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**Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity**

October 22, 2022–January 29, 2023

**Press Conference on October 20, 2022**

With:

- Ortrud Westheider, director, Museum Barberini
- Karole P. B. Vail, director, Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice
- Daniel Zamani, curator, Museum Barberini

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Following the press conference, curator Daniel Zamani will give a tour of the exhibition.

W-LAN at the Museum Barberini: Barberini\_Gast (no password required)

Images for downloading are available at:

<https://www.museum-barberini.de/en/presse>

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Potsdam, October 22, 2022

## Museum Barberini Presents a Major Exhibition on Surrealism

**Potsdam, October 20, 2022 – On Saturday, October 22, 2022, the Museum Barberini will open the first major exhibition to examine the Surrealists' interest in occultism and magic.** Including around ninety works, the exhibition covers topics ranging from the “metaphysical” painting of Giorgio de Chirico from around 1915 and Max Ernst's iconic picture *The Attirement of the Bride* from 1940 to the occult visual worlds in the late work of Leonora Carrington and Remedios Varo. Well-known paintings by artists who have long been part of the art canon such as Salvador Dalí, Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst, and René Magritte will be juxtaposed with key works by lesser-known artists including Victor Brauner, Enrico Donati, Óscar Domínguez, Wifredo Lam, Wolfgang Paalen, Roland Penrose, and Kurt Seligmann. The exhibition also examines the significant contribution made by women artists such as Leonora Carrington, Leonor Fini, Jacqueline Lamba, Kay Sage, Dorothea Tanning, and Remedios Varo.

Including works by artists from fifteen countries and dating from the period between 1914 to 1987, this exhibition presents Surrealism as a global, transnational movement whose influence extended far beyond France of the 1920s and 1930s. Loans from over fifty museums and private collections including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Menil Collection in Houston, the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, the Museo nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Centre Pompidou in Paris. *Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity* was organized in cooperation with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, where this exhibition was shown from April to September 2022, parallel to the Venice Biennale.

Including around ninety works by over twenty artists, the exhibition traces the development of the Surrealist movement. The works selected provide a rich overview of the stylistic and iconographic diversity of Surrealism – a movement that did not see itself first and foremost as an artistic and literary undertaking, but rather as an attitude to life. The point of departure for the exhibition project was the research of both curators from Venice and Potsdam: Gražina Subelytė's dissertation on Kurt Seligmann, *Surrealism and Magic* (The Courtauld Institute of Art, 2021), and Daniel Zamani's dissertation on the interplay of medieval and occult motifs in the work of André Breton (University of Cambridge, 2017).

“Our extensive loan negotiations were based on the exceptional holdings of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, which has one of the most significant holdings of Surrealist painting in the world. Many works that Guggenheim acquired as a patron of the Surrealist movement vividly demonstrate their appropriation of iconography from occult symbolism –

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including Victor Brauner's *The Surrealist*, Paul Delvaux's *The Break of Day*, Max Ernst's *Attirement of the Bride*, Leonor Fini's *The Shepherdess of the Sphinxes*, and Yves Tanguy's *The Sun in Its Jewel Case*," says Ortrud Westheider, director of the Museum Barberini. This foundation is supplemented by loans from over fifty international museums and private collections, many of which are icons of Surrealist painting. Proponents of the twentieth-century canon such as Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, and René Magritte are represented in the exhibition as well as artists who deserve to be rediscovered, including Óscar Domínguez, Wilhelm Freddie, Jacques Hérold, Wifredo Lam, Jacqueline Lamba, Wolfgang Paalen, and Roland Penrose.

"Through their dreamlike images, the Surrealists aimed to stimulate the human imagination and inspire viewers to confront their emotions," explains Daniel Zamani, curator of the exhibition. "Accordingly, an encounter with a Surrealist work was seen as a transformative event that should open a new view of reality. Dorothea Tanning, for example, explained, 'My work is about leaving a door open to the imagination so that the viewer sees something else every time.' The exhibition *Surrealism and Magic* invites the viewer into this realm of fantasy that distinguishes itself decisively from the 'alternative truths' that are being proclaimed today."

Organized by the Museum Barberini, Potsdam, and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, the exhibition is curated by Gražina Subelytė (Venice) and Daniel Zamani (Potsdam). The exhibition is accompanied by a 240-page catalogue published by Prestel (2022) in English and German, with essays by Susan Aberth, Will Atkin, Victoria Ferentinou, Alyce Mahon, Kristoffer Noheden, Gavin Parkinson, Gražina Subelytė, and Daniel Zamani.

### **Shift to the Unconscious and Irrational**

With the publication of the *Manifesto of Surrealism* in 1924, French writer André Breton founded a new literary and artistic movement. Originating in Paris, it soon became an international movement that set the tone of the avant-garde. In the acclaimed *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme*, which took place at the Galerie Beaux-Arts in 1938, Breton brought together over two hundred works by sixty artists from fourteen countries. The focus of Surrealism was the world of dreams and the unconscious. Unlike Impressionism and Cubism, Surrealism does not have a unified style; it is a way of thinking. The artists wanted to examine their inner emotions to express their desires and fears. They chose between abstract, semiabstract, and figurative processes. This mysteriousness was aimed to introduce viewers to a dreamlike, "surreal" view of reality.

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### Magic and Occultism

Many Surrealists were familiar with Sigmund Freud's treatise *Totem and Taboo*. In this text, published in 1913, Freud associated the beginning of art with a magical impulse. He saw the belief in the "omnipotence of thoughts" as the main characteristic of magic. Breton and his companions were fascinated by the idea that inner desires and longing could directly influence external reality. Although they rejected the belief of the supernatural, they used magic as a many-layered metaphor for the surreal – a state in which the distinction between dream and reality was blurred. In addition, the Surrealists were familiar with the traditional comparison of magicians and painters, which are both in a position to create new, illusory worlds with the power of their imagination.

Magic is closely related to occultism – a millennia-old system of ideas based on a belief in the existence of higher powers pervading the universe, while being closed to rational science. The "Theory of Correspondences," according to which the universe is a single living organism in which humans and their environment, the micro- and macrocosmos, are interlinked through analogies and symbolic correspondences, is a central aspect. The Surrealists' understanding of the occult was linked to the Latin term *occultus*, meaning "hidden" or "concealed." For Breton and the Surrealists, however, the occult was not a synonym for a supernatural other world. Instead, they instrumentalized it as a metaphor for the surreal and the unconscious, whose abysses they aimed to investigate in their art and literature.

### Regeneration and Transformation

While the investigation of occultism had played an important role since the beginnings of the Surrealist movement, they took on additional significance after the beginning of World War II. With the rise of fascist regimes in Europe, many Surrealists created works whose uncanny, fantastical landscapes mirrored their existential fears. Simultaneously, they used occult and magical motifs to express their hopes for regeneration and transformation. One source of inspiration was the symbolic language of alchemy, an occult secret science based on the idea of spiritual and material transformation. Like many of the Surrealists, Breton emigrated from Nazi-occupied France to the United States in the early 1940s and continued the group's avant-garde activities in New York. His book *Arcanum 17* (1945) is exemplary for the Surrealist program during World War II. The title of the book refers to the seventeenth Major Arcanum of the tarot deck, "The Star," which in occult interpretations symbolizes hope, regeneration, and magical protection. Breton interwove his story with numerous allusions to myths and legends, especially magical female figures such as the Egyptian mother goddess Isis or the medieval mermaid Melusina – figures that he viewed as an expression of spiritual healing and cultural new beginning.

