

The Dalí Museum Student Surrealist Art Exhibit: "Future-Casting and Fortune-Finding"

Hillsborough County
March 13 – April 25, 2027

Initiated in 1985, the annual Dalí Museum Student Surrealist Art Exhibit presents works by Hillsborough County middle and high school students that explore ideas and visions similar to those of Salvador Dalí and the Surrealists. This year's theme is **"Future-Casting and Fortune-Finding."** We ask you to do something Dalí spent his whole life doing: imagining a future before it exists and then working to make it come true.

In 1922, 17-year-old Salvador Dalí was preparing for his entrance exam to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid. The instructions were clear: paint the assigned sculpture of *Bacchus* at the assigned size. Dalí believed his own perception of the proportions was more accurate than the assigned dimensions, so he ignored the instructions and drew much smaller than required. He technically should have failed the assignment, but the examiners couldn't deny his masterful talent and let him in anyway.

It may be tempting to call this luck, but Dalí never did. From the very beginning, he knew he was fated to be a great artist and acted like it, daring the world to believe it too. He never sat idly and hoped for fame; he insisted on it. Especially after the passing of his older brother, also named Salvador, he sometimes felt like a reincarnation of him, so he was determined to be his own person and make his mark. Was his success destiny or self-creation? Is your future predetermined, or are you building it right now?

Dalí spent his entire life building *Dalí*— the mustache, the myth, the persona so deliberately constructed that it became a different kind of artwork. He carried that sense of unlimited personal authorship throughout his life, pushing himself far past where ambition alone could have taken him. Even the Dalí Tarot deck shows this instinct at work. In the deck, Dalí portrays himself as *The Magician (El Mago)*, the card that represents creativity, mastery and the power to turn ideas into reality, making himself the ultimate creator. In this way, he treated archetypes as tools for interpreting and constructing identity. This suggests that fate and free will were never as separate as they seem, and that life can branch into multiple paths rather than follow one fixed destiny.

Dalí took his fate and tied it to the future of the world, imagining and creating things that didn't yet exist. In his *Imaginations and Objects of the Future* series (1975), Dalí created

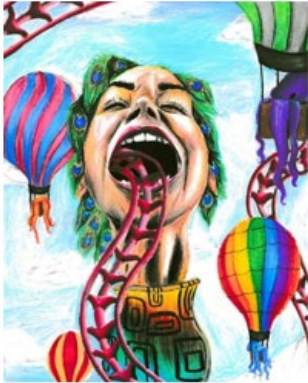
mixed media prints of futuristic inventions, scientific developments and technological advancements. *Biological Garden* (1975) was Dalí's reimagining of the city as a living infrastructure. In this reality, urban spaces would grow organically rather than be constructed from concrete and create a completely self-sustaining society. In *Cybernetic Lobster Telephone* (1975), Dalí used his *Lobster Telephone* (1936) to envision a future where oral communication was unnecessary, with people instead communicating via telepathy and biologic networks. *Spectacles with Holograms and Computers for Seeing Imagined Objects* (1975) even served as an early blueprint for augmented reality (AR) and smart glasses. He was building the future, not predicting it or leaving it to chance.

This is where we invite you in. Dalí knew the future isn't a single fixed point waiting at the end of a road. It splinters, melts and is reshaped, just like how his soft watches eventually disintegrated into fragments decades after they first famously drooped. Even Dalí's own ideas and perspectives weren't fixed. He painted *The Persistence of Memory* in 1931, before World War II and the creation of the atom bomb. Then, in *The Disintegration of the Persistence of Memory* (1952-54), he returned to this most famous image only to take it apart. His later signature movement, Nuclear Mysticism, emerged from his shifting outlook as the world changed. This is a reminder that the future isn't singular, and you have the potential to paint several destinies at once.

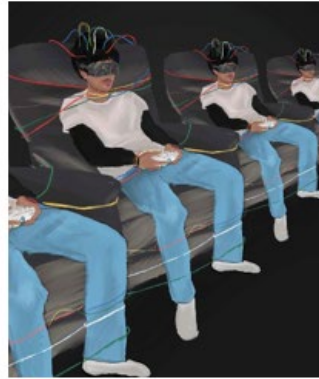
So, who will you be, and what will the world be 10, 20, 50 years from now? Is that self already predetermined, waiting for you to grow into it the way Dalí seemed to know his own fate at 17? Or is it something stranger — built, invented, glimpsed through impossible spectacles that show you what doesn't exist yet?

