

# MYSTICAL MANIFESTO

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The two most subversive things that can happen to an ex-Surrealist in 1951 are, first, to become a mystic; and second, to know how to draw. These two forms of vigor have just happened to me together and at the same time. Catalonia can boast of three great geniuses: namely, Raymond de Sebonde, author of *Natural Theology*; Gaudí, the father of Mediterranean Gothic; and Salvador Dalí, inventor of the new Paranoiac-Critical mysticism and savior, as his very name indicates, of modern painting. The paroxysmal crisis of Dalinian mysticism mainly relies on the progress of the particular sciences of our times, especially on the metaphysical spirituality of the substantiality of quantum physics, and, at a level of less substantial simulacra, on the most ignominiously supergelatinous results – and their own coefficients of monarchic viscosity – of the whole general morphology. The Dalinian principles on which rely and rest the Bramantean bases of the aesthetic soul of his Paranoiac-Critical Activity are, in brief, the following: form is a reaction of matter under inquisitorial coercion “on all sides” of “hard” and unrelenting space. Beauty is always the ultimate spasm of a long and rigorous inquisitorial process.

Liberty is formlessness. Each rose springs up in a prison. The most beautiful architectural works of the human soul are the Tempietto de San Pietro in Montorio by the divine Bramante in Rome, and the monastery of El Escorial in Spain. Both were shaped in the same “incorruptible mold: ecstasy.” “Ecstasy is the incorruptible mold” in opposition to academicism which is the corruptible mold. I know something of this, I, Salvador Dalí, specialist in putrefactions and ammoniacal passions from the early and sacrilegious age of twelve!

Fear nothing, do not be afraid lest our modern pseudo-aesthetes should keep themselves busy with Bramante and Raphael’s superhuman peaks! No more do they dare face perfection, beauty; they are ashamed of them, preferring to go back to the former periods of art that are more or less barbarous but are always prior to the deifications of the Renaissance at its peak, because thus only do they feel at ease being able to apply the bureaucratic formulas of their ultraacademic modern art – plagiarism that is more or less decorative, as well as simplistic and caricatural (because it is not justified by any authentic tradition) of the art of prehistoric caves, of the island of Crete, of Romanesque frescoes, et cetera, up to the aberration for the mentally feeble of African art – above all by getting out of all these the dramatically unskillful and failed aspects of their non-descript techniques. It is truly a unique drama in which we, as modern artists, are definitely superior to those of any previous era.

Only the abstract experiments, antiacademic by dint of their fierce will to ecstasy, of the kind done by Mathieu, are valid from the point of view of knowledge, although electronic photography provisionally is ready to liberate man from this type of activity in order to restore to the human eye anew its full and imperialist realist category. The purpose of mysticism is mystical ecstasy; ecstasy is achieved by St. Theresa of Avila’s path of perfection, and by the successive penetration into the penitential chapels of the spiritual castle. The

mystical artist must form for himself, aesthetically, through the fierce daily self-inquisition of a “mystical reverie” that is the most rigorous, architectonic, Pythagorean and exhausting of them all, a dermo-skeletal soul – bones on the outside, superfine flesh within – like that which Unamuno attributes to Castille, in which the flesh of the soul cannot help but rise up to the sky. The mystical ecstasy is “super-cheerful,” explosive, disintegrated, supersonic, undulatory and corpuscular, and ultra-gelatinous, for it is the aesthetic blooming of the maximum of paradisiacal happiness that a human being can have on earth. Down on his knees, the mystical artist will see – as fruit of his inquisitorial virtue, exercised from the moment of sleep as far as the Lilliputian phosphenes brought about by the slightest digestive mishaps – he will see, singing with joy, the euphoric *Malaquita Rinocerontica Explosiva*, *La Madona Port-Lligatada Desintegrada Lapislazulina*, *La Immaculada Corpuscularia Aurea*. In a state of ecstasy, a grain of wheat floating in the air at the height of one meter and a half above ground will be so firmly fixed there that a grim elephant pushing with its brow with all its might will not succeed in dislodging it. Also, in addition, an angelic child on the beach of Rosas will lift with precaution the skin of the sea to observe a libidinous dog sleeping in the shade of the water. All these subjects, however incredible they seem to you, once you will have seen them you will be able to paint them realistically.

