

# Marc Chagall

**James Johnson Sweeney**

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# Marc Chagall

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## MARC CHAGALL

By James Johnson Sweeney

Marc Chagall has for many years held a key position in the world of modern art, yet this is the first volume to clarify and define his relationship to the movements and schools on which he has exercised so vital an influence.

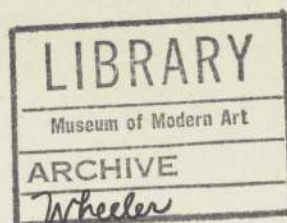
Born in Russia in 1889, Chagall has consistently maintained an artistic independence commensurate with his extraordinarily subtle personal vision. His poetic imagination has created a strange world of sentiment and fantasy, which like that of Chirico and Klee, was a prefiguration of the dreamscapes of surrealism. At the same time Chagall's fairy tale world combines a folk character with an oriental sumptuousness in a way that is unique in contemporary painting.

His work has not been confined to painting; he has achieved brilliant success with his revolutionary stage designs; he is a sensitive draftsman, and he occupies a place with Rouault as one of the greatest of modern print-makers.

Mr. Sweeney, author of *Joan Miro*, *Stuart Davis*, and many other books on modern artists, has written a discerning evaluation of Chagall's inventive and versatile genius. Mr. Carl Schnie- wind, of the Art Institute of Chicago, contributes an account of his extraordinary development and achievements as a graphic artist.

Fifty-five plates, including three in full color, thoroughly illustrate the entire range of the artist's work.

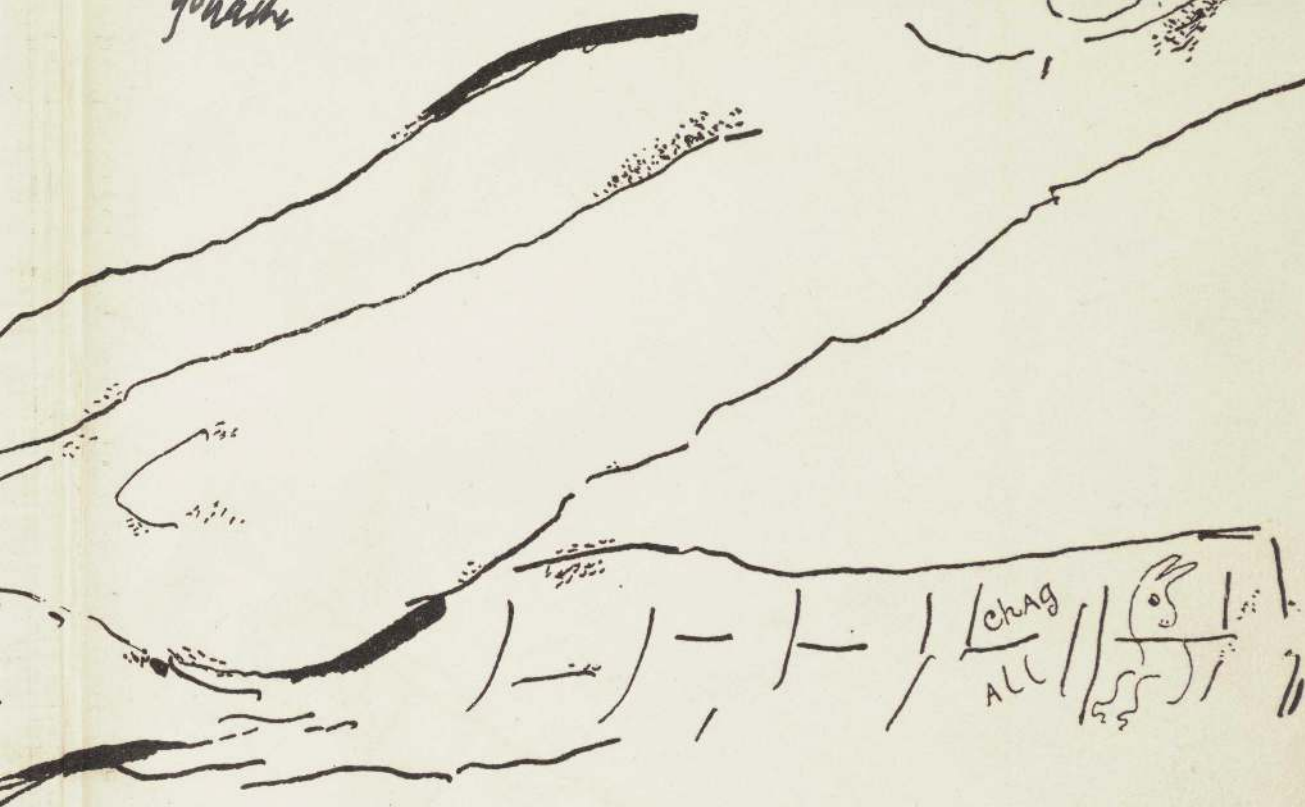
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Albert Carmen in NY after Chagall's  
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## MARC CHAGALL

By James Johnson

Marc Chagall has held a key position in modern art, yet this is not only to identify and define movements and has exercised a

Born in Russia, he consistently maintained his independence of thought and action. His extraordinarily rich and colorful work, which like Klee, was a prelude to the surreal, Chagall's fairy-tale folk character and his continuousness in a contemporary

His work has been painting: he has been successful with his signs; he is a symbolist; he occupies a unique position as one of the great modern makers.

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Fifty-five plates in full color, throughout the entire range of the

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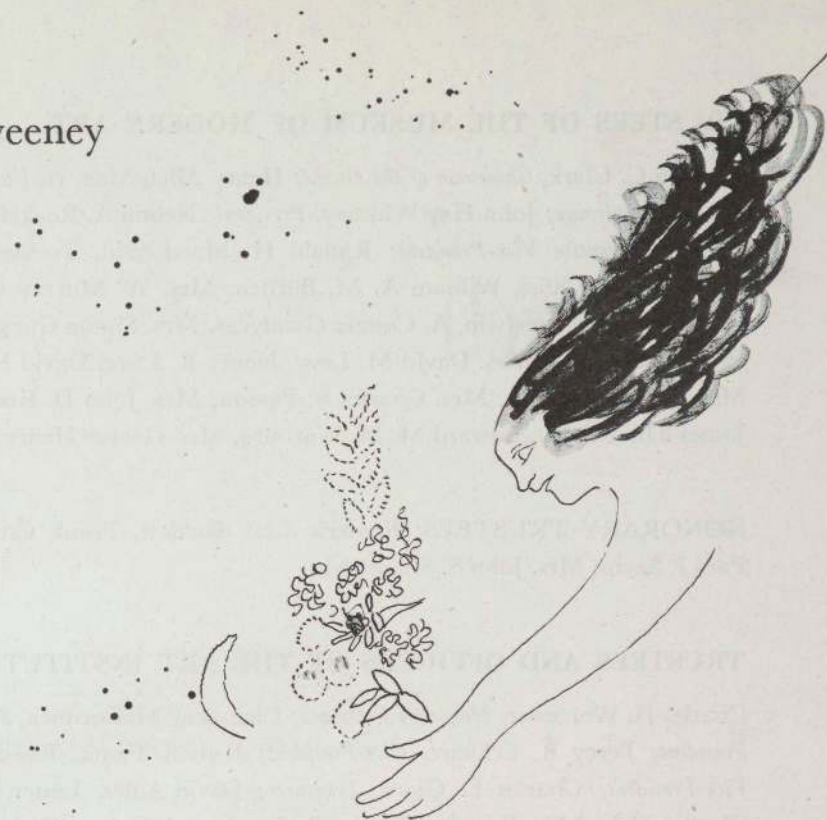
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# Marc Chagall



Marc Chagall

James Johnson Sweeney



# Marc Chagall

In collaboration with The Art Institute of Chicago

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK



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The drawings for the end leaves and title page were made by the artist especially for this catalog



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And I am especially indebted to the artist and his daughter, Ida Gordey, for their patient courtesy and assistance throughout the preparations for the exhibition; to Mr. John Dos Passos for his generosity in translating Blaise Cendrars' poem on Chagall; to Miss Margaret Miller for the painstaking care she has given to the preparation of the catalog, for her invaluable suggestions and revisions of the text, and for her important part in the installation; to Miss Frances Pernas for her assistance in seeing the catalog through the press; and to Carlus Dyer for the design of the cover and format of this book.

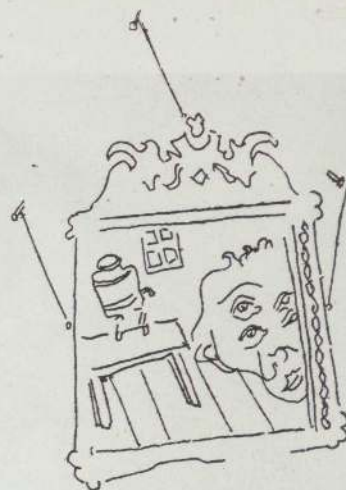
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Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.





## CHRONOLOGY

- 1889 Born Vitebsk, Russia, July 7.
- 1907 Began painting; Pen Academy, Vitebsk. Moved to St. Petersburg.
- 1907- St. Petersburg. Entered Imperial School
- 1910 for the Protection of the Fine Arts; later studied with Leon Bakst.
- 1910- To Paris. Exhibited at the *Salon des*
- 1914 *Indépendants*. Met Blaise Cendrars, Canudo, Guillaume Apollinaire.
- 1914- March, to Berlin; exhibition at gal-
- 1915 leries of *Der Sturm*; later to Vitebsk, Russia. Married, 1915. Mobilized into army.
- 1915- Petrograd; October Revolution, 1917;
- 1917 returned to Vitebsk.
- 1917- Vitebsk. Appointed Minister of Arts
- 1919 for Vitebsk, 1918; directed art academy. First monograph on the artist (Efross and Tugendhold) published in Moscow.
- 1919- Moscow. Executed murals for Gra-
- 1922 novsky's *Jewish State Theatre*. Wrote autobiography.
- 1922 Left Russia for Berlin; first etchings, *Mein Leben*, series, commissioned by Paul Cassirer.
- 1923 Invited to Paris by Vollard. Began illustrations for Gogol's *Dead Souls*.
- 1924 First retrospective exhibition, *Galerie Barbazanges-Hodebert*.
- 1925- Gouaches and etchings to illustrate the
- 1926 *Fables* of La Fontaine.
- 1926 First New York one-man show, Reinhardt Galleries.
- 1930 Autobiography, *Ma Vie*, published in France. Began illustration of Bible.
- 1933 Large retrospective exhibition, Basel.
- 1931- Trips to Egypt, Syria, Palestine, 1931;
- 1937 Holland, 1932; Spain, 1934; Poland, 1935; Italy, 1937.
- 1939 World War II; moved to Gordes, France.
- 1941 To U.S.A.
- 1942 Mexico (3 months). Scenery and costume designs for ballet, *Aleko*.
- 1944 Death of Bella Chagall.
- 1945 Scenery and costume designs for *Firebird*.





Photograph by Lotte Jacobi

*Marc Chagall*

# Marc Chagall

"It is the glory and the misery of the artist's lot" as André Lhôte once said, "to transmit a message of which he does not possess the translation."\* This is particularly applicable to Marc Chagall.

When Chagall first arrived in Paris in 1910, cubism held the center of the stage. French art was still dominated by the materialist outlook of the 19th century. Fifty years earlier naturalism and realism had opened the way to impressionism. Impressionism's analyses of light on objects had led to cubism's analyses of the objects themselves. Little by little the manner of representing an object had come to have a greater interest than the subject—the physical character of the painting more importance than its power to awake associational responses in the observer. Chagall arrived from the East with a ripe color gift, a fresh, unashamed response to sentiment, a feeling for simple poetry and a sense of humor. He brought with him a notion of painting quite foreign to that esteemed at the time in Paris. His first recognition there came not from painters, but from poets such as Blaise Cendrars and Guillaume Apollinaire. To him the cubists' conception seemed "earthbound." He felt it was "necessary to change nature not only materially and from the outside, but also from within, ideologically, without fear of what is known as 'literature.'"† And his approach to a certain degree anticipated that reaction from the materialist, or physical emphasis in painting which was to announce itself two or three years later in the work of Marcel Duchamp and to flower in the surrealist movement of the nineteen-twenties.

Unlike so many of the vanguard artists in Paris at that time, Chagall employed readily recognizable representational forms in his work. Still if you ask Chagall to explain his paintings even today he will reply: "I don't understand them at all. They are not literature. They are only pictorial arrangements of images that obsess me . . . The theories which I would make up to explain myself and those which others elaborate in connection with my work are nonsense . . . My paintings are my reason for existence, my life and that's all."

Yet it was with Marc Chagall in his early Paris work, as André Breton has said, "and with him alone, that the metaphor made its triumphant return into modern painting."‡ This is Chagall's contribution to contemporary art: the reawakening of a poetry of representation, avoiding factual illustration on the one hand, and non-figurative abstractions on the other.

