on cardboard 51.50 x 50.30 cm.
c.1921, Teatre Museu Dalí.

Along with the **sensual features**, we have the smiling face of the girl who "offers herself", just as in the foreground some food delicacies (wine, fruit, etc.) are "offering themselves" in consonance with the landscape: a cove in which two lateen-sail boats are cutting through the water with their corresponding reflections. The painting which uses for the marine view in the background a **pointillist** technique often to be found in Dalí's work over the course of 1921 and 1922, was



probably conceived as an **ironic** version of the feminine archetypes of Catalan Noucentisme. This we might deduce from the girl's vulgar face, jutting breasts and open legs, features which, rather than constituting a kind of homage, seem more like a **sarcastic distortion of** Giorgione's **idealized figures**.

Feedback

What I caught from this painting	How I managed to do it	What I feel looking at this painting	What I can't understand

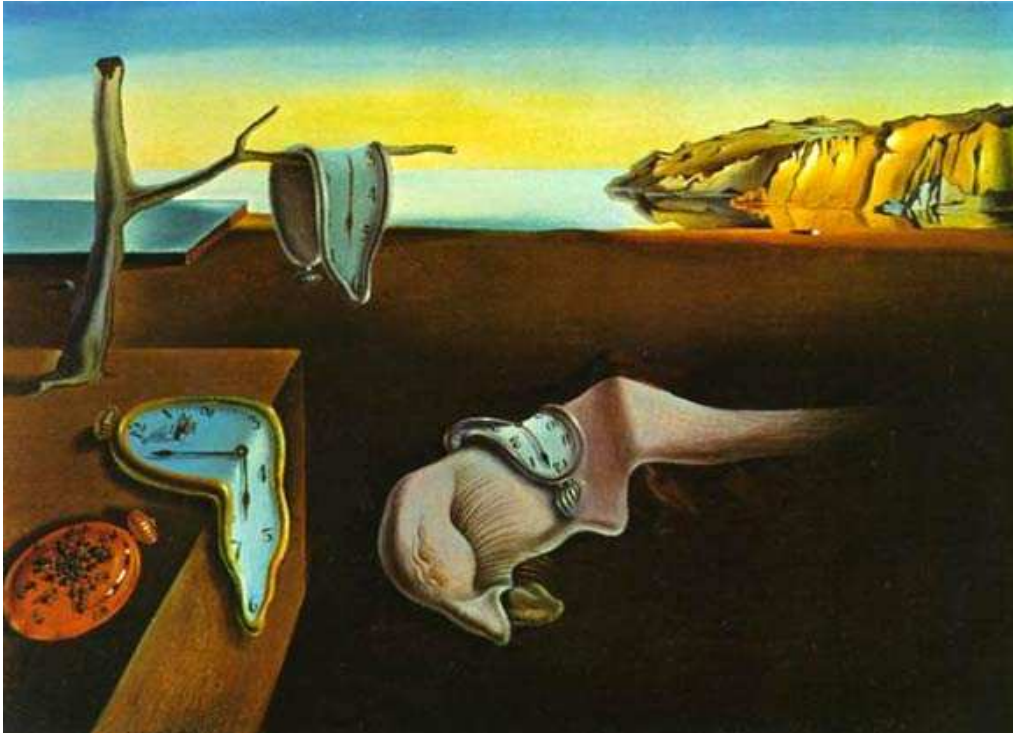
THE SURREALISM

In 1929 Dalí joined the **surrealists**, led by former Dadaist **Andre Breton**. That year, Dalí met **Gala** Eluard when she visited him in Cadaques with her husband, poet Paul Eluard. She became Dalí's lover, muse, business manager, and chief inspiration.

Dalí soon became a leader of the **Surrealist Movement**. His painting, *The Persistence of Memory*, with the soft or melting watches is still one of the best-