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**Modern Artist-Magicians**

Many of the artists who were in the circle of the Surrealists shared Breton's interest in magic and occultism, including Victor Brauner, Leonora Carrington, Enrico Donati, Max Ernst, Leonor Fini, and Kurt Seligmann. Ernst, who was born in Brühl in western Germany, had been interested in the medieval folklore of his home country from an early age and explored alchemical symbolism as a student in Bonn. His move to Paris in the early 1920s contributed significantly to the "occultation" of the movement. A special issue of the American avant-garde magazine *View* published in 1942 celebrated Ernst as the leading artist-magician of Surrealism. One of the many illustrations in the magazine was a portrait of Ernst by his former partner Leonora Carrington, in which Ernst is led through a snow-covered landscape by a white horse. His crimson feathered robe is reminiscent of ritual clothing of Siberian shamans. Ernst responded to the painting with his own picture *Attirement of the Bride*, one of the key works in the exhibition in Potsdam, in which he represented Carrington as a seductress with magical powers and for which Ernst was inspired by paintings of the Renaissance. Like many other artists featured in this exhibition, Ernst and Carrington were included in the *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme* that Breton and Marcel Duchamp organized in 1947 at the Paris gallery of Aimé Maeght. The exhibition, which was dedicated to the subjects of myth and magic, comprised around two hundred works by around one hundred artists from twenty-five countries and marked the impressive new beginning of Surrealism in postwar France.

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## Invisible Forces. Magic of the Surreal

In the *Second Manifesto of Surrealism* (1929), André Breton called for the "occultation" of his movement: the programmatic examination of occultism and magic. Despite this lively interest, the Surrealists rejected belief in the supernatural. Instead, they understood the surreal as an "absolute reality" in which the boundary between dream and reality is suspended. Many artists were inspired by the occult concept of endless analogies, according to which man and nature, microcosm and macrocosm are in a dynamic connection. In the magical notion of invisible forces working through the universe, they saw a metaphor for the unconscious and the depths of the human soul. Many of their compositions are akin to occult landscape depictions intended to express the dimension of the surreal.

## Tower of the Alchemist: Enrico Donati

In the 1930s Surrealism became the internationally leading avant-garde movement. Its global scope was amply reflected by the *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme* (1938) in Paris, in which sixty artists from fourteen countries participated. After the beginning of World War II, most of the Parisian Surrealists fled to the United States. Enrico Donati had studied at the Art Students League of New York and joined the circle of André Breton in the 1940s. His monumental paintings *Tower of the Alchemist* are among his most important Surrealist compositions. In 1947 Donati helped Breton organize the exhibition *Le Surréalisme en 1947*, in which the Surrealists staged themselves as modern artist-magicians and foregrounded themes of regeneration and rebirth.

## Fantastic Worlds: Magic and Metamorphosis

Giorgio de Chirico was an important precursor of Surrealism. With his "metaphysical" painting he aimed to express the mystery and enigma of human life. His inexplicable paintings evoke the idea of a magical dimension that pervades everyday reality. Many Surrealists adopted de Chirico's figurative style, producing meticulously executed pictures in which the irrational world of dreams and the unconscious finds concrete visual expression. While numerous works depict human protagonists participating in magical rituals, themes of transformation and metamorphosis as well as the regenerative powers of nature also play an important role. Time and again, the Surrealists combined their fantastic iconography with traditional occult symbolism. Evoking a sense of estrangement from reality was key to their pictorial strategies.

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### Royal Wedding: Surrealism and Alchemy

Many Surrealists were fascinated by the symbolism of alchemy – an ancient science concerned with the transmutation of matter. For them, the alchemical focus on the permanent refinement of cosmic primal matter (*the prima materia*) acted as a powerful metaphor for psychic and spiritual maturation. This reading is consistent with numerous publications that interpreted the legendary search for the Philosophers' Stone as a symbol of individuation, including the writings of C. G. Jung. In alchemy, the fusion of the elements is symbolized by the “Royal Wedding”: the sexual union of man and woman, fire and water, the sun and the moon, the red King and the white Queen – a motif of erotic desire. The Surrealists drew inspiration from sources such as Émile-Jules Grillot de Givry's occult study *Le Musée des sorciers, mages et alchimistes* (The Museum of Sorcerers, Magicians, and Alchemists, 1929). The third part of this lavishly illustrated volume was devoted to alchemy and its symbolism.

### Goddesses and Witches: Women as Magical Beings

Since antiquity, the idea of “male” and “female” as complementary qualities associated with rationality and irrationality, day and night, order and chaos, has been a key part of the Western metaphysical tradition. The Surrealists were fascinated by the notion of women as irrational and magical beings who have a mysterious connection with the creative forces of nature. In numerous works, they staged female figures as goddesses, witches, or hybrid creatures, acting as fantastical embodiments of the surreal. The positive association of these characters with the world of dreams and the unconscious went hand in hand with the cultivation of highly problematic stereotypes. Furthermore, in Surrealist art, women are often portrayed as the objects of erotic desire. Painters such as Leonor Fini and Dorothea Tanning both countered and subverted the representation of women that underpinned the work of their male colleagues.

### The Mirror of Magic: Kurt Seligmann

Kurt Seligmann joined the Surrealist movement in Paris in 1934. After the beginning of World War II, he went into exile in the United States. In 1948 he published the book *The Mirror of Magic* – a scholarly examination of the history of magic, with which many of the Surrealists were acquainted. Occult themes play a key role both in his paintings and in his printed works. Seligmann drew inspiration from the iconography of the carnival, which had been familiar to him since childhood through the festivities in Basel known as *Fastnacht*. “Magic was a stimulus to thinking,” he wrote in *The Mirror of Magic*, further elaborating, “It freed

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man from fears, endowed him with a feeling of his power to control the world, sharpened his capacity to imagine, and kept awake his dreams of higher achievement.”

### **The White Goddess: Leonora Carrington**

The English-born painter Leonora Carrington found her way to Surrealism in the late 1930s. After the beginning of World War II, she left Europe and subsequently settled in Mexico in the 1940s. Carrington avidly explored writings on magic and the occult, frequently incorporating their esoteric symbolism into her own works. She once described Robert Graves's *The White Goddess* (1948), a study of the magical world of Celtic mythology, as the “greatest revelation” of her life. Many of Carrington's works include elements that are borrowed from medieval and Renaissance art. The fantastic iconography of Hieronymus Bosch's altarpieces fascinated the painter. Carrington also contributed a statement to André Breton's 1957 book *L'Art magique*, in which she emphasized the importance of magic in modern art.

