

*Fathers and Sons:
Dalí, Giacometti, and the Legend of William Tell*

Michael R. Taylor
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Shortly after his arrival in New York in November 1934, Salvador Dalí was commissioned to produce a series of illustrated texts for *The American Weekly*, a popular magazine with a wide readership. Between December 1934 and July 1935, the artist published seven illustrated articles, the content of which reflected his impressions of daily life in the United States.¹ In “New York as Seen by the ‘Super-Realist’ Artist, M. Dalí,” published in the February 24, 1935, issue, for example, Dalí depicts his response to Central Park, where he claimed to have encountered phantoms and a strange rock in the shape of an anamorphic skull. The Central Park spread also contains a self-portrait of Dalí asleep, with his mouth covered by a swarming mass of ants, which can perhaps be related to the fear and anxiety he felt “After Reading about New York Crimes” through an accompanying caption.

The artist returned to the theme of violent crime in “Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York by M. Dalí, Super-Realist,” which appeared in the May 19, 1935 issue of *The American Weekly* as the penultimate work in Dalí’s series of artistic interpretations of American life. The surviving drawing, *Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York* (Fig. 1) reads like a storyboard for a movie in which three distinct scenarios are played out in five frames. The bottom frame is filled with familiar images from the artist’s arsenal of repressed desires and paranoiac imagery, such as the archer from the legend of William Tell or the cherries that relate to his paranoiac-critical interpretation of Jean-François Millet’s painting *The Angelus*.² The scenario playing out in the three frames, which read across the page in the middle row, relates to Dalí’s ongoing investigation into double images, whereby an exposed patch of bricks in a wall takes the shape of a man with a stone on his head, thus leading the viewer to mistake it for the passerby who picked up the stone and, presumably, placed it on the wall before exiting the scene. Unlike the four frames in the middle and lower levels, which show the artist’s continued fascination with

Michael R. Taylor: michael.taylor@vmfa.museum

Copyright © 2022 (Michael R. Taylor). Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 Unported License. Available at <http://jsa.asu.edu/>



Fig. 1. Salvador Dalí (Spanish, 1904-1989), *Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York*, 1935, Graphite and ink on paper, 54.6 x 40 cm, The Menil Collection, Houston © 2022 Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation / Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York

surrealist themes and imagery that had occupied him since the early 1930s, the imagery in the uppermost frame reveals Dalí's newfound interest in Prohibition-era gangsters, an obsession that he shared with millions of Americans who believed that rampant crime was a defining element of their society.³

Dalí's fascination with these romantic yet highly dangerous criminals, who were simultaneously reviled and celebrated in the 1930s as archetypal American dreamers and transgressors of society's rules, is itself a topic worthy of lengthy investigation, but it is the curious sequence of images in the bottom rung of the drawing that will be the subject of this essay. The compelling configuration in the lower right-hand corner of the page depicts an apple slice, from which sprouts a pair of cherries dangling precariously over an apple with a wedge removed. This imagery was clearly a humorous reference to the oscillating geometric forms in Alberto Giacometti's *Suspended Ball* of 1930–31 (Fig. 2). But what prompted Dalí to revisit Giacometti's sculpture while working on *Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York* during the spring of 1935? And what is the possible relationship between Dalí's rendering of *Suspended Ball* and the image beside it of William Tell, who can be identified by the apple perched near the end of the archer's arrow, an obvious reference to the fruit that the fourteenth-century Swiss patriot placed upon the head of his son?

The point of departure for any discussion of Dalí, Giacometti, and their shared interest in the legend of William Tell, must naturally be the phenomenal proliferation of erotically charged objects that characterized surrealist activities throughout the 1930s. Dalí launched a concerted effort in 1931 to get his friends and colleagues to produce conglomerate surrealist objects that were largely inspired by his radical interpretation of Giacometti's recent sculpture. Updating the notion of the surrealist *objet trouvé*, Dalí argued for "symbolically functioning" objects that were intended to awaken repressed desires within the viewer, in line with Sigmund Freud's definition of fetishism.⁴ Freud saw fetishism as a pathological condition in which the fetishist, unable to acknowledge his or her attraction to some threatening or forbidden object of desire, finds gratification by displacing the impulse onto an object or body part, such as a glove or a foot. Replete with fetishistic vigor, surrealist objects took the form of three-dimensional collages of "found" materials that were chosen for their metaphorical, psychological, or sexual connotations, rather than their visual or aesthetic value. In an article published in the December 1931 issue of *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, Dalí identified six different categories of Surrealist objects and placed Giacometti's *Suspended Ball*, along with his own *Shoe and Glass of Milk*, in the first category, which he called "Objects Functioning Symbolically (automatic origin)."⁵

Dalí's reference to *Suspended Ball* in his 1931 article as being the catalyst for the surrealist vogue for object making underscores his profound interest at that time in the work of Giacometti. This can be seen in numerous paintings and sculptures



Fig. 2. Alberto Giacometti (Swiss, 1901-1966), *Suspended Ball*, 1930-31, Wood, iron, and string, 60.4 x 36.5 x 34 cm, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, AM 1996-205 © Succession Giacometti (Fondation Giacometti, Paris and ADAGP, Paris) 2022

of the early 1930s, such as Dalí's *Catalan Bread*, of 1932, which appears to have been directly inspired by Giacometti's phallic *Disagreeable Object*, of 1931, a tusklike sculpture that also resembles a large, spiked dildo or a Maori war club.⁶ A line drawing of *Disagreeable Object* along with six other Giacometti sculptures, including *Suspended Ball*, illustrated the Swiss artist's essay "Objets mobiles et muets" (Moving and mute objects) in the same December 1931 issue of *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*.⁷ During his short-lived association with the surrealist group, Giacometti created objects and constructions that often conveyed intense psychological dramas with intimations of violence, eroticism, and the indeterminate nature of sexual difference. As the Swiss artist explained in his famous illustrated letter to Pierre Matisse, written in December 1947, "everything to do with this at that moment seemed a little grotesque, without value, to be thrown away... it was not anymore the exterior of beings that interested me but what I felt affected my life."⁸

