

SELFRIDGES & CO



SELFRIDGES TAKES A SURREAL TURN THIS SPRING

From 16th March to 24th June, Selfridges will explore the influence of Surrealism on contemporary art and design with a series of collaborations in its Oxford Street store. Running in tandem with the Victoria and Albert museum's exhibition, *Surreal Things: Surrealism and Design (29th March to 22nd July)*, Selfridges' commissions will demonstrate the powerful effect the movement continues to have on artists and designers today.

Selfridges has always been much more than just a shop, operating at many levels of experience, from extraordinary window displays to perception-challenging in-store activities. Surrealism at Selfridges will encompass all of this to offer visitors the most captivating shopping experience ever staged in a department store.

Surreal windows

At the height of the surrealist movement in the 1930's, artists such as Salvador Dali and Elsa Schiaparelli would create window displays for forward-thinking shops. Selfridges will celebrate this tradition by inviting current Surrealism-friendly designers to create unique and thought-provoking schemes.

Commissioned designers include John Galiano, Viktor & Rolf, Maison Martin Margiela, and Moschino. Each of them has been given free reign to create a surrealist world within one window, reflecting the essence of their creativity and the influence of Surrealism on their work.

Swiss minimalist designer Rolf Sachs, and Dadadandy – the Paris-based team inspired by Surrealism and Dadaism - will each create a window and other projects inside the store.

Dadadandy will give Selfridges' Surrealism season one of its most startling art pieces: *The Sum of All Reasons* by Simon Moretti for Dadadandy, a gigantic eyeball dangling over the store's iconic Lady of Time above the historic main entrance.

Rolf Sachs has created a range of surrealist products which will be sold exclusively by Selfridges in its surreal bespoke shop-in-shop (see below).

Within the store, Surrealism continues:

This is not a shop – a collaboration with F.A.T.

Selfridges has invited hot young architectural practice Fashion Architecture Taste (F.A.T.) to design and curate a surreal shop on the lower ground floor of the Oxford Street Store.

This guerilla shop will display and sell an amazing and wide-ranging array of items, all reflecting the ongoing influence of the surreal aesthetic on contemporary art and design.

Products range from the Dali inspired mirror-nails produced by O.P.I Nail Bar for Selfridges, to the oversized stationery by wacky design brand XL, to extraordinary exclusive and dreamy book sculptures by Su Blackwell, to wonderfully sinful and unbelievable confections by ChoccyWoccyDoodah – the most creative chocolatier and patissier this side of the moon.

The shop will also sell exclusive surreal-like lighting pieces through Greenwich Village, Selfridges' contemporary designer furniture space.

Selfridges is delighted to be the exclusive retail partner of the V&A shop as a large selection of the V&A surreal products will also be sold through the Selfridges Surreal Shop.

Surreal tea shop – a collaboration with Les Trois Garçons

Next to the Surreal Shop, on the lower ground floor of the Oxford Street store, Sienna Café will also get the surreal treatment, courtesy of culinary threesome extraordinaire Les Trois Garçons. After its re-invention by this

highly creative team, Sienna Café will look, feel and taste different – selling Surrealism inspired cakes and nibbles.

Dadadandy does Surrealism at Selfridges

As a part of the store's exploration of contemporary Surrealism, Selfridges has commissioned a surrealist art installation to occupy the Ultralounge, the Oxford Street store's events space - also on the lower ground floor.

Created by Dadadandy, *The Fountain of Innocence* is an installation that will suggest a challenging modern take on a series of original surrealist concepts.

Dadadandy will also provide customers with an original sign off: *The Birth of Liquid Desires*, a poetry filled till receipt which people will be able to keep, read, share long after the surreal moment is over.

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**Please contact Bruno Barba at Selfridges Press Office for further information and pictures on 020 7318 3204 or on email on bruno.barba@selfridges.co.uk
Or Helen or Jenny at ZPR on 020 7896 3200 or selfridges@z-pr.com**

Editor's notes:

- **Surrealism**, n. Pure psychic automatism, by which one proposes to express, either verbally, in writing, or by another manner, the real functioning of thought. Dictation of thought in the absence of all control exercised by reason, outside of all aesthetic and moral preoccupation
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surrealism>
- Surrealism at Selfridges:
16th March – 29th April: Surrealism window display
From 23rd March for 6 weeks: 'This is not a shop' in collaboration with F.A.T. opens (lower ground floor)
23rd March – 24th June: Dadadandy surrealist installation (Ultralounge, lower ground floor)
- **V&A's Surreal Things – 29th March to 22nd July**
The V&A's major spring exhibition, Surreal Things, will be the first to explore the influence of Surrealism on the world of design – theatre, interiors, fashion, film, architecture, and advertising. Alongside paintings by Magritte, Ernst and Dali will be some of the most extraordinary objects of the 20th century, from Dali's Mae West Lips sofa and Lobster Telephone to Elsa Schiaparelli's dramatic 'Tear' and 'Skeleton' dresses, and Meret Oppenheim's Table with Bird's Legs. With nearly 300 exhibits, Surreal Things will look at how artists like Dali engaged with design and how

designers were inspired by Surrealism. **For further information, please contact the V&A press office at press.office@vam.ac.uk or on 020 7942 2502**

- **Dadadandy** - Born out of a collaboration between Simon Moretti and Paul Heber-Percy, and inspired by Surrealism and Dadaism, Dadadandy is an artwork, an artist, a place for discussion and a curatorial agency. The company functions as an umbrella for many curatorial activities, including the production of works by artists as well as providing a forum for collaboration, exchange and discussion
- **F.A.T.** - Founded in 1995 and headed by Sean Griffiths, Charles Holland and Sam Jacob in 1995, F.A.T. has an international reputation for innovative and progressive architecture and design. Their work is well known for its wit and accessibility. The practice has recently completed an award winning social housing project and an art school in the Netherlands. Clients include Urban Splash and the Tate Gallery. Their project for Selfridges will be their first in a retail environment
- **Rolf Sachs** – Rolf Sachs has established himself as one of the most stimulating and thought provoking contemporary furniture designers of his generation. He has won international acclaim for his work throughout Europe and has shown extensively in Germany, Italy and Britain. Rolf is gradually moving away from his familiar signature of Deconstruction and Minimalism, towards an exploration of emotional responses evoked by more visually challenging objects, forging a unity of art and design ideas.
- Alannah Weston took on the role of Creative Director of Selfridges in 2004. Alannah was previously Creative Director of Windsor in Vero Beach, Florida where she founded an art gallery for the community and curated a series of exhibitions including work by Christo and Jeanne Claude, Ed Ruscha, Bruce Weber and Peter Doig. The Ultralounge is part of her vision for a store which offer varied and surprising experiences to the customer
- Selfridges is also famous for its many creative collaborations. Early in the year, Selfridges invited two of the most influential Chinese artists to produce exclusive installations for the store. “Follow Me” by Wang Qingsong became one of Selfridges most talked about window displays and “Eating the City”, the edible miniature city which covered part of the shop floor by artist Song Dong, was a big hit with visitors
- The Ultralounge is in the lower ground floor of Selfridges’ Oxford Street store. It was launched as a dedicated events space in February 2006, with Future Punk – a month-long celebration of the attitude that has dominated youth culture since its inception in 1976. Involved in Future Punk were Malcolm McLaren, legendary photographer Bob Gruen, Don Letts, The New York Dolls, The Buzzcocks, The Slits and The Long Blondes. Other Ultralounge events in 2006 were: Spring Beauty; Street

Style and the Christmas Grotto. 2007 opened with the presentation of an exclusive video art installation called Luminous by Brian Eno