# Of Kings and Queens: Alchemical Desire and the Surrealist Imagination

Alyce Mahon

MUSEUM BARBERINI

POTSDAM

## Of Kings and Queens: Alchemical Desire and the Surrealist Imagination

Alyce Mahon

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In his 1945 book *Arcanum et Adeptus*, André Breton voiced his belief in a period of spiritual renewal after the bleak years of World War II. The title of the book refers to the seventeenth Major Arcanum of the tarot deck, "The Star," which symbolizes hope and regeneration, and is related to the moral qualities of "courage," "kindness," and "compassion." At the center of the image lies the figure of a naked woman, who kneels besides a pond and fertilizes water and earthy streams that spring forth from two inexhaustible urns. In keeping with occult interpretations of the figure as a powerful young mother goddess, Breton's account looked to various female heroines from mythology and legend for inspiration. He regarded them as symbols of rebirth and they informed his hope for an impending period of female emancipation and spiritual reenchantment. In a central passage Breton spoke of the "flea woman" to voice this emphatic turn "feminine" values: "Yes, it's always the lost woman, the one who sings in man's imagination but at the end of such trials for her, for him, that it must also be the woman who's found again. And first woman must find herself, must, without man's more than problematic help, learn to recognize herself through the cells to which she is doomed by the very man, in general, has of her. So many times, in the course of this war and before that in the preceding one, I waited to hear her scream ringing out... . myself, seen only once during the time has come to value the ideas of woman at the expense of those of man, whose bankruptcy is coming to pass fairly tumultuously today... . Let art resolutely yield the passing lane to the supposedly 'irrational' femininity."<sup>1</sup>

Breton's evocation of "the lost woman" and this emancipation was critical for an understanding of art and society in the aftermath of World War II. It is critical for an understanding of the Surrealists' wider conceptionalization of the imagination and its potential to liberate Western, masculinist society. From a Surrealist perspective, once the mind was freed from the constraints of reason it could open up to the irrational, and this emancipation was typically evoked in gendered terms. Acknowledging the Western metaphysical tradition, wherein the masculine is categorized as rational and scientific, and the feminine as irrational and natural, the Surrealists valorized the latter as a means to subvert society's civilizing mission. As a result, woman was presented in many Surrealist texts and images as a means for change as well as an exemplar for Surrealist philosophy; she was portrayed as a communicating vessel or path for the unbridling of creative forces and the union of interior vision and exterior fact. In the Surrealist lexicon, the





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"lost woman" was therefore much greater than a mere fetishized object, or the sum of her biological parts; instead, she symbolized the imagination itself in its entire heterogeneous, visionary, and libidinous potential. In this way, the Surrealists rejected the privileged, masculinist model of behavior, and instead promoted, as Breton so eloquently phrased it, "the ideas of woman at the expense of those of man." At a time of world war, this stance was all the more urgent, part and parcel of the Surrealist's turn against a modernism that was, in the words of Breton, a "degenerate threat to the male-focused status quo."

Breton's evocation of woman in *Arream 17* took inspiration from the fourteenth-century fairy figure Melusina, in addition to his recent personal experience of exile in the United States and the trauma of World War I. Melusina was a magical creature—a siren, half-human and half-spiritual, who turned into a serpent woman every Saturday and was endowed with magical powers. In Jean d'Arcis's courtly romance of the late Middle Ages, *Mélusine ou La Noble Historie de Lusignan* (ca. 1393), she figures as the totemic ancestor of the powerful Lusignan family, associated with fertility, great wisdom, and power as a ruler, as well as the gift of clairvoyance. At the end of the account, she is banished from the human world due to her husband's jealousy and disrupts, transforming herself into a dragon-like monster with a loud scream. In his 1860 account *Histoire de la magie*, the occult scholar Eliphas Levi turned to Melusina's hybrid nature to frame her as the archetypal figure of the alchemical process, a magical female creature signifying the flux of things and the analogical alliance of opposites in the manifestations of all occult forces of nature.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Breton and the Surrealists rejected Melusina's signification as a damned,emonic woman and instead championed her as a powerful, modern virgin. Appearing as a siren, a shapeshifting or composite figure, woman can come to symbolize the possibility of the intervention of life in everyday life. As a magical being, associated with regeneration, nature, and benevolent governance, she also reflected the perceived role of woman as a guide toward a new creativity in a war-torn world.

Such authority is evident in Breton's idiosyncratic vision of the impact of her return to the human world: "Melusina...she's the one, invoke, she's the only one I can see who could redeem that savage epoch."<sup>9</sup>

This essay explores the Surrealist imagination through a focus on alchemical desire and the role of woman as a powerful magical being. Considering the art of Max Ernst, Leonora Carrington, Lenore Fini, and Dorothy Tanning, it will be argued that the Surrealists pitted a hybrid female against an overtly rational and male-dominated world. In their art and writing, they frequently cast woman in the role of a magus or alchemist, endowed with occult skill and symbolically mapping the path toward a liberated and reenchanted new world.

1 Max Ernst, *Alchemical Desires*, 1939 (cat. 97).2 Hans Balung, *Green, The Age of Woman and Death*, 1941-44. Oil on panel, 151 x 205 cm. Museo del Prado, Madrid. Inv. 2002.205.

An obsession with the creative power of desire brought woman and occult magic together in Surrealists and images. Magic was discussed as part of the hidden potential of art, and in ethnographic terms, as a magical or lost force, repressed by modern civilization. The Surrealists turned to those lands that favored magic, as indicated by their recognized map of the world, *Le Monde en temps des surréalistes* ("The World in the Age of the Surrealists"), published in the Belgian journal *Variétés* in June 1939. In the map, Alaska, Easter Island, Mexico, Russia, and Ireland are all magnified, while colonial powers such as Great Britain and North America are minimized. For the Surrealists, the imagination had the capacity to remap the real world and bring the peripheral and marginalized into center view. In a 1939 essay in *Minotaure*, the Surrealist artist and scholar of magic Kurt Seligmann published an article titled "Entrenaveuc l'Tsushima," which shed light on how members of a Pacific Northwest Coast Indigenous culture perceived many of the motifs with which the Surrealists engaged, among them fantastic creatures such as the Minotaur and sea monstrosities.<sup>10</sup> In *The Mirror of Magic: A History of Magic in the Western World* (1948), Seelmann effectively summarized the Surrealist fascination with magic in stating that his interest lay in "the aesthetic value of magic and its influence upon man's creative imagination." Also, magic was frequently discussed in corporeal and erotic terms. For instance, the Surrealist poet Benjamin Péret described it as the "flesh and blood" of poetry and mythology as the Surrealist entrepreneur.<sup>11</sup> Finally, the writings of Sigmund Freud informed the Surrealists' understanding of magic. In his essay *Totem and Taboo* (1905), he defined the totem as "an animal (whether edible and harmless or dangerous and feared), and more rarely a plant or a natural phenomenon (such as rain or water), which stands in peculiar relation to the whole clan."<sup>12</sup> While Freud argued that belief in such totemic objects or creatures had been repressed by Western civilization, the Surrealists aimed to revalorize this theme, as expressed in their frequent depictions of chimerical creatures as powerful, protective beings.

In terms of gender politics, the Surrealists were specifically drawn to the theme of the alchemical androgyn—<sup>13</sup> a key symbol of hermetic philosophy, which offered a challenge to traditional hierarchies and promoted a nonbinary iconography in which the long-standing socially gendered characteristics of the masculine and feminine could be unified. An emphasis on alchemical desire and the chemical "wedding" between King and Queen, sun and moon, and their eventual fusion into a male/female hybrid, allowed magic to be harnessed for new Surrealist themes—nearly metamorphosis, mad love, and the union of opposites. For Ernst, magic offered "the means of approaching the unknown by other ways than

those of science or religion," and this aesthetic and ideological position would typically take on the form of the magical, shamanistic, and totemic female. "This position was frequently informed by traditional creatures of mythology and legend, whose chimerical bodies were seen to embody the alchemical power of transformation, among them the mermaid/siren or sphinx.