\* Bibl. 102.

† Raynal, bibl. 143.

‡ Bibl. 35, page 89.





## EARLY YEARS: A SOURCE OF RECOLLECTIONS

Marc Chagall was born in Vitebsk, Russia on July 7, 1889. Vitebsk, at the time of Chagall's birth, was a city of some 60,000 inhabitants. It is an old town—mentioned by the Byzantine chroniclers as early as the 10th century—situated on both banks of the river Dwina about eighty miles northwest of Smolensk. In Chagall's boyhood it was a typical provincial capital, with its pear-domed church towers, its stone buildings painted a striking yellow, its modest gray wooden buildings, its interminable wooden fences and its packed Jewish quarter. More than half its population were Jews. This was the town in which Chagall's early years were passed and which, in recollection, was to provide him with the subject matter for so many of his pictures. This was the "sad and joyful city," as he calls it, of his youth.

His father worked in a herring depot. The family was a large one: he had eight sisters and a brother. The atmosphere in which he was brought up was deeply religious. Day after day, he recalls, winter as well as summer, his father arose at six o'clock in the morning and went to the synagogue. Prayer and ritual color all his earlier memories, as fasts and feasts date them—Pasch, Sukkot, Simhat Torah. His paternal grandfather was a religious instructor, and his mother's father, a butcher in Lyozno, spent half his day in the synagogue. His Uncle Neuch, who also lived in Lyozno, had a violin. He was an ardent Chasidist. Every evening after his long day in the butcher shop he would play the rabbi's song; every Saturday he would put on a thalis, or prayer shawl, and read the Bible aloud.

There were, as he puts it, "half-a-dozen uncles or a little more." And he had as many aunts, each of whom likewise made her contribution to the family folklore which was to supply the elements of so much of his work in later years. For, as he says, "if my art did not play any role in the life of my relatives, on the other hand their life and their creations have greatly influenced me . . . It doesn't matter to me if people discover with joy and satisfaction the enigma of my paintings in these innocent adventures of my relatives."\*

\* Unless otherwise noted, all subsequent quotations from Chagall are taken from his autobiography (bibl. 5), written about 1920.



*Candles in the Dark Street* of 1908 (below), so often described as his "first illogical or fantastic painting" is a good example of the manner in which he turns such material into "fantasy" by those curious representational juxtapositions which we have come to associate with his work.

In his autobiography he recounts an anecdote of his Lyozno grandfather. In the course of festivities, one Sukkot, or Simhat Torah, his grandfather was found to be missing. They searched on all sides for him. Finally, it was discovered that his grandfather had climbed to the roof because the weather was so good and was sitting there quietly regaling himself on raw carrots.

When we add to this story the phrase he employs of his Uncle Neuch's musicianship "He played the violin like a shoemaker," we recognize in these combined recollections the iconographic source of both the fiddler seated on the rooftop and the shoemaker's shop sign in the upper left-hand corner of the picture.

Then if we turn to another recollection in his autobiography, that of his first encounter with death, we find the rest of the subject matter of the picture: "One morning before dawn suddenly I heard cries from the street below my windows. By the feeble glimmer of the night lamp I managed to distinguish a woman running alone down the deserted street. She waved her arms, sobbed, begged the neighbors who were still asleep to come to save her husband as if I,



*Candles in the Dark Street* (La Mort). 1908. Oil, 26 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 34". Owned by the artist.





Portrait of My Fiancée in Black Gloves. 1909. Oil, 34 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 25 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Collection Baron Edward von der Heydt, Ascona, Switzerland.

or my fat cousin sound asleep in her bed, could cure or save a dying man." A few paragraphs further on: "The dead man, solemnly sad, is already stretched out on the ground, his face lighted by six candles. In the end they carry him away. Our street is no longer the same. I do not recognize it."

But in depicting it Chagall has heaped up his various recollections—even to its most familiar figure, the street sweeper—and out of these disparate elements he has made his picture. It is not an anecdote, not even a correlation of details. There is a certain amount of naturalism in the constituent elements if they are taken individually. But visual perspective is in the main disregarded in favor of a perspective of values common to mediaeval and primitive art, the more important features being given the greater size. And this apparently illogical grouping of naturalistic features is the basis of the painting's metaphorical character—a resemblance to a group of literary images with suppressed connectives.



## BEGINNINGS

At the age of thirteen Chagall began, as he says, "to know the intoxication of drawing." His home environment and the iconoclasm of his religion's tradition gave his enthusiasm little encouragement. It was hoped he might make the place for himself in the tradesman's world of Vitebsk which his father failed to do. He continued his school work unhappily and unremuneratively another four years. Then, one day, he announced that he had decided to give it all up to become a painter. He had heard of an "academy," directed by a painter named Pen, Vitebsk's only art school, and he had set his heart on attending it.

With his mother's aid he was enrolled. He remained there scarcely three months. Nevertheless, it was a beginning.

St. Petersburg was the next step. Meanwhile he had been apprenticed to a photographer. But he detested the work of retouching photographs. A bourgeois fellow-student from Pen's, with whom he painted in the country on weekends, suggested the capital; and Chagall prevailed on his father to let him go.

But to live in St. Petersburg under the Czar a Jew had also to have a special authorization. Through a shop-keeper friend his father arranged a temporary certificate which permitted the boy to enter the city for the ostensible purpose of accepting the delivery of some merchandise.\* His friend was to follow shortly afterwards. And Chagall, with twenty-seven rubles in his pocket—all that his father could give him—set out, at the age of seventeen, for his new life, alone.

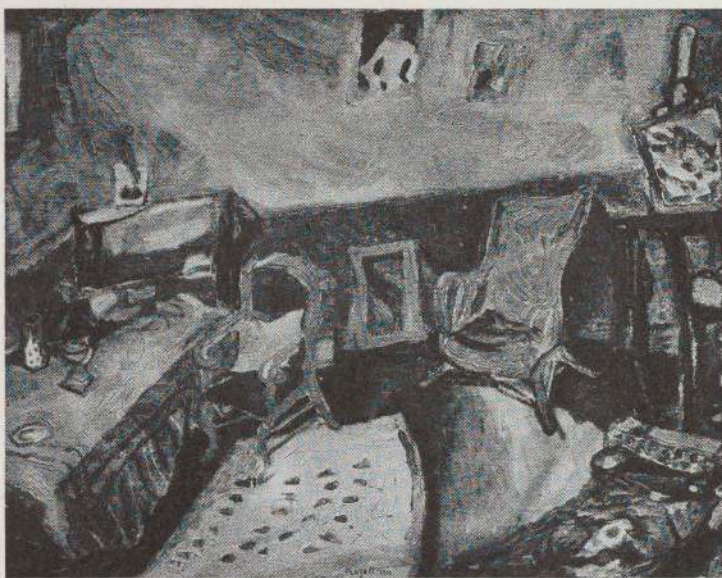
## ST. PETERSBURG 1907-1909

As soon as possible after his arrival in St. Petersburg he took the entrance examinations for Baron Stieglitz' School of Arts and Crafts. He failed. Something had to be found at once to give him the legal right to remain in the capital. He turned to a third class school—the School of the Society for the Protection of the Arts—and there won a year's scholarship with an allowance of ten rubles a month. Following this, one or two patrons aided him for brief periods. He shared lodgings with laborers; he worked as a domestic servant in a lawyer's home. But his Jewish status gave him more trouble than his financial straits. Finally, after a stay in jail for lack of working papers, he decided he had to learn a trade. He apprenticed himself to a sign painter in order to obtain a certificate from a professional school. The prospect of an examination worried him. He knew he "could paint fruit or a Turk smoking," but he was sure he would fail the lettering test. Nevertheless signs interested him—he had always wanted to paint them—and he went to work industriously at this new occupation and produced a whole series.

At the same time he continued to attend the School for the Protection of Fine Arts. But finally he came to realize the futility of it. The two years he had spent seemed wasted. The school

\* To obtain a permit to go his father had to advance Chagall's age two years. As a result the year of his birth has regularly been given as 1887 instead of 1889.





My Studio. Paris, 1910. Oil,  $23\frac{3}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ ". Owned by the artist.

of Bakst had just then begun to attract attention. It was the only school in St. Petersburg with a breath of Western Europe blowing through it. Bakst was a member of the *Mir Iskusstva*, or World of Art group which had grown out of the periodical of the same name, founded by Diaghileff in 1899. This group included such artists as Benois, Golovin, Somov, Roerich, Serov and others, and was essentially an "art for art's sake" movement. It had originated as a reaction from the academy with the aim of welcoming new influences into Russia. But it admitted so many different trends—the only apparent requisite being novelty—that it had degenerated into a modish, stylizing eclecticism. Chagall was soon to realize this. Yet after two fruitless years at the School for the Protection of Arts the possibility of joining a class where fresh ideas were even discussed, much less welcomed, was in itself exhilarating to Chagall. He had to enroll—even though the fee was thirty rubles a month.

He presented himself timorously to Bakst. Bakst accepted him. At the next easel was the dancer, Nijinsky, and in the same class was the Countess Tolstoy. But Chagall soon saw that Bakst's teaching was not for him. Within three months he was back again in Vitebsk.

#### RETURN TO VITEBSK 1909

Still if he had learned nothing from his teachers in St. Petersburg they had done him no harm. And shortly after his return to Vitebsk he was producing those first canvases in which today we recognize the promise of the mature artist: *Birth*, with its naive attention to realistic



details, *Candles in the Dark Street* (page 9), *Portrait of My Fiancée in Black Gloves* (page 10), and *The Wedding* (page 15). From these it is evident that he would not have been able to accept the polite, emasculate approach of Bakst, or to fit in with the *Mir Iskusstva* group. Here was a realist, a genre painter, steeped in the color of his tiny provincial world. Even in these paintings the somber, sullen tones seem to suggest the sad pleasures and constantly impending tragedy of the Jewish quarter in which he had grown up. Here he is the intuitive expressionist—making use of chiaroscuro to externalize his emotions, and distortions to underscore the lyrical or pathetic aspects of his subjects: birth, death, marriage—with *The Wedding* scarcely gayer than *Candles in the Dark Street*.

Then once again came the urge to move on. It was Paris now. In St. Petersburg he had at least learned that Paris was the center of the world he dreamt of. He was tired of the provinces—

“Vitebsk, I am leaving you.

Stay alone with your herrings.”

But first it was necessary to return to St. Petersburg. On his arrival there he had the good fortune to be presented to a celebrated attorney named Vinaver, a member of the Duma, and leader of the Constitutionalist Democratic party. Vinaver admired Chagall, and Chagall in turn came to regard him almost as another father. As he says “my father put me into the world, Vinaver made a painter of me. Without him I would probably have remained a photographer in Vitebsk without any idea of Paris.”

Vinaver put him up near his own home in the offices of the review, *Razvriet*. He bought the first two paintings Chagall ever sold—one the 1909 *Wedding*—and was untiring in his encouragement of the young artist. Finally, towards the end of 1910, he gave Chagall a monthly allowance which would permit him to live in Paris and sent him on his way.

## PARIS

Four days on a train across Europe—Paris—and Chagall confesses that only the great distance that separated him from his native city kept him from returning at once, or at least within a week or month after his arrival.

It was the Louvre, the salons and the galleries of the Rue Lafitte and the Place de la Madeleine that held him: Manet, Delacroix, Courbet, van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse and Bonnard; Renoir, Pissarro, Monet; Chardin, Fouquet, Géricault. The day after his arrival he went to the Salon des Indépendants. “I penetrated” as he says, “to the heart of French painting of 1910. I hooked myself there.”

As soon as he found his way about, he gave up his studio in the Impasse du Maine for one more suited to his means in La Ruche. This was a curious beehive-like structure in a garden near the Abattoirs de Vaugirard built by the sculptor Boucher, a descendant of the 18th century painter of the same name, from lumber salvaged from the demolition of one of the Paris expositions. It comprised about two dozen wedge-shape studios, twelve on the ground floor for sculp-



tors, twelve for painters on the floor above. Modigliani had the studio next to Chagall's; Léger, Soutine, and others on the same landing.

He soon made the acquaintance of the poet, Blaise Cendrars. The poet, Rubiner, was a frequent companion. And Canudo, the editor of *Montjoie*, became even embarrassing in his intemperate championing of the young painter's work. Chagall tells the story of a note of introduction Canudo urged him to take round to present to the collector, Jacques Doucet, with a packet of watercolors. After a quarter of an hour Doucet's valet returned with the message from his master, "We have no need of the best colorist of our day!"

Max Jacob, André Salmon and Delaunay, whose canvases in the salon always struck him by their dimensions, were his friends. And every Friday at Canudo's he would meet Gleizes, Metzinger, La Fresnaye, Léger, Segonzac, Lhôte, Luc-Albert Moreau, and others.

