

ubu

Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme: An Homage

March 18 – May 13, 1995

Ubu Gallery will present a retrospective view of the landmark Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme opening on March 18, 1995. This groundbreaking surrealist exhibition, which premiered at the Galerie Beaux-Arts in Paris in January 1938, was the culminating avant-garde celebration in Europe before the devastating events leading to World War II. Its importance is secured in that it may be the first recorded instance of installation art. Marcel Duchamp, assigned the title of Generateur-Arbitre, designed the environment of the gallery by blanketing the floor with leaves and moss and hanging burlap bags from the ceiling.

Inside the entry lobby, Salvador Dali placed his Rainy Taxi containing two mannequins smothered with snails and drenched by rain falling from the ceiling. Seventeen additional mannequins were placed along the rue Surrealiste which led to the second gallery, each mannequin dressed and decorated by a participating artist. On opening night, the rue Surrealist was deliberately kept dark and flashlights were offered to visitors to view the works. The exhibition was expansive and, in addition to more traditional media, included Surrealist objects and furniture, examples of cadaver exquis (collaborative drawing and collage), as well as decalcomanies (a Rorschach-like watercolor technique).

Ubu Gallery will showcase representative works by many of the major participants, such as Eileen Agar, Andre Breton, Joseph Cornell, Oscar Dominguez, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Georges Hugnet, Rene Magritte, Man Ray, Andre Masson, Matta, Meret Oppenheim, Kurt Seligmann and Yves Tanguy. Substituting for original seventeen decorated mannequins (which no longer exist) will be a collection of original photographs by Gaston Paris, Josef Breitenbach, Man Ray and Raoul Ubac which document the installation. Also on view will be ephemera relating to the 1938 exhibition.