#### *Continuing Opposites*

Alchemy involves the belief in the transmutation of base materials ("philosophic" sulfur and "philosophic" mercury) into "gold" through an elixir or the Philosophic Stone. This alchemical *animatio opusiorum*, a supposed metamorphosis brought about by the binding of opposites, was often symbolized as a sacred marriage, while the philosopher's stone is the astrologer's "Aries"—"being half male, half sun, half moon," and/or by a furnace or "sun/cowen," as alchemists explained in his aforementioned study *The Mirror of Magic*.<sup>4</sup> In Surrealist art, these contraries were typically signified by the forms of the King and Queen, or their accompanying cosmic attributes, the sun and moon. Their coming together could denote the blossoming of erotic feelings, bodily pleasure, or the rediscovery of lost love. Therefore, the union of opposites presented a preeminent, multi-layered theme.

Ernst's *Altermutter der Braut* (fig. 3) as well as Carrington's *Self-Portrait as a Witch* (fig. 4) and *Portrait of Max Ernst* (fig. 5) exemplify this sense of desire and its fruition in an alchemical union. In *Atirement of the Bride*, Ernst stages a magical female as the Surrealist "bride" par excellence with a hybrid form (atembodiment) and a nowl head and a hermaphrodite all to the far right, whose color is shifting from green to an alchemical red (the color of the Philosophers' Stone). Her magical nature is embodied by the nude woman with an engorged throat and the green humaubird on either side of her, as well as by the painted bird behind her, in which another red-robed figure is portrayed. Here, Ernst used the experimental technique of decalcomania, in which the compulsion of two painted surfaces results in an abstract image, to suggest—among other things—the transformative power of alchemy at work. The fantastic imagery of Northern Renaissance painting inspired the composition's iconography—most likely Hans Baldung Grien's allegorical image *The Ages of Woman and Death* (fig. 2), in which Ernst's composition is strikingly similar. Yet, the work challenges the Western male gaze, as the classical female nude is here turned into a hybrid, and instead pays homage to non-European iconographies of beauty and power, evoking Breton's discussion of the robes of Hawaiian chieftains, with their mantles crafted from red feathers, in the Surrealist journal *Miminaire* in 1934.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the painting is an homage to the chemical wedding, as the bride's attire and Ernst's choice of title reference the romance novel

Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz (1608), which Ernst and many Surrealists knew. Breton also referenced this seventeenth-century novel, attributed to Valentin Andreathe, in his 1942 text "Genesis and the Perspective of Surrealist Art."<sup>6</sup> In the tale, a chimerical desire is emphatically gendered: Rosenkreuz is guided on a spiritual pilgrimage by a virgin who is described as dressed in blood-red velvets with a laurel wreath headdress and followed by a train made up of "high on two hundred armed men in unifrom [sic] iller her in red and white." The novel culminates in the alchemical wedding of a King and Queen and the birth of a bird with striking plumage symbolizing "their unified bodies in the spiritual world."<sup>7</sup> In an April 1944 edition of the Surrealist journal *Verve* dedicated to Max Ernst, the artist was celebrated as the "Magician" of the Surrealist group. In an essay in this edition, Ernst crafted his own self-portrait in avian and alchemical terms, writing: "The 4 Leonard Carrington, *Self-Portrait*, ca. 1932-38. Oil on canvas, 68 x 34 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The Pier and Garnet Matisse Collection, 2002.2002.46.1.

Ernest [sic] had his first contact with this sensible world, when he came out of an egg which his mother had laid in an eagle's nest; and which the bird had brooded for seven years."<sup>8</sup> *Atirement of the Bride*, then, a portrait of Ernst as his mythological bird alter ego, alongside his alchemical Queen, Leonora Carrington, with whom he had a three-year relationship from 1932 to 1940.

Ernst and Carrington shared an intellectual fascination with witchcraft,

occultism, and alchemy—Ernst came to these topics through his native Rhineland and its vibrant medieval folklore. Carrington though her fish grandmother and the tales of Celicimythology she grew up with as child. Their relationship began in Paris in the summer of 1932, and they set up home together in the village of Saint-Martin-d'Ardeche, but their lives were eventually torn apart by the outbreak of the war. Due to his German nationality, Ernst was temporarily imprisoned in a series of internment camps, while Carrington fled the country, suffered a nervous breakdown, and was subsequently forced to undergo treatment in a psychiatric asylum in Santander, Spain. She later recalled her experience in her occult memoir *My Life Below* (1944). Given these circumstances, Ernst's painting might also be interpreted as a turn to alchemy to explore personal trauma and the fear and pain of separation. Ernst advanced this alchemical symbolism in many contemporary works: *The Flight* (1940, private collection), for instance, shows a woman in a ripped red cloak running, her body trapped within the same architectural setting as *Atirement of the Bride*, while in *Alice in 1941* (1941, The Museum of Modern Art, New York), he again uses decalcomania to emphasize the female character (bird-like "Alice in Wonderland") in a red plumed gown as a hybrid composite and potent creature. Through his alchemical palette and his hybrid creatures, part animal, part human, Ernst's portrayed the woman as a magus. These works are a representation of lost love—Carrington—as well as Surrealist shapeshifters symbolizing the battle between the artist's free imagination and his physical imprisonment.



4 Leonard Carrington, *Self-Portrait*, ca. 1932-38. Oil on canvas, 68 x 34 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The Pier and Garnet Matisse Collection, 2002.2002.46.1.

5 Max Ernst, *Leonora in the Morning Light*, 1936. Oil on canvas, 68 x 82.5 cm. Private collection.



3 Leonard Carrington, *Portrait of Max Ernst*, ca. 1939 (cat. 46).

*The Bride of the Wind*

In a 1975 interview, Leonora Carrington described her birth as that of "a female human animal" and evoked the notion of imagination in feminine and occult terms, writing "out of the depths of this humanized female nameless apprehension is constantly present a not I, no me, no it, but its, limitless mysterious, but there no doubt at all."<sup>6</sup> Carrington's *SelfPortrait* (fig. 4) offers a personal animal symbolism, while complementing Ernst's alchemical iconography of the time. In this work, she aligns her creative self with the Celtic goddess Epona, typically described as riding white horses in Celtic sagas, symbolized by the seemingly suspended white hobbyhorse on the wall of the nursery room and the galloping white horse outside the window. The white horse appears in the tales of the tribe of the Tuatha dé Danann—the "People of the Goddess Danu" or "the Shining Ones," as a magical creature that could travel like the wind over earth and sea.<sup>7</sup> In the painting, Carrington's maternal bloodline to the Goddess Danu is emphasized by her green jacket collar symbolizing her links to Celtic Ireland as well as her wild mane of hair, her riding breeches, and her anthropomorphic chair resembling a throne.<sup>8</sup> The static and galloping horses denote two states of being, and the canvas serves as the transitional arena for their metamorphosis from one to the other.

