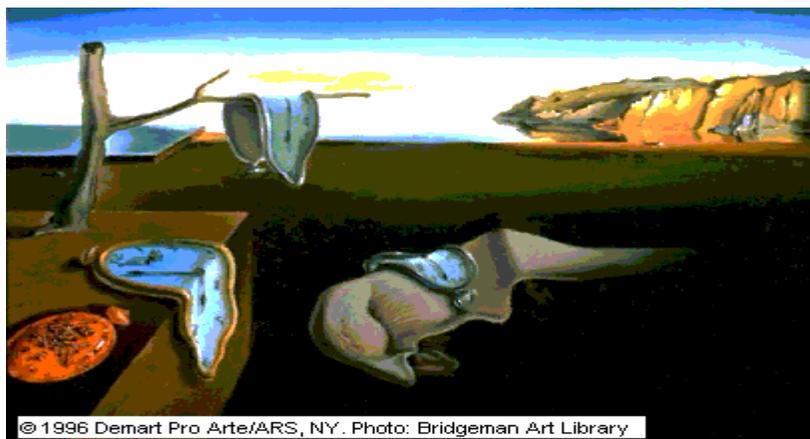


# What is surrealism?

Surrealism is a movement in art. Sur-real means beyond reality, and surrealist art shows the importance of experiences, which are hidden, in normal life, such as dreams and memories.

The surrealists were a group of artists who invented and developed surrealism.

Surrealist painting exhibits great variety of content and technique. That of Dalí, for example, consists of a more or less direct and photographic transcription of dreams, deriving its inspiration from the earlier dream-like paintings of de Chirico. Arp's sculptures are large, smooth, abstract forms, and Miró, a formal member of the group for a short time only, employed, as a rule, fantastic shapes, which included deliberate adaptations of children's art and which also had something in common with the designs used by Catalan artists to decorate pottery. The Russian-American painter Pavel Tchelichew, while not a member of the Surrealist group, created Surrealist images in his paintings as well as in his numerous ballet designs.



The Persistence of memory.  
Salvador Dalí.

# Surreal Artists

Possibly the greatest surrealist artist was Max Ernst; he seemed to be a surrealist by temperament. From an early age he had a fertile imagination, observing reality vividly and letting his fantasies play on it. Painting his fantasies and self-induced hallucinations seemed perfectly normal to him. Ernest often painted forests that are tightly packed and sinister. The sun shines down on them, but does not penetrate: sometimes in his cities are seen in the same way. These paintings are subtly frightening; the more you explore them the more like a nightmare they become.

Ernst wrote about the forest, both as a perfect place for imagining, and as a perfect place where a person was in danger of death. It was the mixture of terror and fascination that the young Ernst had felt on going to a forest for the first time. At first sight the pictures appeal as decoration but gradually the sinister qualities become evident. Ernst's forests are full of symbols, like those of the German Romantic painter Casper David Friedrich but his symbols are not so easy to analyse because they are not traditional. They are symbols from his own imagination and we are left to identify with them or not.

These are some of his excellent pieces of art off one of the many web sites dedicated to him:



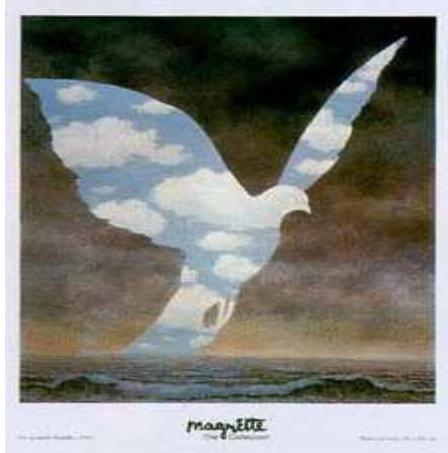


There are many other surreal artists but the one I admire the most is René Magritte.

