

Cat. no. OE 34

***Buste de femme rétrospectif dévoré par les fourmis et les
cuillères***

Retrospective Bust of a Woman Devoured by Ants and Spoons

Retrospective Bust of a Woman Devoured by Ants

Unique Original Version



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Date: 1939
Technique: Assemblage
Dimensions: Unknown
Location: Lost / Ephemeral work



Description

The latest version of the *Retrospective Bust of a Woman* documented to date, this work has been identified thanks to a photograph by Eric Schaal conserved in the archives of the Centre for Dalinian Studies. This is one of the versions in which the ongoing transformation of the original work, from 1933, is most clearly apparent. Dalí placed the head of the bust inside the jaws of a shark, perhaps the same jaws he had previously placed on the mannequin driver of the *Rainy Taxi* in the 1938 *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme*. The zootrope of a succession of men with umbrellas is very different from the one in the version presented at the London Gallery in 1937. The artist completed this new ephemeral creation by affixing spoons, a snail and a broken eggshell to the shoulders and breasts. These elements also relate to the iconography of the mannequin in his *Passage des Panoramas* installation, on the occasion of the exhibition in 1938 mentioned above.

Observations

The title of this work comes from a manuscript in which Dalí refers to the works selected for the exhibition *Salvador Dalí 1939* at the Julien Levy Galleries in New York. The artist refers to the work on two occasions, with a slight variation in the title, as "Buste de femme rétrospectif dévoré par le fourmi et les cuillères" and "Buste de femme rétrospectif dévoré par les fourmis". The first of these has been selected as the original title, and the singular "le fourmi" has been amended to the plural "les fourmis".

Exhibitions

- 1939, New York, Julien Levy Gallery, *Salvador Dali 1939*, 21/03/1939 - 18/04/1939, not included in catalogue

Bibliography

- "All show opens at Levy Gallery", *New York Times*, 21/03/1939, New York, NY
- Robert M. Coates, "The art galleries", *The New Yorker*, vol. XV, no. 7, 01-07/04/1939, New York, NY, p. 56
- Montse Aguer i Teixidor, Marc Aufraise, *Dalí versus Schaal*, Distribucions d'Art Surrealista (DAS), [Figueres], 2006, p. [54], ill.
- *Salvador Dalí - Surrealisti! = Salvador Dalí - Surrealist!*, Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Espoo, Figueres, 2007, p. 231, ill.
- Montse Aguer, Jean-Michel Bouhours, Laura Bartolomé, *Bust de dona retrospectiu 1933/1976-1977*, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres, 2015, pp. 45, 64, ill.
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