

# Surrealist Artworks as a Stimulus for Student Artistic Expression

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## Abstract

Works of fine art present an inexhaustible source of imagination, aesthetics, and creativity and can stimulate the development of personal creativity. Communication with artworks is possible if trained to understand and aesthetically experience them. It is therefore important to be in contact with the rich symbolic meanings of the language of art. If we want to educate students to be able to communicate and understand the cultural dynamics of art forms and to successfully communicate with art forms in the future and develop their visual art literacy, we should implement artistic educational content in higher education. Contact with artworks allows students to better understand their thoughts and feelings and, if using appropriate methods, an artwork can stimulate students to be creative. This paper investigates the influence of Surrealist paintings (made by Rene Magritte and Salvador Dali) on stimulating the artistic creativity of 46 first-year students of Early and Preschool Education at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Split, Croatia. The results are presented using a qualitative methodology, i.e. a specific method of aesthetic transfer (perception, reception, and reaction) that brings the observer of the artwork into aesthetic interaction with the work and stimulates their experience of the work along with their creativity. Experiencing the artworks of Surrealism aroused students' emotions and aesthetic experience, allowing them to create background stories about the observed. Using various freely chosen art techniques, they also made their own artworks, which influenced the development of student creativity.

**Keywords:** students, Surrealism, creativity, method of aesthetic transfer.

## Introduction

Artworks from different epochs and periods enrich our knowledge and point to universal human conditions and experiences, thus overcoming cultural barriers. A

quality artwork contains complex layers of meaning, symbols, and metaphors. It is open to various interpretations and moral and emotional reactions of the observer. Fine art with its many contents and meanings helps people to see the world and to introspectively look at themselves and their mental states, thus creating a dialogue and synergy between the creator and the observer. This is how the world of visual art continues to live in the future. Although an artwork was created in the past, the observer in the present experiences, interprets, and evaluates the observed contents and is inspired by the richness of the observed visual forms. Teaching fine arts is mainly concerned with the acquisition and development of productive abilities, focusing less on art appreciation abilities (Duh, et al 2012), yet appreciation abilities are important for the experience, understanding, and evaluation of an artwork. To experience an artwork adequately, it is necessary to find methods of presenting artistic content that will encourage observers to communicate and evaluate the art form. The method of aesthetic transfer is one of the methods enabling communication with the artistic contents from different time epochs and periods. Art appreciation implies the interconnectedness of the processes of perception and reception, which makes the basis of the method of aesthetic transfer. According to one well-known art historian, being exposed to artworks that present different circumstances, often inconsistent with the observer's standards, requires flexibility on the part of the observer. The adaptability of perception is one of the most precious fruits of aesthetic perception. The observer is encouraged to experience aesthetic levels at which they usually do not think (Arnhajm, 2008). The stimulus for thinking in the context of observing an artwork in Art classes is what gives educational value to the approach to the artwork. Previous scientific research: Brajčić & Kuščević (2012), Brajčić & Jujnović (2016), Brajčić & Perić (2019), Kuščević et al (2019), Brajčić et al (2020), Tomljenović & Bratović (2020), Brajčić & Sunko (2020), Sunko & Brajčić (2021) included the method of aesthetic transfer, which proved to be successful in working with school students and children of different ages. This paper describes the results of research stimulated by the method of aesthetic transfer in the approach to artworks of Surrealism in working with university students.

### **Surrealism as a stimulus for artistic expression**

Surrealism as an art movement emerges in the 20<sup>th</sup> century art in Paris, France, and represents a vast field of activity in the art of the century, affecting not only fine arts but also film, photography, and literature. The poet and writer Andre Breton, the most important theorist and the major spokesman of the movement, published *The Surrealist Manifesto* in 1924, in which he pointed out that Surrealism implies actual functioning of thought, that is, psychic automatism in its pure state intended for verbal or written expression. He believes that thought should be dictated in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern (Lucie-Smith, 2003). Initially, Surrealism was not intended to be realized in the field of fine arts, but in verbal and written expression; nonetheless the ideas of Surrealism very quickly captured fine arts leaving a significant trace there. Ignoring

many aesthetic, moral, and life principles, the Surrealists found their inspiration in the complex cultural tendencies and currents of their time.

