

# The Surrealists



JACQUELINE LAMBA



REMEDIOS VARO



SUN RA



WIFREDO LAM



CLAUDE CAHUN



MERET OPPENHEIM



NARDAL SISTERS



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## Lola Álvarez Bravo

LOW-la AL-vah-rez BRAH-vo

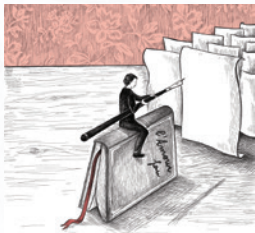
An early innovator in photography in Mexico, Lola Álvarez Bravo began her career as a teacher. She learned photography as an assistant and had her first solo exhibition in 1944 at Mexico City's Palace of Fine Arts. She described the camera as a way to show "the life I found before me." Álvarez Bravo was engaged in the Mexican surrealist movement, documenting the lives of many fellow artists in her work.



## Jean Arp

JON ARP (J as in mirage)

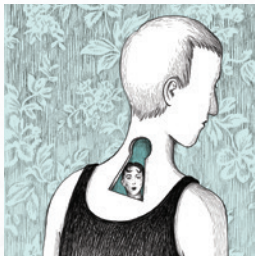
Jean Arp (also known as Hans Arp), was a German-French sculptor, painter, and writer best known for his paper cut-outs and his abstract sculptures. Arp also created many collages. He worked, like other surrealists, with chance and intuition to create art instead of using reason and logic, later becoming a member of the "Abstraction-Création" art movement.



## André Breton

ahn-DRAY bruh-TAWN

A founder of surrealism, avant-garde writer and artist André Breton originally trained to be a doctor, serving in the French army's neuropsychiatric center during World War I. He used his interests in medicine and psychology to innovate in art and literature, with a particular interest in mental illness and the unconscious. He wrote the *Surrealist Manifesto* and organized events and collaborations worldwide.



## Claude Cahun

CLOD cah-HOON

Cahun started in photography at age 19 to explore gender, identity and the unconscious, primarily through self-portraits. Sometimes presenting as a man, sometimes a woman, and sometimes androgynous, Cahun created art at the vanguard of gender and sexuality expression. "Shuffle the cards. Masculine? Feminine? It depends on the situation."





## Agustín Cárdenas ah-goos-TAN CAR-day-nahs

A sculptor in wood, stone and bronze, Afro-Cuban artist Agustín Cárdenas moved to Paris in 1955 and soon after joined the surrealists. He was influenced by his family's Latin American and African origins, and produced work that incorporated abstract figures and organic shapes. Art experts often laud the strong sense of symbolism in the sculptor's mysterious and sensuous forms.



## Leonora Carrington Iuh-NOR-uh CARE-ing-ton

"There are things that are not sayable. That's why we have art." British-born Mexican surrealist painter and writer Leonora Carrington produced haunting, symbolic images that were personally relevant. Carrington celebrated animals; her alter-ego in her paintings was a horse. Her fantastic writing is filled with humor: "People under seventy and over seven are very unreliable if they are not cats."



## Salvador Dalí SAL-vah-door dah-LEE

A painter, filmmaker, and printmaker who connected to dreams and the unconscious, Dalí grew up near Spain's Pyrenees mountain range and often included this landscape in his work. With a playful attitude and taste for the irreverent, Dalí developed the "paranoiac-critical" method to see links between things that are not rationally connected. He also wrote experimental essays like *The Putrefied Donkey*.



## Ei-Q AY KYU

Ei-Q was born as Hideo Sugita in Miyazaki City, Japan. He studied painting and in 1930 started in photography. He's particularly known for photograms, a process of making images on light sensitive material without the use of a camera. The strange abstract designs he made from objects and cutouts were a way to explore the growing impact of mechanical processes on culture and art.



## Max Ernst

MAX ERNST

The prolific German artist Max Ernst moved to Paris in 1922, encountering the surrealists and helping invent novel creative techniques. He promoted automatism, the act of working in a hypnotic state to record mental associations between images and objects. These 'innate' symbols were then used in bizarre drawings, etchings, collages, and sculptures. "All good ideas arrive by chance."



