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Behind the Surrealist Curtain:  
Sex, Sensuality and Silence

January 26 – March 16, 2002

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Reception: January 26th, 1:00 – 5:00 PM

*Hans Bellmer, Victor Brauner, Joseph Cornell, Oscar Dominguez, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, David Hare, Georges Hugnet, Valentine Hugo, Marcel Jean, René Magritte, Marcel Mariën, André Masson, Roberto Matta, Pablo Picasso, Angel Planells, Man Ray, Kurt Seligmann, Jindrich Styrsky, Dorothea Tanning, Raoul Ubac, Laurence Vail*

Ubu Gallery will present “**Behind the Surrealist Curtain: Sex, Sensuality and Silence**,” an exhibition of works in a variety of media which addresses the surrealist exploration of eroticism and the liberation of desire. Presented in association with the influential private dealer in Surrealism, Timothy Baum, this exhibition will complement the exhibition, “**Surrealism: Desire Unbound**,” organized by the Tate Modern (London) and opening at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) on February 6, 2002.

Eroticism is one of the defining themes of Surrealism. Influenced by the Freudian notion that sexual instinct was fundamental to the development of the psyche, the Surrealists saw erotic desire as important to self-awareness and the representation of desire as a vehicle to tap into or reflect the sub- and unconscious. To the Surrealists, no subject matter was too extreme to be excluded, censored or ignored. In their investigation of dreams, the various levels of consciousness, and the libido, little distinction was made between private and public domains. In presenting works from the first historical art movement to address pointedly the subject of erotic desire (certain of the works are, in fact, sexually explicit), this exhibition raises issues that remain at the fore of consideration in contemporary art and culture.

Included in the exhibition are photographs, collages, drawings, prints, paintings and objects –generally of intimate scale– by a cross-section of revered artists, as well as lesser lights: Victor Brauner, Joseph Cornell, Oscar Dominguez, Marcel Duchamp, Valentine Hugo, René Magritte, Marcel Mariën, Angel Planells, Man Ray, Dorothea Tanning, Raoul Ubac and Laurence Vail, among others. Highlighted are an array of exploratory techniques pioneered by the Surrealists: a frottage (rubbing) by Max Ernst; a flottage by Marcel Jean; a brûlage (photograph produced from a heat-altered negative) by David Hare; a decalcomania by Georges Hugnet; collages and mise-en-scène photographs by such dexterous innovators as Jindrich Styrsky and Hans Bellmer. The draftsmen adept with the pen or engraver’s burin – Picasso, the early André Masson and Roberto Matta, Kurt Seligmann and others– are also well represented.