The Surrealist movement grew from the Dadaist movement founded in Switzerland (from 1916 to 1918) by artists of various profiles, poets, painters, and sculptors meeting in the Zurich Cabaret Voltaire. The Dadaists were “disappointed with all that European culture had created up to that time and which was devalued by the war violence with its massacres and utter insanity, so they decided to rise up against all values, even against the programs of previous movements that proved powerless despite all their rationalism” (Semenzato, 1991: 586). In the aftermath of the First World War, some Dadaists, including a particularly significant poet Tristan Tzara, moved from Zurich to Paris. Coming to Paris, these artists directly encouraged the creation of *The Surrealist Manifesto*. Surrealism inherited from Dadaism the defiance of reason and logic, while the rejection of thinking and the acceptance of the subconscious led the Surrealists to accept new ideas that were present in the culture of their time. Surrealists were inspired by the ideas, thoughts, and works of Sigmund Freud and his revolutionary explorations of the nature of the human soul, the role of dreams, and the power of the irrational in shaping personality. Once repressed and now liberated subconscious, unencumbered by the constraints of reason and logic, becomes the creative impulse of Surrealist painters. For them, the painting becomes a document of the state of consciousness. A peculiar feature of Surrealism is the symbolic fascination with the occult. Unexplored areas of the human spirit, neurotic nightmares, fantasies, hallucinations, visions, allegorical, unusual, fantastic situations become sources of inspiration for Surrealist painters. Ivančević (2001) states that Surrealists sought to explore the unknown areas of the human spirit and that is why their paintings seem to be a description of the dreams of strange visions. Surrealists rejected and ridiculed reality and logic, seeking to connect objects into completely unusual and unexpected relationships. According to Ivančević, Surrealists are interested in the subconscious, unexpressed states of the human spirit, contradictions, dreams, hallucinations, and fantasies. Thus, fantasy, irrationality, and imagination prevail in their paintings.

Novelties in Surrealist art experiments include frottage and a method of artistic expression called *Le Cadavres exquis*, seen in Surrealist drawings based on an old children’s game in which several collaborators finish a text or a drawing without knowing what preceded their part. Results of such artistic activities are unusually distorted drawings.

“Surrealism insists on the passive role of ‘the author’ in the mechanism of poetic inspiration. Surrealism exposes as counter-inspiring any active control through reason, morality, or aesthetic evaluation. The author can witness the origin of the

work only like a spectator – indifferently or passionately” (Mirenić-Bačić; Ratković, 2001: 42).

Picasso, Arp, Klee, Ernst, Miro, and De Chirico took part in the first joint Surrealist exhibition in Paris in 1925. For some of these painters, Surrealism was only a passing phase and a useful experience, while others found the fulfillment of their artistic aspirations in the movement. The most famous representatives of Surrealism in fine arts are Max Ernst, Rene Magritte, Joan Miro, and Salvador Dali.

Rene Magritte (1898 – 1967) studied at the Brussels Academy. He was first influenced by Cubists and Futurists, while around 1925, the influences of Surrealism can be felt in his works. Magritte uses the motif of dream and subconscious to create impressive compositions of unusual and strange confrontations of famous objects or events. By placing familiar objects in unusual circumstances, or rather, creating his compositions from incoherent and unrelated elements, Magritte creates fantastic Surrealist art with strong poetics.

After graduating from the Fine Arts Academy in Madrid, Salvador Dali (1904 – 1989) traveled and created in Spain, France, and the United States. He is a representative of veristic Surrealism, a style in the 20<sup>th</sup> century painting characterized by photographic accuracy in visual representations. In his works, the characters of people, animals, and things are presented grotesquely, hallucinatorily, and disproportionately. The painter in an absurd way uses associative reactions to depict states of dream, trance, neurotic outbursts, hysteria, subconscious complexes, and fear. Within the framework of his Surrealist work, Dali also engaged with film art.