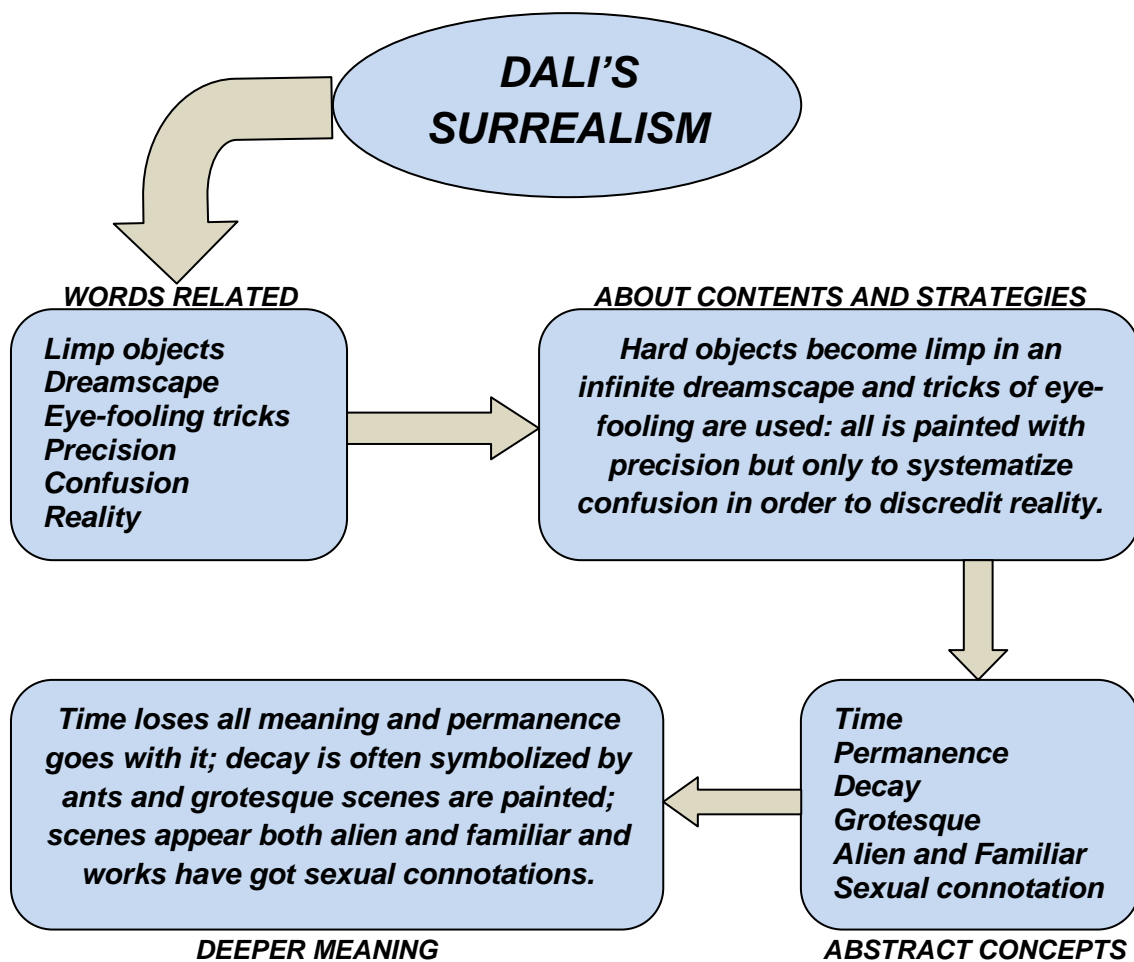
known surrealist works. But as the war approached, the **apolitical Dali** clashed with the Surrealists and was "**expelled**" from the surrealist group during a "trial" in 1934. He did however, exhibit works in international surrealist exhibitions throughout the decade but by 1940, Dali was moving into a **new type of painting with a preoccupation with science and religion.**

The Persistence of Memory



Oil on canvas 24 x 33 cm, 9.4 x 13 inches, Museum of Modern Art, New York City, 1931.

The Persistence of Memory is aptly named, for the scene is **indelibly memorable**. Discredit of reality is the classical **Surrealist** ambition, yet some literal reality is included too: the distant golden cliffs are the coast of Catalonia, Dali's home. The monstrous fleshy creature draped across the painting's center is at once **alien and familiar**: an approximation of Dali's own face in profile, its long eyelashes seem disturbingly insectlike or even **sexual**, as does what may or may not be a tongue oozing from its nose like a fat snail. The year before this picture was painted, Dali formulated his "paranoiac-critical method," cultivating self-induced **psychotic hallucinations** in order to create art. "The difference between a madman and me," he said, "is that I am not mad."



THE CLASSIC PERIOD

Dali and Gala escaped from Europe during **World War II**, spending 1940-48 in the **United States**. These were very important years for the artist. The **Museum of Modern Art in New York** gave Dali his first major retrospective exhibit in 1941. This was followed in 1942 by the publication of Dali's autobiography, "**The Secret Life of Salvador Dali**."

