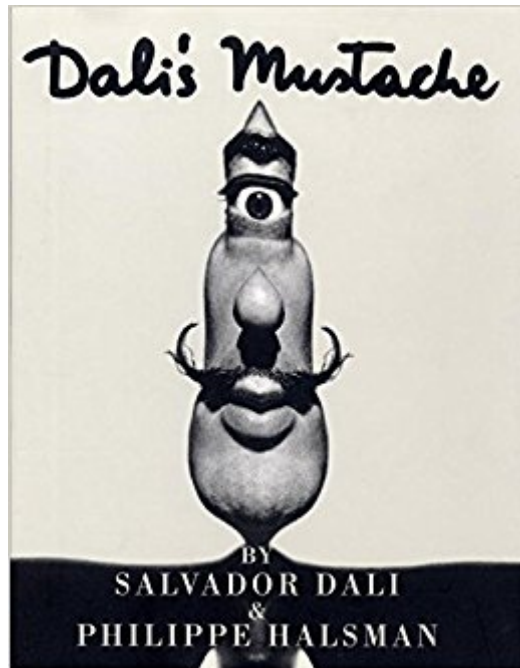




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Dali's Mustache



Synopsis

With 101 "Life" magazine covers to his credit, Philippe Halsman (1906-1979) was one of the leading portrait photographers of his time. In addition to his distinguished career in photojournalism, Halsman was one of the great pioneers of experimental photography, motivated by a profound desire to push this youngest of art forms toward new frontiers by using innovative and unorthodox photographic techniques. One of Halsman's favorite subjects was Salvador Dali, the glittering and controversial painter and theorist with whom the photographer shared a unique friendship and extraordinary professional collaboration that spanned over thirty years. Whenever Dali imagined a photograph so strange that its production seemed impossible, Halsman tried to find the solution, and invariably succeeded. As Halsman explains in his postface, "Dali's Mustache" is the fruit of this marriage of the minds. The jointly conceived and seemingly nonsensical questions and answers reveal the gleeful humor and assumed cynicism for which Dali is famous, while the marvelous and inspired images of Dali's mustache brilliantly display Halsman's consummate skill and extraordinary inventiveness as a photographer. This combination of wit, absurdity, and the offhandedly profound is irresistible and has contributed to the enduring fascination inspired by this unique photographic interview, which has become a cult classic and valuable collector's item since its original publication in 1954. The present volume faithfully reproduces the first edition and will introduce a new generation to the irreverent humor and imaginative genius of two great artists.

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Customer Reviews

"Warning! This book is preposterous," says the back cover. This collaboration between the flamboyant Spanish painter and the Latvian-born portraitist is also a surrealist work of art. Halsman understood the extroverted Dali better than any other photographer; their talents and personalities were the perfect complement to each other. In the course of this witty and inventive homage, the artist's celebrated whiskers tie themselves in a knot, are pressed into service as a paintbrush, become the hands of a clock and blemish the face of the Mona Lisa. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Philippe Halsman's memorable photographs of the leading statesmen, scientists, entertainers and artists of our time continue to appear in magazines and books. In 1944, four years after arriving in the United States from France, his colleagues elected him first president of the American Society of Magazine Photographers. In 1958 he was named one of the world's ten best photographers in an international poll. His other publications include *The Frenchman*, *Piccoli* (a fairy tale), *Philippe Halsman's Jump Book*, *Halsman on the Creation of Photographic Ideas*, and *Sight and Insight*, as well as *Portraits* and *Halsman at Work*, which were published by his family after his death in 1979. His work is represented in the permanent collections of numerous museums in the United States and abroad. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Dali's Mustache" can be read on more than one level. At the most innocent reading, it is a charming little photo essay starring Salvador Dali's mustache, illuminating Dali's answers to a series of interview questions. To a casual reader, it is a whimsical combination of photo art and humor. A more serious reader trying to understand Dali's perspectives and attitudes would see more here. Dali is asked some key questions about his attitudes on art and beauty, and while his answers are brief, they are also telling. The obvious example is the question about the nature of art, and what the mustache illustrates compared to the text of Dali's reply, but answers about Dali's secret and the nature of beauty and ugliness are also thought provoking, especially in context of the entire book and Dali's body of work. A fun and thought-provoking little book for any Dali fan. Edward M. Van Court

What becomes the legendary mustache of a famous artist most? A series of way over-the-top photographs by a famous photographer. The results: this delightfully funny collection of questions of Salvador Dali with photographic answers by Philippe Halsman. Fans of the photographer will remember that he also gave the world the whimsical JUMP BOOK where he asked famous people

including Marilyn Monroe, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor-- that couple obviously would do anything for publicity-- and Mr. Dali as well to jump and shot them as they left the floor. (I have always been amused and gladdened that Eleanor Roosevelt graciously declined to jump.) There are about 30 or so photographs including the one reproduced on the cover of the book. Also included are a Preface written by Dali, Postface by Halsman and Publisher's Notes explaining how some of the more "surreal" photographs were accomplished. The photographs on pages 55 and 111 are just two good examples. Page 55---("No, I am completely mobile"). The explanation is that Halsman cut the mustache and eyebrow out of the print, then cut out the eye, attaching it with thin wire to the eyebrow. Then he hung this mobile from another wire to get the effect of the mustache becoming a Calderesque work of art. Amazing! The answer to the question "Dali, what do you see when you look at Mona Lisa? "A paragon of beauty." We see the Dali's mustache, eyes and hands transposed onto Leonardo's masterpiece (p. 111). The photograph on page 67 is one of my favorites, a takeoff on one of Dali's most famous images, what I would call the melted clocks. He answers the question: "What is surrealism?" "Surrealism is myself." Another favorite is the shot on page 15 where we see a portrait of Dali dressed in coat and tie holding his mustache in both hands. But oops! There is no face. The explanation for this photo that answers the question of why he wears a mustache ("In order to pass observed") is that Halsman made a regular portrait and painted out the face of Dali before printing the negative. These two men obviously had the times of their lives coming up with the ideas that eventually made it into this little gem of a book that has written on the back: "Warning! This Book Is Preposterous." These photographs have to be seen to be believed. Words cannot describe them.

Small but mighty is what I would tell you about this book. Philippe's focus on Dali here is special. I feel his work with Dali is a reflection of Philippe the colorful, inventive and playful artist. I love that Halsman did this book himself and it is always a joy to pick it up and spend a bit of time with it reflecting on artistic greatness.

An amazing collection of pictures. I have a handlebar moustache and couldn't imagine not having this in my collection. A must for the enthusiast of facial hair or photography. Or both. :)

Un livre très original sous forme de questions posées à Dali, auxquelles il répond par des photos pleines d'humour. Les questions et les réponses sont en anglais mais sont très compréhensibles, d'autant que les photos aident bien.

"Very pleased". I received the item in a timely manner and in perfect condition. I am very pleased. Thumbs up. Thank you very much.

I came across this book at work (ironically one of the Fulfillment Centers). It instantly caught my eye. Unfortunately I made this purchase based only off the cover and knowing my girlfriends love for the great Salvador Dali. I didn't read any reviews or description so when I got this book I was expecting a lot of images and painting and information on the artist and his works. However, this book includes pages and pages of photographs of Dali with his mustache as the common highlight. It's still a cool book but it doesn't have much depth and once you've been threw it once there's really no draw to open it again. The lack of content doesn't really bring it much value for me personally but for others it may. If this still sounds of interest to you, you should check it out. It's a nice piece to have on your coffee table for guests to look at.

The content of the book wasn't nearly as cool as the cover. I don't know that I would purchase it if I had it to do over.

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