Don't just illustrate an answer. **Build a future self, or a future world, the way Dalí built his: equal parts fate, defiance, invention and free will.**

Examples of winning art from 2026 exhibits



Isabella Hernandez
Surreal Amusement Park



Zackery Aanensen
[dis]connected



Sophia Richards
Self-Portrait



Caitlyn Keith
Constructed Identity



Jenna Quach
Dinner is Served



Azzurra Marchese
Antalya

Artwork **must be exactly 8x10 or 10x8** because of the frame size and grid layout used in the exhibition.

*If artwork is not exactly 8x10 or 10x8, the piece will be automatically disqualified.

Artist Statements

To encourage students to reflect upon their creative processes and to articulate their artistic decisions, we ask them to consider the questions below as they write their artist statements. Students should limit their responses to 50-75 words addressing some of the following:

- What inspired you?
- How did you respond to the exhibit's theme?
- How did you respond to Salvador Dalí's work?
- What element/s of your work connect with the "futures or fortunes"?
- What Surrealist techniques did you use?

Details:

- Artist statements are not required for the initial jurying process, but if the artwork is selected for the exhibit, **the statement must be submitted using the online form emailed to all teachers of students with accepted work.**
- Artist statements are **due by Sunday, February 28.** Students with accepted work **must submit artist statements (50-75 words) and artwork label information using an online form emailed to the teachers.**
- Artist statements are required for the awards judging process, but scoring remains based on the merit of the artwork in accordance with the scoring rubric.
 - **Works that do not include artist statements will not be considered for awards.**
- Artist statements may not exceed 75 words.
- Artist statements will be printed **exactly as they are typed**; museum staff will not edit them.
- Students are encouraged to have a teacher or parent proof their writing in addition to inputting their text at [Grammarly.com](https://www.grammarly.com), a free proof-reading resource, to ensure their artist statement is free of spelling and grammar errors.

Please advise students that artist statements will appear on display to the public alongside their artwork – please do not include private information

Resources

The Dalí Museum created three videos to support students and teachers as they prepare for the Student Surrealist Art Exhibit.

Surrealism: The Big Ideas

11-minute introduction to Surrealism. The video reviews the history and goals of the movement, and explains Dalí's relationship to the broader group. Consider it Surrealism 101.

How to Make Surrealist Art

9-minute film featuring nine exhibit-winning Pinellas art teachers who provide inspiration and ideas for students to create their own surrealist art. The video introduces surrealist techniques including dislocation, transformation and symbolism, and presents prompts to try in the classroom.

Why Teach Surrealist Art?

6-minute film featuring exhibit-winning Pinellas teachers who explain to their teacher colleagues why the Student Surrealist Art Exhibit is an essential part of their curriculum.

These videos as well as online galleries of previous Student Surrealist Art Exhibits can be found at TheDalí.org/ssae. Additional teaching resources can be found at TheDalí.org/Educator.

Hillsborough County Exhibit Dates (March 13 – April 25, 2027)

Fri. Feb. 5	Digital submissions due to Hillsborough County Schools Art Office
Fri. Feb. 12	Dalí final selection of artwork for display
Tue. Feb. 16	Art Office notifies art teachers of accepted artwork
Fri. Feb. 26	Selected artworks due to the Hillsborough County Public Schools Art Office (all artwork MUST be exactly 8"x10") Entry Form must be taped on back of artwork.
Sun. Feb. 28	Student artist statements (50-75 words) and label information must be submitted using form emailed to all teachers with accepted work
Mon. Mar. 1	Artwork picked up at Hillsborough County Schools Art Office by Dalí
Sat. Mar. 13	Exhibit opens
Tue. Mar. 16	Awards judging & teacher notification
Tue. Mar. 23	Reception at The Dalí, 6:30-8:30 PM
Sun. Apr. 25	Last day of exhibit
First Week of May	Artwork returned to the Hillsborough County Schools Art Office