Painter, some day to come, you will have succeeded, by your own “paranoiac-critical” disciplines of an active and inquisitorial type, in seeing that which is “immaculately corpuscular,” which for me is the case at present, but for you might be an all too ineffable thing of its kind. Do not fear then anything at all and put yourself to painting daily and honestly, “from nature,” that which you will have seen, and for this purpose you will use the Renaissance way of painting because it was then that the means of pictorial expression were

invented once and for all and with the maximum of perfection and visual effectiveness. The decadence of modern painting comes from skepticism and lack of belief, which are the consequence of rationalism, positivism, progressivism, as well as of mechanistic or dialectical materialism, both being equally anachronistic, and all of this having its origin in the distressing and sentimental simplemindedness, of the “Ridi Pagliaccio” type, of very repressed encyclopedists. Here are the good guys for your good government: Pythagoras, the “obscure Heraclitus.” This is true today, with the unity of the universe having been confirmed, clear as the aesthetic of Luca Paccioli or Vitruvius, of that of St. John of the Cross – the highest form of poetic revelation of militant Spanish mysticism which Dalí is updating – it being observed that, every quarter of an hour and of a second, matter is in a constant and accelerated process of dematerialization, of disintegration, slipping out of the hands of scientists and thus proving to us the spirituality of all substance, for the physical light of Dalí’s Paranoiac-Critical Activity, this too, is “wave and corpuscle” at one and the same time.

Ever since the theory of relativity substituted the substratum of the universe for the ether, thus dethroning and reducing time to its relative role, which Heraclitus already assigned it when he said that “time is a child,” and Dalí too when he painted his famous “soft watches”; ever since that unknown and delirious substance seemed to fill the whole universe; since the explosive equivalence of mass-energy – all those who think, apart from the Marxist inertia, know that it is up to the metaphysicians to work precisely on the question of matter.

And in aesthetics it is up to the mystics and only they to resolve the new “golden sections” of the soul of our time; if a powerful Renaissance of mystical painting has not yet begun, it is due to the fact that the artists, this time very late in relation to today’s scientific

progress, still vegetate in the abominable pastures of the last consequences of the most sordid materialism, it is because they have nothing to paint, that today's artists paint nothing, in other words, what is non-figurative, non-objective, non-expressive, non-non-no no no no no no no.

## NO!

Finished are the denials and demotions, finished the Surrealist malaise and existentialist anxiety. Mysticism is the paroxysm of joy in the ultra-individualist affirmation of all man's heterogeneous tendencies within the absolute unity of ecstasy. I want my next Christ to be a painting containing more beauty and joy than anything that will have been painted up to the present. I want to paint a Christ that will be the absolute contrary in every respect to the materialist and savagely antimystical Christ of Grünewald!

Absolute monarchy, perfect aesthetic dome of the soul, homogeneity, unity; biological, hereditary, and supreme continuity – all this above, brought up near the dome of the sky. Below, swarming and supergelatinous anarchy, viscous heterogeneity, ornamental diversity of ignominious soft structures compressed and yielding the last juice of their ultimate forms of reactions. “*Anarchic monarchy*,” this is the “(almost divine) harmony of opposites” proclaimed by Heraclitus, which only the incorruptible mold of ecstasy will knead one day with new stones from the Escorial.

Picasso, thank you! With your Iberian, anarchical and integral genius you have killed the ugliness of modern painting: without you, given the prudence and moderation that characterize and are the honor of French art, we were in danger of having one hundred year of painting more and more ugly, until we have progressively arrived at your sublime “*esperpentos abatesios*” of the Dora Maar series.

You, with a single blow of your categorical sword, you have brought down the bull of ignominy, and also and above all, the even blacker one of materialism in its entirety. Now the new era of mystic painting begins with me.

**DALI.**

Neuilly, Saturday-Sunday  
April 15 1951, 3 o'clock in the morning.

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