



Crucifixion (Corpus Hypercubus)

Another one of Salvador Dalí's striking crucifixion pieces. This one was painted in 1954 to fully capture the ideas of Dalí's artistic manifesto called "Nuclear Mysticism." Curiously, five images of Dalí's wife Gala appear in Christ's right knee, while five images of Dalí himself appear in the left. They can only be seen on close examination of the original painting.

Later in his career Dalí developed a fascination with nuclear science that overshadowed his interest in surrealism. However, following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Dalí's fascination underwent a change, and in 1951 he completed a manifesto outlining the ideas of a new artistic movement dubbed "Nuclear Mysticism." Dalí combined religion and science in an effort to temper the terrible and awe inspiring power of the atom with Christian ethics.

Here in *Corpus Hypercubus* Dalí gives us the most complete depiction of his idea. Christ's body explodes outward from the cross, which has taken the form of a polyhedron net. Just as in *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* Jesus' face is turned away and His body is free of wounds, nails, and the crown of thorns. In Dalí's own words this is meant to preserve only the "metaphysical beauty of Christ-God". Looking up at Christ from the bottom left corner is the figure of Mary Madeleine whom Dalí considered an exemplar of human development within the framework of Nuclear Mysticism.

To me this piece and the aesthetic ideas it expresses show how Christ's sacrifice is eternal. Whether it is a crucifixion piece for the iron age or the atomic age the heart of what Christ has done for us always remains.