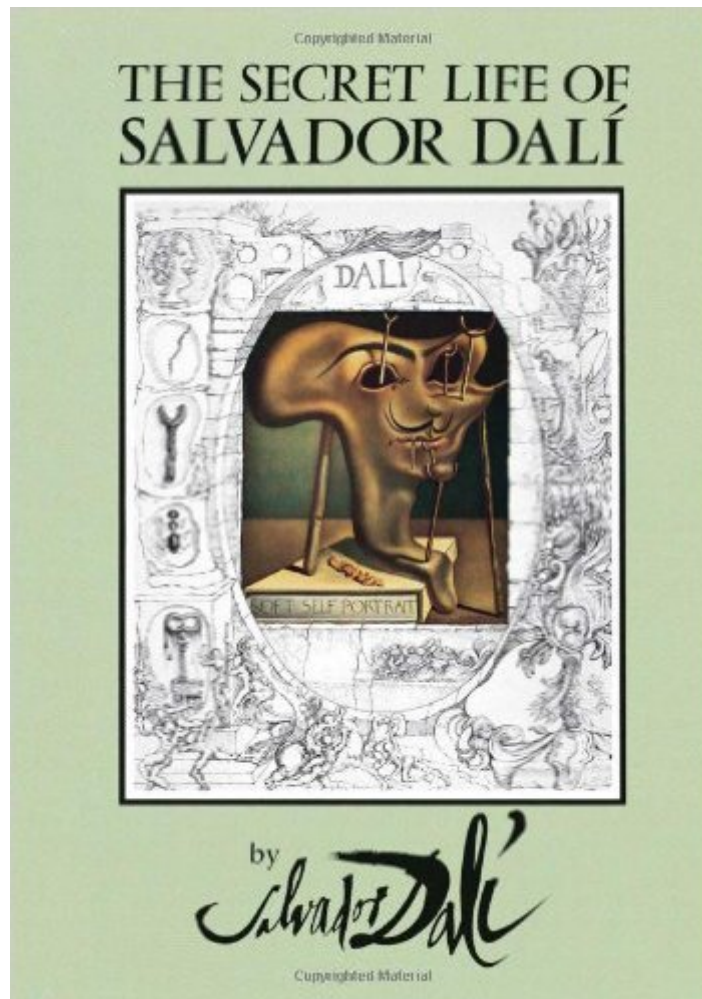


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The Secret Life Of Salvador Dalí- (Dover Fine Art, History Of Art)



Synopsis

Painter, designer, and filmmaker Salvador Dalí (1904–1989) was one of the most colorful and controversial figures in 20th-century art. A pioneer of Surrealism, he was both praised and reviled for the subconscious imagery he projected into his paintings, which he sometimes referred to as "hand-painted dream photographs." This early autobiography, which takes him through his late thirties, is as startling and unpredictable as his art. It is superbly illustrated with over 80 photographs of Dalí and his works, and scores of Dalí drawings and sketches. On its first publication, the reviewer of *Books* observed: "It is impossible not to admire this painter as writer. As a whole, he . . . communicates the snobbishness, self-adoration, comedy, seriousness, fanaticism, in short the concept of life and the total picture of himself he sets out to portray." Dalí's flamboyant self-portrait begins with his earliest recollections and ends at the pinnacle of his earliest successes. His tantalizing chapter titles and headnotes — among them "Intra-Uterine Memories," "Apprenticeship to Glory," "Permanent Expulsion from the School of Fine Arts," "Dandyism and Prison," "I am Disowned by my Family," "My Participation and my Position in the Surrealist Revolution," and "Discovery of the Apparatus for Photographing Thought" — only hint at the compelling revelations to come. Here are fascinating glimpses of the brilliant, ambitious, and relentlessly self-promoting artist who designed theater sets, shop interiors, and jewelry as readily as he made surrealist paintings and films. Here is the mind that could envision and create with great technical virtuosity images of serene Raphaellesque beauty one moment and nightmarish landscapes of soft watches, burning giraffes, and fly-covered carcasses the next. For anyone interested in 20th-century art and one of its most gifted and charismatic figures, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí* is must reading.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Genius isn't pretty, if we are to deduce that this revelation of the secret life of Salvador Dali is representative of the inner reality of genius in general. For certain, genuine creation isn't pretty, as anyone who's ever witnessed childbirth might attest: it's accomplished by blood, obscenity, mucous, hysterics, farts, and pain. Out of such undifferentiated chaos does one mold the miracle of his creation. So in **The Secret Life of Salvador Dali** we get the "confession" of a man whose life from earliest childhood is replete with incidents, fantasies, attitudes, and behaviors that can only be considered pathological. But then how much of this memoir is "real" and how much artistic hyperbole is a question open to debate. For Dali consciously mythologizes his life and makes no secret of the fact that much of his "secret life" may not have actually taken place except in his imagination. "The difference," he writes, "between false memories and true ones is the same as for jewels: it is always the false ones that look the most real, the most brilliant." And shortly afterwards he writes of his life that the "all-powerful sway of reverie and myth began to mingle in such a continuous and imperious way with the life of every moment that later it has often become impossible for me to know where reality begins and the imaginary ends." This is Dali's way of winking at the reader--and yet it's an ambiguous wink at best. For what must always be remembered is that for Dali, the imagination is every bit as "real" in its impact, just as material and plastic, as any historical or anecdotal fact of existence--if anything, the hyper-intensity of Dali's imagination gives his reveries even greater reality.

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