Giacometti originally created *Suspended Ball* in plaster, before asking the Basque cabinetmaker Ipústegui to execute a second version in wood for inclusion in a spring 1930 group show with Joan Miró and Hans Arp at the Galerie Pierre in Paris, where it was displayed in the gallery's window.⁹ *Suspended Ball* consists of a three-dimensional, framelike structure from the top of which hangs a ball from the underside of which a cleft has been removed and is suspended by a thread above a crescent-shaped object, which, tilting upward, is poised on a platform inside the open cage below. This configuration provocatively invites the viewer to place the sphere in a swinging motion, like a pendulum, so that it can slide along the sharp edge of the recumbent wedge. However, the slit in the hanging ball does not quite fit in the wedge of the second curved object and this metaphor for frustrated desire, with sadistic undertones, motivated Dalí, as he freely admitted, to create his general catalogue of surrealist objects. He distinguished his own work from that of Giacometti, however, on the grounds that *Suspended Ball* was still a sculpture, whereas "symbolically functioning" objects did not allow for any likelihood of formal preoccupation and were instead intended to be "*extra-plastiques*."¹⁰

The feelings of sexual frustration that the cleft wooden ball and its opposing wedge aroused in Dalí drew him to Giacometti's *Suspended Ball*.¹¹ These kinetic volumes, which almost touch or kiss within their three-dimensional frame, can be related to the Swiss artist's frequent inability to consummate the sexual act with women who were more or less his social and intellectual equals. As James Lord has argued, Giacometti's profound impotence stemmed from his desire to avoid the sort of familial involvement, evidently sensed by him as a threat, which he had known as a child in Stampa.¹² This would explain why the artist continued all his life to seek sexual satisfaction with prostitutes, who asked of him only a financial commitment. Dalí's own interpretation of *Suspended Ball* reveals that he saw the work as a provocative tease; a metaphor for sexual frustration, onanism, and impotence, in which the expectation that the two forms will touch is perpetually thwarted as

the ball glides over the crescent without touching. “A wooden ball marked with a feminine groove is suspended,” Dalí declared in his 1931 essay on Surrealist objects, “by a very fine violin string, above a crescent whose wedge merely grazes the cavity. The beholder feels instinctively compelled to slide the ball over the wedge, but the length of string does not allow full contact between the two.”¹³ This physical distance also corresponds to Dalí’s own fear of sexual intimacy, especially with prostitutes, and his lifelong belief that he suffered from impotence and a small penis that could never satisfy a woman.

Giacometti’s first contact with the Surrealists came in April 1929, when he met André Masson at the Café du Dôme in Paris, a meeting probably engineered through the art dealer Jeanne Bucher.¹⁴ Masson in turn introduced Giacometti to the dissident Surrealists, including Georges Bataille and Michel Leiris, who shared his interest in themes of pent-up sexual aggression and fantasies of violence and brutality.¹⁵ It was not until the spring of 1930 that Giacometti became an official member of the surrealist group after *Suspended Ball* caught the attention of Dalí and André Breton. The latter’s astonishment at the sculpture’s impossible equilibrium led him to acquire the wooden version of the work from Pierre Loeb, the owner of the Galerie Pierre, prompting the surrealist leader to invite Giacometti to join the group. This trajectory echoes that of Dalí, who also briefly associated himself with Bataille and his colleagues at the illustrated magazine *Documents*, before switching allegiance to Breton and his officially sanctioned surrealist activities.

The crucial impact that Giacometti’s sculpture had on Dalí’s paintings and objects was not a one-way street, but led to what I believe was a genuine exchange of ideas based upon shared interests and obsessions both sexual and artistic in origin. Take, for example, the Swiss artist’s labyrinthlike *Project for a Passageway*, which equates a recumbent female body with a sequence of confined architectural spaces based upon a photograph of clay huts in the Cameroon village of Goulfé that was published in *Cahiers d’Art* in 1927.¹⁶ In *Project for a Passageway*, Giacometti appears to have conflated this cluster of dwellings in West Africa with the reclining nude in Man Ray’s *The Primacy of Matter over Thought*, which had been reproduced underneath Dalí’s *Surrealist Shoe* in the December 1931 issue of *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, to create make a tunnel of love that becomes a metaphor for the female reproductive system.

The same issue of *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* also contained Dalí’s extraordinary illustrated article, “Communication: Visage paranoïaque,” in which the artist revealed how he had “misread” a postcard of a large hemispherical African hut with villagers as an image of a Picasso-like head.¹⁷ The double image that resulted from this accidental rotation to vertical of the horizontal photograph was seen by Dalí as a classic example of his paranoiac-critical method. When the artist stumbled across the postcard of the African village, he instantly read it as a reproduction of a Picasso painting of an elongated head with a strange double mouth (the seated

Africans in front of the Kraal); he then determined this misreading was due to the fact that he had just been reflecting upon Picasso's cubist paintings. In my opinion, both Giacometti's *Project for a Passageway* and his *Landscape—Reclining Head* of 1932 reveal a profound debt to Dalí's working practices and disorienting double imagery, which shared the Swiss artist's concerns at that time with equating and perceiving the body through African art and architecture.¹⁸ With this in mind, it is worth noting that *Landscape—Reclining Head*, a form of picture puzzle in which a mountainous landscape turns into a head with projecting nose, eyes, and ears when seen from a certain right angle, was originally entitled *Chute d'un corps sur un graphique* (Fall of a body on a graph), and only received its current appellation in 1947.¹⁹

Giacometti appears to have been particularly close to Dalí around June 1933, when he asked the Catalan painter to write an essay on his work for inclusion in the catalogue of the "Exposition surréaliste" held that month at the Galerie Pierre Colle in Paris. However, Dalí's text was not printed after Giacometti and Max Ernst vehemently objected to the Catalan artist's provocative question: "Does anyone still remember that dirty painter who called himself Cézanne?"²⁰ The rupture does not appear to have been permanent, and Giacometti was receptive to the younger artist's ideas throughout the early to mid-1930s, as can be seen by his positive response to Dalí's question concerning an experimental fantasy involving the gender of one of the *Angelus* figures that had dissolved after the painting had been partially immersed in a bucket filled with lukewarm milk. Both artists agreed that it would be the male character that would be engulfed and erased.²¹