Yet that nostalgia which he had felt so deeply on his arrival in Paris was to set the tone and provide the inspiration for all his work of the period, steadily evolving though it was. Like that other precursor of surrealism, Giorgio de Chirico, who, unknown to Chagall, was painting his nostalgic recollections of Italian architecture in Paris at the same time, Chagall rarely lost sight of the Vitebsk of his boyhood, even though the yellow houses, the "white voluminous church at the center of the large square" and the interminable wooden fences might at times become chaotically scrambled in his pictures with the Eiffel Tower and the Champ de Mars.



## RECOLLECTIONS

In his earliest Paris work such as *My Studio*, 1910 (page 12), Chagall is still the native expressionist—warmer and brighter in color than in his Vitebsk work—a Soutine, as it were, before Soutine. Even here we have the reminder of the early days in his *Portrait of My Fiancée in Black Gloves* on the studio wall; and in *The Wedding* of 1910 (page 16) we see him plunging back into home-town memories. But if we compare it with the 1909 wedding picture which he left in St. Petersburg with Vinaver, we see how profoundly his pictorial approach has changed, even though the subject matter is practically the same. There is an increased emphasis on the flat character of the picture surface in the 1910 painting in contrast to the receding perspective of the earlier





The Wedding. 1909. Oil. Formerly Vinaver Collection, Paris.

version. The beginnings of this were already visible in his *Vitebsk Burial*,\* painted before his departure for Paris. In the 1910 painting the converging lines in the center foreground are used to focus attention on the bride and her father. This triangle is carefully kept clear so that the most important protagonists remain in the open and are not lost in the wedding procession. Towards the same end—and also to stress the plane surface of the canvas—the wedding procession is made to walk across the picture rather than to thread its way down out of the picture's depth. The influence of cubism is possibly recognizable in the sharp angles and the mixed perspective treatment of the houses. In short, we recognize here a development in the structural organization of the canvas and in the composition of individual elements which has already moved quite a distance from the naturalistic space box of *The Wedding* or *Candles in the Dark Street*.

*I and the Village* (opposite page 18) of the next year carries all these trends quite a step further. Here cubism's respect for the plane of canvas is even more clearly illustrated. The composition of the rectangle is still tighter than in *The Wedding* through a greater disregard for a naturalistic treatment of space. And this picture offers an ideal exemplification of Chagall's statement: "I fill up the empty space in my canvas as the structure of my picture requires with a body or an object according to my humor." The composite strikes one first, then the details: first the large profiles, then smaller reminders of life in Vitebsk: the milkmaid, the farmer and his companion and the neighborhood church. Chagall, like the expressionists, uses color and line to underscore emotion, but also makes the details serve as emotional comments, footnotes or glosses.

\* Reproduced in Venturi, bibl. 181, pl. 1.





The Wedding. Paris, 1910. Oil,  $39\frac{1}{8} \times 74\frac{1}{4}$ ". Owned by the artist.

The same holds for *Dedicated to My Fiancée* (page 21). While the mood of *I and the Village* is idyllic, and this quality is supported by the delicate tonalities and gentle rhythms, *Dedicated to My Fiancée* is a passionate expression in bold vermilions, greens and golds organized in violent rhythms. It is easily comprehensible that the force of this picture's colors and the turbulence of its rhythms should have reinforced the pornographic interpretation which led the censors of the Salon des Indépendants to request its withdrawal. Chagall and a companion protested that there was absolutely nothing pornographic about it. After some consideration the authorities allowed it to remain.

## POETRY

The poet Blaise Cendrars was possibly Chagall's closest friend in these days. He admired Chagall's approach in painting, perhaps because of its basic similarity to his own in poetry. For him the verbal image was "a double-faced image" which on the one side "looks into the depths of the mind and on the other is reflected in the creative mechanism of sound. Considered in its material realization, it is translated by sounds, but through its psychic origins it is the product of the labor of the spirit . . . the verbal image is a psychic unity anterior to the word."\* For him Rimbaud's *Enfance* was a poem of "pure psychic unity." Its contrast of individual images and their untranslatable fusion in the whole offers a striking comparison with what Chagall achieves in his most characteristic paintings:

\* Blaise Cendrars, *Aujourd'hui*, Paris, 1931, p. 201.





Half-Past Three (The Poet). 1911. Oil, 78 x 57". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Walter C. Arensberg, Hollywood.



*Au bois il y a un oiseau, son chant vous arrête et vous fait  
rougir.*

*Il y a une horloge qui ne sonne pas.*

*Il y a une fondrière avec un nid de bêtes blanches.*

*Il y a une cathédrale qui descend et un lac qui monte.*

*Il y a une petite voiture abandonnée dans le taillis ou qui  
descend le sentier en courant, enrubannée.*

*Il y a une troupe de petits comédiens en costumes, aperçus sur  
la route à travers la lisière du bois.*

*Il y a enfin, quand l'on a faim et soif, quelqu'un qui vous  
chasse.*

Translation on page 102.

While Chagall had a deep respect for the craftsmanship of painting and felt that in Paris those days one imbibed it almost without effort, he looked deeper for the real sense of art. He felt that French painting, from the neo-classicism of David and Ingres to the disciples of Cézanne and the cubists, had been interesting itself in surface features, and that even his leading Paris contemporaries were afraid to plunge into the chaos—"to break the accustomed surface and turn it upside down under their feet." He "personally did not feel that the scientific trend was beneficial to art. Impressionism and cubism," he said, "are alien to me . . . Art seems to be above all a state of the soul."

This was probably the ground on which his poet friends found his work so congenial, just as the surrealist poets were later to find Giorgio de Chirico's. André Breton is reputed to have given Chirico's paintings some of his most enigmatic titles. And Chagall tells us that Cendrars contributed many to his: *St. Voiturier*, *Half-Past Three* (page 17), and *To Russia, Asses and Others* (page 25), with its mild, avowedly anti-Czarist note more evident in Cendrars' title than in the actual content of the picture. In return it has been said that Chagall's painting played an important part in the inspiration of Cendrars' *Prose du Transsibérien*. And one of the most successful of his *Dix-Neuf Poèmes Élastiques* is the two-part poem—a portrait of Chagall and a description of his studio in La Roche:

#### I. PORTRAIT

*He's asleep*

*He's awake.*

*Right away he's painting*

*He grabs a church and paints with the church*

*He grabs a cow and paints with the cow*

*With a sardine*

*With heads, hands, knives*





I and the Village. 1911. Oil on canvas, 75 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 59 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". The Museum of Modern Art, Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund.







Dedicated to My Fiancée. 1911. Oil, 77 x 45 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Owned by the artist.



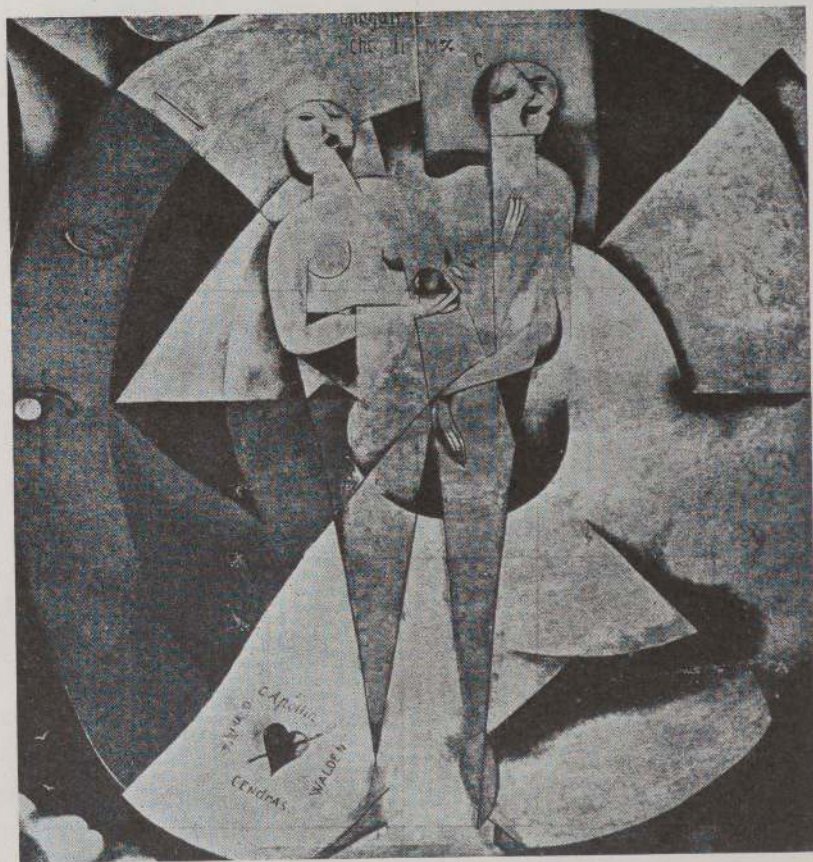


The Soldier Drinks. 1912. Oil, 43 x 37 1/8". Collection Frau Nell Urech-Walden, Schinznach-Bad, Switzerland.

*He paints with an oxtail  
 With all the dirty passions of a little Jewish town  
 With all the exacerbated sexuality of provincial Russia  
 For France  
 Without sensuality  
 He paints with his hips  
 He has eyes in his hinder parts  
 Suddenly it's your portrait  
 It's you gentle reader  
 It's me  
 It's him  
 It's his betrothed  
 It's the corner grocer  
 The girl who brings home the cows  
 The midwife*



*There are puddles of blood  
 They are washing newborn babies in them  
 Skies gone mad  
 The latest thing in mouths  
 The corkscrew Tower  
 Hands  
 Christ  
 He's Christ himself  
 He passed his childhood on the cross  
 He cuts his own throat every day  
 Suddenly he's not painting any more  
 He was awake  
 But now he's asleep  
 He's choking on his cravat  
 Chagall is astonished to be still alive.*



Homage to Apollinaire, Cendrars, Canudo and Walden. 1911-12. Oil.  
 Lange Collection, Krefeld, Germany.

## II. STUDIO

La Ruche

*Stairways doors stairways  
And his door opens like a newspaper  
Covered with visiting cards  
And then it closes again.  
Disorder, this is the land of disorder  
There are photographs of Léger, photographs of Tobeen that you really don't see  
And behind your back  
Behind your back  
Frenetic works  
Sketches designs frenetic works  
And oil paintings . . .  
"We guarantee the absolute purity of our  
Catsup"  
Says a label  
The window is an almanach  
When the giant steamshovels of the lightning raucously unload the barges of the  
sky and empty the rumbling dumpcarts of thunder  
The heavens fall  
Pellmell*

*Cossacks the Christ a rotting sun  
Roofs  
Sleepwalkers a few goats  
A werewolf  
Petrus Borel  
Insanity winter  
A genii split like a peach  
Lautréamont  
Chagall  
Poor child beside my wife  
Morose enjoyment  
His shoes are down at the heels  
There's an old stewpan full of chocolate  
You see the lamp double  
And my drunkenness when I go to see him  
Empty bottles  
Bottles  
Zina  
(We talked of her)  
Chagall  
Chagall  
Astride ladders of light*

Translated by John Dos Passos.



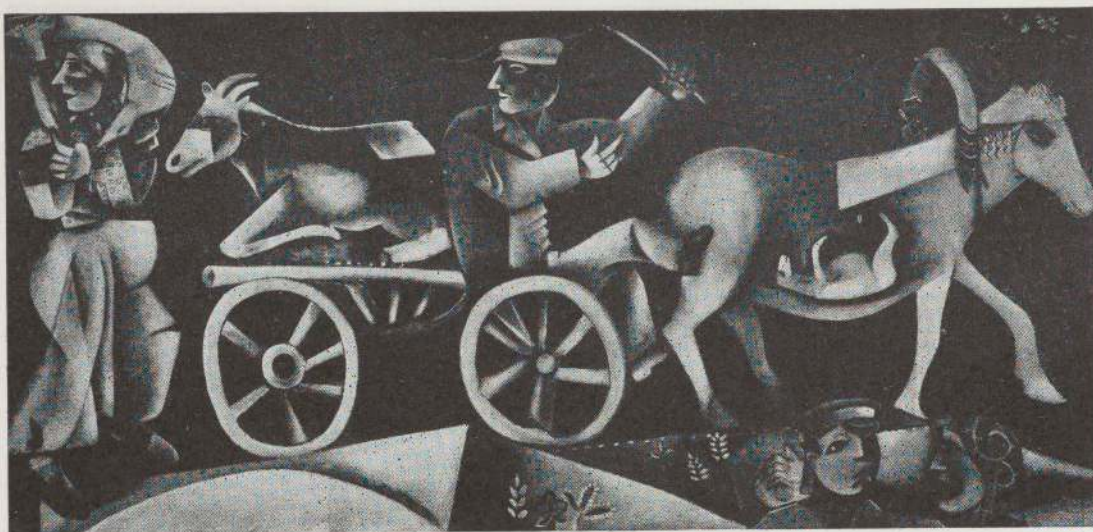


To Russia, Asses and Others. 1911. Oil,  $61\frac{5}{8}$  x  $48\frac{1}{8}$ ". Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

## CUBISM

Cendrars was an intimate of Fernand Léger and a close friend of all the cubists. And while Chagall may have felt a materialist superficiality in their researches, he did not refuse to learn from them. In his painting *To Russia, Asses and Others* (above) he had already begun to break up naturalistic forms to adapt them to his compositional needs—"to fill empty spaces," as he put it. In *The Drunkard* this procedure is carried a step further and the decapitated head and flying bottle are used to create a focal center for his composition. A comparison of these pictures from another viewpoint shows clearly Chagall's sustained interest in the cubist's emphasis on the composition of the plane of the canvas over the pictorial illusion of space—just as we saw it





The Cattle Dealer. 1912. Oil, 38 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 78 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". Collection Frau Nell Urech-Walden, Schinznach-Bad, Switzerland.

in the comparison of his two earlier wedding paintings. Finally in *Half-Past Three* (page 17) he employs a full cubist freedom in the selection of planes and contours and their non-naturalistic recomposition.

