(Found) Object Lessons: Dalí, Cornell, and Convulsive Cinema

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> While the merely perceived object masks the void through its neutral presence or tends to be confounded with it, the privileged object imposes itself upon us as a touchstone of the void, acting to open up a horizon between interior psychic reality and external reality on which the threat of a separation is overcome but not repressed becomes the guarantee of the freedom of play […] Never identical to itself, the object invites us to discover one by one the symbolically functioning pieces of the puzzle of our identity.
>
> - Annie Le Brun[1]

> Identity will be convulsive or will not exist.
>
> - Max Ernst[2]

According to the gallerist Julien Levy, in December 1936 Salvador Dalí and several other "artists, critics and select movie enthusiasts" attended a special screening at Levy's gallery of several surrealist short films including Joseph Cornell's *Rose Hobart* (1936).[3] The story goes that Dalí became increasingly furious as he watched Cornell's film, resulting in a confrontation with Cornell. Dalí claimed, "it is that my idea for a film is exactly that, and I was going to propose it to someone who would pay to have it made. It isn't that I could say Cornell stole my idea […] I never wrote it or told anyone, but it is as if he had stolen it."[4] Although several critics mention this incident, most of these elide the question of why Dalí was so outraged by Cornell's film, or what exactly Dalí had in mind for his own production. It is my contention that the answer to this question throws substantial light upon both Dalí's and Cornell's research and artistic output during this period, and that it has

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a considerable bearing on what they would produce afterwards. A clue is provided by Deborah Solomon, who suggests that the film is a "modified readymade" that forced "the 'found object' into film" and thus brought "a key Surrealist concept to its logical conclusion."[5] Solomon does not pursue this fascinating insight any further, but it provides us with a useful point of entry centered around surrealist research on the object, which both Dalí and Cornell were embarking upon at this time, proving integral to their later development.

The found object is associated with quotidian reality, anchoring it firmly within the everyday; but also, via notions of objective chance and the *objet trouvé*, it is connected with the unconscious desires of the person who encounters it, merging with and interrogating its objective/subjective relations. Film, like photography, has the ability to faithfully represent or document reality. However, film also offers a subjective reimagining of reality, thereby bridging the gap between subjectivity and objectivity, rather in the manner of André Breton's notion of the "communicating vessels" that link interior and exterior reality in a perpetual, dialectical movement. This also includes the ability to move from interpretation to action, and ultimately to the longed-for transformation. I argue that, although they are so different in many ways—having set out on disparate, individual artistic paths—Cornell and Dalí converge in their discovery of a common "cinematic" approach that offered a possible solution for each artist's particular concerns. This occurs most notably in their experiments with the object and film, or more accurately, in the intersections between these, and further, in the interplay between reality and representation. To be clear, although both artists worked temporarily in the medium of film, as well as writing several unrealized film scripts, it was the insights gained from working on these that influenced their work in other mediums. For Dalí, his experiments with film had a significant impact on his paintings, objects, installations, and shop windows; and for Cornell, his forays into film had a major influence on his collages, boxes, and shop windows.

As I have argued elsewhere, what is at stake here is a new kind of surrealist cinema that I term "convulsive cinema"—actually a camera-less cinema that evokes and mimics the experience of cinema but is associated with works that are not directly grounded in the materials of film.[6] These include certain surrealist objects as well as collage, assemblage, and photography. One of the key aspects that unites these mediums is a shared static and non-time-based quality that at the same time is met by a kinetic, film-like quality that implies temporal flow/becoming. This paradoxical state—in *Nadja*, Breton refers to it as "neither static nor dynamic"[7]—suggests a liminal space between stasis (inanimate) and movement (animate), shuttling between both in perpetual flux. The resulting effect is both enchanting[8] and unsettling, not unlike Freud's notion of the uncanny but also the surrealist marvelous.[9]

Central to convulsive cinema, like convulsive beauty, is the ability of a static

medium to replicate a sense of movement.[10] I suggest that a convulsive charge is created by the revelation of hidden, contradictory desires in this flickering between stasis and action, and this has the ability to alter one's perception. This is not just a mental phenomenon that responds to our thoughts and emotions but an affective one—very much centered on the body, accompanied by a powerful physical response that affects us deeply, leading to illumination and transformation. At the same time, convulsive cinema relies on the selection of content that has the potential to create "jolts and shocks,"[11] particularly in the ways in which the various elements are arranged and juxtaposed with each other, and also in the contexts/spaces in which they are encountered. Special mention must be made of the relationship between reality and representation, which is fraught with convulsive potential due to the mimetic possibilities offered by photographic mediums that so resemble represented reality that it is possible to confuse one for the other. Convulsive cinema seeks to highlight this (false) relationship, which is seen as integral to a surrealist re-envisioning of reality.

This analysis will focus principally on Dalí and his relationship with photography, collage, and film, and consider how the insights gained from his experiments with these mediums feed into an incipient "convulsive cinema." I contend that the object provides a greater opportunity for Dalí to fully realize the potential of convulsive cinema than painting or film because of the object's paradoxical (dialectical) relationship with reality and representation. Whereas film transforms reality into representation, the surrealist object problematizes this relationship by incorporating represented objects (such as an erotic post card or a photograph of a shoe) or/and/with "real" (natural or man-made) objects that are taken directly from quotidian reality (such as human hair or in the case of Dalí's *Rainy Taxi* [1938], to which I shall return, a car). When the represented or "real" objects are combined in artworks, they retain something of their former existence so that a convulsive relationship results from their union. As Johanna Malt observes, the surrealist object "uses pre-existing real objects with their own form, and reconfigures them [...] it also contributes to the uncanny power [...] which often estranges the already familiar."[12] Although several scholars have written about the influence of collage, photography, and film on Dalí and Cornell, what particularly interests me are the intersections between these mediums and the object, and the interplay between reality and representation that in turn raises questions about the relationship between exterior and interior reality, illusion and vision, perception and thought.[13]

To investigate the nature of the cinematic influences on Dalí's work and its relationship with convulsive cinema, I will discuss photography, collage, and film, and assess how far these mediums are able to articulate Dalí's intentions and desires. Secondly, I will explore Dalí's "turn" to the surrealist object and consider how the object builds upon his earlier experiments and developing conception of a more fully realized version of convulsive cinema; I examine this most closely in my analysis of

Dalí's *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically* (1931). I will also briefly consider Dalí's work with objects in different environments: installations, exhibitions and window displays, all of which offer new possibilities for convulsive cinema. Finally, I consider Dalí's 1938 installation, *Rainy Taxi*, and briefly survey some of his other installations, exhibitions, and shop windows which further develop his connection to convulsive cinema, with far-reaching implications for conceptualizing the object's spatial relations in a cinematic/theatrical setting.

The Camera Eye: Documenting "Real Facts"

Much of Dalí's thinking and writing on photography and film spans the period 1927-29, coinciding with his burgeoning interest in Surrealism and eventual entry into the Paris surrealist group shortly after the screening of *Un Chien andalou* (1929). It is not my intention here to trace the various stages of Dalí's experiments in any detail but simply to provide a rough sketch of the insights and techniques gleaned from his engagement (both theoretical and practical) with photography and film.[14] For Dalí, photography and film served two main purposes: they were a means of objectively documenting and recording what he referred to as "the most humble and immediate facts" or "small things."[15] They also encouraged a new way of looking that chimed with the surrealist notion of transforming one's vision and seeing the world anew with the "savage eye" Breton invokes in the opening line of *Surrealism and Painting* (1928).[16]

Meditating on "small things," Dalí writes in 1929, "these facts, instead of being conventional, fabricated, arbitrary, gratuitous, are real facts, or appear to be real enough, and as such they are enigmatic, incoherent, irrational, absurd, inexplicable."[17] Shunning traditional poetic approaches to the depiction of the image, such as metaphor, Dalí attempts to transpose in as naturalistic a manner as possible "that unlimited fantasy which is born of things in themselves."[18] It is useful to recall the influence of Breton's *Nadja* (1928), which Dalí also acknowledges:[19]

> It concerns facts of quite unverifiable intrinsic value […] [having] absolutely unexpected, violently fortuitous character […] it concerns facts belonging to the order of plain notation, but which on each occasion present all the appearance of a signal, without our being able to say precisely what it signals.[20]