### **Method of aesthetic transfer**

Teaching methods represent quality communication in teaching and learning and are therefore essential in transferring and acquiring knowledge and skills with the aim of developing personal competencies and potentials (Duh & Zupančić, 2011). The method of aesthetic transfer is applied in acquainting the observer with an artwork, whereby it transmits not only knowledge but also aesthetic components in communication with observers. The personal impression is highlighted in the interaction, and it depends on different personalities of the observers. This is a qualitative method that assumes observation or analytical inspection along with the collection of data on the observed phenomena. This method of research takes place in three phases: 1. *perception*: perception of artworks with all senses, 2. *reception*: putting images into words, 3. *reaction*: activity, productive reaction to the artwork (Duh & Zupančić, 2011: 69). The first two phases are aimed at stimulating aesthetic experience, which encourages the cognitive component of aesthetic transfer, while reception occurs as a creative process of receiving and processing information, i.e. as a productive and creative response to the observed work, which makes cognitive and psychomotor components of aesthetic transfer.

## **Research methodology**

### **Research aim and questions**

The aim of the research was to determine the influence of the works of Surrealism (Magritte, Dali) on student motivation and creativity. In accordance with the defined aim, the following research questions were formulated:

Does the painting *The Son of Man* by Rene Magritte influence student motivation?

Does the painting *The Burning Giraffe* by Salvador Dali influence student motivation?

Does the painting *The Son of Man* by Rene Magritte influence student artistic creativity?

Does the painting *The Burning Giraffe* by Salvador Dali influence student artistic creativity?

### **Research sample**

A total of 46 first-year students of Early and Preschool Education at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Split, Croatia participated in the research. All students were females and gladly participated in this research, which took place during regular classes at the Faculty.

### **Method of data collection and processing and the research procedure**

The data were collected using the method of aesthetic transfer and using a free interview. The interview was based on Hickman's questions related to the encounter with an artwork to encourage various answers and creativity of the observer's experience: What feelings does this work evoke in you? What does this work remind you of? After having learnt about the artist and the circumstances in which the work was created, what feelings does this work arouse in you now? What does this artwork mean to you? How does this artwork relate to issues that concern you as well? (Hickman, 1994). Students noted down and handed in their impressions in the reception phase. In the phase of data processing, we analyzed students' artworks according to the criterion of creativity accompanied with the observation of the research authors, and we performed a comparative analysis of students' creativity with regard to their works. In the results analysis section, we will present three works of fine art and three literary works that represent three categories of student works as illustrative examples: 1. highly creative student works, 2. artworks with pronounced elements of creativity, and 3. less creative artworks.

The creativity of artworks was assessed according to these six criteria: a) pronounced possibility of redefinition and recomposition, b) rich use of color and shape, c) unusual and imaginative presentation of motifs, d) rich art vocabulary, e) well used mixed media art technique, f) fluency in ideas during realization, d) associativity. According to the above criteria, student artworks were evaluated by the research authors.

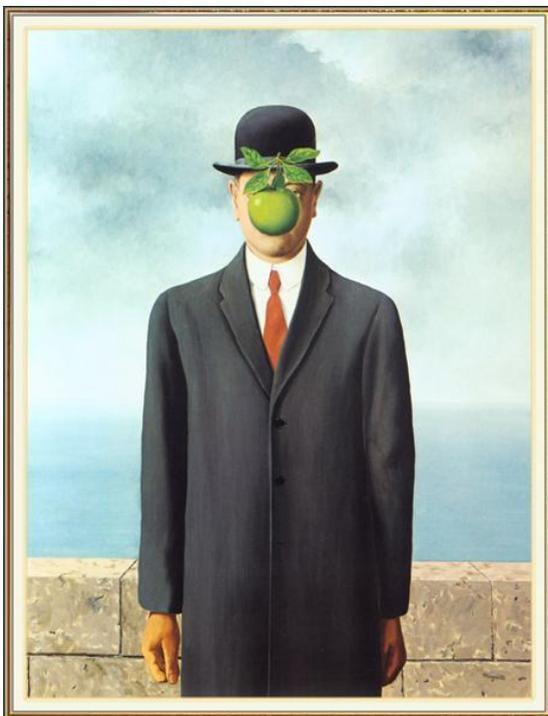
The research was conducted from December 2021 to January 2022. A total of 8 hours of exercises were dedicated to creating works, i.e. four hours dedicated to each analyzed artwork. The research was based on a qualitative art and research method of aesthetic transfer, i.e. observation, description, and interpretation of situations that took place during all three phases of aesthetic transfer. Perception – students observed the artwork, reception – internal reaction to the artwork (expressed in words), and reaction – creation. Prior to the research, material, technical, and spatial conditions were prepared so that students could create their own artworks, and before the beginning of their work, appropriate art tools and materials were prepared. Students had the freedom to choose art techniques and materials.