Entry Requirements

- Up to **6 entries per teacher** & one work per student. If two teachers submit the same student, only one will be chosen for consideration.
- Finished **work must be 8"x10"** to fit frames and cannot be thicker than ½." If work does not fit into frame, the work **will be disqualified**.
- While we cannot accept **3D objects** nor clay reliefs due to fragility, photographs of 3D pieces are encouraged. They will be judged on the merit of the photograph first and on the merit of the object second (see photo of a winning 3D object on page 2).
- **Artwork must be original** - no digital reproductions (unless documenting a 3D piece). Digital reproductions of oil paintings or drawings will **not be accepted**.
- Any work found to be plagiarized **will be disqualified and removed from the exhibition**.
- **AI-generated images are not allowed** (e.g., DALL-E, Midjourney) for this exhibition due to possible ethical issues with copyright, plagiarism or fair use; however, students may use AI-powered tools within an art teacher-approved application (e.g., Adobe Photoshop, Procreate) to assist during the ideation and editing process of creating original digital art, photography, mixed-media work, etc. If AI-powered tools are used, the application(s) must be listed using the online artist statement form.
*****Check your students' sources and observe their work processes.*****

Exhibit Details

- Exhibit website: **TheDalí.org/ssae**
- Open to middle and high school students in Hillsborough County, Florida
- Teachers must submit student artwork; **students may not submit their own artwork**
- 120 works will be selected (based on wall space)
- The Dalí Museum **will frame selected work in 8"x10" frames**

- PLEASE NOTE: The exhibit is held in The Dalí Museum Raymond James Community Room and is always free to visit. Please call before visiting the student exhibit as the Community Room occasionally closes for Museum programs and private events.

Suggested Surreal Techniques to Consider:

Juxtaposition	Metamorphosis	Collage
Displacement	Dreamlike settings	Levitation
Double images	Dislocation	Transparency
Transformation	Symbolism	Scale distortion

Accepted Artwork Checklist:

- ✓ Original and exactly 8"x10" (or 10"x8")
- ✓ Entry form attached (page 9)
- ✓ Student and Guardian Agreement (online form)
- ✓ Artist statements submitted online (online form)

Judication Guidelines:

- **Theme:** Artwork appropriately addresses the exhibition theme
- **Originality:** Artwork exhibits an original approach to process, concept and subject matter
- **Expression:** Artwork communicates an aesthetic vision or style and visual expression of critical thinking
- **Skill/Technique:** Artwork exhibits technical competency
- **Completeness:** Artwork exhibits thoughtful use of space and equal treatment to all elements of artwork

Judication Scoring Rubric

Level 4	- Shows strong evidence of integration between the theme and the visual work. - Shows strong use of innovation and creativity. - Communicates a strong personal and/or original message. - Shows strong application of the design principles and excellent technical use of media to express ideas. - Shows strong use of space and is fully finished.
Level 3	- Shows good evidence of integration between the theme and the visual work. - Shows good use of innovation and creativity. - Communicates a good personal and/or original message. - Shows good application of the design principles and good technical use of media to express ideas. - Shows good use of space and/or is predominantly finished.
Level 2	- Shows little evidence of integration between the theme and the visual work. - Shows little use of innovation or creativity. - Communicates limited personal vision or original message. - Shows limited and/or inconsistent application of the design principles. - Novice in use of space and/or is partially unfinished.
Level 1	- Shows no evidence of integration between the theme and the visual work. - Shows trite and/or simplistic approaches. - Communicates no personal or original message, and/or is direct copy of copyrighted photographic resources. - Shows no understanding of the design principles and/or very little or no technical competence or control of media. - Shows poor use of space and/or elements appear to be rushed or unfinished.

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The Dalí Museum Education Department thanks you for your participation.

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Info Form (required)

ACCEPTED ENTRY FORM: STUDENT SURREALIST ART EXHIBIT	
On this sheet, indicate the orientation of the work by drawing arrows pointing to the top of the work or with a description such as “the clouds go on the bottom”	
Attach to back of artwork	
Student Name	
Title of Work	
Teacher Name	
School Name	