Breton's documentary approach must have struck Dalí in its charge to faithfully record the "facts," which in themselves appear to have no "unverifiable intrinsic value" but harbor some mysterious, hidden and possibly prophetic meaning.[21] With their faithful representations of familiar objects in recognizable settings, the work of painters like Giorgio de Chirico and René Magritte offered Dalí a pictorial equivalent of this notion; but in the case of both artists, the relationship between these

objects is often unfamiliar or bizarre, relating back to Breton's championing of Pierre Reverdy's aesthetic in the first manifesto (1924) that became a cornerstone of Surrealism: the disorienting effects (*dépaysement*) involved in the creation of an image born from the "juxtaposition of two more or less distant realities."[22] The most famous example of this approach is, of course, Lautréamont's "chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissecting-table,"[23] which matter-of-factly records the meeting of these familiar objects (umbrella and sewing machine); but their pairing and the setting are unfamiliar, bizarre, and perverse, causing *dépaysement*. However, the Freudian and sexual symbolism of the scene—connoting a violent sexual encounter or castration—also leads us to experience it as convulsive. The use of the phrase "beautiful as" encourages us to connect these seemingly unrelated items and construct not only a convulsive image but a convulsive narrative, which we are meant to accept as "beautiful."[24] As we shall see with the paintings Dalí produces after *Un Chien andalou*, there is a greater degree of narrativization in his work, forcing us to see and accept the connections between the myriad elements as natural, as real, thereby deepening the convulsive affect/effect. Dalí never tired of reminding us that his own method, in his painting and other mediums, was a "pure photography of the mind" involving a meticulous realism or "concrete irrationality" that is not a retreat from the real into "some Never-neverland of the imagination but is just the reverse, it is about an intensification of the real."[25]

According to Dalí, in addition to faithful documentation, photography and film also offer a new way of looking. As he remarks, "knowing how to look is a way of inventing."[26] However, this is still very much concerned with the objective recording of the "facts" mentioned earlier—transforming them through various techniques such as close-up or forced perspective, or employing editing devices like montage and dissolves to evoke movement, ellipsis, and a greater sense of narrative. We can see many of these techniques in early paintings such as *Los esfuerzos estériles* (Little Ashes, 1928), *The First Days of Spring* (1929), *Illumined Pleasures* (1929), and *The Lugubrious Game* (1929). Other scholars have examined these links in detail, and so I will keep my remarks to a minimum. What I want to emphasize is that all these techniques remain faithful to the idea of recording "facts" and representing a recognizable reality that at the same time calls into question how this reality is represented, ultimately interrogating any notion of a unitary reality. This in turn leads each of us to scrutinize and challenge the relationship we construct ourselves between perception and reality, or as Dalí puts it, "may our internal reality be strong enough to correct our external reality."[27]

Un Chien andalou: *Moving Pictures*

The experience of working on *Un Chien andalou* seems to have encouraged a greater cinematic influence on Dalí's art. In the paintings just mentioned, there is a pronounced dialectical interplay of stasis and movement that is largely achieved

through montage and the incorporation of narrative elements, including temporal duration: the figures appear to be beset by unresolved conflicts, and in a process of transformation. The poses of those figures—walking, running, stretching out a hand, caressing another figure, or presented in bodily fragments that appear to be in a state of flux—constantly suggest movement. These contrast with other figures or parts of figures who are, for instance, sitting or standing, as well as the various static objects that populate the pictures. They resemble "moving pictures," despite being contained by the painted "screen." As with *Un Chien andalou,* the paintings are filled with erotic, disturbing, mysterious, and violent material juxtaposed with ordinary, often banal scenes that deliberately defy any logical explanation. Dalí's realistic technique binds all these elements together, creating a convincing verisimilitude in the manner of a *trompe l'oeil*. The importance of this emphasis on the creation of recognizable and believable elements of reality—at the level of *mise-en-scène*, characters and actions—is crucial to establishing an experience that is propitious to transformation, whereby fantasy is perceived as real. As Breton writes in the first manifesto: "What is admirable about the fantastic is that there is no longer anything fantastic: there is only the real."[28] The narrative technique in Dalí's paintings encourages us to link together the various "characters" and "props" associated with them into meaningful "scenes" with convulsive results. The audience is made to make sense of—and ultimately accept—these disturbing, violent, erotic scenes.

Dalí's exposure to the collage novels of Max Ernst deepened his understanding of temporal duration and narrative.[29] In Ernst, once again, the poetry is created through the juxtaposition of unrelated elements rather than "poetic effects" (metonymy rather than metaphor), particularly through the repetition of certain images or motifs that are mysterious, violent or erotic, encouraging the reader to move beyond the surface (manifest) content to the deeper (latent) meanings. Like Ernst, Dalí also combined collage with painting, but Dalí is distinct in that his refined technique often makes it impossible to detect whether the image is painted or collaged. This ambiguity and indifferentiation, a hallmark of convulsive cinema, relates to the confusion between representation and reality. Ironically, the collage elements that promise a more "real" connection with reality are simply simulations, just like the paint strokes on the canvas. Interestingly, in some of Dalí's early paintings, he incorporates sand, small stones, and other found objects from quotidian reality, further underscoring the gap between reality and its representations. As soon as the "real" objects are combined into the work, they become something else.[30] As I will explore with the objects, despite becoming representations, the elements taken directly from everyday reality never lose the trace of their former existence—they move back and forth between both representation and reality as convulsive cinema.

Beyond the Screen: The Object

The object offered Dalí a way to move beyond the world of representation

and intervene directly in reality. In a 1933 letter to Breton, Dalí provides us with a remarkable account of the "birth" of the surrealist object that literally emerges from a cubist collage, dropping to the ground to begin its "prenatal life":

> All these larval newsprints will not afterwards do other than live, develop and grow in the very entrails of the picture […] It [the picture] hardly survives unless as an umbilical cord, and as long as it is to support the many props, ingredients, objects to which it has just given birth. One can then make out real stones, real shoes. All these objects and ingredients which at the beginning of the *papier collé*, closely adhered to the picture, were now increasingly hanging from it in an independent, even loose manner, getting to be less and less stable and less stuck. We are already at the point where the shoes and stones dangle from the picture by a string. One perceives then that the picture has had it, that it is ready to give up the rest of its life, that its life is hanging by a thread; the object physically drops from the picture and begins its prenatal life out of it.[31]

This idea of the liberated object that moves beyond representation into reality is closely linked with Dalí's notion of "*being-objects*," which I consider later.

Breton's and Dalí's writings, as well as those of the Czech Surrealist group—in particular, Jindřich Heisler, Karel Teige and Toyen—are especially influential in the surrealist object's theoretical development. Surrealists and commentators alike generally regard surrealist objects as both concrete interventions in reality and dialectically linked to unconscious processes, such as dreams, desire, and so on; objects are, in fact, material verification of the inner workings of these internal processes. In many ways, objects provide an ideal example of what Breton had been arguing in *The Communicating Vessels* (1932), with his focus on uniting dialectically the antinomies associated with the inner and outer worlds/realities but also—and this is crucial—his desire for the object to directly intervene in reality as an agent of change and transformation. In one of Breton's earliest mentions of the surrealist object, his "Introduction to the Discourse on the Paucity of Reality" (1924), he puts forward the proposal "to fabricate, in so far as possible, certain objects which are approached only in dreams, and which seem no more useful than enjoyable."[32] He recounts a dream involving his discovery of a strange book/statue at a market, which "upon waking, was sorry not to find it near me."[33] Clearly, Breton seeks to materialize (concretize) his subjective desire, a longing picked up again in the same essay when he poses the question: "Must poetic creations assume that tangible character of extending, strangely, the limits of so-called reality?"[34]

Dalí enthusiastically endorsed Breton's ideas relating to the surrealist object, recognizing how the object might be the ideal vehicle for his own concerns and

obsessions. Objects offered Dalí the opportunity to explore further his theory of critical paranoia, which he had already developed in relation to painting and film.[35] However, the objects that appear in his paintings, although rendered in such a way as to appear real and to have cinematic properties, are still merely representations that are fixed to the canvas and inert. Despite film's photographic realism and the ability to represent objects in motion, film images, too, are confined to the cinema screen. As we saw in the 1933 letter to Breton, Dalí's evocative description of collage giving birth to the objects into three-dimensional space provides a blueprint for a notion of a convulsive cinema beyond the screen—one that embraces and trespasses into quotidian reality.