### **Research discussion and results**

Due to the scope of this research, we will present only two studies on student artworks in the results section. In each study, we will present exemplary works of students from the already described categories.

#### *Study 1*

On a big screen in the classroom, students were shown the painting *The Son of Man* by Rene Magritte. The students watched the presented painting in silence and with great concentration.



*Figure 1. Rene Magritte, The Son of Man, 1964*

## 1. Highly creative student work (Figure 2, Figure 3)

*Perception phase* – The student M. T. watched the painting in silence for ten minutes. The observation was followed by the reception phase, during which the student thought and expressed herself in words.

*Reception phase* – “The work by Rene Magritte entitled *The Son of Man* prompted me to think about the connection between knowledge and sin, to think about man and freedom, and set an example of an interesting composition that sparked an idea of creating my artwork ‘Slobod i Sloboda’ (‘Mr. and Mrs. Freedom’).”

*Reaction phase* – The student was strongly motivated for literary expression and wrote a poem entitled “Slobod i Sloboda”:

### **Slobod i Sloboda (Mr. and Mrs. Freedom)**

Mr. Freedom started to bow to Mrs. Freedom, when she made him stand up and said

Mr. Freedom, do not kneel before me, for you are equal to me.

Do not stand before me like before an icon, but take me to be your wife,

Your mistress and a friend and a part of your being.

Let’s dance the divine dance together.

Along with the poem, the student successfully expressed herself in prose as well. She described her artwork in an essay in the following way. “Considering freedom and love as phenomena inherent to the human being, in my artwork I thought about the manifestation of freedom in a love relationship. In every love relationship, we ask ourselves how to determine freedom in the relationship between two people, is freedom defined by lovers, or does the freedom define the lovers? We can go with questions in all directions, that is exactly the goal of the work ‘Slobod i Sloboda’. Becoming aware of freedom in a relationship, it is important to look at its roots, to know the beginning, thus a depiction of Adam and Eve, the first people who tasted the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, who became aware of and tested their freedom. It is clear to us that this freedom entails a great sacrifice, but it becomes what God planned for man, to become faithful to his image, created in the image of God, to become the one who actively participates in his freedom and moves towards his liberation.

Along with the beginning, becoming aware of the creation is also important to us, God creates the world and the man, he shapes him and gives him a purpose. Man becomes an earthly creator, creates and builds, shapes and intends something, both to himself and to help others, for the purpose of liberation. He builds with his companion, with her, he shares his destiny and the results of his work, and together they nurture the fruits of their love. In the center of my work, there is an eye covered with a sphere with a slit in the middle. This part of the composition points out the importance of opening the view to the wider picture of reality, the importance of entering the core

and remembering the beginning. Below, we can see the photograph 'Love Story', which shows two great lovers who were connected by art. They are painter Salvador Dali and his wife Gala.

Dali considered Gala his greatest muse and often dedicated his works to her, while she took care of many other parts of their lives, including tailoring his interesting suits. They often emphasized the free character of their relationship. The freedom they enjoyed together and built together. In the photo, they hold Dali's work 'love story' as a sign of the importance of their love in the work of this artist. The black background with gold leaves represents the negative aspects and difficulties in relationships intertwined with golden moments of comfort, pleasure, fulfillment, and growth. In this work, I wanted observers to reflect on the character of freedom in a love relationship."



Figure 2. "Slobod i sloboda"

Student M. T.



Figure 3. "Slobod i sloboda"

Student M. T.

The student M. T. was inspired by Rene Magritte's work and made interesting and highly creative artworks, which she called "Slobod i Sloboda". Although the task was to create one artwork, the student created two of them on her own initiative. She chose the techniques of collage and acrylic.