## Ted Joans

TED JONES

Poet, artist, and trumpet player Joans' adventurous and visionary work defies easy categorization. He lived in Paris much of his life and published over 30 books. He believed that life, poetry, and art were inseparable, and valued the role of "objective chance" in his creative process. He was actively opposed to militarism and consumer culture. "Jazz is my religion, and surrealism is my point of view."



## Paul Klee PAWL CLAY

Klee was influenced by expressionism and cubism and became a noted color theorist. He taught at the Bauhaus in Germany. Well established by the time the surrealist movement began, the surrealists were impressed by his work and saw him as a kindred artist. Klee was very prolific and is said to have created thousands of works. He was also a musician, and once played violin for the Bern Symphony Orchestra.



## Wifredo Lam wee-FRAY-doh LAM

Cuban-born artist Wifredo Lam was known as a painter, but also experimented with printmaking, sculpture, and ceramics. He studied in Madrid and was influenced by 16th century Dutch painting. When he moved to Paris in the 1930s, he joined the community of surrealists in the city before WWII forced him to leave. Lam joined other surrealist refugees in southern France and later went back to Havana.





## Jacqueline Lamba jah-KLEEN lawm-BUH (J as in mirage)

“The line does not exist, it is already form. Shadow does not exist, it is already light.” French artist Jacqueline Lamba was born near Paris and spent her early childhood in Egypt. She studied as a painter and created softly colored watercolors with a focus on ethereal landscapes and figures. Lamba also experimented with photography and collage. Her first solo show was in 1944 at the Norllyst Gallery, NYC.



## Mina Loy MEE-nuh LOY

Loy helped launch the modernist revolution in poetry. A bohemian painter, sculptor, designer of toys, and an avant-garde poet, her writing was considered “shocking.” Loy’s poems were so cerebral and compact that a contemporary writer coined the term “logopoeia” to describe them. She showed art with futurist, dadaist, and surrealist groups, as well as writing manifestos like her 1914 *Feminist Manifesto*.



## Dora Maar DOR-uh MAR

Maar, born as Henriette Theodora Markovitch, was an accomplished fashion photographer as well as radical artist. Her surrealist photomontages and street photographs exposed the underside of life in Paris during the period between world wars. Her haunting photos feature strange objects and atmospheres. One of the few female artists included in early surrealist exhibitions, she also showed work in Japan.



## René Magritte ruh-NAY muh-GREET

Belgian surrealist Magritte is well-known for using everyday objects in unpredictable and illusory ways. He was influenced by futurism and cubism. Magritte occasionally paid the bills by working in advertising and it was rumored he made a living by forging famous paintings and bank notes. "If the dream is a translation of waking life, waking life is also a translation of the dream."



## Joyce Mansour JOYCE man-SOOR

Mansour, an Egyptian-French writer, became involved in the surrealist movement in Paris, publishing 16 books of poetry and several works of macabre prose. The tragic loss of her mother and first husband fueled her obsession with love and death: "I opened your head to read your thoughts; I crunched your eyes to taste your blood; I drank your blood to know your desire; And your trembling body became my food."



## Lee Miller LEE MILL-er

A photographer, journalist, and model, Miller moved to Paris in the 1920s to apprentice herself with the surrealists, afterwards living in several European countries. The events of WWII that she photographed affected her deeply, and it is believed she suffered from PTSD. She was once investigated as a possible spy. She described photography as "a matter of getting out on a damn limb and sawing it off behind you."



## Virginia Mori ver-JIN-yuh MOR-ee

Illustrator and short animated film director, Mori is an Italian artist who studied at the State Art Institute in Urbino. She is very active in the exhibition and festival scenes in Europe and beyond. Mori prefers to work in pencil, ink, and ballpoint pen on paper. She describes her surreal and slightly disturbing imagery as a way to “suggest strange feelings and situations in a metaphoric way.”



## Nardal Sisters nar-DAWL

Jeanne “Jane” and Paulette Nardal were Martinique-born writers and activists. The sisters studied at the Sorbonne in Paris and started an open literary salon. Their bilingual journal *Revue du Monde Noir*, celebrated the intellectual accomplishments of the Black diaspora, paving the way for the emergence of the Negritude movement. Their radical writing connected them politically to surrealist writers from Europe.