It should be noted that, despite Dalí's positive reception of Breton's theories on the object, the artist was keen to emphasize the "active" nature of the creative process rather than rely on "passive" states like the dream and automatism. This followed Breton's infamous backlash aimed at those artists, including Dalí, who created the first series of surrealist objects that appeared in the third issue of *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* under the banner of "symbolically functioning objects."[36] Breton criticized a number of these objects for being, in his view, too overdetermined, particularly in their intentional inclusion of "latent" sexual content (which "weakens the tendency to dramatization and magnification that the psychic censor makes in the opposite case").[37] Breton also suggested the objects were too personal for others to appreciate their meanings. For Breton, the object is constructed in the mind, automatically, and its latent meaning only becomes clear after it has been created; by contrast, Dalí felt that "by a paranoiac and active character, it would be possible (simultaneously with automatism and other passive states) to systematize confusion and thereby contribute to a total discrediting of the world of reality."[38] Although Dalí mentions "automatism and passive states" and was certainly impressed by Breton and Paul Éluard's simulations of certain mental disorders in *The Immaculate Conception* (1930), one feels that this was simply political maneuvering at this stage because of Breton's greater standing in the group, as Dalí would go on to assert later the importance of his more "active" model. Indeed, as Haim Finkelstein argues, Dalí's technique was not "merely a technique for 'forcing' the inspiration but a whole new outlook on the world of visible reality, a manner of accommodating reality and its objects to one's own desires and obsessions."[39] What this disagreement also highlights is a general change within the surrealist movement of moving away from dream and automatism "to an active soliciting of the mind to discharge the images hidden in the unconscious."[40] It is also important to emphasize the critical and political ramifications of Dalí's theory, which would lead to the idea of creating a concrete intervention in reality and transforming life. This again is actually very similar to Breton's notion of the "communicating vessels"—directly intervening in reality as an agent of change and transformation and, of course, fulfilling the surrealist credo to "transform the world" (Marx) and "change life"

(Rimbaud).[41]

Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically, *1931*

Dalí's *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically* (1931) has garnered a lot of critical attention, particularly because it is one of the first surrealist objects, and also because it represents a breakthrough in terms of fulfilling much of what Dalí had written about in terms of a concrete intervention in reality and illustration of his paranoiac critical method (Fig. 1).[42] I would argue that much of this has to do with how his object navigates between certain binaries/roles: reality and representation, and also the past meanings Dalí attached to it versus the "new" (present) role or meanings the object has accrued. These depend very much on the context. For example, in *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically*, we must navigate the original context/s of the shoe as an object of utility or commodity versus its status as an art object in a gallery, as well as the difference between Dalí's reading of and connection with his object and ours.

Dawn Ades observes that *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically* "seems more like a compendium of sexual references running from fetishism to pornography,"[43] and indeed, we cannot ignore the shoe's obvious fetishistic connotations, which have been noted by both Sigmund Freud and Richard von Krafft-Ebing. Dalí is clearly aware of these references and deliberately and consciously utilizes these cultural signifiers of sexuality, fetishism, and perversion as a form of provocation, but I will return to these readings later. For the time being, I wish to avoid the obvious sexual and biographical meanings on which nearly all commentators have remarked—despite Dalí encouraging just such a reading—and consider instead how this object takes us back to the artist's obsessive documenting of "facts" and "small things." Dalí relies on metonymy rather than metaphor in his arrangement of the elements (objects and figures), and it is in the arrangement and the chain of associations that the meanings are divulged. Let us consider again the relationship between representation and reality. Dalí provides a full description of his object as follows:

> A woman's shoe, inside of which a glass of warm milk has been placed, in the center of a soft paste in the color of excrement. The mechanism consists of the dipping in the milk of a sugar lump, on which there is a drawing of a shoe, so that the dissolving of the sugar, and consequently of the image of the shoe, may be observed. Several accessories (pubic hairs glued to a sugar lump, an erotic little photograph) complete the object which is accompanied by a box of spare sugar lumps and a special spoon used for stirring lead pellets inside the shoe.[44]

Fig. 1. Salvador Dalí, *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically*, 1931, The Art Institute of Chicago © Art Institute of Chicago /Through prior gift of Mrs Gilbert W. Chapman/Bridgeman Images © Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, DACS 2022

We are presented, then, with a number of found "real" objects—shoe, sugar cubes, a glass of milk and a spoon. The erotic photograph and drawings of the shoes are representations, and it is difficult to account for the claw-like object. These elements are connected to a mechanism and base that are constructed, meaning that technically speaking, this is predominantly an assisted readymade, like Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel* (1913).[45] The construction of Dalí's object is convulsive in the way in which the real and represented objects are combined dialectically. For example, the drawings of the shoe contrasted with the "actual" or "real" shoe present us with a paradoxical and disorienting situation: which is the real shoe? The common-sense response would have us reply that it is the larger, "actual" found shoe, but we cannot ignore the fact that this shoe is now part of something greater and has transformed into something else—an art object/art-ifice. The drawings are perhaps easier to accept as representations, as we can tell they are signs or simulations that represent the shoe; again, it is the encounter or combination of seeing both shoes together that creates the confusion. I feel that this is exactly the response Dalí is after: systematizing confusion and discrediting any single reality, forcing us to question how we interpret reality.[46]

The implied movement of the mechanism, which some commentators have compared to gallows, adds to the convulsive quality of Dalí's object.[47] There is no doubt that the impetus for *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically* was Alberto Giacometti's sculpture, *Suspended Ball* (1930).[48] *Suspended Ball* also produces ambivalent, unconscious feelings of attraction and repulsion, achieved by the suggestion of an erotic encounter between the two objects that stand in for the male and female sexual organs; Dalí waxed lyrically over its ability to provoke unconscious desires and erotic fantasies in his 1931 article, "Surrealist Objects."[49] Although *Suspended Ball* could be described as an example of convulsive cinema in its own right, Dalí recognized that a convulsive charge would be greater if he were to combine real objects with represented objects. He also simulates movement through the mechanism he constructs and the instructions he provides. However it is the fact that this movement is only suggested that is most important; it is "neither static nor dynamic." In this sense, the temporal dimension—implied by the possibility of movement and hence becoming—and potential for narrative (what has occurred prior to the event? What is happening now? What will happen next?) is both inferred and delayed. This tension is productive in its ability to provide the "jolts and shocks" fundamental to surrealist practice.[50] Robert Short's comments on Magritte's paintings, which he convincingly argues work better as static rather than moving images, are relevant here. Short writes that in order to experience the convulsive spark or shock, it must derive "from the tension between the suggestion of movement or of a transformation in the image, and the fact of its fixity."[51] This is because the paintings have to do with ideas and not processes, and in Magritte's enigmas, "the transmutation of one object into another—the challenge of one

quality in the world of appearances by another—is a movement of our thought, not a movement in the entities themselves. If there is process—narrative even—it is an internal one."[52] In a parallel with my comments on Giacometti's sculpture, Magritte's paintings are ultimately *representations*, despite their other convulsive qualities, and implied through the dialectic of stasis and movement. Dalí's *Surrealist Object* goes even further in its play with representation and reality, the static/dynamic qualities, and the obvious personal connections associated with the found objects that make up the final work. I will take up this point about personal associations a bit later in this essay.

Intermission – Object Lessons in the (Convulsive) Cinema: The Film as Found Object

I want us to recall the incident at the screening of *Rose Hobart* in 1936, which occurs chronologically between the creation of Dalí's *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically* and *Rainy Taxi* (1938), which I will consider next. Many of the Surrealists were in town for MoMA's landmark exhibition, "Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism," including Dalí, who also had a solo show of his work at Levy's gallery where the film was screened. Both Cornell and Dalí were included in the MoMA show: five pictures by Dalí and one object by Cornell, reflecting their very different statuses. In fact, Dalí had just appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine—he was *that* famous! When Dalí disrupted the screening and accused Cornell of stealing his idea, Cornell "protested over and over again, 'why, why when he is such a great man and I am nobody at all?'"[53] Why indeed?