2. Artwork with pronounced elements of creativity (Figure 4)

*Perception phase* – The student K. K. observed the painting carefully for 10 minutes.

*Reaction phase* – “This work evokes in me the feelings of discomfort and mystery because human gaze reveals the depth of a person’s soul and character, because the moment we do not see a person’s gaze we cannot see their intentions. This work reminds me of the phrase: ‘The eyes are the mirror of the soul’. Because, as I have already mentioned, the gaze and the eyes reveal much about the person and their intentions, whether bad or good. The gaze creates a kind of intimacy and connection between the speaker and the listener and, although in some situations excessive gaze can create discomfort in us, making us feel as if the listener perceives and analyzes us, when the person is not looking at us, this can create even greater discomfort because this can mean complete disinterest and we feel we talk ‘in vain’. Gaze reveals a lot about human character, and what the person expects or wants from us. There is also a metaphor ‘to smile with your eyes’, which means a lot to us today because of the pandemic we are going through and because of which we have to wear protective masks. In these situations when we are having a conversation, we cannot see if that person is smiling, we can only hear it or see it when the person is ‘smiling with their eyes.’”



Figure 4. *BIND(ing)* student K. K.

*Reaction phase* – The student K. K. entitled her artwork, inspired by Magritte’s painting, “*BIND(ing)*”. She used a mixed media technique (watercolor, collage). She says: “Magritte’s painting inspired me to create my work, because during the analysis I saw an apple covering the face, and realized that we can’t see exactly what is needed to understand an important issue in today’s world, i.e. ‘Is a person good or evil?’”

The gaze also reveals whether the person is interested in conversation, in getting to know each other, or something completely different.”

### 3. Less creative student artworks (Figure 5)

*Perception phase* – The student K. B. observed the painting carefully.

*Reaction phase* – “This work is seemingly simple and clear. But when observing it longer, it evokes in me a sense of mysticism and complexity.”



Figure 5. Student K. B.

“The white shirt and suit remind me of formality and seriousness, while the four-leaf apple partially covers the eye and leaves an impression of playfulness. In addition, I later noticed that the elbow is turned in the ‘wrong’ direction. This observation clearly confirms the fact that only by looking closely can we know the details. Looking at the artwork, I think that there is no one right answer, or universal truth, because something seemingly simple, like this work, contains multiple hidden messages.”

*Reception phase* – The student called the artwork “Revelation” and verbalized the experience of making her own work inspired by Magritte’s painting in the following literary description: “With my work I wanted to get to the core of the human mind and what is in it and motivate the observer to think about their own thoughts that motivate them and because of which they love life. The key would mean we can lock our thoughts at any time and live on ‘autopilot’, unaware of ourselves.” The student did not give a name to her painting.

We analyzed all student works by comparing them according to the categories.

Table 1. Student artistic creativity in Study 1

Artwork category	f	%
1.1. highly creative artworks 2.3. 3.	17	36.96
4.artworks with pronounced elements of creativity	19	41.30
5.less creative artworks	10	21.74

From the observed results we can notice that students reacted positively to the method of aesthetic transfer, whereby 36.96% of students made highly creative artworks, 41.30% of students created works in which elements of creativity were pronounced, and 21.74% of students made less creative works. During the creation phase in this study, the authors noticed the students were highly motivated in expressing themselves. We can even point out that some of the students almost enthusiastically approached the creation. The students often recomposed and redefined their work, changed their original ideas, exchanged ideas and experiences with each other, and participated very actively and independently in the creation of their works. They also observed and commented on the works of their colleagues with great curiosity. The verbal and written reactions of the students to the observed painting indicate the strong experience of the observed content that stimulated the students to express themselves in fine art and literature. We can conclude that Rene Magritte’s *The Son of Man*, presented by the method of aesthetic transfer, encouraged students to creatively express their thoughts and ideas. These results coincide with the results obtained in previous studies conducted by the authors (Brajčić & Kuščević, 2012; Brajčić & Jujnović, 2016).

## Study 2

On a big screen in the classroom, students were shown Salvador Dali's painting *The Burning Giraffe*.



