



Exhibition: **Surreal versus Surrealism**  
Valencian Institute of Modern Art (IVAM)  
29 September – 8 January 2012

Organized by: Valencian Institute of Modern Art (IVAM)

Sponsored by: 

Curators: Gianni Mercurio and Demetrio Paparoni



The exhibition called Surreal versus Surrealism shows the contrast between the terms Surreal and Surrealism in the current contemporary art. While Surrealism offers images of dream-like visions, immediately considered to be unlikely in everyday life, on the other hand, the Surreal provides us with real images which we find difficult to accept as true, to the extent of wrongly confusing them with dream-like or fantastic images. This way, if Surrealism has mirrored the disorders of the human unconscious, which are reflected in the real world shaped as a work of art, the Surreal mirrors the reality which reflects the human unconscious, creating disorders.

The exhibition Surreal versus Surrealism includes a total of 46 works of art, including paintings, sculptures, photos, videos and installations, created by 43 selected artists. Those works depict true situations which, on the contrary, are understood as a figment of the imagination. The exhibition is divided into four chronological sections, each one presenting works which belong to a different decade, since the 1980s up to the present time.

Among the participating artists, several famous names of the international artistic scenario stand out, such as Maurizio Cattelan, Dionisio González, Michael Joo, Anish Kapoor, Rudi Mantofani, Shi Yong, Cindy Sherman, Kiki Smith and Erwin Wurm. The list of the artists also includes Matthew Barney, Ross Bleckner, John Bock, Monica Bonvicini, Francesco Clemente, Roberto Cuoghi, Hans Op de Beeck, Nathalie Djurberg, Francesco Gennari, Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, Robert Gober, Douglas Gordon, Peter Halley, Carsten

Höller, Shirazeh Houshiary, Li Tianbing, Oleg Kulik, Ma Liuming, Yue Minjun, Komar and Melamid, Liu Jianhua, Wangechi Mutu, Vik Muniz, Luigi Ontani, Tony Oursler, Javier Pérez, Richard Prince, Neo Rauch, Marc Quinn, Inez Van Lamsweerde & Vinoodh Matadin, Ronald Ventura, Wang Guangyi and Zhang Xiaogang.

The birth of the Psychoanalysis gave rise to a vast movement of thinking which, in the context of the twentieth-century Modernism, has meant a real revolution. In the same way as the Bolshevik Revolution, which transformed the social function of the perception of the masses by means of the class struggle, the psychoanalytic revolution has also had a deep influence upon the culture and customs of the twentieth century and it keeps doing so in the current times. The new collective awareness of the role played by the unconscious in the everyday life of the individual proper and the influence exerted by The Interpretation of Dreams by Freud have been, since the first half of the twentieth century, the main point of reference for Surrealists, who, at their turn, have exerted their influence upon the art of the following decades.

The substantial change takes place in the late 1970s, as a result of the first effects of the social transformations brought about by the Telematic Revolution. Shortly afterwards, the Internet, the satellite-TV, the photoshop-like softwares and the new scientific discoveries would change the perception of the reality. It is in this very context where the idea of Postmodernity and a global vision of the world have been strengthened. It is in this very context –where the relationships among individuals belonging to different cultures and geographic areas have changed dramatically, in the art, although not only in the art,– where the Surrealism and its ramifications have given way to the Surreal.