But if the cubists had been interested in breaking up forms to reorganize compositionally in their paintings, Chagall was primarily interested in breaking up memories. Just as he reorganized various units from his recollections of Vitebsk into a non-naturalistic composite in *I and the Village*, he followed the same procedure with minor variations in his view of the Champ de Mars, *Paris Through the Window* (page 28). In the same years he also returned to what seem almost direct memories of his boyhood. In a painting such as *The Cattle Dealer* (above) we are recalled to his autobiography where he says "I have forgotten to remember you, little Uncle Neuch. With you I used to go out into the country to look for cattle. How happy I was when you consented to take me in your jolting cart!"

## SIMPLICITY AND CRAFT

Chagall always manages to give the impression of keeping a child's innocence of eye. Yet if we consider *The Cattle Dealer* (above) closely we will realize that what Paul Valéry said of La Fontaine also applies here. "Carelessness here is expert; laxity, studied; ease the height of art. As for naïvete, that of course is to be dismissed. Such sustained skill and innocence, to my mind,



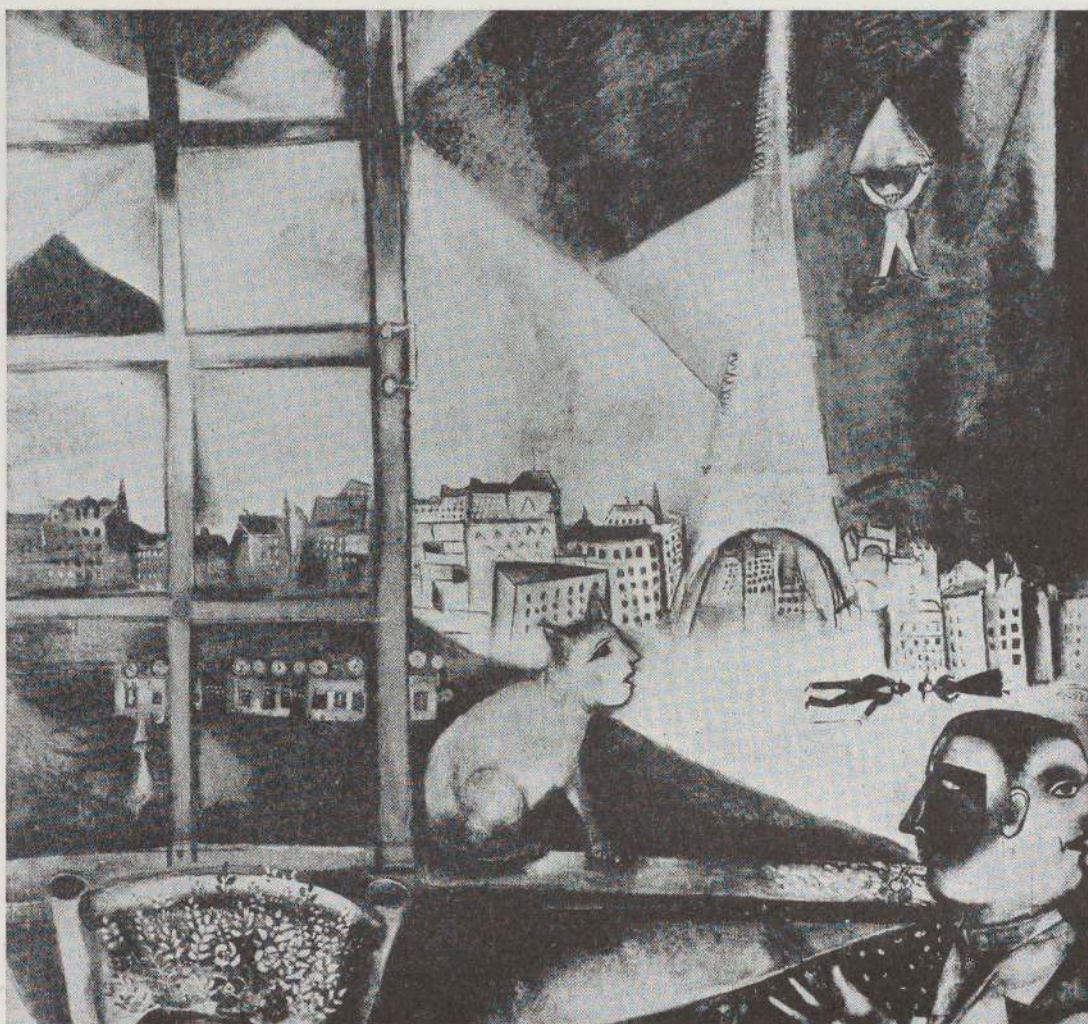


The Pregnant Woman. 1913. Oil, 76 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 45 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". Municipal Museum, Amsterdam. Regnault Collection.

preclude any indolence or 'simplicity.' " \* For here we see a repetition, or rather a development of the cross-canvas compositional device to emphasize the plane of picture surface, which he had employed in the second *Wedding*. Here he further exaggerates the effect by omitting the wheels on the far side of the cart in order to give the vehicle as little depth as possible. Stress likewise is placed on curves and angles parallel to the plane of the picture surface. Even the profile treatment of the principal figures recalls the conventions of primitive fresco painters—notably the walking figure, with its obvious reminiscence of the figure of the Good Shepherd, and the head of

\* Paul Valéry, *Variété*, Paris, N.R.F. 1924, p. 56. Quoted by Cassou, bibl. 40, pp. 68-9.





Paris through the Window. 1913. Oil,  $52\frac{1}{4} \times 54\frac{3}{4}$ ". The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York.

the beast so carefully composing and accenting the corner of the rectangle, yet carrying the observer's eye back into the picture.

Again in the *Pregnant Woman* (page 27) we have an adaptation of tradition to phantasy in its reminiscence of the *Blacherniotissa*,† the famous Byzantine Virgin with the figure of Christ, framed medallion-fashion, in her breast, from which so many well-known Russian ikons, such as the Madonnas of Igor, Kostroma, Novgorod and Kurssk, took their inspiration.

† Bazin, bibl. 91, p. 321.



## APOLLINAIRE AND WALDEN

Another important figure in the Paris world in which Chagall had come to feel so much at home, was Guillaume Apollinaire. Apollinaire was the friend and spokesman of the cubists, as well as the leading poet of the younger generation. As a companion, an artist, a champion, he was liked and admired on all sides.

Chagall, because he did not adhere closely to the cubist view, felt Apollinaire could not sympathize with his work. Though he had known him for some time he was hesitant to bring him to his studio. One evening after dinner, he and Apollinaire walked back to La Ruche together. Chagall explained his views. For him impressionism, cubism, symbolism, realism, were only so much formal baggage. "Primitive art already had a technical perfection towards which the present generation is striving, now playing tricks of sleight of hand, now falling into stylization. I compare this formal baggage to the Pope of Rome sumptuously vested beside Christ naked, or to the lavishly decorated church beside prayer in the open fields."

Apollinaire listened, sat down and muttered something about "supernatural." The next day Chagall received a letter enclosing a poem dedicated to him.

Another evening Chagall was with a group at Apollinaire's. The poet turned to a little man in the corner. "Do you know what you must do, Mr. Walden? You must put on an exhibition of the work of this young man. Don't you know him? Chagall . . ."

In June of that year, 1914, Chagall was in Berlin for the opening of the exhibition arranged by Herwarth Walden, editor of *Der Sturm*, in the two little rooms in the Pötsdamerstrasse where he edited the review. This was Chagall's first one-man exhibition. And the introduction to the catalog was the poem by Apollinaire:

### ROTSOGE

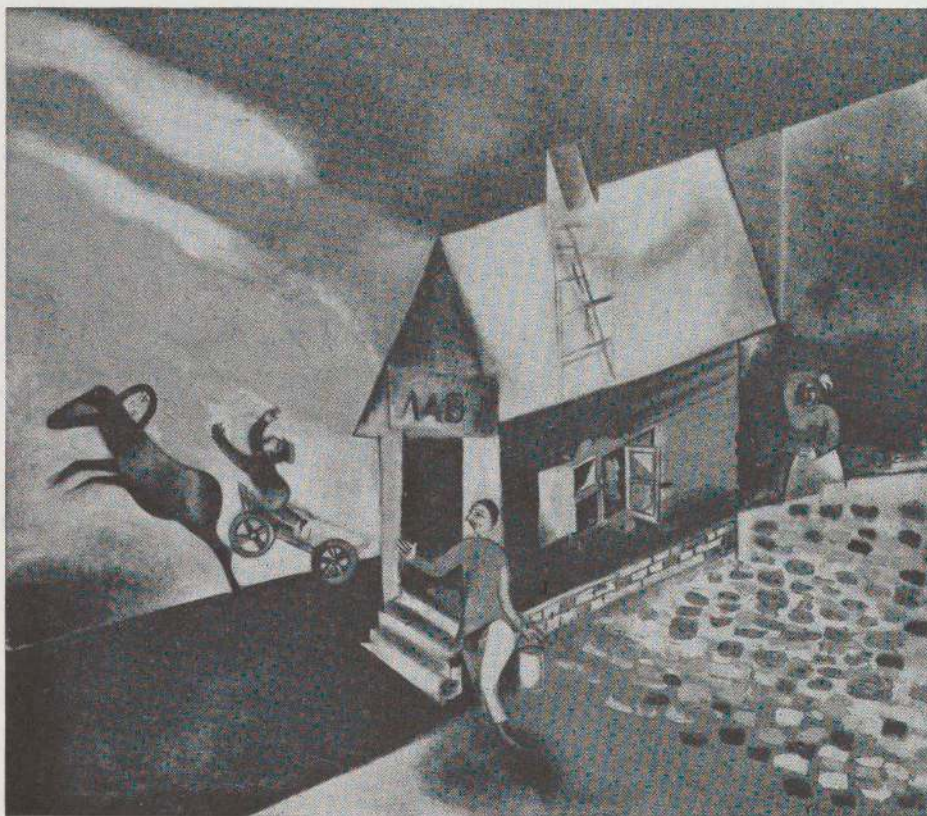
*Au peintre Chagall*

Ton visage écarlarte ton biplan transformable en hydroplan  
Ta maison ronde où il nage un hareng saur  
Il me faut la clef des paupières  
Heureusement que nous avons vu M. Panado  
Et nous sommes tranquilles de ce côté-là  
Qu'est-ce que tu veux mon vieux M. D.  
90 ou 324 un homme en l'air un veau qui regarde à travers le  
ventre de sa mère  
J'ai cherché longtemps sur les routes  
Tant d'yeux sont clos au bord des routes  
Le vent fait pleurer les saussaies  
Ouvre ouvre ouvre ouvre ouvre  
Regarde mais regarde donc  
Le vieux se lave les pieds dans la cuvette  
Una volta to inteso dire Ach du lieber Gott  
Et je me pris à pleurer en me souvenant de nos enfances  
Et toi tu me montres un violet épouvantable



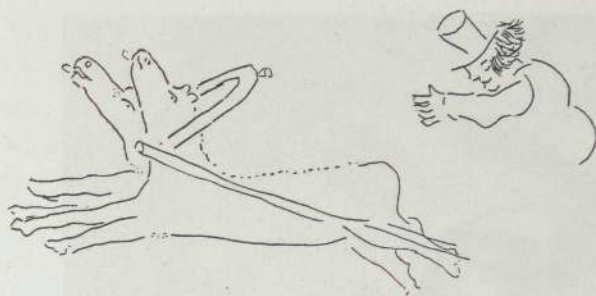
*Ce petit tableau où il y a une voiture m'a rappelé le jour  
 Un jour fait de morceaux mauves jaunes bleus verts et rouges  
 Ou je m'en allais à la campagne avec une charmante cheminée  
 tenant sa chienne en laisse  
 J'avais un mirliton que je n'aurais pas échangé contre un  
 bâton de maréchal de France  
 Il n'y en a plus je n'ai plus mon petit mirliton  
 La cheminée fume loin de moi des cigarettes russes  
 Sa chienne aboie contre les lilas  
 Et la veilleuse consumée  
 Sur la robe ont chu des pétales  
 Deux anneaux d'or près des sandales  
 Au soleil se sont allumés  
 Tandis que tes cheveux sont comme le trolley  
 A travers l'Europe vêtue de petits feux multicolores.*

Translation on page 102.