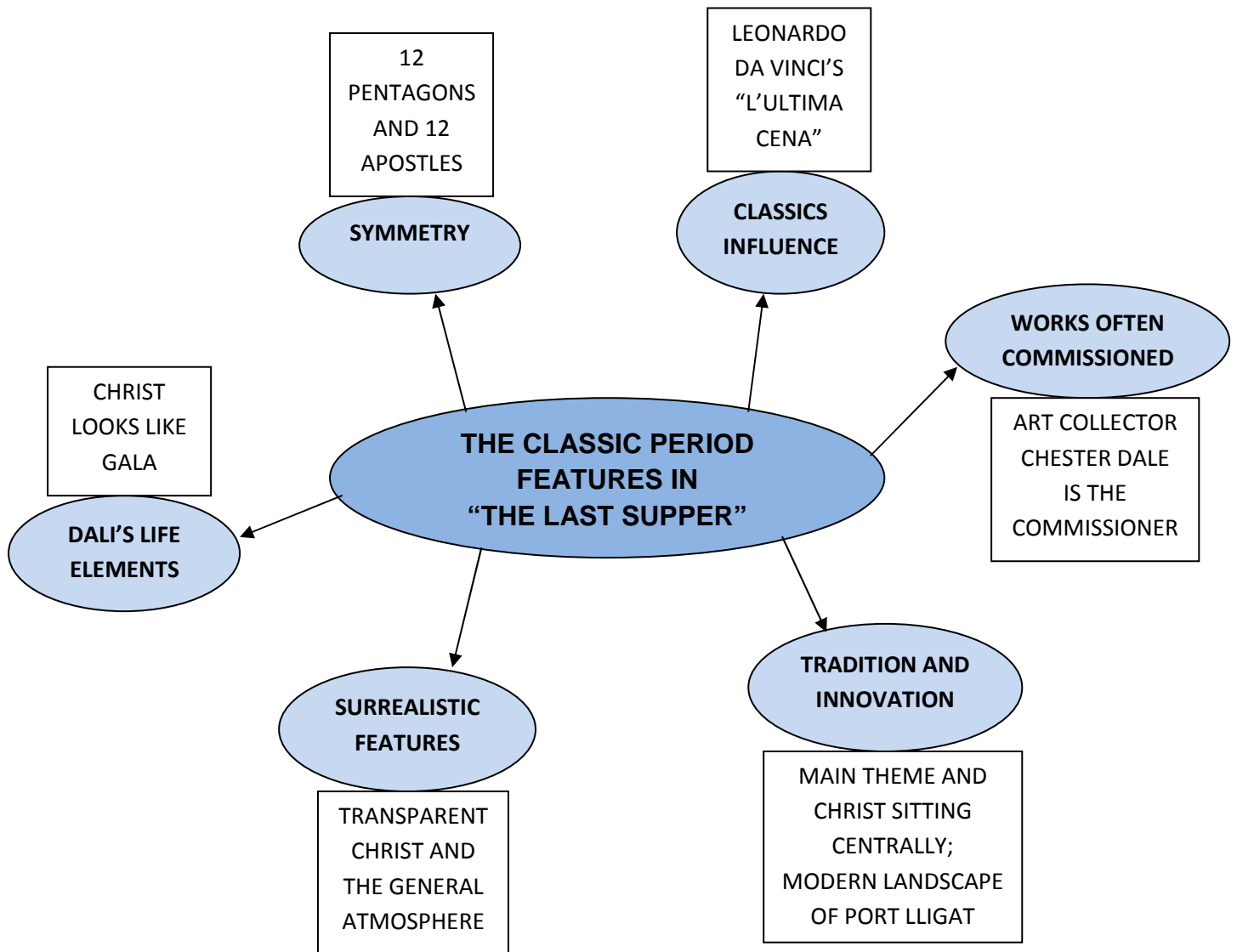
As Dali moved away from Surrealism and into his **classic period**, he began his series of **19 large canvases**, many concerning **scientific, historical or religious** themes. Among the best known of these works is *The Sacrament of the Last Supper*.

The Sacrament of the Last Supper



Oil on canvas, 267 × 166.7 cm (5 ft 5 5/8 in x 8 ft 9 1/8 in) 1955 National Gallery of Art, Washington.

"The Sacrament of the Last Supper" was painted using oil on canvas, in 1955. Some critics viewed it as a mediocre rendering of a much-used subject. The figure of **Christ is transparent**, and above him the arms and chest of a man appear in the sky, suggesting that he is already ascending to heaven. An aspect of the painting that caused controversy was the fact that **Christ was given Gala's features**. Dali had already portrayed Gala as the Madonna in several earlier paintings.