The Architectonic Angelus of Millet (Fig. 3), which Dalí completed in 1933, reveals his receptiveness to Giacometti's sculpture, especially as it was presented in Bataille's journal *Documents*. Bataille's thinking, which—as Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss have shown—was centered on the formless, the basely material, the destructive, the scatological, the obscene, the cruel, the sadistic, and the absurd,²² was to have a profound impact on the future directions of both artists' work. The fourth issue of *Documents*, which appeared in September 1929, included an essay on Giacometti by Michel Leiris that insisted upon the raw emotional intensity of his sculptures, which Leiris interpreted as contemporary fetishes that shunned convention and embraced the irrational and the transgressive.²³ Giacometti's "fetishes" were viewed by Leiris as precise equivalents for the memory traces of intense moments of physical and emotional crisis. This essay was accompanied by a series of haunting photographs by Marc Vaux of Giacometti's plaster sculptures, with special emphasis placed on the now lost plaster version of *Man and Woman* of 1928–29.²⁴ This important early work, which Giacometti also cast in bronze (Fig. 4), is often compared to *Hercules the Archer* (Fig. 5) by Émile Antoine Bourdelle, Giacometti's former teacher. The arched body of the man in Giacometti's work is strongly reminiscent of the curved angle of the bow pulled back by Hercules's outstretched hand in Bourdelle's sculpture, which was completed in 1909.²⁵



Fig. 3. Salvador Dalí (Spanish, 1904-1989), *The Architectonic Angelus of Millet*, 1933, Oil on canvas, 73 x 60 cm, Museo Nacional, Centro de Arte, Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain © 2022 Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation / Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York



Fig. 4. Alberto Giacometti (Swiss, 1901-1966), *Man and Woman*, 1928-29, Bronze (unique), 40 x 40 x 16.5 cm, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, AM 1984-355 © Succession Giacometti (Fondation Giacometti, Paris and ADAGP, Paris) 2022



Fig. 5. Émile Antoine Bourdelle (French, 1861-1929), *Hercules the Archer*, 1906-1909, Bronze, 64 x 60 x 29 cm, Musée Bourdelle, Paris

Unfortunately, this familiar comparison, while relevant to my discussion of William Tell, looks back to Giacometti's training and development as a sculptor rather than forward to the impact of his work and ideas on his avant-garde colleagues.

In this regard, Giacometti's sculpture surely anticipates Dalí's *The Architectonic Angelus of Millet*, whose two figures form a fissured and eroded rock formation. The delirious geology of the couple is remarkably similar to the bright white color and surface texture of the plaster used in Giacometti's *Man and Woman*, while the

undertone of violence in both works comes from the lance or dagger point that extends from the male body and pierces the body of the female, like a phallic arrow. Leiris, having seen the plaster iteration in Giacometti's studio, used a stunning sequence of associative metaphors to describe the fragile white plasters, comparing them to "the transient sweet salt of snow," as well as "the dust that falls from our fingernails when we polish them," and finally to "the marvelous salt so many ancient searchers believed they could extract from the earth's bowels . . . sea salt, bitter salt, salt of crackling knuckles, salt of teeth, salt of sweat, salt of looks."²⁶ These provocative descriptions, which, as Anne Umland has argued, deliberately evoke processes of liquefaction, dissolution, and entropy to denote the body's decomposition into bodily fluids, base matter, salt, and plaster dust,²⁷ may also have prompted Dalí to imagine the *Angelus* figures as decomposing natural forms that have become worn and eroded through prolonged exposure to wind and rain. In Giacometti's sculpture, the taut linear male figure wields a long, spikelike phallus that is aimed at a small hole in the smooth, concave torso of the female. However, in Dalí's painting the male is threatened by the female who, assuming the form of a petrified praying mantis, looms high above him, ready to strike, which falls in line with the artist's unique interpretation of Jean-François Millet's *The Angelus* as a monstrous example of disguised sexual repression and violence. The flagpole-like protuberance is thus swallowed up by the female figure in an unmistakable act of fellatio with overtones of cannibalism.

What if we were to look at Giacometti's *Man and Woman* through the lens of Dalí instead of Bourdelle? Then the prototype for this threatening image would not be the labors of Hercules, but rather the legend of William Tell, which, as I shall argue, is a recurrent motif in both artists' work of the early 1930s, although Giacometti's interpretation was radically different from that of his younger counterpart. The legend of William Tell remains an elastic myth that has been stretched to fit the political agendas of both the left and the right, its bowman offering either a revolutionary challenge to the existing order or standing as a steadfast defender of that order against outside invaders, depending on your point of view. Giacometti's understanding of the Tell legend probably came from Friedrich Schiller's 1804 play *Wilhelm Tell* (which had become required reading in elementary schools in Switzerland by the late nineteenth century) and Gioachino Rossini's 1829 opera, *Guillaume Tell*.²⁸ But Schiller's and Rossini's presentation of William Tell as a Swiss patriot whose example stands as a universal symbol of freedom was turned on its head by Dalí, in line with his revolt against all forms of paternal authority.

As Dawn Ades has convincingly argued, Dalí's interest in the William Tell legend was probably stimulated by *Guillermo Tell*, the epic historical drama written in 1926 by the prominent Catalan writer Eugenio d'Ors, in which Tell becomes the bearer of patriotic ideals, thus imbuing the legend with a contemporary relevance to the political situation in Catalunya and its subjugation under Castilian rule.²⁹

This was a political reading that Salvador Dalí Cusí, the artist's father, who was a fervent Catalan nationalist, would have wholeheartedly supported, and it may have encouraged his son to transform this seemingly innocent piece of sentimental folklore into a scandalous theme of incestuous mutilation. For Dalí, the tale of the Swiss patriot's shooting an apple placed on his son's head at a distance of two hundred paces was a castration myth that could be related to his own psychosexual Oedipal drama focused on his unresolved conflict with his overbearing, authoritarian father. The older man had expelled his son from the family home in December 1929 due to his adulterous relationship with Gala, an older woman then married to the surrealist poet Paul Éluard. Another reason for the estrangement from his family was the artist's blasphemous inscription on his 1929 work *The Sacred Heart (Sometimes I spit with pleasure on the portrait of my mother)*, which was misunderstood by his father as a cruel reference to Dalí's mother, who died of cancer when he was sixteen years old, rather than the anticlerical surrealist provocation, insulting the Holy Mother or Virgin Mary, that his son no doubt intended.