Burning House. 1913. Oil, 42 x 47 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Collection Frau Nell Urech-Walden, Schinznach-Bad, Switzerland.





## RETURN TO RUSSIA 1914

From Berlin to Vitebsk was only a step. Chagall had no notion of the impending disaster. But he had scarcely arrived in his native town when the border was closed. It was eight years and more before he saw Paris again.

If the exposure to cubism had effected both a formal liberation in his work and a distinctly personal approach to his subject matter, it had also afforded a discipline. The result is clear from a comparison of his 1914 *Self-Portrait* (page 32), painted shortly after his return, with his earlier *Portrait of My Fiancée in Black Gloves* (page 10). The soft contour lines of the earlier painting have now given way to an austere outline. The rectangle of the picture space is now tightly organized—the suggestion of atmospheric space round the figure in the earlier pictures having been replaced by color planes functioning almost as forms in the total composition. *Self-Portrait* may appear superficially much further from the cubist outlook than such a painting as *Homage to Apollinaire, Cendrars, Canudo and Walden*, 1911-12 (page 23). But the increased compositional confidence and economy of form are clearly the result of his total Paris practice.

During his first months in Vitebsk a new factualism and reserve began to appear in his work. In Paris, from the days of his arrival there, he had dreamed of Russia. Throughout those years he had been able to visualize the little world of his youth only from steadily paling memories. Now that he was back in the midst of it, he seemed to feel an impelling need to record it at once, directly, almost literally, in order to be able to keep it with him afterwards, fixed on canvas. There is, for example, the portrait of his sister, *Lisa with a Mandolin* (page 33), several homely domestic studies such as the brooding hen in a box on the floor, or a family group around a table. He found a beggar and paid him a few kopecks to pose in the phylacteries and thalis of the *Praying Jew* (page 35), and on another occasion an itinerant preacher—"the preacher of Slouzsk"—served as model for the *Old Man in Green*. In this phase of his work his interest in illogical associations of detail and ambiguities of scale seems to have temporarily disappeared. And when both reappear shortly afterwards, with the tiny figure on the head of the man wearing the prayer shawl in *Feast Day* (page 34), and in the beggar, with bag and sticks, floating through the sky in *Suburbs*



Self-Portrait. 1914. Oil. Collection Charles Im Obersteg, Basel, Switzerland.

of *Vitebsk*, they are reinforced by a more pervasive realism than is found in any of his Paris paintings.

In 1915 Chagall married Bella, the "fiancée in black gloves" of his early *Vitebsk* days. Marriage; a few days in the country; then his class was called up for military duty. He was entrained for Petrograd but there he was fortunate enough to find a desk job in a government office under his brother-in-law.

Thanks to this chance, painting was not impossible though the opportunities were limited. In the 1915 Moscow Art Salon he exhibited twenty-four paintings; and the following year in the exhibition of the Jack of Diamonds group, with such painters as Altman, Kliun, Popova, Puni, Malevich, Rozanova and Udaltzova, he was represented by fifty pictures painted in Russia since his return from Paris. In Petrograd he was also fortunate in finding companions who would talk painting with him, notably the physician-author Baal-Machschowess-Eljacheff, whom he met at the home of the collector Kagan-Chabchaj. This circle was passionately interested in the new developments in art that were taking place on all sides in spite of the war. And Kagan-Chabchaj, who was one of the first amateurs of Chagall's paintings, had even begun building up a collection of them as a nucleus for a national museum.



In February 1917 came the revolution. First the provisional government; then Kerensky; then Korniloff; finally Lenin. Shortly after the October Revolution, at a meeting of actors and painters there was talk of establishing a Ministry of the Arts. Chagall's name was proposed for the post. But he decided that if he were to be a minister it would be better to be one in his native town. He left Petrograd at once for Vitebsk. He was appointed. And the ministry was to be a stormy and ungrateful one for him.

### MINISTER OF ART, VITEBSK 1917

One good feature of the appointment however was the fact that it allowed him to return to his native town. But instead of going back to his easel he set about founding a school of fine arts. He had known Lunatcharsky, the new People's Commissar for Public Instruction, as a newspaper man in Paris. And what money he now got for the support of his school was through Lunatcharsky's assistance. But times were very hard. It was difficult for the commissars to whom he had to appeal for supplies to see any urgency in his requests when the whole country required aid. Furthermore, Chagall was probably less an administrator than a painter. One day when he was out of town endeavoring to raise funds, a revolt, led by the painter Malevich, broke out among the professors, and Chagall was free of his official duties to return once again to his own work.

In 1915 he had painted the first of what was to become a long series of paintings of lovers,



Lisa with a Mandolin. 1914. Oil, 15 x 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Owned by the artist.





Feast Day. 1914. Oil. Collection Charles Im Obersteg, Basel, Switzerland.

*Opposite:* The Praying Jew (The Rabbi of Vitebsk). 1914. Oil, 46 x 35". The Art Institute of Chicago, The Joseph Winterbotham Collection.









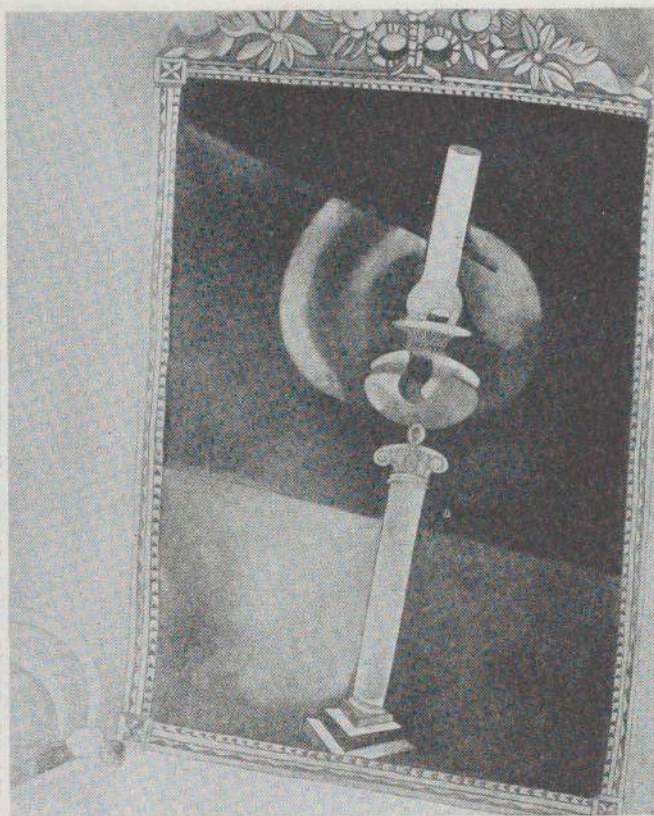


The Birthday. 1915-23. Oil, 31 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York.

each celebrating an anniversary of his marriage with Bella, her birthday, or his or their daughter, Ida's. And from then on throughout his work this theme of marital affection and comradeship was to share his sentimental attention with the recollections of his birthplace. Even in *The Mirror* (page 38) painted in Petrograd, with the small lonely figure of Bella burying her face on the table, he seems to recall the "large mirror, hanging free, alone and cold, glittering bizarrely" in the large dark drawing-room of his house in Vitebsk. In the 1917 *Promenade* (page 39) the blithely floating figure of Bella expresses their happiness. At the same time, from a strictly pictorial point of view, it serves to fill the empty space in the upper right-hand corner of the canvas and balance compositionally the picnic spread on the ground.

In 1917 and 1918 he also returned to studies of his native city (page 40) and painted some of his strongest and most dramatic landscapes. In *Gate to the Cemetery* there are still survivals of





The Mirror. 1916. Oil. Russian state collection.

cubist interests. But now the geometrical emphases are used to suggest a dramatic overtone, rather than to stress the plane of the picture's surface. A hardness and coldness are the dominant notes. The crisp contour lines are matched by a precision of brushwork. There is none of the apparent impetuosity and swinging rhythms of that earlier emotional work, *Dedicated to My Fiancée*; likewise the sultry colors of that painting have now given way to deep mineral blues and greens. In *Cemetery* (page 42) of the same year an emotional evocation is also clearly the artist's aim. But here his colors are muted. It is as if he felt that a staccato interplay of lines and broken forms and the associations of his subject were sufficient and that subdued grays and pale earth reds were the complexion of his mood. And in these two canvases Chagall may be said to have attained the maturity of his dramatic expressionism with a control and restraint which he did not command at the time of his Parisian work in this vein.

And in 1917, the same year as these landscapes, we see what may be evidence of a return to





Promenade. 1917. Oil. The State Russian Museum, Leningrad.





The Market Place. c. 1917. Oil, 26 x 38 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". On anonymous loan to the Worcester Museum.



The Man with a Load of Mischief. 18th century English inn sign attributed to Hogarth.





Self-Portrait with Wineglass (Double Portrait). 1917. Oil, 92½ x 54".  
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.





Cemetery. 1917. Oil, 27 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 39 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Owned by the artist.

a still earlier interest—the interest in shop signs which had led him to apprentice himself to a sign painter in his early days in St. Petersburg. For in *Self-Portrait with Wineglass* (page 41) there appears a possible iconographic relationship to the famous English inn sign *The Man with a Load of Mischief* (page 40), rather questionably attributed to Hogarth. The derivation may have been indirect, or from a common ancestor, and very likely unconscious. But the similarities of composition, theme and details are striking.

Fritz Endell in a chapter on artists as sign painters in his book, *Old Tavern Signs*, writes: "Among English artists . . . Hogarth deserves first place. He is supposed to be the author of a sign, not very gallant to the fair sex, called *A Man Loaded with Mischief* . . . I doubt if Hogarth engraved this plate himself; it is signed 'Sorrow' as the engraver and 'Experience' as the designer."

And just as Hogarth's keen observation of street signs is clear from his frequent use of them in his London engravings Chagall's interest in them is evidenced in another 1917 painting *The Market Place* (page 40) by the prominence he gives the large mineral water signboard in the picture's foreground.





The Green Violinist. 1918. Oil, 77 x 42½". The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York.





Study for *Introduction to the New Theatre*, principal mural in the State Jewish Theatre, Moscow. In the disk at the left appears Chagall, carried by the critic Efross and preceded by Granovsky.

### MOSCOW STATE JEWISH THEATRE 1919

But the art which had made the greatest progress in Russia since the revolution was the theatre. It had always attracted Chagall. In 1911 the critic, Tugendhold, had pointed out in a review that Chagall had put such vitality into his paintings that he should be able to produce striking psychological sets. He had even suggested to Tairov that Chagall design sets for a production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, though nothing came of it. In 1917 Chagall had made several curtain designs and a stage set for a Gogol festival at the experimental Hermitage Theatre in Petrograd. And once he was officially released from his directorship of the academy in Vitebsk he turned to the stage and to Moscow.

At the time Granovsky was planning a new Jewish Theatre and remodeling a small hall to house it. This had originally been the drawing-room of an apartment. From it came the name State Jewish Kamerny, or Chamber, Theatre. Funds were very scarce; but Granovsky was more interested in building a company than in a pretentious installation.

Granovsky put the Jew on the stage with all his racial color and idiosyncrasies emphasized even to the point of grotesqueness. His aim was to transmute the traits of ordinary life into dramatic form by an exaggeration and stylization of gesture rhythms, speech rhythms and color, much as Synge and Lady Gregory had done a few years earlier with the colloquial idiom of the West of Ireland peasantry. And the new theatre, in contrast to the naturalist and realist theatre of Stanislavsky, was to emphasize the illogical and fantastic. The critic Efross suggested Chagall as the artist most suited to decorate the small hall in this spirit and to design the sets for the inaugural program. Granovsky commissioned Chagall to do the work, and the hall eventually became known as the "Shagalovsky Sal," the Chagall Room, or sometimes, on account of its small size, the "Chagall Box."





Detail of mural in the State Jewish Theatre. 1920. The standing figure represents the actor, Michoels, dressed as Hamlet.

As decorations for the drawing-room-auditorium Chagall painted four panels, a long mural and a frieze. The mural ran the length of the room from the entrance doors at one end to the stage at the other and was an allegory of the *Introduction to the New Theatre* (page 44). It depicted Efross carrying Chagall at once from Vitebsk to Moscow and more immediately from the entrance doors toward the stage. Further along were represented Granovsky and his leading actor, Michoels, and with them musicians, dancers, clowns and acrobats—reminders of the playful character of the new theatre in contrast to the moralizing naturalist style, a spirit closer to the *Commedia dell' Arte* than to the conventional productions of Chekhov or Gorki.