Figure 6. Salvador Dali, *The Burning Giraffe*, 1937

Highly creative artwork (Figure 7)

*Perception phase* – The student M. Š. observed the painting carefully for 10 minutes.

*Reception phase* – “This artwork arouses in me the feelings of restlessness, fear, interest, and wonder. The feelings of restlessness and fear are mostly caused by the depiction of a giraffe in flames and two terrible female figures, but also cold, dull colors. The work is mystical and full of symbolic meanings, and therefore arouses a sense of interest and wonder (mostly because of the drawers). It reminds me of an apocalypse or a dream. The apocalypse because the painting shows catastrophic scenes that create panic, nervousness, and fear. The dream because the scenes are very unusual, insane, irrational, and imaginative. This work for me represents doom, death. Each drawer symbolizes an open, unfinished chapter in life that haunts and eats the female figure. Her pain and helplessness are shown not only in the drawers but also in the bloody hands and head, and knives stabbed in her back. There are also unusual and imaginative real-life motifs like a burning giraffe. It looks like a symbol of

suffering and pain. Each of us has some problems and doubts from the past that torment and follow us.”

*Reaction phase* – “The inspiration for this work was Salvador Dali’s painting *The Burning Giraffe* which conveys to the observer various intense feelings and the symbolism behind the work. Thus, Dali’s work makes us think about important life issues, conveys his feelings, and sends a certain message. My work was created with the aim of conveying a certain meaning and pointing out the importance of the relationship between human and nature. A woman’s head would represent the human race, and a branch would represent the nature.”



Figure 7. *Fusion*, student M. Š.

“The point is that without the nature, the survival of the human race would be questionable. We must care more about nature and environmental protection because the nature is an integral and important part of our lives.”

## 2. Artwork with pronounced elements of creativity (Figure 8)

*Perception phase* – The student P. M. observed the painting carefully for 10 minutes.

*Reception phase* – “The painting evoked undefined sad feelings in me, perhaps because of the colors, suggesting suffering. Struggle is definitely the word that I think best describes this painting made by the great artist Dali. Every time I look at it, I see some new detail that changes my whole view of the painting. When I summarize everything, I think that for me this work represents both mental and psychical struggle. I would say that physical struggle is symbolized by two abstract figures. Their blood, flesh, and bones depict the struggle in the cruelest way. In the background, there is a small burning giraffe. This for me presents a mental struggle, the feelings, and mental suffering experienced by the dominant figures in the painting. Now that I have become aware of my feelings, I am sure that this painting has aroused in me negative feelings that I can associate with violence and lack of tolerance, which I do not support by any means.”

*Reaction phase* – “The title of my work will be ‘W&P (Water and Peace)’ where I will try to show a figure from another world that has found water and is no longer burning. The red color inspired by Dali’s painting represents pain and sacrifice. That color is on the hands of my figure, all over her body, and around her. The figure finds a source of water (peace) which in my painting is represented by black details such as the stone spring, blue colors of the drops of water, and blue details in the right corner which are in contrast with the upper left corner of this work and symbolize peace and positive emotions.”



Figure 8. *W&P (Water and Peace)*, student P. M.

“The person who finds peace (perhaps including me too) has found all, so my improvised figure will find their water accordingly.”

### 3. Less creative artworks (Figure 9)

*Perception phase* – The student P. L. observed the picture carefully for 10 minutes.

*Reception phase* – “‘The Burning Giraffe’ by Dali makes me feel uneasy. The work reminds me of a dream, as do other Dali’s works. Nothing makes sense. Due to the composition in which the character in the foreground goes towards us, it is easy to get involved in the image, a dynamic has been created according to which it seems that I am also a part of it.”

*Reaction phase* – “The title of my work is ‘The Game of the Subconscious’. Dali’s works as well as the direction of Surrealism are generally known for presenting the dreams.”