Many readers will be familiar with *Rose Hobart*, Cornell's re-imagining of George Melford's jungle melodrama, *East of Borneo* (1931). Cornell took the 16mm reels of film that made up Melford's film, which he discovered in a bargain basement warehouse in New Jersey, and re-cut and spliced them together in a completely different order. He added some other material including unidentified footage of a crowd staring upwards, shots of the sun, and passages of clouds passing in front of the sun, culminating in a solar eclipse. To finish, Cornell dispensed with the original soundtrack, added a new one, and projected the film through a blue filter at a slower speed than the original. These changes reduced the original film's running time from seventy-five minutes to nineteen minutes.

As I have mentioned, Solomon likens Cornell's film to a "modified readymade," adding that Cornell is responsible for "forcing the idea of the 'found object' into film and thus bringing a key Surrealist concept to its logical conclusion."[54] One might describe *Rose Hobart* as a "found film" in the sense that Cornell literally found the reels of film that made up *East of Borneo*. It can be considered a "modified" or more accurately a "rectified" readymade because Cornell alters the original found object in various ways.

When Solomon refers to "bringing a key Surrealist concept to its logical conclusion,"[55] the explanation is not as cut and dried as her previous comments.

She continues, "Cornell's movie-collage was so innovative that not for thirty years would there be anything like it: *Rose Hobart* initiates a genre of film—the so called 'compilation film,' that flourished among experimental filmmakers in the 1960s, and that Dalí had given thought to the very same innovation […]"[56] There is not the space here to examine the compilation film in detail, but it involves editing together and creating a new story from footage from various sources. Compilation films had been around as early as 1903.[57] The idea of creating a text from found fragments was of course also nothing new, especially in the realm of collage and assemblage. However, Cornell's decision to adapt this collage idea to film *was* new, what Cornell referred to as a "tapestry in action"[58] inaugurating "collage film" or "found-footage film" and influencing many future avant-garde filmmakers such as Stan Brakhage, Ken Jacobs, Jonas Mekas, Chris Marker, and Bill Morrison.[59] As for Dalí having conceived the same idea, perhaps Solomon was thinking of the artist's unrealized film script, *The Surrealist Mysteries of New York* (1935), which shares some similarities with *Rose Hobart*. Like Cornell, Dalí's idea was to base his film on another film, the popular silent crime serial film *The Exploits of Elaine* (1914), screened in Europe under the title *The Mysteries of New York*. Whilst sharing some generic similarities—crime, horror and the supernatural—Dalí's script also increasingly recycles many of the bizarre and impossible scenarios from his earlier films and paintings. In one scene, for example, the main character, an escaped medium, rips off the hand of the leader of a secret organization as he shuts the door on her, and ants and bees emerge from a hole in the palm, now trapped in the door.[60] This scene is almost identical to one in *Un Chien andalou* and also present in many of his paintings, poems, and objects.

Interestingly, the heroines in *The Surrealist Mysteries of New York*, *The Exploits of Elaine*, and *East of Borneo*/*Rose Hobart* share some traits as well: all young, beautiful, strong women on personal missions. In *East of Borneo*, Linda, played by Rose Hobart, is on a quest to rescue her husband. Cornell dispenses with this plot and only retains the shots featuring Hobart with some added material. As Michael Richardson suggests, it is not difficult to see *East of Borneo* as "a very strange film, with a strangeness that is quite independent of, and is not exhausted by, Cornell's transformation of it."[61] In my view, Cornell's transformation conforms to surrealist notions of woman as muse, object of desire, and conduit of unbounded desire, unsettling and questioning conventional notions of gender identity and moving away from object to subject of desire. In fact it is not clear whether for Cornell this transformation is a renewed form of a patriarchal will-to-mastery as fantasy or fetish, or is a kind of fan's idealized homage or film-portrait, celebrating and preserving her star-image and performance, and/or is a figure of identification, a desire to be her.

To return to Solomon's point about "bringing a key Surrealist concept to its logical conclusion": it is clear from Dalí's research on the surrealist object that the object had more convulsive potential than his work in other mediums for the

reasons I've discussed in relation to *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically* (1931), such as the incorporation of found "real" objects and represented objects, and the disputed status of the completed work as liminal, neither art nor found object/s. I should make mention, too, of the personal dimension of the objects Dalí selected for this artwork. We know next to nothing about where these objects came from, but there are some clues as to why they were selected and their relation to Dalí's oedipal anxieties, which he takes up in his book *The Tragic Myth of Millet's L'Angelus: Paranoiac Critical Interpretation* (1963). Steven Harris explores this connection convincingly, suggesting that there is "a gendering of the elements that constitute the object, and a blurring of that gendering within a fetishistic economy," which introduces a further set of convulsive oppositions: female/male and feminine/masculine.[62] The shoe and glass of milk are receptacles, associated psychoanalytically with the mother and castration complex. The shoe is a substitute for "the missing phallus of the mother, which compensates for one's own threatened penis in this economy—especially as it is likely to be dissolved in the warm milk of the mother," intimating "an undecidability of sexual difference, as one hovers at the edge of entry into the symbolic order."[63] Harris also notes that the shoe is convex, associated with the phallus and fetishistically may compensate the potential castration anxiety, but also concave, and as a receptacle "dissolves its own image in a fluid that itself is ambiguously gendered,"[64] as milk (female) and sperm (male). Dalí analyzes the action of the sugar cube, which is stamped with the image of the shoe, "dipping in the milk" in some detail in *The Tragic Myth of Millet's L'Angelus*, where he works through a series of images, memories, and associations around milk, resulting in "both terror and comfort, the loss of self and the fear of being devoured by the mother."[65] Dalí's own analysis leaves us in no doubt as to its oedipal nature: "The submersion of the man in the *Angelus*, in other words, of *me* in the maternal milk, can only be interpreted […] as an expression of the fear of being absorbed, annihilated, eaten by the mother."[66] Dalí also associates the mother image with Gala, his wife, who is seen ambivalently, on the one hand as a monstrous devouring mantis that is related to the terror of the sexual act and in his belief that it would lead to his total annihilation; and on the other, seen as a comforting, maternal presence, rescuing and curing Dalí from his anxieties. We again recognize in Dalí's object not only an exemplary form of convulsive cinema but also a fascinating study in convulsive identity. In other words, this work, like all of Dalí's work, can be read as an extension of his identity: so many masks or displaced selves that are always as much self-portraits of their creator as portraits of the fictitious and real personae of his paintings, objects, films, etc. Identity, then, is both sought and submerged, and displayed and displaced, in the creation of these portraits; the haunted self is the place where the I and the Other converge and conflict like ghostly palimpsests. Claude Cahun's remark, "Under this mask, another mask, I will never be finished lifting all these faces"[67] seems an appropriate expression of such a quest. Ultimately, it is the question Breton poses in

Nadja: "Who am I?" and "Whom do I haunt?"[68]

Solomon's point about "bringing a key Surrealist concept to its logical conclusion" could also be referring to the notion of the found object as a *trouvaille*, which Breton links with the marvelous and convulsive beauty: "What is delightful is the dissimilarity existing between the object wished for and *the object found*. The *trouvaille*, whether artistic, scientific, philosophic or as useless as anything, is enough to undo beauty of everything beside it."[69] For Cornell there is no doubt that *the trouvaille* could be related to the reels of film that would provide the source material for *Rose Hobart*, which he discovers through a "classic" chance encounter, allied with another key surrealist concept: *objective chance*. Perhaps there is a sense of jealousy here, too, on Dalí's part, possibly recalling Breton's criticisms of the first surrealist objects, including Dalí's *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically*: "No doubt in the end such objects are too specific in conception, too personal as they are, will always lack the astonishing power of suggestion with which some nearly ordinary objects by chance find themselves endowed."[70] Cornell's findings can be considered "nearly ordinary" in the sense that this "forgettable" jungle melodrama could be "trash" in terms of bad taste, or in the fact that, when he discovered the footage, it was unwanted, discarded, and in a state of decay. It literally became a "found film" when Cornell discovered it, or the film can be seen as "finding" Cornell, offering a solution or providing a missing element of a puzzle, as with the objects found by Breton and Giacometti, and which Breton elaborates on in *Mad Love*. Maybe it was simply that Dalí was frustrated by Cornell's ability to "effortlessly" transform such a lowly object into such a treasure? Or the way Cornell brought to life the static photographic portrait, creating a convulsive, still-moving portrait of Rose Hobart? Or was it that Cornell's film was a variation on Dalí's double images, the cannibalized source film (*East of Borneo*) haunting the re-edited version Cornell created as a kind of palimpsest, barely covering—and, in fact, constantly reminding us of—its degraded source and status as a fiction (representation) through its elliptical editing and absence of narrative? One gets the impression that Cornell did not recognize his achievement. And in fact it turns out that for Cornell, it was not the solution he sought—not in this form.