The opposite wall was broken by three windows. Between the windows were four single figure panels. These represented the folk ancestors of the four arts synthesized in the new Jewish theatre: poetry by a copyist of the Thora; acting by a Jewish wedding entertainer, the descendant of the royal entertainer of the past (page 47); music by a street violinist; and dance by a buxom girl,





Detail of mural in the State Jewish Theatre. 1920.

who, with an echo of Chagall's Chasidic upbringing, dances out of pure love and joy (page 47). Above the windows ran a long narrow frieze representing a banquet table laid for a wedding feast (page 47).

Facing the stage between the two entrance doors Chagall depicted the modern couple who dance on the stage with abandon—a relatively geometrical design in blue, gray and black to contrast with the color and activity of the side panels. The loosely hung curtain was black. And the ceiling was conceived as a sort of mirror in an interwoven pattern of grays, blacks and whites, suggesting a reflection of the colors and forms on all sides and beneath it.

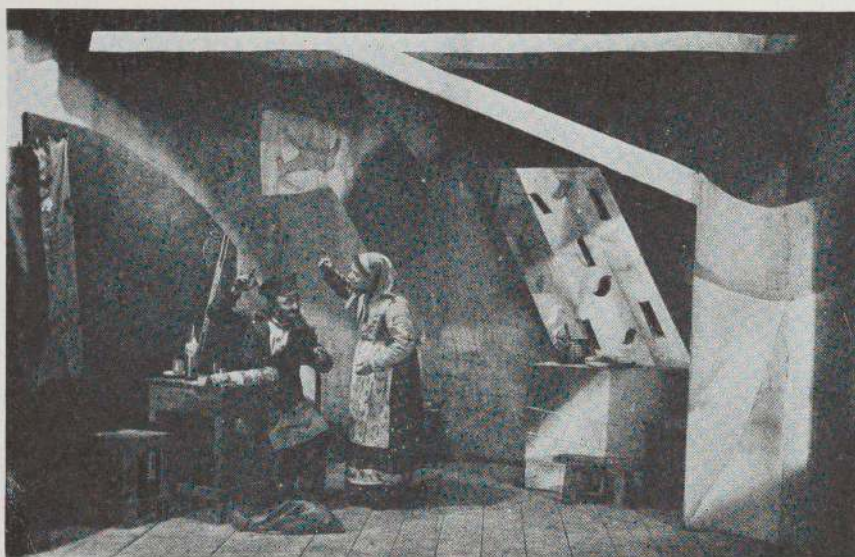
Chagall's designs for Granovsky's first production—dramatizations of three stories by the Yiddish humorist, Sholom Aleichem—were his first executed theatre work. The stage sets for the three plays were, in comparison with the murals, relatively simple, although each was marked by the stylistic idiosyncrasies familiar in his paintings, particularly *Congratulations* (page 48). The results of his work had a wide repercussion in the Soviet theatre world of the day and maintained



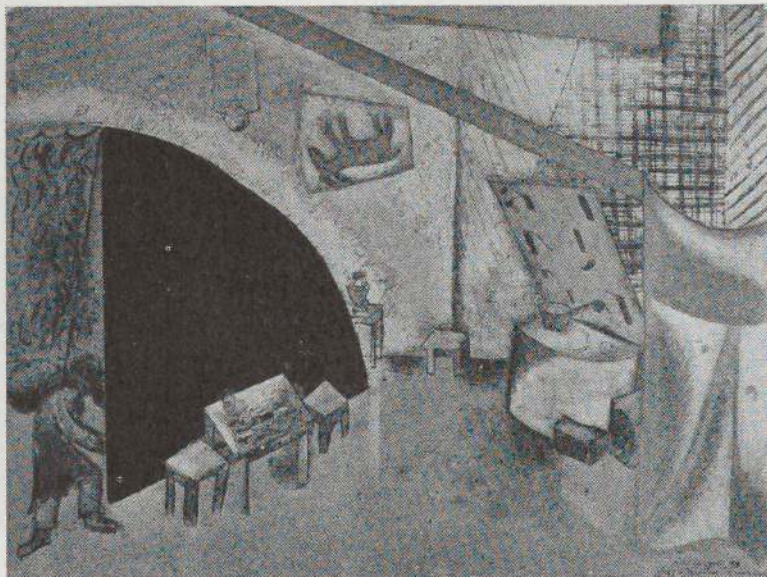


*Above:* The Wedding Feast. 1920. Mural frieze in the State Jewish Theatre. *Left:* The Dancing Girl. 1920. Mural panel. *Right:* The Wedding Entertainer. 1920. Mural panel.





Michoels in the rôle of Reb Alter in Sholom Aleichem's *Congratulations*, produced at the State Jewish Theatre, 1921.



Stage set design for *Congratulations*. 1919. Mixed medium,  $18\frac{3}{4}$  x  $24\frac{3}{4}$ ". Owned by the artist.



an indirect influence there for many years. It is evident even in the constructivist settings for the *Voyage of Benjamin III*, and *200,000*, produced by Granovsky in 1923. While still associated with the State Jewish Theatre, he was approached by Vachtangov, Granovsky's rival, to design sets for a production of *The Dybbuk* at the Habima Theatre. But at the time Chagall's humor was still too unconventional for Vachtangov. And a year later, for the Second Moscow Art Theatre, Chagall designed a set for Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* which was rejected because of its fantasy, so out of keeping with the realist style which dominated that theatre.

Two years after completing his work for the State Jewish Theatre Chagall was still unpaid. During that period he had written his autobiography which appeared eleven years later in Paris as *Ma Vie*. But he had grown restive in Moscow. His friend the poet Rubiner, had written him from Germany, "Are you alive? The story goes that you were killed in the war. Do you know you are famous here? Your pictures have created expressionism. They sell very high."

Finally, with the assistance of the poet, Demian Bedny, and Lunatcharsky he succeeded in obtaining a permit to leave the Soviet Union for Paris.

## RETURN TO BERLIN, 1922. "MEIN LEBEN"

Berlin was the first stop. When he left there for Vitebsk in 1914 his most important paintings were on exhibition in the offices of *Der Sturm*. On his return he found practically all had been sold and the money owed him amounted to almost nothing at the current value of the mark.

During the nine months he remained in the German capital he painted no pictures. He did, however, produce a series of engravings for an edition of his autobiography, *Mein Leben*, which Paul Cassirer was to publish. In the end the publication of the text was abandoned in favor of a portfolio of dry points under the same title (page 77). Cassirer issued it, as well as several other plates of similar character independent of the portfolio.

But Chagall's Berlin sojourn was not, however, to be all disappointments for him. As his friend Rubiner had pointed out, Chagall's reputation had grown remarkably in Western Europe during his eight years in Russia. Although he had gained nothing financially from all the paintings he had left behind him in Berlin, he had gained much in the way of recognition. Already in 1914 he had warm admirers in Germany among the younger men. Heinrich Campendonck, one of those associated with the Blue Rider group, had been notably influenced. A still younger man, Max Ernst, recalls having been so struck by a reproduction of *To Russia, Asses and Others* that when he got to Berlin in 1916 he went directly to the gallery of *Der Sturm* to see what remained of the Chagall exhibition. And the influence of Chagall is readily recognizable in certain Ernsts as late as 1919. Again, in Belgium he was highly regarded by the second generation of the Laetham-Saint-Martin group—Servaes, Permeke, Gustave de Smet, and by Edgard Tytgat, who four years later, when the group gave a party on the river Lys in Chagall's honor, was to celebrate the event in his painting *Remembrance of a Sunday*.\*

\* Reproduced in Jean Milo, *Edgard Tytgat*, Paris, 1930, pl. 12.



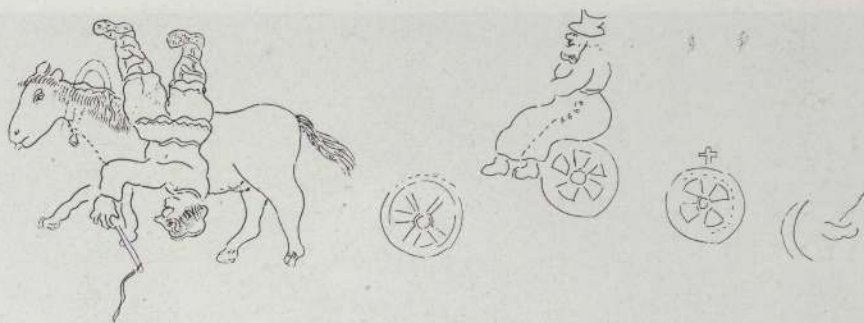
Two months before leaving Paris for Berlin in 1914 Charles Malpel, an attorney who also dealt privately in paintings, had arranged a contract with Chagall through Cendrars paying him 250 francs monthly for seven small pictures. Only two months of this contract had elapsed before his departure. But after Chagall had been cut off in Russia by the outbreak of the war Malpel continued to draw on the stock of paintings left behind by Chagall in La Ruche with the intention of paying Chagall the accumulated monthly amounts on his return. At this same time, several of Chagall's neighbors made free with the paintings left in the studio and the critic, Gustave Coquiot, unaware of the manner in which they had been acquired, purchased several of the canvases. Ambroise Vollard had seen some of these paintings at Coquiot's and had immediately requested his address.

Chagall lost no time in leaving for Paris. And shortly afterwards it was agreed that he should prepare a series of etchings to illustrate a Vollard edition of Gogol's *Dead Souls*.



Blue House. 1920. Oil,  $26\frac{1}{8} \times 38\frac{1}{4}$ ". The Museum of Fine Arts, Liège, Belgium.





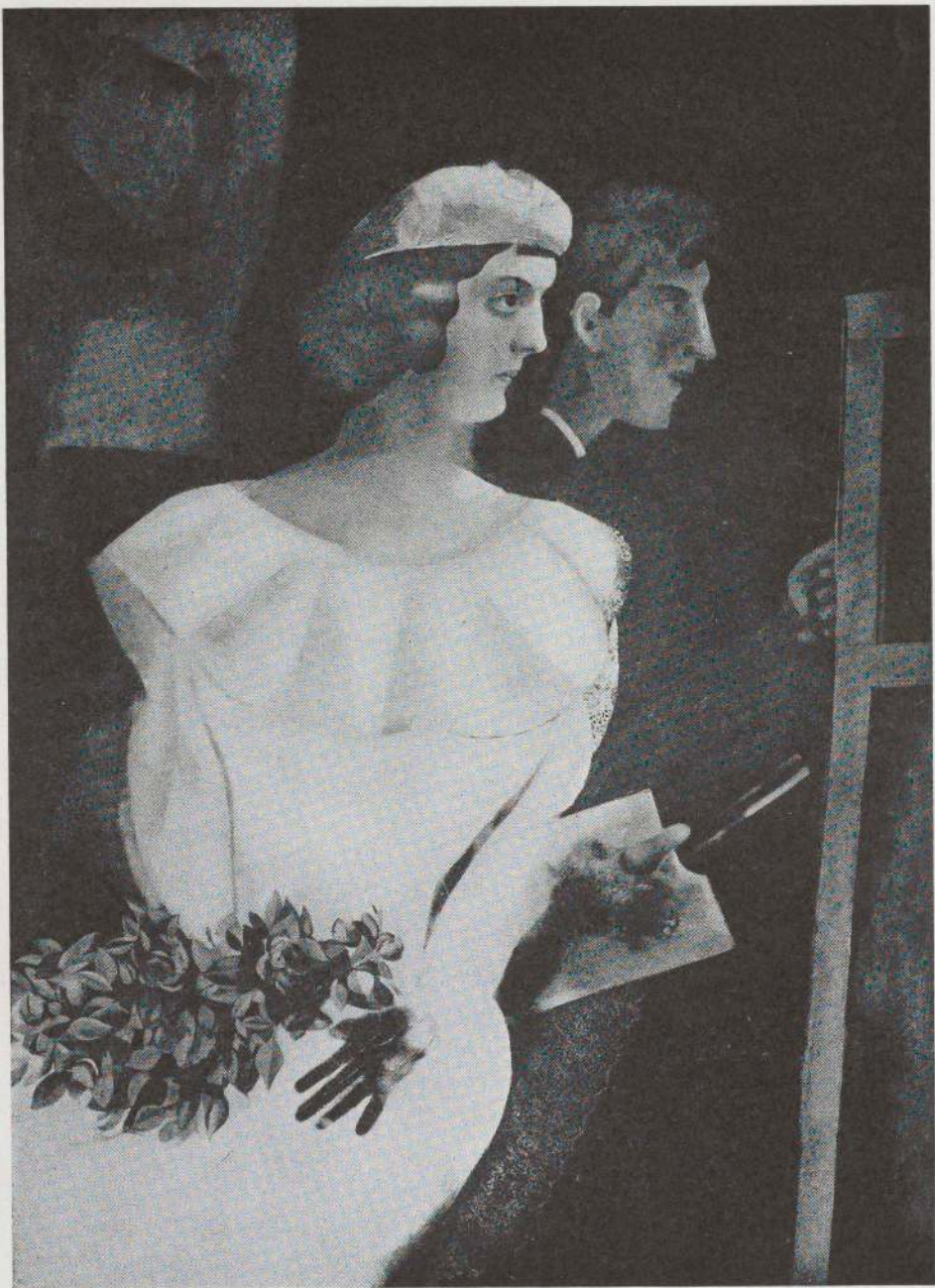
### PARIS AND GOGOL'S "DEAD SOULS"

Chagall was the perfect choice as illustrator of Gogol's novel. He was familiar with a provincial corner of Russia very similar to the setting which Gogol had given Chitchikov's rascalities; he had also a sentimental attachment to it, and a sense of humor. As a result, though he was keenly aware of the foibles of the provincial life which he had to depict, he would neither treat it with too sharp a satire, nor fail to bring out its faults. This is what we find in the hundred odd plates, tail pieces and ornamental initials that would have made a masterpiece of illustration had the book not remained unpublished like so many other Vollard projects. In the three years he worked at it, Chagall had gradually won a new fluidity of line and a sensibility to tonal contrasts that were shortly to influence his oils by softening the severity of line and the bold, often strident, colors which had characterized his later Russian period.