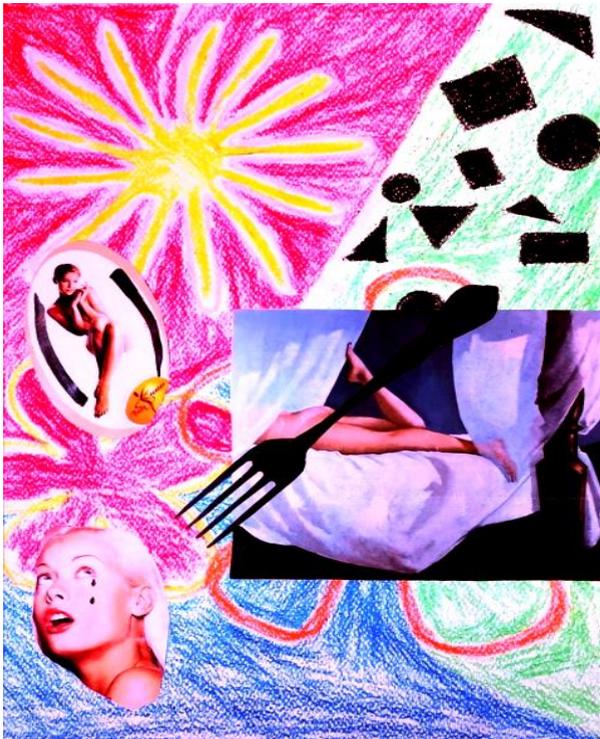


Figure 9. *The Game of the Subconscious*, student P. L.

“Usually, the elements of Surrealist works are contextually unrelated actions that merge into one. My work has shown something similar. The world of dreams and all those images that emerge from the subconscious while we sleep without any special explanation. As I dream, sometimes I feel like something is coming towards me and makes me feel heavier. Nothing is crystal clear, but the feeling is real and familiar.”

Analyzing the student artworks in Study 2, we noticed that the artistic and literary creativity of students was stimulated.

Table 2. Student artistic creativity in Study 2

Artwork category	f	%
1.1. highly creative artworks	14	30.43
2.3.		
3.		
4.artworks with pronounced elements of creativity	23	50.00
5.less creative artworks	9	19.57

Highly creative artworks were noticed in 30.40% of students, while 50% of students made works in which elements of creativity were pronounced. Only 19.57% of students made less creative works. Students also showed high motivation during their work, they communicated with each other and actively participated in the creation. The students changed their creative aspirations, constantly looking for changes, alterations, for an artistic expression that would best suit their ideas, curiously observing the artistic ideas of their colleagues. During the creative process, the students communicated with each other exchanging ideas, and thus became co-creators of other works. We conclude that Salvador Dali's painting *The Burning Giraffes* stimulated the motivation and creativity of students.

These results coincide with the results obtained in previous studies by authors in which works of modern artists of the 20th century were used as a stimulus (Brajčić & Kuščević, 2012; Brajčić & Jujnović, 2016).

## Conclusion

The time we live in is the time of the image, the time of visual communications, and visual culture. Education should thus pay special attention to the development of student visual and artistic skills and abilities within the overall development of personality.

Using artwork as a stimulus in motivating students' artistic expression is an interesting issue in art pedagogy that has been insufficiently researched. We conducted the research entitled "Surrealist Artworks as a Stimulus for Student Artistic Expression" to contribute to investigating student perception, reception, and reaction to Surrealist artworks. In this research, the positive effects of Surrealism on the motivation and creativity of students were determined. The method of aesthetic transfer stimulated students' art appreciation and productive abilities releasing their creative artistic and literary potentials. Furthermore, relying on our observations, we

can conclude that this method encouraged students to act, to be motivated, independent, and autonomous. It also affected their aesthetic experience. Through their artistic and literary works, students developed artistic communication skills and cognitive-emotional competencies. The results showed that artwork is an inexhaustible source of knowledge that enhances originality and communicativeness through language, symbols, and images, creating new links visible in new creative forms. Students transformed their visual and artistic experience in contact with the works of Surrealism into their own research and creation of artistic and literary works.

The use of the method of aesthetic transfer, applied mainly in work with preschool children and school students, has proven to be effective and scientifically justified in working with university students as well.

Future research on the application of the method of aesthetic transfer as a stimulus for the development of creativity could include other contemporary artists and art movements of the 20th century. Such research would make a significant contribution to stimulating students' creativity in visual art education.

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