In protest of his irrevocable banishment from his father's household, the disinherited Dalí defiantly shaved off his jet-black hair and buried it on the beach at Cadaqués, together with the empty shells of the sea urchins he had just eaten. Shortly afterward, the artist posed for a photograph taken by his friend, the Spanish filmmaker Luis Buñuel, showing the painter wearing a sea urchin balanced on his head, a clear reference to the apple placed on the head of William Tell's son, as can be seen in a photomontage juxtaposing an image of Gala with Buñuel's photograph that was used as the frontispiece to *L'Amour et la mémoire* in 1931. Given his father's well-known passion for eating sea urchins, Dalí no doubt intended this surrogate apple to have cannibalistic overtones, as he later recalled in his memoirs:

I had balanced on my head William Tell's apple [perhaps misremembering that it was, in fact, a sea urchin, a diversionary offering meant to tempt his father into eating the sea urchin rather than his son], which is the symbol of the passionate cannibalistic ambivalence which sooner or later ends with the drawing of the atavistic and ritualistic fury of the bow of paternal vengeance that shoots the final arrow of the expiatory sacrifice—the eternal theme of the father sacrificing his son.³⁰

Just as his paranoiac-critical investigation into Millet's *The Angelus* had uncovered the latent eroticism and sexual violence of this seemingly harmless image of rural piety, so the meaning of the William Tell legend changed, once Dalí's fertile imagination had unveiled its tragic subtext, into a castration myth revolving around his father's mutilation and sacrifice of his son and his violent sexual urges for Dalí's beloved Gala. The artist wrote poems documenting William Tell's obscene behavior,

and painted several versions of the legend in quick succession, beginning with *William Tell* (Fig. 6) in 1930, followed by *The Old Age of William Tell* in 1931, *William Tell and Gradiva* in 1932, and culminating in 1933 with the monumental *The Enigma of William Tell* (Fig. 7), in which Tell is depicted with the features and ludicrously extended peaked cap of Vladimir Lenin, another historical father figure representing patriarchal authority and retribution. In this controversial painting, Dalí asserts his commitment to freedom of thought and his complete liberation from the social and moral strictures of the Surrealist group and the Communist Party, much to the horror of André Breton, who considered the work a “counter-revolutionary act” and treason against the Bolshevik leader.³¹

Having overcome his own all-powerful, domineering father, Dalí was not about to let the “father of the revolution” stand in the way of his creative freedom, which he felt was being threatened by mindless bureaucrats at Moscow’s beck and call. This is why Lenin, the revered leader of the Bolshevik revolution, is shown in a radical state of half-undress, assuming a provocative kneeling position that suggests he is being sodomized, as he cradles the infant Dalí in his arms. However, the artist’s true intentions are revealed by the strategic placement of a raw cutlet on the child’s head and a lamb chop on Lenin’s grotesquely extended, phallic right buttock (a “lyrical appendage” that has to be propped up by a crutch), which signifies the father’s cannibalistic desire to eat his son.³² This threat of annihilation also extends to Gala, who is shown as a defenseless child lying in a tiny cradle inside a walnut shell positioned perilously close to the father’s gigantic sandaled foot. “She is under constant threat from this foot,” Dalí explained to Robert Descharnes, “because if the foot moves only very slightly, it can crush the nut.”³³ Dalí scholars have long been perplexed by this footwear, which has led to bizarre discussions about the sandals worn by Roman centurions and other wild explanations. What Dalí is clearly referencing here, however, is the tradition of representing the bearded Swiss hero wearing sandals, half-stockings, Bavarian breeches, and a hooded shepherd’s shirt that was made popular by, first, Richard Kissling’s monument to William Tell (Fig. 8), which was unveiled in the marketplace of the Swiss town of Altdorf in August 1895, and then, slightly later, by Ferdinand Hodler’s iconic portrait, *William Tell* (Fig. 9), of 1897, where the hero, holding his crossbow in his outstretched left hand, advances powerfully. The rustic attire of Hodler’s warriorlike Tell—a white shepherd’s shirt open at the chest—almost certainly inspired Dalí’s provocative image of Tell in his tight-fitting white undergarments in his 1930 painting.³⁴ This interpretation of the painting shows how Dalí equated the actions of his belligerent father, who was prepared to sacrifice his own son, with the “cannibalistic” behavior of other historical father figures, such as the “atrocious myth of Saturn, of Abraham, of the Eternal Father with Jesus Christ, and of William Tell himself—all devouring their own sons.”³⁵

That William Tell was an accomplished marksman who successfully pierced



Fig. 6. Salvador Dalí (Spanish, 1904-1989), *William Tell*, 1930, Oil and collage on canvas, 113 x 87 cm, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, AM 2002-287 © 2022 Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation / Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York



Fig. 7. Salvador Dalí (Spanish, 1904-1989), *The Enigma of William Tell*, 1933, Oil on canvas, 201.3 x 346.5 cm, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden © 2022 Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation / Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York

the apple balanced on his son's head without hurting him was of little consequence to Dalí, whose paranoiac-critical interpretation focused instead on unmasking the latent content of the legend, in which the apple-shooting incident becomes a terrifying act of paternal vengeance. Dalí's psychoanalytical re-reading of the William Tell legend dramatically transformed it from an innocent story of filial devotion and heroic resistance to the capricious cruelty of a foreign tyrant, to one of mutilation and murder in which the hideous father figure takes the form of an oversexed, bearded hermaphrodite, as Dalí depicted him in *The Old Age of William Tell*. In *William Tell* (Fig. 6), the inanely grinning father sports a tightly woven beard (borrowed from the Tell iconology) and an exposed penis, thus threatening his son with physical and sexual violence, while the scissors he brandishes leaves no ambiguity in the viewer's mind as to who is the intended target of this castrating weapon. A similarly ominous and indecent scene takes place in *William Tell and Gradiva*, in which the bearded father, having sacrificed his male offspring, now seduces his son's love and future wife in a deserted Catalan landscape. Tell/Dalí Cusí is shown stroking his tumescent penis while pulling the hair of the naked Gala, who assumes the identity of Gradiva, based on the title character of the 1903 novella by Wilhelm Jensen that was the subject of a well-known psychoanalytic study by



Fig. 8. Richard Kissling (Swiss, 1848-1919), *Monument to William Tell and his Son*, 1895, Bronze, 13 feet high, Altdorf Market Place, Canton of Uri, Switzerland



Fig. 9. Ferdinand Hodler (Swiss, 1853-1918), *William Tell*, 1897, Oil and tempera on canvas, 255.5 x 195.5 cm, Kunstmuseum Solothurn, Switzerland