During these three years Chagall had also gradually found his way back into Parisian life. In 1924 the Galerie Barbazanges-Hodebert held an exhibition of his work from the years 1908 to 1921. French taste, however, in its rationality and decorum still found Chagall's illogicalities of representation difficult to accept. And in spite of the recognition of Rouault and the growing acknowledgment of Soutine, dramatic and sentimental emphases so popular in expressionistic centers found little favor. It is true that several younger admirers of Giorgio de Chirico were beginning to make themselves heard. But even these future surrealists did not, as Breton confesses, become aware of the kinship between many facets of Chagall's work and their own aims until much later.

In spite of this lack of recognition from the French, however, Paris still remained for Chagall "his second birthplace." And little by little the atmospheric mildness of the Ile de France and the Riviera began to modify his earlier asperity. Now instead of those constant nostalgic dreams of his first visit we find him more often applying his technique of mellowed tonalities to the French countryside as in *Landscape* (page 54). Even in paintings whose subjects may still draw their inspiration from boyhood recollection, such as *The Trough* (page 55), there is a softening of forms, a melting of contour lines in the general atmosphere of the canvas and an interest in subtleties of texture which did not exist in his paintings of five years earlier.





Double Portrait. 1924. Oil,  $51\frac{1}{4} \times 37\frac{3}{8}$ ". Collection Philippe Dotremont, Uccle-Brussels, Belgium.





Marc Chagall with his wife and daughter in his Paris studio, 1924. Photograph Thérèse Bonney.

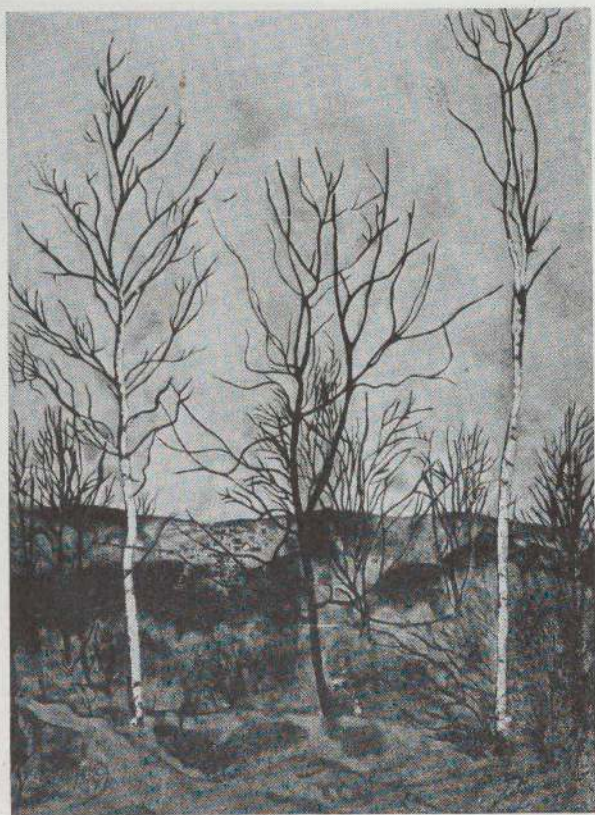
### THE FABLES OF LA FONTAINE

And if Vollard was intuitive in his first assignment to Chagall, he was bold as well as right in his second. For in 1926, even before the plates for *Dead Souls* were finished, he asked him to illustrate another work, *The Fables of La Fontaine*.

Perhaps the idea was suggested to him by one of the Gogol plates, *The Barn Yard* (page 78). At any rate this subject matter was just as congenial to Chagall as the provincial Russian setting of the former book. Animals had figured persistently in his painting since his early years. And his depictions of them always had a homely, sympathetic character.

Yet when Vollard held an exhibition of the preliminary gouache illustrations, at the Galerie Bernheim-jeune in February 1930, there was a violent critical outburst. It was claimed that Vollard had shown not only very poor judgment but also poor taste in commissioning Chagall, a romantic and an oriental, to illustrate these classical 17th century French masterpieces. The protest had undoubtedly xenophobic and possibly anti-Semitic inspirations. Aside from Chagall's



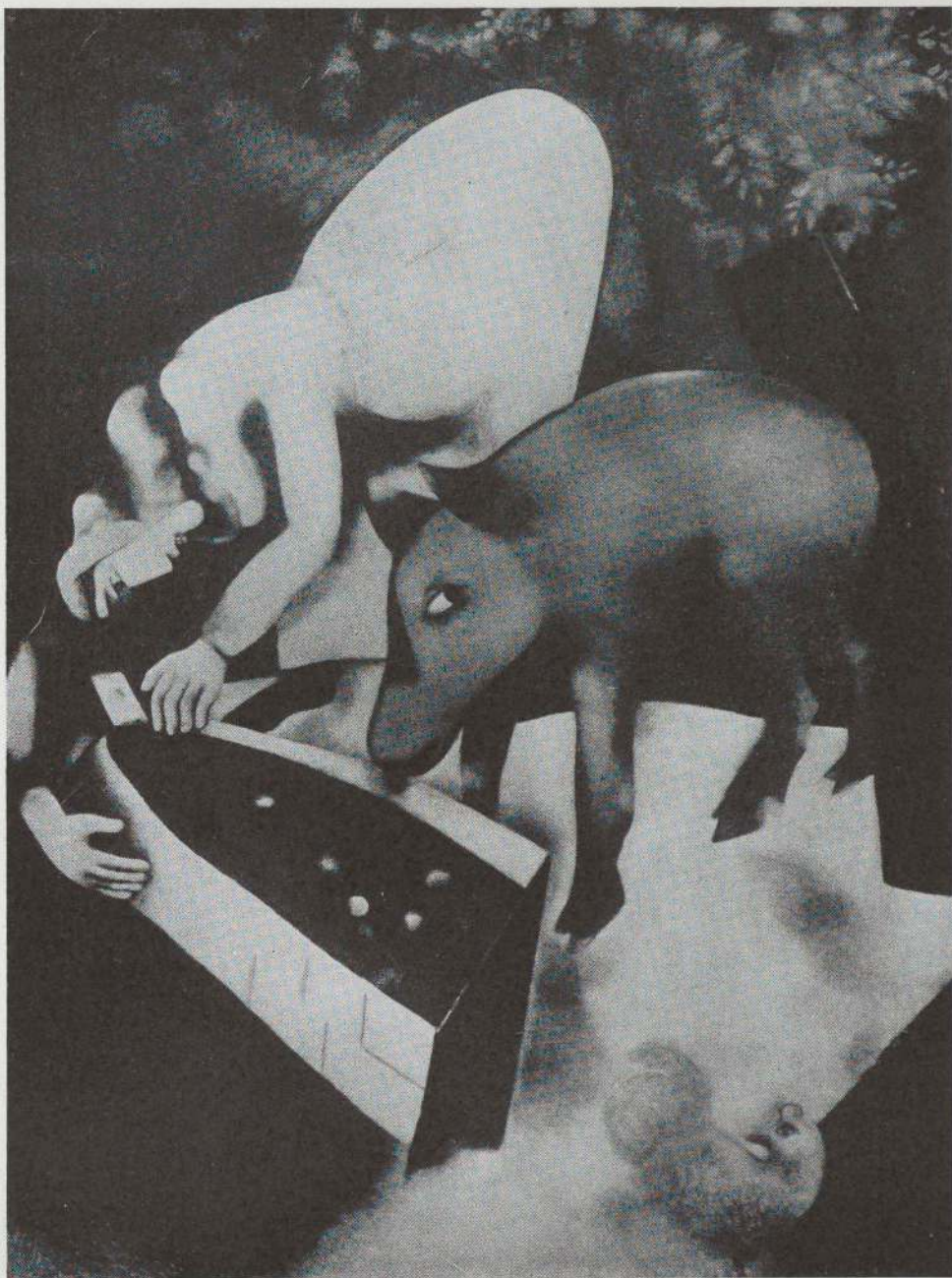


Landscape. Ile Adam, 1925. Collection Mme Fontaine, Paris.

proven talents as an illustrator and his sympathetic vision of the animal world, which alone would recommend him for the choice, there was a very live fabulist tradition in Russia in Chagall's boyhood. For Krylov, one of the most popular Russian classic authors during the 19th century, owed his reputation as the first Russian poet of national importance to his fables. The earliest fables of Krylov are translations of La Fontaine's, or at least recreations of them.

Vollard's first plan was to have Chagall make color engravings in the 18th century manner. Chagall set to work on a hundred gouaches for this purpose. Vollard had a special studio built for the work, to be directed by the artisan-engraver Maurice Potin, who had several Prix de Rome winners among his workmen. Many color experiments were made. But in the end the results were unsatisfactory. There were too many gradations of tone in the gouaches. The work of reproducing them suitably would be endless. Vollard decided to abandon the project—but not the illustration of *The Fables*. He commissioned Chagall to do the same number of plates in





The Trough. 1925. Oil,  $57\frac{5}{8} \times 45\frac{1}{8}$ ". Collection the Vicomte de Noailles, Paris.



black and white. Finally, after three changes of engraver, the destruction of one complete printing and a remaking of all the plates, the work, which was begun in 1927, was completed in 1931.

The final result even surpassed *Dead Souls* in quality. It has been said of Chagall "he likes color, but prefers light." In these prints there is a notable increase in luminosity and delicacy. Both are peculiarly suited to the subject matter. The sharp line of his earlier work was appropriate to Gogol's satire; but the sentiment and sympathy of La Fontaine demanded a subtler touch. And the general atmospheric enrichment and deeper interest in subtleties of texture, recognizable in his oils of the same period, provided it.