Carrington's use of the horse as a protective totem was also explored in her contemporary short story "The Owl Lady" (1957–58) in which a girl, Lucetta, fondly strokes her old rocking horse, Tarat, who has been "frozen in a gallop" and plays happily at being a horse herself, riding away in an imaginary story landscape, until her cruel father pulls and end to it by burning the wooden toy.<sup>9</sup> White and green dominate the painting's palette; the former denotes the alchemical white of the Queen, and the latter the green of primal matter that turns red during the process of elementary fusion. In addition, green was the color of hope and feminine potency for Carrington personally— $\rightarrow$  symbolic connection unequivocally expressed in Ernst's portrait *Lemuria in the Morning Light* (fig. 5), where she reigns over a fantastic realm of verdant vegetation. Later, in her aforementioned text *Down Below*, Carrington poetically aligned herself with green spaces speaking of a garden "so green and fertile," and "a Druidic temple" from which she seeks to state "my knowledge."<sup>10</sup> In Jules Michel's book *La Sovrana* (1862), a text that was popular with the Surrealists and cited by Breton in his *Anthologie de l'humour noir* (1949), the habitat of witches was similarly described in green, Celtic terms. Michel writes that these wise women, knowledgeable about herbs and natural medicine, are to be found amid greenery and wild landscapes such as forests, woodlands, and "old Celtic cromlechs[!]" that is, megalithic structures.

stone circles."<sup>11</sup> In Carrington's self-portrait, the lactating hyena that admits a hazy smoke adds further hermetic element to her pictorial tale of desire and repression: the animal is the alter ego of a young heroine in Carrington's short story "The Debutante" (1937–38), and functions as a symbol of female sexuality as well as analogy.<sup>12</sup> However, in esoteric terms, the hyena is also associated with initiation, specifically a path toward "profound knowledge."<sup>13</sup> Through her modernization of alchemical iconography, Carrington thus created her own self-image as a sexually liberated, Surrealist sorceress.

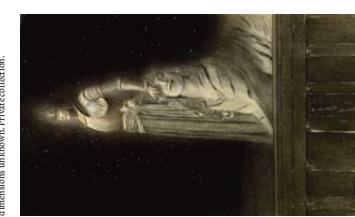
Carrington's *Portrait of Max Ernst* (cat. 86) continues this exploration of alchemical desire, depicting Max as her alchemical King.<sup>14</sup> She depicts him as a fusion of man and bird, dressed in a festal robe reminiscent of the shape-shifting woman-serpent Melusina as well as recalling the mermaid-like creatures Ernst had sculpted for their eighteenth-century farmhouse in the village of Saint-Martin-d'Ardèche. The horse, symbolizing Carrington, is depicted as a white and majestic but frozen creature, while a smaller horse is visible inside Ernst's lantern or alchemical vessel. Thus, this composition reverses conventional gender roles through animal symbolism, with woman as the active guide—other than mere intuitive muse—to the final alchemical union or marriage. Within this symbolic narrative, Ernst is presented as a hermit figure—comparable to the card of "The Hermit" in the traditional tarot deck (fig. 3), who must follow nature/woman/the horse. The white key landscape denotes an alchemical phase of separation and purification wherein the Queen revives first, followed by the King, who typically is sold in red robes.<sup>15</sup> The painting is dated May 1940, when Ernst was arrested for a second time as an enemy alien and taken to a camp at Laird in the region of Drôme, leading to Carrington's sudden departure for Spain and her subsequent mental collapse.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, within this biographical framework see how Carrington turns the theme of alchemical desire explore personal anxiety and loss—the composition might be read as an expression of her hopes for the future of Ernst finding her and their lives continuing together, despite the trauma of war. In a later short story, titled "The Third Superior Max Ernst" (1942), Carrington again wrote of their totem animals, extending this thematic iconography as she describes Ernst reappearing as a bird creature who units a horse Carrington from afar. However, once again it is the horse who subsequently leads them to freedom, "through the war winds which leap out of the profile snake, like hair like wind."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Leonor Fini, *The Horse Attains with Three Women*, 1938, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Private collection.

<sup>7</sup> Leonor Fini, *Little Lemuria Spain*, 1944. Oil on canvas, 40 x 54 cm. The Condé Museum, London.

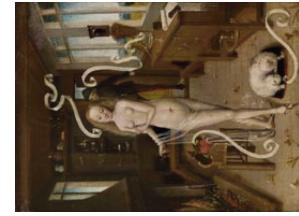
<sup>8</sup> Presented by Mrs. Members, 2011. Inv. 73389.

<sup>9</sup> Leonor Fini, *An Interior with Three Women* (fig. 6), Leonor Fini also depicts the female figure as an alchemical virago or fearless female warrior. Specifically, she



<sup>7</sup> Fernand Khnopff, *At the Window* (fig. 5), the habitat of witches was similarly described in green, Celtic terms. Michel writes that these wise women, knowledgeable about herbs and natural medicine, are to be found amid greenery and wild landscapes such as forests, woodlands, and "old Celtic cromlechs[!]" that is, megalithic structures.

*The Modern Sphinx:*



10. Lower Rhine master of the fifteenth century,  
LoveMagic, c. 1420. Oil on panel, 24 x 30 cm.  
Museum der Bildenden Künste, Leipzig, Inv. 509.

portrays Carrington in this esoteric guise; the woman in the foreground is easily identifiable as her friend and fellow Surrealist by her facial features and wild hair. Behind her stand two more women by a bed, one likely to be a self-portrait. However, Fini adds alchemical details that take the painting beyond the genre of portraiture. Carrington notably wears bright red stockings and a lace plate, both of which attract the spectator's eye in their luminosity. The red of the stockings signifies the philosopher's Stone, while the siren recalls the imagery of Symbols at the nineteenth-century to which Fini so frequently turned for inspiration—nobody Fernand Khnopff's rendition of the legal sirenodyne in *Ave Veritatem Unus Angi* (fig. 7), who also wears medieval armor and stands beside a sphinx. For Khnopff, the pairing of the sirenodyne and the sphinx represented the idea of duality and the reconciliation of opposites—that is, the spiritual and the material. In her adaptation of his Symbolist imagery, Fini shows Carrington as heiress of this alchemical angle, while she herself dons the sphinx—a magical being she explored as an artist after ego in countless images. At a time of world war, Fini thus staged herself and her colleague as magical heroines and comrades in arms, keeping in line with her description of Carrington as “true revolutionary.”<sup>58</sup>

Fini's wartime works are frequently populated by such fearless virgins, as seen, for instance, in *The Shepherdess of the Spines* (cat. 60), where this same female type stands among a clowder of spines in a barren landscape, wielding a phallic staff. If the sphinx is read as an androgynous figure, part woman and part male beast, then Fini's emphasis lies on desire as a power that overcomes antinomies, framing women as propheticlike creatures. Fini had been fascinated by the sphinx as a totemic creature as a young girl, explaining to her biographer, “I remember I wanted to like the sphinx” and copying the Egyptian sphinx of Miramare Castle and the gardens that adorned the villa cinema in her hometown of Trieste, but she also came to see these hybrid creatures as “images of femininity triumphing over a city.”<sup>59</sup> Fini’s knowledge of occult texts ensured that her use of the sphinx image was sophisticated. In his aforementioned anthology *Histoire de la magie* (1860), Eliphaz Lévi celebrated “the enigma of the modern sphinx, which must be dissolved or we perish.”<sup>60</sup> In his book on magic, Seligmann additionally noted that the esoteric motif of the sphinx dates back to Hurrian and functioned as a symbol of “occult wisdom.”<sup>61</sup> Fini was versed in this literature and spoke of analogies as the ideal state of alchemical being, writing that “It unites the thinking aspect of the male with the imaginative side of the female. I would like to think of myself as androgynous.”<sup>62</sup> Fini’s painting *Ende of the Earth* (cat. 65) may be seen to bring all these influences together as we find an uncanny siren or sphinx figure emerging from murky waters. The golden aura around her head suggests she is a guide, just as the metallic sheen of the water implies that alchemical change is



9. Dorothea Tanning, *Self-Portrait with Hand on Door Knob*, 1947.  
Oil on canvas, 102 x 64.8 cm. Philadelphia Museum  
of Art. Purchased with funds contributed by  
C. K. Williams II, Inc., 1999.30.v.