Rainy Taxi, *1938*

Alyce Mahon describes the debut of Dalí's *Rainy Taxi* on the opening night of the 1938 "Exposition intérnationale du surréalisme" at the Galerie Beaux-Arts in Paris in these terms:

> That night, invitees clad in evening dress stepped out of their cars to be greeted by a parody of their bourgeois selves – Salvador Dalí's *Rainy Taxi* installation, an automobile with headlights on, driven by a goggle-wearing mannequin whose head was helmeted in shark

> teeth, behind whom sat a glamorous blonde mannequin-lady with an omelette on her lap and a sewing machine by her side, surrounded by lettuce and chicory heads […] the taxi interior was drenched with "rain" (thanks to perforated pipes of water on the car ceiling), and infested with two hundred live Burgundy snails.[71]

We see a further development of Dalí's conception of convulsive cinema in this installation, now the introduction of a "real" setting (Fig. 2). The installation looked like a "real" car from a distance; one can imagine that the darkness of a winter night in Paris only added to the confusion. With *Rainy Taxi*, the object has come a long way from the pages of Dalí's poems or the surfaces of his paintings, collages, or cinema screen, and even from the confines of the gallery space. This maneuver is already convulsive in the way it upsets audience expectations. The public had grown accustomed to the strange objects the Surrealists had served up in many exhibitions mounted across Europe and in America during the 1930s; they had even become fashionable and re-commodified into commercial art objects, drained of their subversive meanings. Now that subversion was literally outside the gallery, in the street.

Finkelstein writes, "what makes this scene so memorable is the fact that, rather than outside, the rainstorm rages inside the taxi […] space has been transformed in a manner analogous to the displacement occurring in dreams."[72] This "interchangeability of exterior and interior,"[73] as Finkelstein puts it, is extremely inventive and mirrors or inverts what we've said about Dalí's installation being exterior to the gallery space rather than displayed in the gallery's interior. The mannequins, in place of humans, continue this notion of interchangeability, as do the snails, vegetables, omelette and sewing machine. Defamiliarizing our usual expectations, this boundary confusion adds to the convulsive jolts and shocks. Twelve frogs were also to appear (or did appear and quickly disappeared), and the woman was supposed to wear a dress displaying Jean-François Millet's *L'Angélus*, but for whatever reason this was never realized. We should also mention the convulsive quality created by the immobile taxi that still evokes movement because the role they usually play in picking up passengers.

Breton had originally opposed Dalí's installation, but the rest of the surrealist group was enthusiastic. It fitted perfectly with the design of the show, which was carefully curated to create a "complete environment, so that the works, rather than being presented as isolated oddities, are integrated into a transformed and marvelous setting."[74] In fact, Duchamp was tasked with the role of "Generator-Arbiter" of the show, with Dalí and Ernst acting as "special advisors"; thus the sense of a "totalizing" experience and "complete environment" was very much a collective effort. However, it was in keeping with the lessons Dalí had learned over the previous years as he began more and more to work in "real" environments,

Fig. 2. Salvador Dalí, *Rainy Taxi* (Detail), 1938, Dallas Museum of Art, Gift of the Junior Associates and an anonymous donor/Bridgeman Images © Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, DACS 2022

transforming them in ways only he could.

Special mention must also be made of the giant, elaborate installation he created in 1939 for the New York World's Fair (Fig. 3). The *Dream of Venus* pavilion featured many of Dalí's trademark images and themes, articulated through a range of mediums in highly imaginative ways (Fig. 4). Particularly in his use of "live" models in fantastic costumes, mingling with figures he created, the pavilion afforded a new take on convulsive cinema. Representation and reality were again in a constant dance

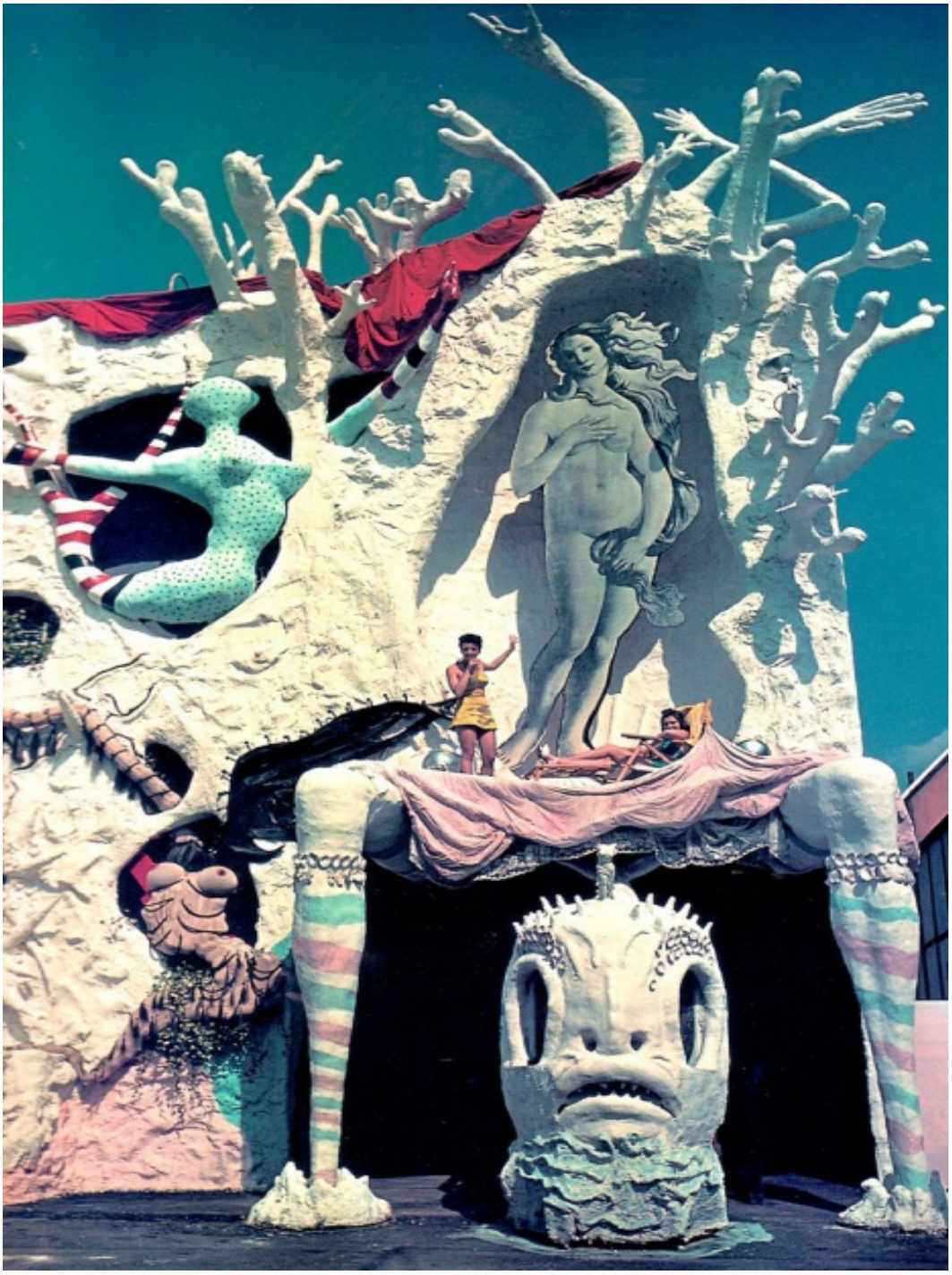

Fig. 3. Salvador Dalí, Façade of the "Dream of Venus," Venus Pavilion, New York Fair 1939, photograph by Eric Schaal © Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres, 2022 © Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, DACS 2022