## Meret Oppenheim MEH-ret AW-pen-heim

German-born Oppenheim was known for sculptural works, especially her assemblages. Like other surrealists, she moved to Paris as a young woman, living later in Switzerland. Much of her work focused on female sexuality and oppression. Oppenheim also modeled for photographers. Later in her career, she designed costumes and once organized a controversial dinner party where food was served on a nude woman's body.



## Gisèle Prassinos jee-ZELL prah-SEE-nos

"The river in front of her was black. She thought it contained many things." Prassinos first published in a French surrealist magazine at age 14, with her first book following a year later. She wrote of strange things like blue spiders, liquid frogs, and "arrogant hair." Prassinos claimed that her writing was automatic and subconscious before ever hearing of this common surrealist practice.





## Sun Ra SUN RAH

Black musician, composer, and writer Sun Ra was known for his Afrofuturist vision and his “philosophical surrealist bop funk.” Ra was self-taught, reading music, playing piano, and composing from childhood. Ra believed he was an alien, sent to earth to save humans by bringing peace. His outrageous clothing, prolific output, and blending of musical genres resulted in innovative, avant-garde performances.



## Man Ray MAN RAY

Ray was a painter, filmmaker, and photographer involved in the dada and surrealist movements. His romantic partners were often the subject of his photos. In Paris, Ray was associated with many well-known artists and writers. Forced to flee during WWII, Ray lived in California for several years, eventually returning to Paris. Ray’s groundbreaking techniques earned him many accolades in the art world.



## Kay Sage KAY SAYGE

Born in America, Sage traveled in Europe as a girl. She studied at the Corcoran School of Art and continued to study painting in Rome. Sage then moved to Paris, where she became involved in the surrealist movement, later moving back to America during WWII. Her paintings are known for their ethereal architectural elements. She also wrote poetry and created small sculptures with found objects.



## Philippe Soupault fil-LEEP su-POH

Political activist, poet, novelist, and critic, Soupault was involved in the dadaist movement before surrealism. He co-founded the periodical *Littérature* and experimented with “automatic writing” at the beginning of the surrealist movement. He then taught at Swarthmore College in America before returning to France. In 1972 Soupault was awarded the Grand Prix de Poésie by the French Academy.



## Yves Tanguy EVE tan-GEE

Tanguy served in the French merchant navy and army, before returning to Paris to look for jobs as a young man. Rumor has it, a singular painting changed his life and he dedicated himself to painting although he never had any formal training. Five years later, in 1927, he had a solo exhibition in Paris at the Galerie Sur-réaliste and became deeply embedded in the surrealist movement.



## Dorothea Tanning dor-oh-THEE-uh TAN-ing

While studying painting in the 1940s, Tanning met several surrealists in New York. She moved to Arizona, then rural France, and finally returned to New York. In addition to painting, Tanning also explored sculpture and writing. She published a collection of poems at age 100, living to be 101. "Art has always been the raft onto which we climb to save our sanity. I don't see a different purpose for it now."



## Toyen toy-YEN

Toyen was a Czech-born artist known for erotic paintings and illustrations, and the crossing of gender boundaries in speech and affect. Sexual ambiguity was the cornerstone of Toyen's work and life. Toyen's artistic journey included experimentation with cubism, artificialism, and finally surrealism. Toyen helped found the Czech Surrealist Group in 1938.



## Remedios Varo ray-MAY-dee-os VAH-ro

Spanish artist María de los Remedios Alicia Rodriga Varo y Uran-ga was a painter. Her work was in the International Surrealist exhibition (Paris, 1938). She played surrealist games such as cadavre exquis (exquisite corpse), and was drawn to spirituality. After imprisonment during WWII as a political radical, she escaped to Mexico. Varo said surrealism was a "way of communicating the incommunicable."



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JOANS



EI-Q



SALVADOR DALI



GISELE PRASSINOS



TOYEN



AUGUSTIN CARDENAS



KAY SAGE



ERNST