Dorothea Tanning came to both Surrealism and the occult through Gothic literature, discovered as a reader in her local library in Galesburg, Illinois. Tanning’s first major Surrealist composition, *Birthday* (fig. 9), makes her view on alchemical desire clear. *Birthday* was the work that brought Tanning and Ernst together, and it documents a moment of transition in their life, shifting from a simple self-portrait to a dreamscape of “countless doors,” which are both open and closed.<sup>53</sup> In her autobiography *Between Lives* (2001), Tanning explained that the work was “a talisman for the things that were happening, an iteration of quiet events, line densities through a crystal paperweight of time.” She portrays woman—herself, shown at the age of thirty-two—in chimerical terms. This power to access unknown realms is symbolized by her hand on the door knob, and the fact that she stands before a vista of open doors and passageways. It is augmented by her silken skirt made up of writhing green bodies as well as the bizarre creature in the bottom right corner of the composition—a hybrid winged creature that resembles a lemur and denotes a magical assistant or famulus. According to medieval and Renaissance alchemy, the famulus typically drinks the milk or blood of a magical witch and Tanning’s bare breasts suggest she is draining this malevolent role. The work’s iconography resembles that of Carrington’s earlier *Self-Portrait* and may have been based on critically charged withdrawl imagery of the Northern Renaissance such as the Leipzig “LoveMagic” panel (fig. 10), given that it features the prominent motif of an open door as well as the female enchantress accompanied by a sunburst/pentacle.

Knowing that a reproduction of *Birthday* was selected for inclusion in a double issue of the American avant-garde review *VVV* (nos. 2–3, March 1943), alongside

Tanning's painting *Children's Game* (1942, private collection) and her short story "Blind Date" allows this alchemical reading to go further. The edition of *VVV* included reproductions of the Surrealist's own tarot deck (*tarot de Marsella*), which they had designed at the Villa Air-Bel in Marseille in 1940-41 (see cats. 38, 39, 41, 42), and a focus on the Swiss Renaissance philosopher and alchemist-physician Paracelsus (born Theophrastus von Hohenheim), who championed core aspects of esoteric philosophy and who was cast as the "Magus of Knowledge," and thus as a keeper of alchemical wisdom, in a card designed by Ernst.<sup>7</sup> In his edition, Seligmann translated "Propositions by Paracelsus," a text from the 1516 original, and noted that for Paracelsus "prophecy requires imagination and faith in nature."<sup>8</sup> Tanning's *Birthday* must have been perceived as a fitting companion piece to these other works and ideas, a potent stimulus for unleashing artistic creative powers and a reflection of women as comparable to the most powerful female figure of the time—“The Pope” (p. 14; fig. 6), associated with divinity, wisdom, and intuitive knowledge of the secrets of nature.

Doors or passageways are recurrent features in Tanning's work and are often overlaid with occult significance—as in her work *The Guest Room* (cat. 58), where a pulsating naked girl stands at the entrance of a children's bedroom or nursery that is ripe with night magic and uncanny, mysterious transformations. A 1947 etching by Tanning portraying a woman's body in the shape of a keyhole extends this motif and marked her inclusion in the Surrealist circle (fig. 11). It was exhibited in the International Exhibition of Surrealism held at the Galerie Maeght in Paris in 1947, showing that she was received entirely on magical myth and alchemy.<sup>9</sup> Though it modest in size, Tanning proudly described it as “vessel, bait, keyhole—for the surrealists, and we accepted that it was reproduced in the catalog.”<sup>10</sup> In it she depicts the female with the same leonine tresses we have seen in the shape-shifting female figures of Ernst, Carrington, and Fini, but here the luxuriant locks symbolize the portal toward a new Surrealist space and experience. Fittingly, Tanning explained her work in spatial terms as “about leaving the door open to the imagination so that the viewer sees something else every time.”<sup>11</sup> Equally, Ernst had a long-standing fascination with fantastical female figures, and Tanning was familiar with his 1929 collage book *La Femme, too ideal*, which abounds with representations of women in bizarre guises and magical settings.

Ernst and Tanning married on October 24, 1946, in a joint ceremony with

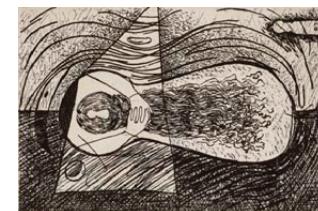
the alchemical couple, guided by a female counterpart: Tanning herself, whose identity is revealed by her shorted hair in front of her, we find a chessboard lying on the wooden planks—a motif that many of the Surrealists associated with occult significance (chance versus predestination) and whose figures of the King and the Queen they symbolically related to the protagonists of the hermetic wedding (*see cat. 43*). In Tanning's composition, the artist's joint placement in a boat further reinforces the overarching theme of spiritual/alchemical journey through life, while the white sail again morphs into Erst's totemic animal—the bird, which is refigured as a soaring pelican. Ernst's painting *Chimai/Nuptials* (cat. 29), executed in 1948 to commemorate his wedding to Tanning, also celebrates alchemical desire and how love allows him to heal the closer female magical powers. Here, we find an alchemical palette of warm yellow (sulfur) wedded to cool blues (mercury), used to map out geometric forms that stand for a large male/King figure and a smaller female/Queen, respectively, and to show their shared space as a type of alchemical vessel, further emphasizing their perfection. A blueskies leads the spectator's eye toward the horizon line, and a repulian figure in the foreground, a variant on the dragon found in traditional images of the alchemical androgyn, further symbolizes their happy nuptials.<sup>12</sup>

#### Conclusion/New Beginnings

The Surrealists' engagement with magic and their exploration of alchemical iconography coincided with the arrival and celebration of international women artists in the group—first in Paris and London in the interwar period, and then in North America in the 1940s. To many women artists, the movement was attractive because of its gendered discourse, while the tropes of occultism offered a means to craft their own image in emancipatory terms. Ernst, Carrington, Fini, and Tanning all turned to alchemy to explore identity, loss, desire, and spirituality. In essence, it offered a path for self-knowledge. However, for women Surrealists it also functioned as a means of self-empowerment, a mode to reverse traditional gender roles, and a way to promote women as skilled bearers of knowledge. Working within the surrealist discourse and its privileging of the feminine as well as its obsessive turn to the theme of desire (Carrington, Fini, and Tanning modified and expanded Surrealism's range to make it all the more relevant for a disenchanted and rationalized modern world). Whether staging what Breton described as the “fox woman”—the screaming Melusina—or an amorous muse, sorceress, elvine virago, or insightful Queen, Ernst, Carrington, Fini, and Tanning ensured Breton's ambitions for the “occultation” of Surrealism would speak to individual, lived experience as well to universal messages of new beginnings.