Fig. 4. Salvador Dalí, "Venus dreaming," Venus Pavilion, New York Fair 1939, photograph by Eric Schaal © Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres, 2022 © Salvador Dalí Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, DACS 2022

of interchangeability and disorientation. The play with "live" models and represented figures, especially the mannequins, built on Dalí's experiments and writings on the object. According to Finkelstein, "the ultimate ideal, in Dalí's view is the 'fusion' or the 'formation of unity' with the object."[75] Earlier attempts to create different categories of objects necessarily fall back on a division between subject (artist) and object (surrealist object); therefore it is no surprise that Dalí draws on Freud's notions of projection, introjection and incorporation. What all three theories share is the switching between something that is incorporated from the outside world into the subject, cannibalizing it (incorporation, introjection) and expelling something that the subject refuses to recognize or rejects in oneself (projection). An excremental

"other" or "second self" is created or *objectified* through mannequins and live models, which become extensions or doubles of the self—or conversely, through the use of costumes and masks, whereby objects hide, transform, or merge with the self, becoming "inanimate objects." In Finkelstein's words,

> the perception by man of the objective 'other' depends on an alienation from himself. As the *être-objets* essay makes clear, this is a two-way action in which one can objectify one's essence by making oneself into an object—an 'other.' On the other hand, another person who is given special characteristics through the use of masks and costumes, is being manipulated as an object, becoming a projected image of the person performing this '*fonctionnement*.'[76]

Through elaborate costumes, Dalí's own experiments with his identity is the stuff of legend, none moreso than his infamous address to the 1936 International Surrealist Exhibition of London, when he nearly suffocated in a diving suit. Another of Dalí's "*being-objects"* was the "flower headed woman," a young woman (Sheila Legge) whose face was hidden behind a bouquet of roses, and who circulated at the same exhibition in London. Far from realizing some final unity or merging with the other, these performances reveal the elasticity of identity configured as *object*-ification, transgressing the borders between human/object and akin to Georges Bataille's concept of *informe*, open to constant metamorphosis.

In many ways, *Dalí's Dream of Venus* became the genesis for the Dalí Theatre-Museum in the artist's birthplace, Figueres. Dalí again created a "complete environment" on a gargantuan scale, within which were myriad "micro" environments, and within those, further installations containing paintings, drawings, sculptures, engravings, holograms, stereoscopes and photography by Dalí—all forming "the world's largest surrealist object," according to the museum website.[77] It is also Dalí's final resting place, as he is buried beneath the museum; rather than read this as a suturing or synthesis of subject/object relations, it is perhaps more useful to see this as a kind of heterotopia.[78] Foucault refers to the cemetery and museum as exemplars of this type of heterotopic space, and the Theatre-Museum functions as both.[79]

Clearly Dalí's museum is a space both to explore his artworks and also to commune with or celebrate the man behind the work. One notes the uncanny feeling of the ever-present specter of Dalí, still pulling the strings and manipulating our responses. The meanings attached to the museum are very much dependent on the original vision Dalí had for the museum but also on the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, who continue to manage the museum and promote Dalí and his work in a positive way. Foucault would no doubt suggest that this attempt to sacralize the man, his work and the museum is utopian in the ways in which it attempts to demarcate

"correct" meanings attached to each, challenging the illusion that no place can exist in a timeless vacuum, whereby its meanings are frozen for all eternity. He would also point out that these meanings are dependent on the various discourses by which the visitors are governed. However, it could be argued that, Dalí's ghostly presence is again everywhere, shuttling between the various oppositions we have identified (absent/present; dead/alive, object/subject, representation/reality etc.) (re)staging his (convulsive) identity as the ultimate "*being-object.*"

Object/Subject Lessons: From Convulsive Cinema to Convulsive identity

If *Rose Hobart* was not Cornell's "solution," how can we regard his discovery of the *East of Borneo* footage as a *trouvaille*? To answer that, we have only to look at the box assemblages he began to create roughly around the time of the altercation with Dalí. He could neither draw nor paint, and although he continued to make collages throughout his life, his true calling was the box assemblage. Most Cornell scholars agree that the date of Cornell's decision to focus on the box was 1936, around the time of the Dalí incident.[80] They point to an interview in which he suggests that his inspiration came from two encounters whilst travelling through his native New York: one in which he saw compasses in a shop window, and a second encounter later that afternoon when he discovered some boxes in another window. Cornell relates that "everything can be used in a lifetime, can't it […] Halfway home on the train that night, I thought of the compasses and the boxes, it occurred to me to put the two together."[81] What is fascinating about Cornell's description is its convulsive quality: 1) the static objects in the immobile shop windows, which already contain the idea for encasing his subjects and objects in his future boxes; contrasted with 2) the shop-windows viewed in motion, as he walks by; and 3) his reflections on how he might combine these, sitting in a carriage, in the speeding train. All of these qualities would find their way into his boxes because of his penchant for static images that evoked movement rather than moving images. Indeed many of Cornell's objects are intended to move and be manipulated. That may be another (convulsive) tension: resting, say, on a shelf or in a museum, and their potential for action (flowing sand, bouncing balls etc.).

Like Dalí, Cornell moved from collage to film, but there is a sense that the figures Cornell idealized in his many portraits of stars and other lesser-known figures escape him through movement, editing, and the inevitable closure denoted by the movie's closing scene: "The End." It is interesting to read Cornell's article, "Enchanted Wanderer: Excerpt from a Journey Album for Hedy Lamarr," that appeared in *View* (December 1941/January 1942), where Cornell begins by focusing on the power of film to capture "the gaze of a human countenance in its prison of silver light," but everywhere he reminds us of the subject's agency and movement, ending with an image of Lamarr slipping "effortlessly into the role of a painter herself […] le chasseur d'images."[82] Imprisoned object becomes liberated subject,

just as Rose Hobart does. On the other hand, the box presents Cornell with an opportunity to ensnare his subjects in a single frame, the glass front on many of his prison-like boxes sealing in the occupant in an eternal present. Paradoxically, Cornell may place other objects or other images of the subject in the same box, evoking movement and the unfolding of time, but the scene remains frozen like a *memento mori*.

Cornell continued to make collages and films but the boxes preoccupied him, especially those that that were memorials to various Hollywood stars, dancers, young women, androgynous boys, and others, and represented the perfect vehicle for his convulsive cinema and convulsive identity. He could gaze upon the objects of his desire at will, as well as identify with or become one with them. Like Dalí's, his portraits are extensions of himself, and like the "*being-objects"* become (self) portraits of the creator: he inhabits them as they inhabit him.

I think it took some time for Dalí to recognize that he had already discovered his solution very early on, but he kept refining his version of convulsive cinema, becoming more adept at combining reality and representation so that we constantly question reality. Dalí draws attention to the artifice attached to representation and its inability to ever fully reflect or capture any single notion of reality; it is always contested and in flux.[83] Roger Rothman writes of "a momentary sensation of an almost imperceptible yet unbridgeable gap between reality and representation" in some of Dalí's works in the mid-1930s that are almost too perfect in their realism. The representation or "copy…'pricks' precisely because it is so perfect (both objective and precise)."[84] The irony is that what is represented appears almost uncannily real to the point that its status as representation (simulacrum) resurfaces, convulsively, highlighting its artifice. This is precisely what Dalí achieves: a slice through the screen that appears to contain reality, just as his friend Luis Buñuel had slit the woman's eye with a razor in *Un Chien andalou*. In both cases, Dalí highlights the convulsive relationship between representation and reality and the role of the eye (I) that looks but does not see the screen as a false mirror of reality.

Whereas Cornell "traps" his subjects and objects within his boxes, Dalí allows (liberates) his subjects and objects so that they may emerge from behind their respective surfaces, screens, and other spaces, particularly in his various installations and "complete environments," but these are still very much controlled and manipulated by the master conjurer Dalí. There are indeed problematic aspects to both artists' work in relation to their representations of gender identity (particularly in relation to women and girls), which are often fetishized and sexualized. As I have also argued, however, Dalí's use of desublimation in his *Surrealist Object Functioning Symbolically* and other works challenges, subverts, and resexualizes the commodified object, which surrenders its utility and material relations with commodity fetishism in favor of an overflowing, unbounded desire. The perpetual dialectical movement between subject and object—subjectivizing the object and objectifying the subject

(alongside the other binaries: representation and reality, self and other)—are figured in the flickering image between what we encounter on the screen and all that is behind and beyond it: from convulsive cinema to convulsive identity.

