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OWEN CHEATHAM FOUNDATION ACQUIRES NEW DALI SCULPTURED JEWEL

Salvador Dali has completed a new objet d'art, "The Angel Cross". It is the third of his spectacular jewels to move and probably will be the most controversial of all his jewel creations.

Acquired by the Owen Cheatham Foundation as the twenty-ninth objet d'art in its "Art-in-Jewels" Collection by Dali, "The Angel Cross" is the Spaniard's first jewel to combine the arts of sculpture and painting.

It is also the first of his religious jewels to show a figure on the cross. But it is not the figure of Christ, but rather represents, according to Dali, "the angelic state achieved by man when he detaches himself completely from material surroundings."

Sculptured from virgin gold, the figure was then painted by Dali in oil, with amber, so that it has a luminous, glowing quality.

The sculptured jewel, Dali says, "corresponds to the hyparxiological concept of existence ... the treatise of existence." In it, Dali says, the viewer sees "the gradual transformation from the mineral world to the angel."

Dali describes the concept as his "most ambitious" and compares the result to the finest work of Benvenuto Cellini - something critics have done long since.

In "Dali, a Study of His Art-in-Jewels", published in 1959 by the New York Graphic Society, A. Hyatt Mayor, of New York's Metropolitan Museum, wrote:

"Dali has been compared to Cellini. But Cellini, who was an experienced metal worker, made tight, niggling drawings that specify exactly how to case and chase an object. Dali's dashing, imaginative sketches are perhaps his most likeable creations, but they need a practical jeweler to translate them before their effect can be approximated in metal and stone. The sketches would never get off the paper without an interpretation as thorough and as skillful as that of the orchestrator of a piano score."

Dali's jewels, including "The Angel Cross", have all been crafted by Alemany & Company, New York jewelry firm, working in close collaboration with the artist. Dali designed "The Angel Cross" after Carlos Alemany, president of the firm, acquired an extraordinary flawless topaz from Brazil.

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Dali conceived of using the gem, which weighs 1687 karats, to represent the Door of the Tabernacle and the Gate of Heaven. The diamonds, platinum and gold posed no problem. Alemany then began the search for other materials to execute Dali's design. From Russia came a great block of lapis lazuli which eventually was carved into a perfect globe weighing 602 pennyweights. From China came rare dark coral. For the base, Dali wanted crystallized zinc sulphite. This mineral, also rare, Alemany brought from Africa.

"The Angel Cross" stands 30 inches high. Embedded in the base are twelve diamond encrusted platinum spines. These move in undulating rhythm, each from its own electrically driven motor, hidden in the base. The rhythm, patterned from the study of sea urchins, represents the animal world, in Dali's concept. The mineral is symbolized by the lapis lazuli globe; the plant world by the coral; man and the spiritual by the figure on the cross.

Dali's creations actually incorporates three crosses. The central cross is sculptured gold. The second, of coral, represents the Tree of Life. Against this rests the figure. The central element is encased within a large cross composed of five cubes of 18-karat gold. These cubes appear to be suspended in space. Only careful examination reveals that they are held together by tiny gold bridges at the back of the cross. In the front of the large exterior cross is hung the great topaz with golden hinges. This opens and closes, as a gate.

The sculpture is, Dali states, "built on the mathematics of the number twelve."

"... The number twelve," says Dali, "is that of the dodecahedron. At the same time it is the twelve Apostles, the twelve signs of the Zodiac, the twelve months of the year. Even the cube which imprisons, so to speak, the structure of the coral cross is also based on the number twelve."

Dali's first moving jewel, "The Royal Heart", was created in honour of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. It is a large beaten gold heart with a pulsating centre of rubies which represents "the Queen, whose heart beats constantly for her people."

His second moving jewel, "The Living Flower", rises from a malachite base and shows a gold flower, with petals paved with diamonds. The lower bloom opens and closes rhythmically. Dali also designed the mechanism embedded in the malachite. This he describes as a "simple matter of weights and pulleys, which, when set in motion by electrical impulses, brings the flower to life."

The Owen Cheatham Foundation, headquartered in New York, loans the Collection to museums, universities, and charitable organizations for exhibitions for fund-raising purposes.

A first private showing of "The Angel Cross" was held in New York at the French & Company Galleries on Tuesday, June 7.

The first public viewing will be in London, where the Collection will be exhibited at Sotheby's Galleries, September 14 to October 8, for the benefit of the Institute of Child Health, of the Great Ormond Street Hospital.

With the Compliments of:

Messrs. Sotheby & Company,
34 & 35 New Bond Street,
London, W.1.

The Institute of Child Health,
Great Ormond Street,
London, W.C.1.

For further information please telephone:

FLE 4494 or FLE 2218

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON OWEN CHEATHAM FOUNDATION
COLLECTION OF "ART-IN-JEWELS" BY SALVADOR DALI.

The Owen Cheatham Foundation Collection of "Art-in-Jewels" by Salvador Dali was acquired in November, 1958 - 22 of the objets d'art from the Catherwood Foundation and six major pieces from Alemany & Company, the New York jewelry firm which has crafted all of Dali's jewel designs. A new jewel, "The Angel Cross" never yet exhibited in public has just been added.

The Collection is loaned by the Foundation to museums, universities, and charitable institutions as a fund-raising instrument. The first showing of the Collection was in May, 1959, at French & Company Galleries as a benefit for the Spence-Chapin Adoption Service. Since then, the Collection has been shown at the Portland Museum of Fine Arts in Portland, Oregon; in Springfield, Mass., as a benefit for the Springfield Symphony Association; at the Columbia Museum of Fine Arts in Columbia, South Carolina; Marquette University in Milwaukee; in Sarasota, Florida, as a benefit for Happiness House; at the Telfair Museum of Arts & Sciences in Savannah, Ga.; in Augusta, Ga., for the benefit of the Junior League, and in Atlanta, Ga., for the benefit of the Atlanta Art Association.

First public exhibition of the Collection with "The Angel Cross" will be in London at Sotheby's Galleries, September 14 to October 8, under the auspices of the Institute of Child Health, the Medical School of the Great Ormond Street Hospital.

The jewels, which have caused Dali to be likened to Cellini, were never intended by Dali to be used for personal adornment, but rather for public display, enjoyment and inspiration.

"To history," says Dali, "they will prove that objects of pure beauty, without utility but executed marvelously, were appreciated in a time when the primary emphasis appeared to be upon the utilitarian and the material.

"Freed of materialism and serving a philanthropic purpose, the Dali jewels are a new Ambassador for America - to Russia, to Europe, to all the world; a symbol of the cosmogonic unity of our century.

"The jeweled pieces - ornaments, medals, crosses, objets d'art - were not conceived to rest soullessly in steel vaults. They were created to please the eye, uplift the spirit, stir the imagination, express convictions. Without an audience, without the presence of spectators, these jewels would not fulfill the function for which they came into being. The viewer, then, is the ultimate artist.

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His sight, heart, mind - fusing with and grasping with greater or lesser understanding the intent of the creator - gives them life."

The jeweled works of art include representations from his surrealist and classical periods as well as his more recent "mystic-nuclear" phase. In this phase he has been creating such paintings as "The Crucifixion", presented to the Metropolitan Museum by Chester Dale in 1955, and "The Last Supper", which is in the National Gallery in Washington.

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