<sup>12</sup> Dorothea Tanning, *Miracle Blue Boat* (1947, oil on canvas, 68 x 82 cm, Max Ernst Museum, Berlin; Lent from the Kestnerhaus Koln, Cologne, LWL-MB).



<sup>11</sup> Dorothea Tanning, *Vessel for Surrealism* (1947, etching in the exhibition catalog *Le Surrealisme en 1947*, images 15-16 on, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Henry Church Fund, Inv. 545-1947).

<b>Duration:</b>	Museum Barberini, Potsdam: October 22, 2022–January 29, 2023
<b>Exhibited Works:</b>	89 objects
<b>Curator:</b>	Dr. Daniel Zamani, curator, Museum Barberini
<b>Artists:</b> (Including number of works in the exhibition)	Anonymous (1) Victor Brauner (4) Leonora Carrington (9) Giorgio de Chirico (2) Salvador Dalí (1) Paul Delvaux (2) Óscar Domínguez (3) Enrico Donati (8) Max Ernst (5) Leonor Fini (6) Wilhelm Freddie (1) Jacques Hérold (1) Wifredo Lam (2) Jacqueline Lamba (2) René Magritte (2) André Masson (3) Matta (3) Wolfgang Paalen (2) Roland Penrose (2) Kay Sage (1) Kurt Seligmann (18) Yves Tanguy (4) Dorothea Tanning (4) Remedios Varo (3)
<b>Lenders:</b>	KUNSTEN Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg Goddard Center, Ardmore The Baltimore Museum of Art Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels The Art Institute of Chicago The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

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Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York  
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Mart, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento  
e Rovereto  
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Amy and Eric Huck Collection  
Mark Kelman Collection  
Ulla and Heiner Pietzsch Collection  
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and numerous private collectors who wish to remain  
anonymous

**Exhibition Space:** 1,244 square meters

**Exhibition Design:** Gunther Maria Kolck, Hamburg, and  
BrücknerAping, Büro für Gestaltung, Bremen

**Address:**

Museum Barberini  
Alter Markt, Humboldtstrasse 5–6  
14467 Potsdam

**Opening Hours:**

Daily except Tuesdays: 10 a.m.–7 p.m.  
Monday and Wednesday to Friday for kindergartens and schools (by appointment only): 9–10 a.m.

**Admission and Tickets:**

Monday and Wednesday to Friday €16 / €10,  
Saturday/Sunday and holidays €18 / €10  
Free admission for children under eighteen and secondary-school pupils

**Social Media:**

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App, Prolog,  
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**Barberini Prolog** introduces you to the current exhibition. As a compact, multimedia website, it gives an overview of the subject matter and works in the exhibition and is the perfect way to prepare for your visit to the museum or to recommend the exhibition to your friends.  
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Gražina Subelytė from the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, and Daniel Zamani, Museum Barberini, present key works from the exhibition in the filmed series *Close ups*. In addition to being shown daily in the museum's auditorium, the talks are available in the media center of our website as well as on the Barberini App.

The **360-Degree Panorama** on our website enables you to digitally explore the exhibition. The navigation system makes it possible to virtually move from room to room in the exhibition and view every picture in detail through the zoom function. (Available starting in mid-November.)

**Events and Educational Program:**

Each exhibition is accompanied by a rich program of educational offerings and events for all ages and interests. The complete program along with updates and new items is available on our website: <https://www.museum-barberini.de/en/kalender/formate>.

**Selected Events:**

**Public tours** are offered on weekdays at 11 a.m. and 12 noon, and on weekends at 11 a.m., 12 noon, and 3 p.m. The Barberini Kids guides offer Children Explain Art tours on Sundays. A **combination tour of the Museum Barberini and the Berlin State Museums** is available on two different dates, including the *Surrealism and Magic* exhibition in Potsdam and the *Surreal Worlds* exhibition at the Scharf-Gerstenberg Collection in Berlin.

**Lectures and Talks:** The Museum Barberini offers two public **introductory tours** every day in the auditorium at 12 noon and 3 p.m. On weekends, the museum offers the Art for Children Event on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and there is an introduction for families and children in the auditorium on Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. Karole P. B. Vail, director of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, will give an **online live lecture** entitled "Peggy Guggenheim: Redeeming Women Artists" in

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collaboration with the American Academy in Berlin. Curator Daniel Zamani will present the concept of the Surrealism exhibition in a **conversation with Lisa Zeitz**, editor in chief of the German art magazine *WELTKUNST*. In an online lecture, Zamani and Gražina Subelytė will talk about the scholarly research involved in putting together the exhibition. In the series **Art Special**, lectures held at the museum and online lectures will investigate topics relating to the current exhibition (“Surrealism and Symbolism” and “Magical Visual Worlds: The Women Surrealists and the New View of Women”) and the collection of Impressionist paintings at the Museum Barberini (“Art and Nature: Biotopes in Impressionist Landscapes”). All lectures are presented as online events on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. and as live lectures at the Museum Barberini on Thursdays at 5 p.m.

**Symposium:** On October 26, 2022, the **Sixteenth Conference of the Museum Barberini** will present the subject matter of the **Modigliani exhibition** that is planned for 2024 at the Museum Barberini.

**Activities for Children and School Kids:** The **Art Action for Children** takes place every Saturday and Sunday at 11 a.m. **Tours and workshops for schools and kindergartens** can be booked at any time during the day and are available in a variety of foreign languages. The museum opens early at 9 a.m. for such groups. Our *KunstGeschichten* and *Writing Workshop*, which can be downloaded on our website, are a perfect way for children to prepare for and follow up on their visit.

**Free Event:** Ukrainian Refugees are invited to attend a free weekly **Museum Meeting in Ukrainian** on Mondays from 4 to 6 p.m. In addition, the Museum Barberini offers tours in Ukrainian and Russian.

**Barberini Live Tour:** For all visitors who are unable to come to Potsdam but do not want to miss out on any of the

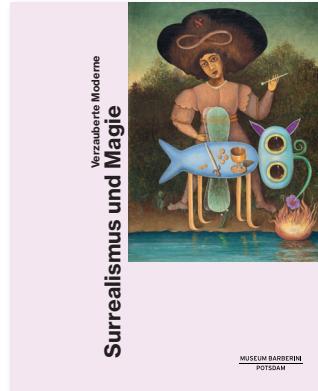
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exhibitions at the Museum Barberini, we offer personal tours from the comfort of your home. Experienced guides will take you through the current Surrealism exhibition and the Hasso Plattner Collection of Impressionist paintings using 360-degree images in an interactive tour that is available in English and German. The tour can be booked daily on our website and through visitor services at [live\\_tour@museum-barberini.de](mailto:live_tour@museum-barberini.de), +49 331 236014-499.

**Barrier-Free Offerings:** The Museum Barberini offers tours in simple language as well as barrier-free telephone tours for blind and visually impaired visitors.

**Film Program and Concerts:** The Museum Barberini will present thematic **documentary films** in cooperation with ARTE on three Sundays, including the documentary *Meret Oppenheim—A Surrealist on Her Own*. The Filmmuseum Potsdam will present a film series that is thematically matched to the Surrealism exhibition. In cooperation with the Kammerakademie Potsdam, a concert talk will be held on November 18, 2022, as part of the “Sound of Color” series, in which works by composers who were contemporaries of the Surrealists will be presented.