1 Annie Le Brun, "Untitled Essay," in *Objets D'identité,* ed. Adrien M. Dax *et al* (Paris: Éditions Maintenant, 1976), 252-3.
2 Max Ernst, *Beyond Painting* (New York: Solar Books, 2009 [1948]), 33.
3 Julien Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2003), 229.
4 Ibid., 231.
5 Deborah Solomon, *Utopia Parkway: The Life and Work of Joseph Cornell* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2004), 87-89.
6 Darren Thomas, "Objectifying surrealism: Man (Ray) without a movie camera or the object as cinema," in Neil Coombs, ed., *Surrinema: Beyond Cinema (Patricide)* (Rhos-on-Sea: Dark Windows Press, 2014), 91-99.
7 André Breton, *Nadja* (New York: Grove Press, 1960 [1928]), 160.
8 Interestingly, Marci Kwon links enchantment with the marvellous in relation to Cornell's thaumatrope (*Le voyager dans les glaces: Jouet surréaliste*), which features collaged images of stars and athletes that are set spinning to create a blurred narrative of a fencer/shooting star battling with the heavens (Marci Kwon, *Enchantments: Joseph Cornell and American Modernism* [New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2021]). Like convulsive cinema, this relies on movement to achieve its effect: "One could describe the thaumatrope's momentary illusion as a form of the Surrealist marvellous…Cornell's floating, flickering man in the stars creates a moment of magic that is once intangible and real. Like all moments of enchantment, this one cannot last" (47-49).
9 Steven Harris suggests quite rightly that convulsive beauty is related to "a convulsive experience akin to the convulsions of orgasmic bliss or, indeed, to the involuntary tremors provoked by the experience of the uncanny" (Steven Harris, *Surrealist Art and Thought in the 1930s* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 11). This is much closer to Dalí and other surrealists, such as Breton, Bataille and Ernst, for example, who use eroticism and sex productively, as desublimation. On the other hand, In Cornell's works (particularly his early work), he seeks to excise anything that could possibly be read as erotic or sexual or disenchantment (in order to disguise his true desires) in favor of (re) enchantment (sublimation), but he cannot erase the sense of disenchantment lurking in the shadows that threatens to return in an instant. Referring again to the Cornell work mentioned in the previous footnote, this could be seen as an example of convulsive cinema in its play with enchantment and disenchantment via its cinematic effect, combining stasis and movement, as well as revealing something hidden, but the overall effect is closer to that of the marvellous.
10 At the end of *Nadja*, Breton declares: "Beauty will be CONVULSIVE or will not be at all," but it is only several years later that he elaborates upon this in *Mad Love*, emphasizing the connections between beauty and physical sensation, particularly the erotic dimension. Convulsive beauty is likened to "a feathery wind brushing against my temples to produce a real shiver"(8).
11 Breton, *Nadja*, 160.
12 Johanna Malt, *Obscure Objects of Desire: Surrealism, Fetishism, and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 87.
13 Writings on the cinematic influences in Dalí's work include: Dawn Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), Haim Finkelstein, *Salvador Dalí's Art and Writing: The Metamorphosis of Narcissus (1927-1942)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Matthew Gale, *Dalí and Film* (London: Tate Publishing, 2007), Elliott H. King, *Dalí, Surrealism and Cinema* (Herts: Kamera Books, 2007) and Ramona Fotiade, *Pictures of the Mind: Surrealist Photography and Film* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2017). Writings on the cinematic influences in Cornell's work include: Tom Gunning, "Joseph Cornell's American Appropriation of Surrealism by Means of Cinema," in *Surrealism and Film After 1945: Absolute Modern Mysteries*, eds. Kristoffer Noheden and Abigail Susik (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021), Jodi Hauptman, *Joseph Cornell: Stargazing in the Cinema* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), P. Adams Sitney, "The Cinematic Gaze of Joseph Cornell," in *Joseph Cornell*, ed. Kynaston McShine (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1990), 69-90, and Annette Michelson,

"*Rose Hobart* and *Monsieur Phot*: Early Films from Utopia Parkway," *Artforum* 11, no. 10 (June 1973): 47-57.
14 Again, all of this has been well established in the literature on Dalí's relationship with photography and film in this period. See note 13.
15 Salvador Dalí, *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 134.
16 André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2002 [1965]), 1.
17 Salvador Dalí, "Un Chien Andalou," *Mirador* (Barcelona) 39 (October 24, 1929): 6. Translated and published in Haim Finkelstein, ed., *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 134.
18 Salvador Dalí, "Film-arte, film-antiartistico," *La Gaceta Literaria* (Madrid) 24 (December 15, 1927): 4. Translated and published in Finkelstein, *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 56.
19 Salvador Dalí, "La dada fotogràfica," *Gaseta de les Arts* (Barcelona) 2 (6) (February 1929): 40-42. Translated and published in Finkelstein, *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 68.
20 Breton, *Nadja*, 160.
21 In *Tiny Surrealism: Salvador Dalí and the Aesthetics of the Small* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), Roger Rothman suggests convincingly that Dalí's love of "little things" is central to the artist's art, writing, and concept of the world.
22 André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1990 [1924]), 20.
23 Comte de Lautréamont [Isadore Ducasse], *Maldoror and Other Poems* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), 217.
24 See Krzysztof Fijalkowski's incisive analysis of Lautréamont's poem in Krzysztof Fijalkowski and Michael Richardson (eds.), *Surrealism: Key Concepts* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 185
25 Robert Short, *The Age of Gold: Surrealist Cinema* (London: Creation Books, 2003), 58.
26 Salvador Dalí, "La fotografia, pura creació de l'esperit," *L'Amic de les Arts* (Sitges) 2 (8) (September 30, 1927): 90-91. Translated and published in Finkelstein, *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 46.
27 Salvador Dalí, "Ten Recipes for Immortality" (1973), quoted by Antonio Pixtot, in conversation with Monstse Aguer, in Dawn Ades, *Dalí's Optical Illusions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 64.
28 André Breton, *What is Surrealism? Selected Writings,* ed. Franklin Rosemont (London: Pluto Press, 1989 [1978]), 125.
29 Abigail Susik perceptively argues that Breton sees parallels with cinema in Ernst's collages of 1919-1921, especially "the suggestion of cinematic motion" making them "radically innovative for Breton because they abandon as their main focus the old game of naturalism via perspective and pursue instead a blatantly filmic brand of illusionism." See: "The Man of these Infinite Possibilities: Max Ernst's Cinematic Collages," in *Historical Presence in Visual Culture: Contemporaneity,* Vol 1 (2011): https://contemporaneity.pitt.edu/ojs/contemporaneity/article/view/27; accessed July 26, 2022.
30 This period was short-lived. I agree with Dawn Ades when she writes that "the abrupt change that his paintings then underwent marks a watershed in his career, coinciding with the culmination of his intense theoretical interest in film in his collaboration with Buñuel on the script and direction of *Un Chien andalou* in early 1929." Dawn Ades, "Why Film?" in Matthew Gale, *Dalí and Film* (London: Tate Publishing, 2007), 20.
31 Salvador Dalí, "Cher Breton (Lettre à André Breton)" (1933). Translated and published in Finkelstein. *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 249.
32 André Breton, "Introduction to the Discourse on the Paucity of Reality," (1924). Published in: *What is Surrealism? Selected Writings,* ed. Franklin Rosemont (London: Pluto Press, 1989 [1978]), 26.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 Most pronounced is the scene where there is a chain of concave images linked by dissolves: Close-

up of the hand full of ants crawling out of a black hole in the palm. None of the ants fall off. Dissolve to the hairs on the armpit of a young woman who is lying on a beach in the sunshine. Dissolve to the undulating spines of a sea-urchin. Dissolve to the head of a girl seen directly from above. This shot is taken as though through the iris of an eye: the iris opens to reveal a group of people standing around the girl and trying to push their way through a police barrier. The use of the dissolves momentarily unites both images so they appear as double images.

36 This was one of several categories of surrealist objects Dalí coined.

37 André Breton, *Communicating Vessels* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1990 [1932]), 68.

38 Salvador Dalí, "L'Âne pourri," in *Femme visible* (Paris: Éditions surréalistes, 1930), 11-20. Translated and published in Finkelstein, *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 223.

39 Haim Finkelstein, *Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object* (Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1979), 30.

40 Ibid.

41 Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, 241.