Sigmund Freud.³⁶

Like Freud before him, for his paintings Dalí drew upon a wealth of biblical and mythological texts and imagery, such as *William Tell*, as can be seen in the pointing hand of the shamed son, who extends a finger toward the outstretched hand of the omnipotent father in a gesture reminiscent of Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam* on the Sistine Chapel ceiling. With his face hidden and his genitals covered by a collaged fig leaf with a tiny, strategically placed beetle to indicate the relative size of his shriveled penis (in direct contrast to the enormous sausage-like member flopping out of his father's underwear), the cowering Dalí takes on the role of Adam to Gala's Eve, who is shown in bas-relief beside an upright, engorged phallus. The banishment from the parental home thus acquires the universal significance of the biblical story of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden, as can be seen in *The Old Age of William Tell*, where the sorrowful young couple depart the indecent scene in which Dalí's father/William Tell is pleased by two women behind a semitransparent sheet. However, it should be pointed out that numerous representations of William Tell in the nineteenth century made reference to Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling, with the Swiss folk hero and expert marksman pointing at the dying Albrecht Gessler (also known as Hermann Gessler), or after shooting the apple from his son's head, answering the question concerning the meaning of his second arrow by gesticulating toward the tyrannical reeve of the Austrian dukes of the House of Habsburg, who was stationed in Altdorf in the canton of Uri in the fourteenth century.³⁷ These visual sources, which ultimately derive from Schiller's drama, first performed at Weimar on March 17, 1804, in which Gessler forces Tell to shoot an apple from the head of his son Walter for defying his order to bow before a pole bearing the Austrian reeve's hat, suggest that Dalí was fully cognizant of the Tell iconology through his research into the latent content of the legend.

Neither is this disturbing, infanticidal imagery uncommon in Giacometti's work of the early 1930s, although I do not believe that Dalí's cannibalistic interpretation of the legend can be applied to such works as *Flower in Danger* (Fig. 10), of 1932, in which a fragile white flower, like a pendant earring, is menaced by a catapultlike device made of a wooden rod held bowed in tension by a single filament. Created in the same year as Dalí's *The Enigma of William Tell*, this is another work that is often compared to Bourdelle's *Hercules the Archer*, although I prefer instead to situate the piece within the framework of the William Tell legend as updated by Dalí. But whereas William Tell represented for Dalí the oppressive, castrating father figure against whom he was rebelling at the time, this Oedipal scenario does not appear in Giacometti's work. Giovanni Giacometti, the artist's father, an internationally recognized post-impressionist painter, was not a tyrannical figure to be repudiated and overcome, but rather a positive role model, someone who encouraged and nurtured his son's burgeoning talent as a sculptor and painter. Indeed, Giovanni



Fig. 10. Alberto Giacometti (Swiss, 1901-1966), *Flower in Danger*, 1932, Wood, plaster, wire, and string, 56 x 78 x 18 cm, Alberto Giacometti Foundation, Kunsthaus Zürich © Succession Giacometti (Fondation Giacometti, Paris and ADAGP, Paris) 2022

Giacometti's death on June 25, 1933, had a profound impact on his son, who created a tombstone for his father's grave in the San Giorgio Cemetery in the Swiss village of Borgonovo in the summer of 1934. The death of his father brought about a sea change in Giacometti's work. He abandoned his previous interest in sexually charged surrealist objects in favor of a return to the human figure and drawing from life rather than his imagination.

I would argue that Giacometti utilized the William Tell legend to convey his own emotional fears and sexual desires, which were directly embodied in the vulnerable figure of the son with the apple on his head. Giacometti transformed Tell's legendary feat of archery from an act of heroic resistance to the Hapsburg tyranny into an image of death, blindness, and physical and emotional torture. The perilous plaster flower in *Flower in Danger* can thus be read as a symbolically pure object that could be destroyed at any moment through the accidental or deliberate release of the cocked sling. However, upon closer observation, the spindly flower

supported by its stalk of bent wire is revealed to be out of the catapult's line of fire. Giacometti's work at this time is filled with such tense and psychologically disturbing imagery in which the threat of death or violation is formalized, ritualized, and turned into a game.

In the Swiss artist's *Point to the Eye*, of 1931–32, for example, a long, pointed form resembling a dagger or an arrow tapering to a stiletto point threatens the eye socket of a tiny skull-like head mounted on part of a rib cage. The spike aiming at the victim's eyeball in this sculpture can be compared to Buñuel and Dalí's 1929 film *Un Chien Andalou*, whose notorious opening scene shows a straight razor slicing through a young woman's opened eyeball (a calf's eye was used as a substitute) as well as to the bull's horn that penetrates and kills the matador by ripping out his eye in Bataille's *L'Histoire de l'Oeil*.³⁸ It almost goes without saying that loss of vision is what all artists fear most, which was especially true for Dalí and Giacometti, both of whose work at this time was increasingly based on optical effects and distortions related to the acts of seeing and recording visual stimuli. The explicit sadism of such imagery also looks back to *Suspended Ball*, where the sliding action of the grooved sphere suggests the act of cutting and slicing, but once again the threat is averted as the elongated, phallic blade can only swivel on its pivot, pointlessly pointing. The small size of the modeled skull in *Point to the Eye* is also important here, since it suggests that a child's head is being threatened by the tapering point of the arrow, thus making it the most explicit reference in Giacometti's work to the legend of William Tell.

Rosalind Krauss has persuasively argued that the matrix of ideas that operate Giacometti's conception of sculpture's rotated axis in works like *Point to the Eye*—the horizontal gameboard, movement in real time, the sculpture as base, the base as necropolis—were inspired by Bataille's notions of the *informe* and *basesse*.³⁹ The flat wooden platform on which this drama unfolds can indeed be read as a pre-Columbian ritual site with a channel for sacrificial blood, thus recasting the terrain of sculpture as a children's gameboard or playing field with overtones of ritualized violence and sacrificial offerings in line with Dalí's interpretation of the William Tell legend. But where Tell in Dalí's work stands for the castrating father capable of inflicting pain and violence on his son, for Giacometti the legend stands for the pain inflicted on him through broken relationships that end in frustration and heartache. In all of these works, Giacometti emerges as the persecuted victim of a cruel and sinister game, seemingly beyond his control, that can be understood as a rather direct representation of the emotional experience of a love affair that has come to an end and must be broken off despite the pain that such a break will inflict upon both parties. Not for nothing was this work first called *Rélations désagréables* (Disintegrating relations).