The **Quiet Morning** series has become a tradition since the founding of the Museum Barberini. On two dates the museum will again offer thematic yoga sessions, this time inspired by *Surrealism and Magic*.



## **Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity**

Edited by Vivien Greene, Michael Philipp, Gražina Subelytė, Karole P. B. Vail, Ortrud Westheider, and Daniel Zamani

With contributions by Susan Aberth, Will Atkin, Helen Bremm, Victoria Ferentinou, Alyce Mahon, Kristoffer Noheden, Gavin Parkinson, Gražina Subelytė, and Daniel Zamani

Prestel, Munich 2022

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## **Contents**

- Daniel Zamani, “Magical Beginnings: André Breton and the ‘Occultation of Surrealism’”
- Kristoffer Noheden, “Modern Minotaurs: Surrealism, Myth, and Magic in the 1930s”
- Gražina Subelytė, “Metaphors of Change: Surrealism, Magic, and World War II”
- Alyce Mahon, “Of Kings and Queens: Alchemical Desire and the Surrealist Imagination”
- Susan Aberth, “Modern Enchantress: Leonora Carrington, Surrealism, and Magic”
- Gavin Parkinson, “Toward L’Art magique: Surrealism and Magic in the 1950s”
- Daniel Zamani, “Hidden Dimensions: In Search of the Surreal”
- Will Atkin, “Endless Metamorphosis: Surrealism and Alchemy”
- Victoria Ferentinou, “Agents of Change: Women as Magical Beings”
- Gražina Subelytė, “The Alchemy of Painting: Kurt Seligmann”
- Victoria Ferentinou, “Sisters of the Moon: Leonora Carrington and Remedios Varo”

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Victor Brauner  
*The Surrealist*, 1947  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 45 cm  
Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice  
(Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York)  
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022,  
Image: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York  
(Photo: David Heald)



Max Ernst  
*Attirement of the Bride*, 1940  
Oil on canvas  
129,6 x 96,3 cm  
Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice  
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© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022,  
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Leonora Carrington  
*The Necromancer*, ca 1950  
Oil on canvas  
73 x 54,5 cm  
Private collection, courtesy Weinstein Gallery,  
San Francisco  
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022,  
Image: Weinstein Gallery, San Francisco  
(Photo: Nicholas Pishvanov und Carter Andereck)



Giorgio de Chirico  
*The Child's Brain*, 1914  
Oil on canvas  
80 x 65 cm  
Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Purchase 1964  
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022,  
Image: Moderna Museet, Stockholm



Leonora Carrington  
*Grandmother Moorhead's Aromatic Kitchen*, 1975  
Oil on canvas  
79 x 124 cm  
The Charles B. Goddard Center for the Visual and  
Performing Arts, Ardmore, Oklahoma  
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022 /  
Image: The Charles B. Goddard Center for the  
Visual and Performing Arts, Ardmore, Oklahoma



René Magritte  
*Black Magic*, 1945  
Oil on canvas  
79 x 59 cm  
Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels,  
Bequest of Georgette Magritte, 1987  
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022, Image: Musées royaux des  
Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brüssel (Photo: J. Geleyns)



Remedios Varo  
*Celestial Pablum*, 1958  
Oil on canvas Masonite  
91,5 x 60,7 cm  
FEMSA Collection, Monterrey  
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022,  
Image: FEMSA Collection, Monterrey



Max Ernst  
*Day and Night*, 1941/42  
Oil on canvas  
112,4 x 146,1 cm  
The Menil Collection, Houston,  
with funds provided by Adelaide de Menil Carpenter  
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022,  
Image: The Menil Collection, Houston  
(Photo: Hickey-Robertson)



Kay Sage

*Tomorrow Is Never*, 1955

Oil on canvas

96,2 x 136,8 cm

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York,  
Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1955

© The Estate of Kay Sage / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022,  
Image: bpk, Berlin / The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Leonor Fini

*Ends of the Earth*, 1949

Oil on canvas

35 x 28 cm

Private collection

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022



Dorothea Tanning

*The Magic Flower Game*, 1941

Oil on canvas

91,5 x 43,5 cm

Private collection, South Dakota

© The Estate of Dorothea Tanning /  
VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022



Paul Delvaux

*The Break of Day*, 1937

Oil on canvas

120 x 150,5 cm

Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venedig  
(Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York)

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022,

Image: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York  
(Photo: David Heald)



Leonora Carrington

*Cat Woman*, 1951

Carved and polychrome wood

ca. 202 cm high

Private collection

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

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***Sun: The Source of Light in Art***

February 25–June 11, 2023

The composition of Claude Monet's painting *Impression: Sunrise* of 1872, which gave Impressionism its name and is now 150 years old, focuses on the red disc of the rising sun. This picture is the catalyst for the exhibition *Sun: The Source of Light in Art*, which examines sun iconography from antiquity to the present. The sun plays a central role in European art as a symbol or personification of divine powers, a motivating force in mythological narratives, an atmospheric element in landscape paintings, and an intensification of color in the modern era. The exhibition brings together around eighty works, including sculptures, paintings, manuscripts, works on paper, and books from antiquity to the present, and pictures by Peter Paul Rubens, J. M. W. Turner, Caspar David Friedrich, and Sonia Delaunay. Among the more than thirty lenders are the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, the Museo nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen in Munich, the Musée du Louvre in Paris, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and the Albertina in Vienna.

An exhibition of the Museum Barberini, Potsdam, and the Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris.

***Clouds and Light: Impressionism in Holland***

July 8–October 22, 2023

Landscape painting originated in Holland, and the realism of the Old Masters of the seventeenth century long set the standard. With the development of plein-air painting in France, nineteenth-century Dutch painters found new inspiration. The painters of the Hague School captured the changing light of nature in vast, cloudy sky using a range of gray tones. Beginning in the 1880s, Impressionist influences from France sparked an interest in cityscapes and images of modern life, followed by the exuberant freedom of color in the painting of Pointillism. The exhibition *Clouds and Light: Impressionism in Holland* brings together around one hundred works by around forty artists, including Johan Barthold Jongkind, Vincent van Gogh, Jacoba van Heemskerck, and Piet Mondrian. Among the lenders are the Rijksmuseum and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Kunstmuseum Den Haag in The Hague, the Dordrechts Museum in Dordrecht, the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, and the Singer Museum in Laren.

An exhibition of the Museum Barberini, Potsdam, in collaboration with the Kunstmuseum Den Haag, The Hague. Under the patronage of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Germany, His Excellency Ronald van Roeden.

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***Munch: Transforming Nature***

November 18, 2023–April 1, 2024

This is the first exhibition to examine Edvard Munch's landscapes. It focuses on Munch's investigation of nature and his view of nature as both a cyclical self-renewing power and a mirror of his own inner turmoil. Munch developed a pantheistic understanding of nature, which he projected onto the forests and coasts of Norway. The dramatic weather conditions depicted in his paintings are especially topical due to the current climate crisis. The exhibition brings together around ninety loans from museums such as Munchmuseet in Oslo, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, the Museum Folkwang in Essen, and the Von der Heydt-Museum in Wuppertal.

An exhibition of the Museum Barberini, Potsdam; the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown; and Munchmuseet, Oslo.