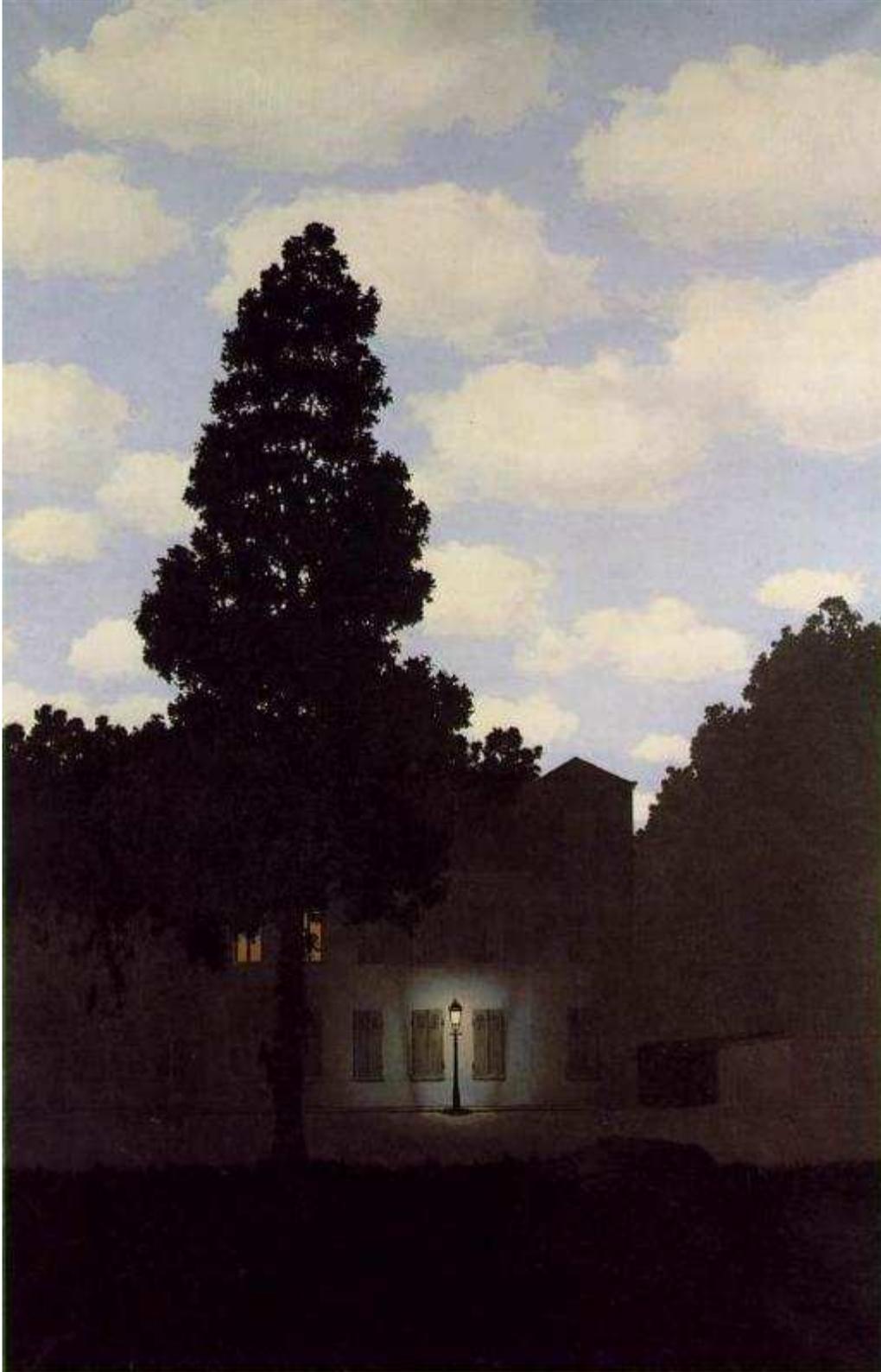
*My painting is visible images which conceal nothing; they evoke mystery and, indeed, when one sees one of my pictures, one asks oneself this simple question "What does that mean"? It does not mean anything, because mystery means nothing either, it is unknowable."*

*René Magritte*

These are some of his pieces of art:



La Grande Famille  
(1963)



The Empire of Lights  
(1954)

# What Do I Think?

I think surrealism is an artist's chance to use a picture or an image to say more than one thing. In surrealism you can do impossible things. What I like about surrealism is that the things are real but they are in the wrong place and that's what makes it interesting for me.

Surrealism is used in many places including advertising because it is interesting and makes people think. Surrealism is also on the Internet where you can also find pieces of writing which tell you what the images mean.