To conclude then, I would like to return to Dalí's 1935 drawing *Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York*, with its small vignette featuring his interpretation of

Giacometti's *Suspended Ball*. The timing of this drawing is crucial for my discussion, since it coincides with the Swiss artist's definitive break with the surrealist group and his repudiation of his former course of innovation as "nothing but masturbation" (a telling statement that has previously been seen as a put-down, but in light of his connections to Dalí's work can now be understood in a more complex and ambiguous way).⁴⁰ This statement, which reflects his bitter disillusionment with the movement after he was expelled from the group in December 1934, fails to register the fact that Giacometti's surrealist phase yielded some of the most audacious and innovative sculpture he ever produced.⁴¹

Ironically, Giacometti's decision to completely sever his ties with Breton and the Surrealists coincided with the growing international reputation of his surrealist sculpture, signified by his first solo show in the United States, which opened at the Julien Levy Gallery, New York, on December 1, 1934.⁴² Dalí's sudden resurgence of interest in Giacometti's work during the Catalan artist's New York sojourn was almost certainly provoked by this month-long exhibition of a dozen works entitled "Abstract Sculpture by Alberto Giacometti," which, for ten days, overlapped with Dalí's own exhibition of twenty-two paintings.⁴³ The significance of this brief yet remarkable juxtaposition of Giacometti's sculptures and Dalí's paintings has been previously overlooked in the literature on both artists, and considering his then-latest paintings in this context must have provided the impetus for Dalí's recasting of his friend's work and ideas in *Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York*. Nothing in the Giacometti exhibition was sold, and it was poorly received by American critics, such as Edward Alden Jewell of the *New York Times*, who dismissed the twelve sculptures on display as being "unqualifiedly silly."⁴⁴ Only Dalí, it would seem, saw something new in the Swiss artist's work.

Dalí's initial response to Giacometti's sculpture in the early 1930s was to create fetish objects (such as *The Surrealist Shoe*) that were "destined for the most secret physical and psychological pleasures."⁴⁵ Five years later, having seen Giacometti's work in New York, Dalí appears to have had a different reaction, as seen in his imaginary rendition of *Suspended Ball* placed side-by-side with the standing figure of William Tell in the bottom panel of *Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York*. The intended victim of Tell's apple-laden arrow is a decapitated (acephalic) man, who holds his severed head in one hand, while his other hand points to the spot where the head used to be. The unmistakable reference here is to Giacometti's *Point to the Eye*, since upon closer inspection the headless figure is revealed to be out of line with Tell's arrow, as is typically the case in the Swiss sculptor's investigations of threatening situations and violent acts, which are suggested, but ultimately diverted.

It is my opinion that when Dalí saw Giacometti's work afresh in New York he connected it with the legend of William Tell and thus saw a direct correlation between his own paintings on this theme and works such as *Point to the Eye* and

Suspended Ball. It is surely no coincidence, therefore, that the artist used a sliced apple to make reference to the sphere and crescent of *Suspended Ball*, since this decidedly unorthodox material for sculpture also makes reference to the apple that William Tell placed on the head of his son, thus connecting it to his own use of the legend of the Swiss patriot as a framework for dealing with the Oedipus complex and the fear of castration induced by the deteriorating relationship with his own father.

Another important point to make here is that Dalí reversed the order of Giacometti's sculpture so that the masculine wedge now hovers over the feminine sphere, an image that is more in line with the Catalan artist's earlier representations of the sexual act, which often centered on the buttocks or anus as the site of pleasure and penetration. Or, as his friend, the surrealist writer René Crevel put it, Dalí's William Tell "puts an apple on his son's head in order to perforate it with an arrow, as if the son is all at once castrated, sodomized, and would shortly also be eaten up."⁴⁶ The lack of gender specificity in both works may detract from this argument, but it is nonetheless supported by the pair of cherries that dangle from the suspended wedge of apple. These cherries are also connected to Giacometti's work through Dalí's earlier investigation into the latent content of Millet's *The Angelus*, which was very much on his mind during his stay in New York, as can be seen in his pictorial transformation of the silhouetted forms of Millet's peasant couple into a pair of immense Manhattan skyscrapers.

While Dalí was carrying out research for *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus* in Paris, Giacometti had related to him a bizarre incident he had witnessed while stuck on a train that had broken down between two villages in the high Swiss Alps. A print salesman, traveling on a donkey, had seized the opportunity to sell his chromolithograph reproductions of the Millet painting to the bored, waiting passengers. The peasants traveling in the same carriage as the artist were taken by some sort of collective frenzy and hastened to buy all the prints "with a unanimity that did not fail to surprise him," even though they assured Giacometti they were "absolutely ignorant until then of the existence of the aforementioned image" of *The Angelus*.⁴⁷ This recollection, which for Dalí confirmed his theory that the erotic subtext of the painting was the reason for its immense popular appeal, may have led him to juxtapose Giacometti's sculpture with the dangling pair of cherries, which come from postcards depicting smiling women with two cherries hanging from their mouths like half-eaten genitals. Dalí viewed these cherries as an overt symbol of how fellatio can turn to cannibalism, since all that remains of the devoured penis are the stems and two balls. These ideas, as expressed in this "goofy vision" of Giacometti's *Suspended Ball*, reveal how Dalí co-opted the Swiss artist's sculpture into his own paranoiac-critical themes and obsessions. But this act of appropriation can also tell us a great deal about the changing conditions of Surrealism in the mid-1930s and why Giacometti and Dalí, in their resistance to André Breton and other oppressive father figures, were increasingly looking elsewhere for their inspiration.

This essay has its genesis in a lecture on Dalí and Giacometti that I gave at the *Surrealism Laid Bare* conference at West Dean College on May 5, 2007, which was published that year in Michael R. Taylor, “Pères et fils: Dalí, Giacometti, et la légende de Guillaume Tell,” in Astrid Ruffa, Philippe Kaenel, and Danielle Chaperon, eds., *Salvador Dalí à la croisée des saviors*, trans. Susan Jacquet (Paris: Éditions Desjonquères, 2007), 190–205. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Elliott King and Claudia Mesch for offering me the opportunity to substantially revise and expand this essay for this special Dalí issue of the *Journal of Surrealism and the Americas*.

