**The Hallucinogenic Toreador**

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| [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/thumb/b/bb/The_Hallucinogenic_Toreador.jpg/300px-The_Hallucinogenic_Toreador.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Hallucinogenic_Toreador.jpg) | |
| **Artist** | [Salvador Dalí](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador_Dal%C3%AD) |
| **Year** | 1968-1970 |
| **Type** | [Oil on canvas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_painting) |
| **Dimensions** | 398.8 cm × 299.7 cm (157 in × 118 in) |
| **Location** | [Salvador Dalí Museum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador_Dal%C3%AD_Museum), [St. Petersburg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Petersburg,_Florida), [Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida) |

***The Hallucinogenic Toreador*** (1968-1970) is an [oil painting](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_painting). [Salvador Dalí](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador_Dal%C3%AD) painted it in [1970](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1970), following the canons of his particular interpretation of [surrealist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surrealism) thought. It is currently being exhibited at the [Salvador Dali Museum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador_Dali_Museum) in [St. Petersburg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Petersburg,_Florida), [Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida). In this piece, Dali transmits his passion for [bullfighting](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bullfighting).[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hallucinogenic_Toreador#cite_note-0) By combining [symbolism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbol) with [optical illusions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optical_illusion) and estranging yet familiar [motifs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motif_(visual_arts)), he creates his own visual language. His application of the paranoiac-critical method within this painting combines versatile images as an instructive example of his artistic creation.

The entire scene is contained within a bullfighting ring, submerged under a barrage of red and yellow tones, alluding tentatively to the colors of the [Spanish flag](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Spain). In the upper left section we observe a representational portrait of his wife, Gala, to whom he dedicated this piece. Her serious, rigid expression could be interpreted as a pictorial representation of her deep seated dislike for bullfighting. In the bottom left section there is a pattern of multicolored circles. This rectangular-shaped burst of colors immediately grasps the viewer's attention and steers it down towards the visibly emerging shape of a dying bull's head (probably [Islero](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islero)), dripping blood and saliva from its mouth.

This pool of blood transforms itself into a sheltered bay where a human figure on a yellow raft comes into sight. The lower section of the bay takes on the shape of a [Dalmatian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalmatian_(dog)). The slain bull slowly rises to become the landscapes of Cabo de Creuss ([Cape Creus](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cape_Creus&action=edit&redlink=1)), Dalí's beloved birthplace. It was said that concern for an increase in [tourism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism) led Dali to embrace its features in the painting. The mountain is mimicked on the right; however, this time, the mountain bears greater resemblance to the precipitous mountains around the town of Rosas, near Dali’s studio.

An old anecdote lies behind the painter's desire to represent the sculpted figures of [Venus de Milos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venus_de_Milo), seen 28 times in the painting. Dali decided to incorporate these particular silhouettes in his paintings after a visit to New York, where he purchased a box of pencils with a reproduction of the goddess on the cover. Dali uses negative spaces to produce an image, alternate and complementary to the Venus de Milo. This complementary image encourages the eye to contemplate the painting in such a way as to introduce the quasi-hypnotic array of forms that inhabit the canvas. Examined from a distance, the body of the second Venus reveals the face and torso of the toreador (bullfighter, likely [Manolete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manolete)). Her breasts as his nose, while her face transform into his eye. Their long skirts make up his white shirt and red scarf of the Toreador. The green layer makes up his necktie. His eye is found within the face of the second Venus. The soft white area unveils a tear slipping from his eye.

The gadflies of [St. Narciso](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=St._Narciso&action=edit&redlink=1) (patron saint of [Catalonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catalonia)) march over the arena in seemingly straight and parallel lines, forming the cap, hairnet and cape of the toreador. Situated on the lower right hand corner, the whole spectacle is being watched by an infant boy dressed in a sailor’s suit who is said to represent Dali as a youth.

When the painting was exhibited in a New York City gallery in the late 1960's as a work in progress, it was accompanied by an illustration of the design, matting out the areas not relevant to the Toreador so the Toreador was easier to see. It was labeled explicitly, "How to see the toreador."