



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

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NGV Annual Appeal: Dollars for Dalí



9 May 2018: The National Gallery of Victoria is calling on all Victorians to help support the acquisition of Australia's first and only painting by Salvador Dalí, one of the most famous artists of the twentieth century and a defining pioneer of the Surrealist art movement.

Dalí's *Trilogy of the desert: Mirage* 1946 is currently on display at NGV International and visitors are invited to make donations of any size – large or small – in order to help keep this work in Victoria.

Trilogy of the desert: Mirage was the centerpiece of a triptych commissioned by Shulton Cosmetics to promote a new perfume, *Desert Flower*. The work is a masterful surrealist composition: a female figure clasping a blooming flower is set amongst a desert landscape, complete with Renaissance architecture and a classical bust of the Apollo Belvedere.

This painting has not been on public display since the mid 1960s, at which time it went back into the private family collection of William Lightfoot Schultz, the owner of Shulton Cosmetics.

Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV said: 'The work of Salvador Dalí has had an indelible influence on art movements, artists and pop culture that continues to this day. The NGV has a strong Surrealist collection with works by artists including René Magritte, Max Ernst, Sidney Nolan, Marcel Jean and James Gleeson. The addition of a painting by Dalí would be a defining acquisition for the Gallery and for Australia.'

Leigh Clifford, Chairman, NGV Foundation said: 'The strength of the NGV Collection has been built through philanthropy – and the acquisition of this work by Salvador Dalí promises to be a testament to this strong philanthropic tradition. We are seeking \$1.5 million to ensure this important painting stays in Victoria and we warmly welcome contributions of any size. I would like to acknowledge the outstanding support to date towards this significant acquisition from The Eugenie Crawford Bequest, The Nigel Peck AM & Patricia Peck Fund, Morry Fraid and the Spotlight Foundation, The Fox Family Foundation, The Hansen Little Foundation and Donors to the 2018 NGV Foundation Annual Dinner.'

Salvador Dalí's *Trilogy of the desert: Mirage* 1946 is currently on display at NGV International. Donations can be made in person at the NGV or via the website: NGV.MELBOURNE. Donations of two dollars or more are tax deductible.

The NGV's Annual Appeal fundraising campaign supports the acquisition of major works for the NGV Collection. Recent acquisitions have included Howard Arkley's *Actual Fractal* 1994, François Marie Poncet's neoclassical sculpture *Vénus* 1782 and William Larkin's *Mary, Lady Vere* c.1612–15.

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About Salvador Dalí

Salvador Dalí was born on 11 May 1904 in the small town of Figueres, in Catalonia, Spain. In 1929, at age twenty-five, Dalí held his first solo show in Paris. He joined the Surrealist movement and soon became a leading figure. During this time Dalí created *The Persistence of Memory* 1931 one of the best-known Surrealist works in the world.

Dalí and his partner, Gala Éluard, escaped from Europe during the Second World War, spending 1940–48 in the United States. This period had a personally transformative effect on Dalí and reinvented his approach to art. He embraced Catholicism, American consumerism, and following the explosion of the atomic bomb in 1945, proclaimed his new theory of Nuclear Mysticism. *Trilogy of the desert: Mirage* encapsulates all these developments in Dalí's art, making it a key work from his middle period.

In 1974 Dalí opened the Teatro Museo in Figueres. This was followed by retrospectives in Paris and London at the end of the decade. In the early 1980s Dalí's health began to fail and Dalí died on 23 January 1989.

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IMAGE CAPTION

Salvador Dalí

Spanish 1904–89

Trilogy of the desert: Mirage 1946

oil on canvas

35.6 x 60 cm

Proposed acquisition