- 1 The *American Weekly* series began with “Written by a Madman, Illustrated by a Super-Realist” (December 16, 1934). This was followed by six more articles in 1935: “New York as Seen by the ‘Super-Realist’ Artist, M. Dalí” (February 24); “How Super-Realist Dalí saw Broadway” (March 17); “The American City Night and Day by M. Dalí” (March 31); “American Country Life Interpreted by M. Dalí” (April 28); “Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York by M. Dalí, Super-Realist” (May 19); and finally “Crazy Movie Scenario of M. Dalí, the Super-Realist” (July 7).
- 2 For the Catalan artist, this famous nineteenth-century painting held an intense fascination that stemmed from his childhood memory of seeing a reproduction of it in his school in Figueres. Whereas most people of his generation regarded Millet’s *The Angelus* as a sacred image of rural piety, however, for Dalí it was a monstrous example of disguised sexual repression, incest, and cannibalism, in which mothers devour their sons after copulation; see Michael R. Taylor and Dawn Ades, “The Tragic Myth of Millet’s *Angelus*,” in Ades, ed., *Dalí/Duchamp*, exh. cat. (London and St. Petersburg: Royal Academy of Arts and The Dalí Museum, 2017), 150.
- 3 David E. Ruth, *Inventing the Public Enemy: The Gangster in American Culture, 1918–1934* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 1.
- 4 Dalí’s proposal for the construction of Surrealist objects as a new form of communal activity for the movement is discussed at length in Dawn Ades, “Surrealism: Fetishism’s Job,” in Anthony Shelton, ed., *Fetishism: Visualising Power and Desire*, exh. cat. (London: South Bank Centre; in association with Lund Humphries, 1995), 73–78.
- 5 Salvador Dalí, “Objets surréalistes,” *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* 3, (December 1931): 16–17, reprinted in Haim Finkelstein, ed., *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, trans. Haim Finkelstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 231.
- 6 The carved, banana-shaped bird-figures from the Easter Islands and the tusk-shaped metal horns made by the Toba group of the Batak people of Sumatra have also been suggested as possible sources for this sculpture; see Patrick Elliott, “Catalogue,” in Toni Stooss and Patrick Elliott, eds., *Alberto Giacometti, 1901–1966*, exh. cat. (Edinburgh and London: National Galleries of Scotland; in association with Royal Academy of Arts, 1996), 146.
- 7 Alberto Giacometti, “Objets mobiles et muets,” *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, no. 3, (December 1931): 18–19, reprinted in Anne Umland, “Giacometti and Surrealism,” in Christian Klemm, Carolyn Lanchner, Tobia Bezzola, and Anne Umland, eds., *Alberto Giacometti*, exh. cat., (Zürich and New York: Kunsthaus Zürich and The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001), 21.
- 8 Alberto Giacometti, “A Letter from Alberto Giacometti to Pierre Matisse,” December 1947, trans. Lionel Abel, first published in *Alberto Giacometti: Exhibition of Sculptures, Paintings, Drawings*, (New York: Pierre Matisse Gallery, 1948), 36, 42.
- 9 That the wooden sculpture was displayed in the gallery window was confirmed by Nesto Jacometti: “In Pierre Loeb’s window, in front of a Miró painting with a shooting star, there was a strange machine construction of wood, signed ‘A. Giacometti’ – a real mill to grind up the seeds of overbred aesthetic culture,” see Jacometti, “Il était une fois,” *Die Weltwoche* 1680 (January 21, 1966): 23.
- 10 Salvador Dalí, “Objets surréalistes,” 16.
- 11 Dalí was not alone in his admiration for *Suspended Ball*. Maurice Nadeau recalled how: “Everyone who has seen this object function has felt a violent and indefinable emotion, doubtless having some relation with unconscious sexual desires. This emotion has nothing to do with satisfaction, rather

- with irritation, the kind provoked by the disturbing perception of a *lack*,” see Nadeau, *The History of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Plantin Publishers, 1987), 188.
- 12 James Lord, “In Search of Genius,” in *Alberto Giacometti*, exh. cat. (New York: Acquavella Galleries, 1994), 10.
- 13 Salvador Dalí, “Objets surréalistes,” 16–17, reprinted in Finkelstein, ed., *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 233.
- 14 In an interview with Valerie J. Fletcher, conducted on March 18, 1988, Annette Giacometti remembered that her late husband met Masson in April 1929, followed shortly afterward by Michel Leiris and Georges Bataille; see Fletcher, “Alberto Giacometti: His Art and Milieu,” in *Alberto Giacometti, 1901–1966*, exh. cat. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, 1988), 55, n.2.
- 15 Rosalind Krauss was the first scholar to consider the impact of Bataille’s ideas on Giacometti’s surrealist production, as seen in his efforts to systematically undermine sculptural conventions regarding form, narrative, and presentation; see Krauss, “Giacometti,” in William Rubin, ed., *Primitivism in 20th-Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*, vol. 2, exh. cat. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1984), 503–29.
- 16 This photograph was reproduced in André Gide, “Architectures nègres,” in *Cahiers d’art* 7–8 (1927): 265.
- 17 Salvador Dalí, “Communication: Visage paranoïaque,” in *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, 3 (December 1931): 40.
- 18 As Thierry Dufrêne has argued, the two-way influence between Dalí and Giacometti led to works by each artist founded on the principle of the double image—e.g. woman as architecture, or landscape as slanting head—and double vision: analytical when closely seen, synthetic when seen from afar. Dufrêne persuasively links these experiments with optical illusions and double vision with the fade in, fade out (“*renchaînés*”) practiced by Luis Buñuel and Dalí in *Un Chien Andalou*; see Dufrêne, “Dalí-Giacometti: Images paranoïaques et objets indécidables,” *Revue de l’art* 137, (2002–2003): 35.
- 19 Reinhold Hohl, *Alberto Giacometti: Sculpture, Painting, Drawing* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), 299.
- 20 Ibid, 101. It is not known if Dalí was aware that Giacometti greatly admired Cézanne’s work when he wrote this essay, but the fact that he ended up provoking the Surrealists with this diatribe speaks to the movement’s increasing inability to accommodate the Catalan artist’s unorthodox views and behavior.
- 21 Salvador Dalí, *Le mythe tragique de l’Angélus de Millet* (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1963), 23, reprinted in Haim Finkelstein, ed., *Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 286.
- 22 Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss, *Formless: A User’s Guide* (New York: Zone Books; and Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997).
- 23 Michel Leiris, “Alberto Giacometti,” *Documents* 4, (September 1929): 209–210.
- 24 The remarkable photographs by Marc Vaux that accompanied Leiris’s article are reproduced in Anne Umland, “Giacometti and Surrealism,” 18–19.
- 25 See, for example, Patrick Elliott, “Catalogue,” in *Alberto Giacometti, 1901–1966*, exh. cat. (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1996), 145.
- 26 Michel Leiris, “Alberto Giacometti,” 210; English translation in James Clifford, “Alberto Giacometti,” *Sulfur* 15:3 (1986): 40.
- 27 Anne Umland, “Giacometti and Surrealism,” 19.
- 28 Joseph A. Kestner has suggested that both James Joyce and Salvador Dalí may have seen the 1923 German silent film *Wilhelm Tell*, directed by Rudolf Dworsky and Rudolf Walther-Fein, since both the Irish writer and Catalan painter made reference to the Tell legend in their work over the next decade. The same argument could be used for Giacometti; see Joseph A. Kestner, “Ulysses/Tell: Text and Nineteenth-Century Context,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 38:1–2, (Fall 2000–Winter 2001): 105.

