

EXHIBITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Hilliard University Art Museum

University of Louisiana at Lafayette
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Lafayette, LA 70503

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Salvador Dalí. *Centaur*, 1960. Wood engraving on wove paper after a watercolor. 9.75x7 in. Collection of the Park West Museum.

Salvador Dalí's Stairway to Heaven

Curated by David S. Rubin

Exhibition Dates: June 8, 2018 – January 18, 2019

Reception: Friday, June 15, 6:00–8:00 PM

The Hilliard Museum is excited to serve as the inaugural venue for the exhibition *Salvador Dalí's Stairway to Heaven*, showcasing over 140 works by the prolific artist. This exhibition uniquely presents two of Dalí's projects from the collection of the Park West Museum: illustrations for *Les Chants de Maldoror* and *The Divine Comedy*, as an analog for the progression of his personal life and views as an artist. Curated by David S. Rubin, the psychological depth of this exhibition humanizes the legendary artist.

Early in his life Dalí characterized himself as an amoral nihilist, who favored free association and the most primal human instincts. This part of his life is reflected in his illustrations he created for a 1934 edition of *Les Chants de Maldoror*, a poetic text describing violence, cannibalism and debauchery, which was a favorite of the Surrealists.

Later in Dalí's life he was invited to illustrate an edition of Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, commissioned by the Italian government to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the author's birth. The selection of Dalí was controversial because he was not Italian and his reputation as a nihilist put him at odds with *The Divine Comedy's* redemptive message. Ultimately, Dalí was not chosen for the project, but he continued his work nonetheless. His illustrations for *The Divine Comedy* later found a home in a 1960 edition. This was particularly fitting because, by this time in his life, his work was influenced by an earnest interest in spirituality, Christianity, and mysticism.

Salvador Dalí's Stairway to Heaven offers a fresh perspective on one of the titans of art history. The exhibition is organized by Carole Sorell, Incorporated and presented with generous support from the Park West Foundation. A fully illustrated catalog with an essay by David S. Rubin accompanies the exhibition, as well as "Dalí-Illustrator," a 407-page hardcover book by Eduard Fornés.

When the exhibition closes at the Hilliard Museum in January, it will travel to the Bradbury Art Museum, Jonesboro, Arkansas; Oglethorpe University Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia; University of Texas at San Antonio Main Art Gallery, San Antonio, Texas; Plains Art Museum, Fargo, North Dakota; Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Fort Wayne, Indiana; Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art, Shawnee, Oklahoma; and Biggs Museum of American Art, Dover, Delaware.

Biography

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) was born in Figueres, Spain. For much of his life he was arguably the foremost proponent of Surrealism. Dalí believed that Surrealism's role in society was to question the intellectual systems and traditions that unify it. He hoped to expose what he believed were the false narratives humankind imposed upon culture and the physical world, which he viewed as an arbitrary, irrational place.

Salvador Dalí's contemporaries include Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Juan Gris, and André Breton. His work has been exhibited the world over and is held in the permanent collections of prestigious institutions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Art Institute of Chicago, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Tate Gallery, London; and many others.

About Us

Carole Sorell, Incorporated

Carole Sorell is the founder, president and CEO of Carole Sorell, Incorporated. Her clients include Fortune 500 companies, Museums, Arts Organizations and Foundations. Previously she was Assistant Commissioner of Public Affairs, Department of Cultural Affairs, New York City. [Carole Sorell Inc. Website](#)

David S. Rubin

David S. Rubin is a Los Angeles-based curator, art critic, and artist who has been in the contemporary art field for more than forty years (from 2000-2006 he was Curator of Visual Arts at the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans). His curatorial archives are housed in the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art. [Linked In Profile for David S. Rubin](#)

The Park West Foundation

The Park West Foundation was founded in 2006 by Albert and Mitsie Scaglione and is directed by Diane Pandolfi. The Foundation's mission is to support national and international programs for at-risk youth, as well as programs for art education, museums and conservation that positively impact young adults and the environment, and organizations committed to positive values and leadership. For more information please visit [Park West Gallery Website](#).

The Hilliard Museum

The Hilliard University Art Museum operates on the campus of UL Louisiana Lafayette, and was originally founded in 1968 as the Art Center for Southwestern Louisiana. Featuring a state-of-the-art modern facility that was erected in 2004, the museum houses more than 2,200 objects in its permanent collection, and is the largest art exhibition space between New Orleans and Houston. The Hilliard serves a wide range of educational and cultural needs by fostering cross-disciplinary intellectual discourse on campus and through the region. At the core of the Hilliard's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit the art of our time while celebrating the great diversity of Louisiana's heritage.

Museum Hours, Admission & General Information

The Hilliard University Art Museum is located at 710 East Saint Mary Boulevard, on the campus of UL Lafayette. Museum Hours are: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm; Wednesday, 9:00am - 8:00pm; Saturday, 10:00am - 5:00pm; closed Sunday and Monday. General Admission: \$5 Adults, \$4 Seniors (62+), \$3 Students (5-17). FREE for Members, UL Students/Staff/Faculty with identification, and visitors under 5. For general information, please visit hilliardmuseum.org or call (337) 482-2278.



Salvador Dalí. *Meeting of Dante and Beatrice*, 1960. Wood engraving on wove paper after a watercolor. 9.75x7 in.