42 See for example: Finkelstein, *Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object*, Dawn Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), Steven Harris, *Surrealist Art and Thought in the 1930s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) and Johanna Malt, *Obscure Objects of Desire: Surrealism, Fetishism, and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

43 Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism*, 154.

44 Salvador Dalí, "Objets surréalistes," *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* (Paris) 3 (December 1931): 17, translated and published in Finkelstein, ed., *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 234.

45 It could be argued that the construction of the base, the wooden mechanism and attached wires and weights, along with the drawings of the shoe that are stamped/attached to the sugar cubes, actually make this a "rectified" ready-made because the base and mechanism for raising and lowering the cubes into the milk appear to have been specifically created for this work, and the cubes are altered and marked by the shoe illustrations, meaning that the original objects (the sugar cubes) are transformed in a way that the other elements that make up the final piece are not. The other elements are simply assembled and fixed in place.

46 I am surprised that, to my knowledge, no other scholar has remarked on the parallels with Joseph Kosuth's installation, *One and Three Chairs* (1965), which takes Dalí's idea a stage further, combining a wooden folding chair, a mounted photograph of a chair, and a mounted photographic enlargement of the dictionary definition of "chair." It assembles three possible representations or "answers" to what we mean by a chair. However, the relationship between reality and representation is considered in an intellectual, dry and conceptual manner, unlike Dali's convulsive approach, which remains focused on the representation (of the woman's shoe – and by extension – women) as fetish objects – but also foregrounding the process of fetishization itself.

47 See, for example, Janine Mileaf, *Please Touch: Dada and Surrealist Objects After the Readymade* (Dartmouth College Press: New England), 113.

48 Dalí's conception of symbolic functioning owes much to Giacometti's sculpture, as Dalí readily acknowledges, suggesting that the combination of forms in the sculpture provokes unconscious, instinctive and involuntary desires and erotic fantasies in the spectator. For a lucid account of this influence on Dalí's thought, see Finkelstein, *Salvador Dalí's Art and Writing*, 162-163.

49 Salvador Dalí, "Objets surréalistes," *Le Surréalisme au service de la r*évolution (Paris) 3 (December 1931): 16-17, translated and published in Finkelstein, *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí*, 231-234.

50 Breton, *Nadja*, 160.

51 Robert Short, "Magritte and the Cinema," in Silvano Levy (ed.), *Surrealism: Surrealist Visuality* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1997), 107.

52 It is not dissimilar to Marcel Duchamp's wish in "recreating ideas in painting [...] I wanted once again to put painting at the service of the mind [...] This is the direction in which art should turn: to

an intellectual expression." See: Marcel Duchamp, *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* [1973] (New York: Da Capo Press, 1989), 126. it is the spectator that provides the *movement* and not the text. Clearly, certain (convulsive) cues have to be present but essentially it is the perception and imagination provided by the spectator that activates these.

53 Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery*, 231.

54 Solomon, *Utopia Parkway: The Life and Work of Joseph Cornell*, 87-89.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 See, for example Harris James Elder, "The Compilation Film: Principles and Potentials of a Documentary Genre" (MA Diss., Oklahoma State University, 1976), last modified November 16, 2021, https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/215285245.pdf.

58 Jodi Hauptman, *Joseph Cornell: Stargazing in the Cinema* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 87.

59 See Eli Horwatt's (2008) thoughtful essay on Cornell, in which he argues that early Soviet film practice, and notably the newsreel, frequently involved the re-editing of films from the West in order to transform their former (unacceptable) ideological meanings. "Joseph Cornell and the Soviet Re-editors," last modified November 16, 2021, http://recycledcinema.blogspot.co.uk/search?updated-max=2008-07-10T14:41:00-07:00&max-results=7&start=14&by-date=false.

60 For a more detailed account of Dalí's *Surrealist Mysteries of New York*, see Elliott H. King, *Dalí, Surrealism and Cinema* (Herts: Kamera Books, 2007), 54-58.

61 Michael Richardson, *Surrealism and Cinema* (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 69.

62 Harris, *Surrealist Art and Thought in the 1930s*, 44.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid, 46.

65 Ibid.

66 Salvador Dalí, "The Tragic Myth of Millet's *L'Angélus*," in *Oui 2: Scientific Archangelism, Writings 1933-1978* (Exact Change: Boston, 2001 [1963]), 57.

67 Claude Cahun, *Disavowals* (London: Tate Publishing), 27.

68 Breton, *Nadja*, 11.

69 Breton, *Mad Love*, 13.

70 André Breton and Paul Éluard, *The Immaculate Conception* (London: Atlas, 1990 [1930]), 55.

71 Alyce Mahon, *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros: 1938-1968* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005), 37.

72 Finkelstein, *Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object*, 114.

73 Ibid, 113.

74 Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism*, 167.

75 Finkelstein, *Salvador Dalí's Art and Writing*, 168.

76 Ibid, 174.

77 Website of The Dalí Theatre-Museum: https://www.salvador-dali.org/en/museums/dali-theatre-museum-in-figueres/, last modified November 16, 2021. For a thoughtful discussion of the museum-as-object, see Montse Aguer Teixidor, "The Dalí Theatre-Museum in Figueres: A Journey into the Innermost Reaches of Salvador Dalí's Brain," pp 148-159, in Elliott H. King (ed.), *Salvador Dalí: The Late Work* (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 2010).

78 Briefly, according to Foucault, the heterotopia presents a juxtapositional, relational space, a site that represents incompatible spaces and paradoxes, such as a garden that may contain various species of plant from across the globe, including flowers, shrubs vegetables etc., which are arranged in such a way to represent order, utility or notions of beauty, for example – or the garden may contain water features, garden furniture and enclosures that purport to form a kind of unity or a special, individual space that may be likened to a utopia, cut off from the spaces that surround it – but these meanings

can be undone by viewing these through a different set of discourses that can alter or challenge the original discourses attached to the space. Crucially, the meanings of the garden change over time according to the various social and cultural discourses in play at any one particular moment. For Foucault, such spaces are seen as 'other': unsettling, incongruous, conflicting or transforming.

79 According to Foucault, until the end of eighteenth century, cemeteries were usually situated in the center of the city near a church, connected with the notion of a sacred resurrection and the immortality of the soul. However, at the turn of the nineteenth century, cemeteries were relocated to the periphery of towns because death and illness were seen as synonymous and a threat to health. Relocation "banished" such a threat. As death is individualized, there is a need for his or her own space and a sense that this unique resting place houses an immortal soul. A cemetery is a heterotopia because the graves and tombs form a sort of ideal town for the dead, each situated and displayed dependent on their social status. The cemetery encourages the visitor to share the illusion that their departed loved ones eternally reside in this place. Quite simply, this individualized place is a utopia, simulating life after death, but at the same time it represents a "real" death, with the attendant loss, grief, etc. but also links with wealth, power and rank. The museum is seen as a heterotopia of time. Disparate objects are collected and displayed from different times in a single space that attempts to enfold the totality of time – a totality that is protected from time's disintegration. Ultimately, the museum enacts a double paradox: it incorporates infinite time in a finite space, and it is both a space of time and a "timeless" space seeking to freeze time. Like cemeteries, museums attempt to create a utopian space sealed off from time (complete, timeless), but ironically museums are a continual accumulation of time and endlessly reconfigured and transformed. The Theatre-Museum presents a single museum/tomb that represents a utopian space and time that endlessly restages Dalí's life and work and his many identities.

80 Lynda Roscoe Hartigan, "Joseph Cornell: A Biography," in *Joseph Cornell*, ed. Kynaston McShine (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1990), 91-99, for example, refers to an interview with Cornell's sister, Elizabeth Cornell Benton, who indicated that Cornell conceived the idea whilst crossing the Flushing River on the train in the early '30s. This followed his earlier encounter with the compasses and boxes that he had seen previously that day.

81 Quoted in David Bourdon, "Enigmatic Bachelor of Utopia Parkway," *Life*, December 15, 1967, 63.

82 Joseph Cornell, "Enchanted Wanderer: Excerpt from a Journey Album for Hedy Lamarr," in *The Shadow and its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*, ed. Paul Hammond (London: BFI, 1978), 129-30.

83 I should also mention Dalí's experiments with stereoscopic paintings, holograms, and other optical devices that drew on advances in science to once again document the "facts" of everyday reality and, at the same time, challenge and problematize their means of representation.

84 Rothman, 139.