- 29 Dawn Ades, *Dalí* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982), 170.
- 30 Dalí, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, 319.
- 31 André Breton, quoted in Gilles Néret, *Salvador Dalí* (Köln: Benedikt Taschen, 1994), 31–32.
- 32 The artist later recalled the symbolism of this work in a diary entry, dated May 1952: “I have dreamed twice of this new William Tell! It’s about Lenin. I want to paint him with one buttock nine feet long and propped up on a crutch. I’ll need a canvas eighteen feet long for it. . . . I’ll paint my Lenin with his lyrical appendage even if they throw me out of the Surrealist group. He’ll be holding a little boy in his arms—me. But he’ll be staring at me cannibalistically, and I’ll be crying out: ‘He wants to eat me!’,” see Salvador Dalí, *Diary of a Genius*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Creation Books, 1994), 25.
- 33 Dalí, quoted in Robert Descharnes and Gilles Néret, *Salvador Dalí* (Köln: Benedikt Taschen, 1993), 53.
- 34 It is also possible that Dalí was aware of popular representations of the Swiss patriot, who appeared on handkerchiefs, clocks, and even as a chocolate figurine. In his long poem, “The Great Masturbator,” which he completed in Port Lligat in September 1930, Dalí makes reference to “two large sculptures of William Tell / one made / of real chocolate / the other of false shit.” The artist may have come across (and even consumed) a pair of Swiss chocolate William Tell figurines at this time, the “rubbed out mouths” and coprophiliac connotations of which appear to have provoked “a mental crisis”; see Dalí, “Le Grand masturbateur,” in *La Femme visible* (Paris: Éditions surréalistes, 1930), reprinted in Finkelstein, ed., *Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 181–82.
- 35 Salvador Dalí, *The Tragic Myth of Millet’s Angelus*, trans. Eleanor R. Morse (St. Petersburg, Florida: Salvador Dalí Museum, 1986), 135.
- 36 Wilhelm Jensen, *Gradiva: Ein Pompejanisches Phantasiestück* (Dresden: Carl Reissner, 1903), repr. in Jensen, *Gradiva: A Pompeiian Fantasy*, trans. Helen M. Downey (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1918). Jensen’s novella, recounts the experience of a young archaeologist called Norbert Hanold, who becomes obsessed with the figure of a Roman woman in a fourth-century BCE bas-relief, whom he calls “Gradiva” (she who walks). This tale inspired Sigmund Freud to write the first psychoanalytical study of a work of literature; see Freud, “Delusions and Dreams in Jensen’s *Gradiva*,” 1907, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 9 (1906–1908), ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1959), 7–93. For an excellent account of Dalí’s engagement with the Gradiva myth, see Deborah Bürgel, “Gradiva and Rose Sélavy—A Comparative Study of Imaginings of the Feminine in Salvador Dalí and Marcel Duchamp,” *Avant-garde Studies* 3 (Spring–Summer 2018): 1–31.
- 37 For a useful overview of the iconography of William Tell in the history of art and popular culture, see Walter Dettwiler, *William Tell: Portrait of a Legend*, trans. M. C. Melián Bodenmann (Zürich: Swiss National Museum, 1991).
- 38 Georges Bataille had earlier praised the opening scene of the sliced eyeball in Buñuel and Dalí’s film in an essay in *Documents* with which Giacometti was no doubt familiar: “The eye could be brought closer to the cutting edge, whose appearance provokes at the same time acute and contradictory reactions: precisely what the makers of *Un Chien Andalou* must horribly and obscurely have experienced when in the first images of the film they determined the bloody loves of the two protagonists,” see Bataille, “L’oeil,” *Documents* 4 (September 1929): 216.
- 39 Krauss, “Giacometti,” 523.
- 40 Alberto Giacometti quoted in Lucy R. Lippard, ed., *Surrealists on Art* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), 141.
- 41 The Swiss sculptor had been called to account by Breton at a group meeting and charged with disloyalty to Surrealism due to his design work for the fashionable interior decorator Jean-Michel Frank, including lamps, rugs, and vases, which he made with his brother, Diego. Giacometti abruptly walked out of the meeting and left the Breton circle forever, perhaps realizing that the true reason for his excommunication was not his decorative designs, but rather his return to making life studies from

models.

42 “Abstract Sculpture by Alberto Giacometti,” Julien Levy Gallery, New York, December 1, 1934 – January 1, 1935.

43 “Paintings by Salvador Dalí,” Julien Levy Gallery, New York, November 21 – December 10, 1934. Given that Julien Levy was Dalí’s great patron and supporter in the United States, who looked to him for guidance with exhibitions of surrealist artists, it is tempting to speculate that this joint-exhibition was the Catalan artist’s idea.

44 Edward Alden Jewell, “One-Man Shows,” *The New York Times* (December 9, 1934): 9.

45 Salvador Dalí, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, op. cit.: 290.

46 René Crevel, *L’Esprit contre la Raison et autres écrits surréalistes* (Paris: Société Nouvelles des Éditions Pauvert, 1986), 328, reprinted in an English translation in Haim Finkelstein, *Salvador Dalí’s Art and Writing, 1927–1942: The Metamorphoses of Narcissus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 131.

47 Salvador Dalí, *The Tragic Myth of Millet’s Angelus*, 39.