LATEST YEARS

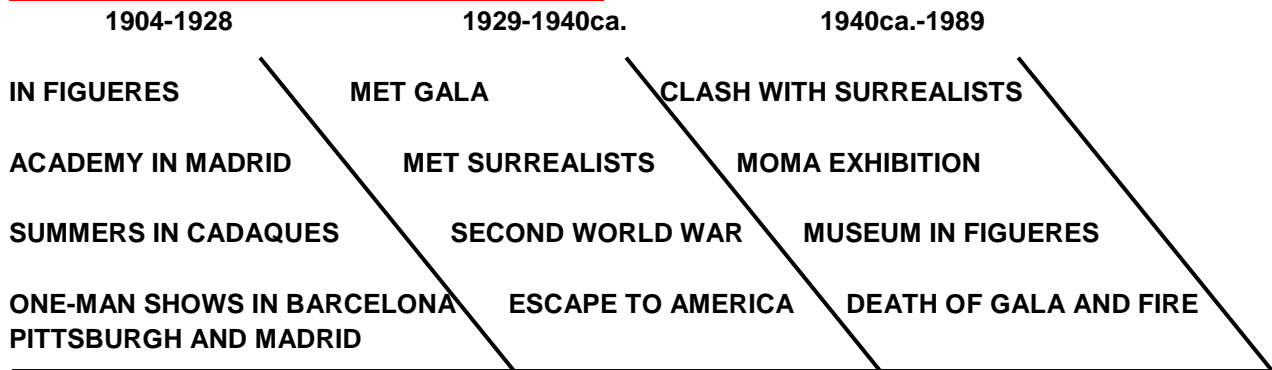
In 1974, Dali opened the **Teatro Museo** in Figueres, Spain. This was followed by retrospectives in Paris and London at the end of the decade.

After the **death of his wife**, Gala in 1982, Dali's health began to fail. It deteriorated further after he was burned in a **fire** in his home in Pubol in 1984. Two years later, a pace-maker was implanted. Much of this part of his life was spent in **seclusion**, first in Pubol and later in his apartments at Torre Galatea, adjacent to the Teatro Museo. Salvador Dali died on January 23, 1989 in Figueres from heart failure with respiratory complications.

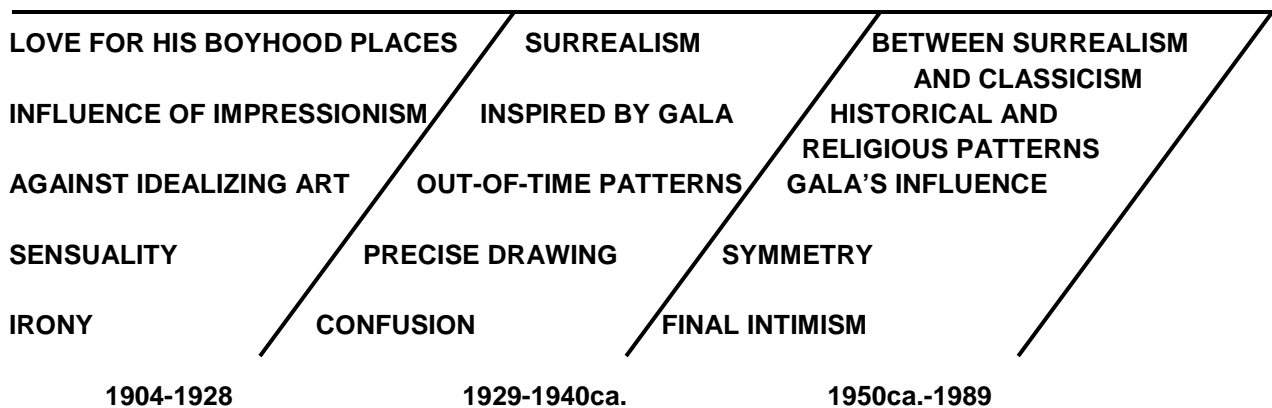
A CONSTANTLY GROWING AND EVOLVING ARTIST

As an artist, Salvador Dali was not limited to a particular style or media. The body of his work reveals a constantly growing and evolving artist.

LIFE EVENTS THAT INFLUENCED THE ARTIST



DALI'S GROWTH AND EVOLUTION



FEATURES OF DALI'S ART ACROSS THE DECADES

Dali worked in **all media**, leaving behind a wealth of **oils, watercolors, drawings, graphics, and sculptures, films, photographs, performance pieces, jewels** and objects of all descriptions. As important, he left for posterity the permission to explore all aspects of one's own life and to give them artistic expression.

Whether working from pure inspiration or on a commissioned illustration, Dali's **matchless insight** and **symbolic complexity** are apparent. Above all, Dali was a superb draftsman. His excellence as a creative artist will always set a standard for the art of the twentieth century.