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English III

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Surrealistic Realism

The article “Why Get Upset When You Can Just Smile?” includes a short story called “Golden Slumbers” written by Mieko Kawakami. It centers around a wedding during the beginning of the pandemic. In the story, there is a girl that doesn't seem to care about the wedding and is instead just sitting there, knitting. The main character in the story starts to doze off and because of the girl's comments about the wedding, contemplates the difference between a wedding and a funeral. Before the short story, Kawakami mentions that when she would look back on the early parts of the pandemic, the feelings of dystopias and utopias were both present at the same time.

Salvador Dali's surrealistic artworks connect to the feeling of the short story “Golden Slumbers”. In the introduction of the article, Kawakami explains that the feeling at the time, during the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, was unreal, or like a dream. Dali's paintings are most often dream-like, as he got a lot of his ideas from dreams.



Fig. 1. Dali, Salvador. *The Persistence of Memory*. 1931

[The 10 Most Famous Artworks of Salvador Dali - niood](#)

This painting, *The Persistence of Memory*, is one of Dalí's more famous works. It is a painting of three melting clocks, representing the fluidity and instability of time. There is also a fourth clock laying face down and covered in ants. The background is very still, calm and peaceful, and maybe even thoughtful. The melting and distorted clocks give the sense of losing track of time.



Fig. 2. Dali, Salvador. *Three Young Surrealist Women Holding in Their Arms the Skins of an Orchestra*. 1936 [Three Young Surrealist Women Holding in Their Arms the Skins of an Orchestra](#)

This painting is of three women with flowers for heads, two of which are holding the “skins” of instruments. At first glance, without reading the title, the instruments seem like they are melting. But after reading the title, it is revealed that they are not melting, instead, they are, in fact, the skins of the instruments.



Fig. 3. Dali, Salvador. *The Elephants*. 1948

[The Elephants \(1948\) by Salvador Dali - LadyKflo](#)

This painting is still very dream-like, but it is different from the previous two, as it does not have any objects that seem like they are melting. It does, however, have elephants with extremely long legs. The legs have joints in odd places that make it look like they are made of clay and were stretched out.

Works Cited

Kawakami, Mieko. "Why Get Upset When You Can Just Smile?" *The New York Times*,

May 19, 2020,

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/19/opinion/mieko-kawakami-coronavirus-story.html>. Accessed 27 September 2023.