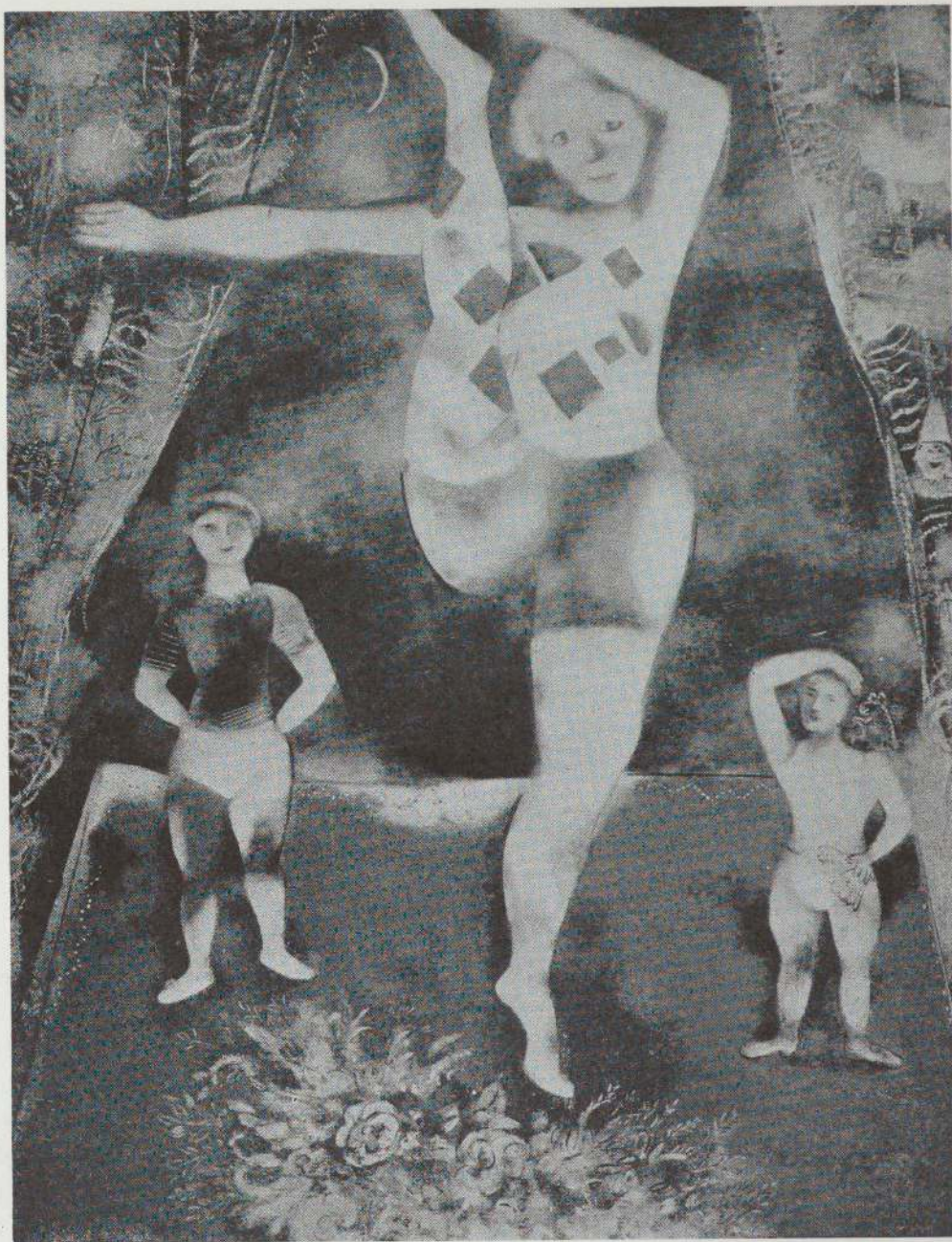


## FLOWERS

A new note now began to assert itself in the subject matter of his pictures. It was in Toulon in 1924, Chagall recalls, that the charm of French flowers first struck him. He claims he had not known bouquets of flowers in Russia—or at least they were not so common as in France. The event undoubtedly had its important associations in his world of sentiment. He has said that when he painted a bouquet it was as if he were painting a landscape. It represented France to him. But the discovery was also a logical one in the light of the change taking place in his vision and pictorial interests. Flowers, especially mixed bouquets of tiny blossoms, offer a variety of delicate color combinations and a fund of texture contrasts which were beginning to hold Chagall's attention more and more. To him they may have had a sentimental origin, as the lovers in his "anniversary" pictures undoubtedly had. But very soon, like every other representational element in his work, they became primarily form units, or means toward the organization of forms. And in such pictures as *The Circus* (page 57) and *The Bride with the Double Face* the minute texture details soon became fused into a compositional unity by the soft luminous atmosphere in which he wraps them.

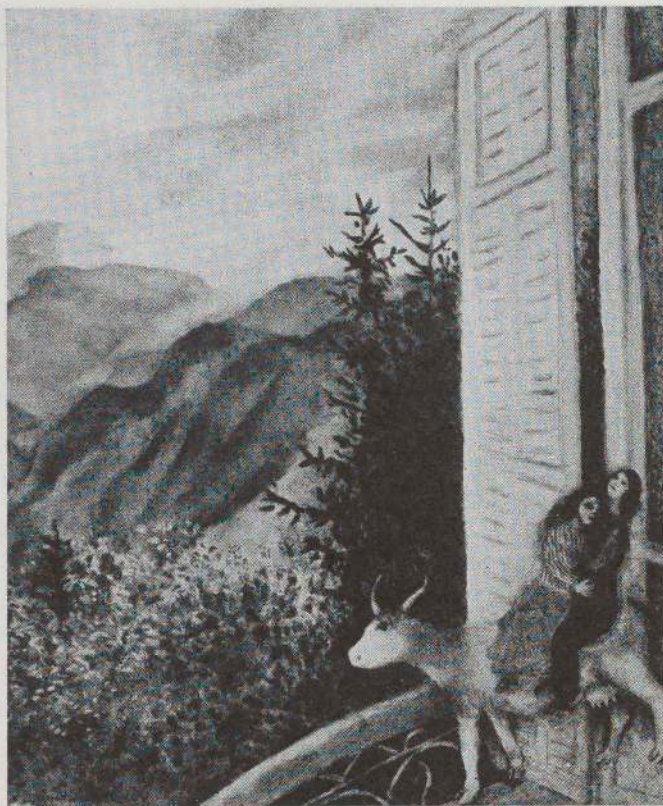
On his return to France Chagall lived with his wife and daughter in a studio at 36, Avenue





The Circus. 1926. Oil, 46 x 35". Collection Dr. Potvin, Brussels.





In the Mountain. 1930. Oil, 28 x 23". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bissett, New York.

d'Orléans, on the same court in which Lenin had hidden on his way to Russia. Two years later the family moved to Boulogne-sur-Seine. And from then on each vacation found them in a different part of France—Savoie, Auvergne, the Pyrenees, the Riviera. Through all this period one feels a happiness, a joy of living in his work. Animals, lovers, flowers; his series of circus gouaches; or vacation landscapes at Peira Cava near Nice (above). Now, there was none of that longing of his first Paris years for something beyond reach, or that melancholy and inquietude of his Russian paintings. Instead each new picture seemed to exude a warmer sentimental glow, as much a product of the technique of which he was gaining constantly a fuller mastery as of his subject matter.

In 1931 the autobiography which he had written during his last two years in Russia was published in Paris as *Ma Vie*. It was illustrated by early drawings instead of the engravings which he had originally made for the text. But shortly afterwards he had another call from Vollard for illustrations—fitted to his tastes and talents—a Vollard edition of the Bible.





The Lovers in the Flowers (Lilacs). 1931. Oil, 51 x 35". Collection Josef von Sternberg, Hollywood.





Solitude. 1933. Oil,  $43\frac{5}{8} \times 66$ ". Owned by the artist.

## PRESENTIMENTS

As a preparation for this work he decided in 1931 to make a trip to the Near East, Egypt, Syria, Palestine. In the course of his journey he painted a series of landscapes notable for a meticulous documentary character, which nevertheless does not interfere with a distinctive emotional overtone. While the subject matter and technical treatment in a painting such as *The Wailing Wall* are completely different from his Vitebsk realist paintings of 1914, there is a certain kinship between these two phases of his work. Just as the playfulness of his first Paris work had been supplanted by a greater thoughtfulness on his return to his native environment, now the light-hearted sentiment of his Peira Cava landscapes and the carefree work of the twenties have given way to a melancholy expression. And freedom from anxiety is rarely to show itself during the next decade.

In fact with a painting such as *Solitude* (above) an air of spiritual foreboding begins to appear in his work, as if something within him were sensitive to developments which on all sides were preparing the way for the tragedy still six years off.

During the same years his restlessness increased. In 1932 he made a trip to Holland to study Rembrandt. In 1933 he attended the opening of his large retrospective exhibition in Basel. In



1934 he went to Spain to study El Greco; in 1935 to Poland; in 1937 to Italy and the primitives.

And in the paintings of this period we find his old themes returning. Haunted by his forebodings and in the midst of the general European discontent, he seemed to turn back for reassurance to his recollections of Vitebsk. These pictures of the middle thirties are composed much as were those of his early nostalgic phase; but he is now quite far from the cubist insistence on the composition of the picture plane. This is replaced by the new atmospheric and textural interests of his recent landscape studies.

In *Nude over Vitebsk* we have the square and the great white church of St. Elias. The nude, used "to fill the empty space" of the sky, is possibly a recollection of his fiancée posing for him, which he describes in his memoirs. In another canvas we have a view of his home and "the stoop-shouldered beggar with his sack on his back and his stick in hand" composed with two vases of flowers out of the twenties. In *Time is a River Without Banks* (page 65) appear the huge clock, which recurs so insistently in early drawings and paintings, the inevitable lovers and a herring which his father's work would never permit him to forget. And in *The Bride and Groom of the Eiffel Tower* (page 68) he brings a whole sequence of events into one composition in the primitive convention.

The other aspect of his work in these years is nourished by his steadily increasing "presentiments." From *Solitude* these forebodings of evil or warnings of impending disaster take a more dramatic turn in *Crucifixion* of 1938 (page 62); and become colored by social alarms in *Revolution* of two years later.



### WORK ON THE BIBLE

All this time the work on the Bible illustrations had progressed. On his return from Palestine, Chagall had made about twenty sketches for the book of Genesis to feel his way compositionally. He then started at once on the definitive plates. And by the time of Vollard's death in July 1939 he had completed 105 plates of the series.

Like the preliminary gouache and oil sketches, in which he had employed the same motives





White Crucifixion. 1938. Oil, 61 x 55". Owned by the artist.



he intended to use in his plates, these engravings were much closer in character and technique to his Palestine landscapes than anything that had gone before. The forms were more fully modeled than in his earlier work. The treatment of the plate was much less linear than even the *La Fontaine* illustrations. The interest in atmosphere and detail that had shown itself in his oils was now translated to the copper plate just as completely and effectively as the rich tonalities of his gouaches had been ten years earlier. And the drama and mystery of the representations came out more eloquently in his delicately modulated grays, blacks and whites than one could possibly imagine in a broad gamut of color. There is a dignity and mystery in his conceptions that lift them to one of the highest levels of his achievement to date.

In 1939 Chagall and his wife moved to Gordes, above Marseille. In September war was declared. But work with Chagall at Gordes went on practically as usual. And in February 1940 he held a large exhibition at the Galerie Mai in Paris. Four months later the Germans entered the capital. But a long year was to elapse before he finally reached New York on June 21, 1941.

## NEW YORK

In spite of the trying experiences he had been through it seemed no time until Chagall found his feet. Still, for all his apparent resilience and energy, his work betrayed a definite disturbance and fatigue. Little that was fresh appeared in his painting for some time. Forms did not have the gaiety and assurance which had come to be regarded as characteristic of Chagall. His colors were not clear. There was a repetition of old conceptions, a lack of conviction.

Fortunately, in the early part of 1942, Leonide Massine invited him to design the costumes and sets for a new ballet, *Aleko*, and to supervise its production in Mexico City. An environment with fewer reminders of events in Europe and a definite job to be done were both beneficial.

On Chagall's return there was a notable clarification of his palette. The Mexican scene had added new colors and new themes to his repertory. These changes appeared first in a group of gouaches exhibited shortly after his return. But soon, in a less obvious way, they became recognizable also in the revitalized tone of more ambitious work, such as *Juggler* of 1943. Here, although Chagall returned to a combination of his Vitebsk and circus memories, the gloomy and uncertain character of his oils of the past few years was replaced by a gayer tone implicit in his bright, contrasting blues, reds and greens as well as in his subject. Once again the picture is simply an organization of recollected forms employed, as he had employed them thirty years earlier, primarily as pictorial elements to "fill empty spaces as the composition requires and according to his humor." If there is any symbolism in them, it is not intentional. Nevertheless it achieves once again that metaphorical character in its association of disparate images which, in a more direct technique, had marked his early Paris work and which Cendrars and Apollinaire found so congenial to their approach in poetry.

Another canvas of a few months later, *Listening to the Cock*, making use of a device of trans-





The Red Cock. 1940. Oil, 29 x 36". Collection Miss Mary E. Johnston, Glendale, Ohio.

parency reminiscent of the earlier *Cattle Dealer*, is still more clearly indebted to his Mexican sojourn for its color (page 69). And recollections of the visit continue to appear in his paintings for the next year and more.

After its presentation in Mexico City the ballet *Aleko* was brought to New York. What Efross said of Chagall's work for Granovsky in Moscow was still in great part true. "He made drawings and paintings but not at all sketches for scenery or costumes. On the contrary, he transformed the performers and the spectacle into a category of pictorial art. He did not make sets, but rather panel paintings."\* The backdrop seemed more like a vast painting by Chagall in front of which the performers moved than an integral part of the production and even dwarfed the dancers by its visual force. Nevertheless there was a spirit of holiday and magic in it and an exuberance of color that was Chagall at his purest.

\* Bibl. 116, p. 44.





Time is a River without Banks. 1930-39. Oil on canvas,  $39\frac{3}{8} \times 32''$ . The Museum of Modern Art.









The Cello Player. 1939. Oil,  $39\frac{1}{2} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ ". Municipal Museum, Amsterdam. Regnault Collection.





The Bride and Groom of the Eiffel Tower. 1938-39. Oil,  $58\frac{3}{4} \times 54\frac{1}{8}$ ". Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.





Listening to the Cock. 1944. Oil, 38½ x 28". Collection Adolphe A. Juviler, New York.





Spirit of the Town. 1945. Oil, 42 x 32". Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.



In September, 1944, Madame Chagall died. The loss was a staggering one to Chagall. His thoughts and work for months seemed fixed irremediably on the past. Then fortunately the ballet once again was able to render a service of distraction.

The Ballet Theater was planning a revised production of Stravinsky's *Fire Bird*. On very short notice they called on Chagall for aid. A few months' intensive work and the result in the way of visual spectacle was even more impressive than *Aleko*—compositions in Chagall's most characteristic manner, with all stops out, expanded to the size of the New York Metropolitan Opera House stage. They were more like huge murals than stage sets—murals that had grown out of that panel in Granovsky's little theatre in Moscow, and, at a further remove, out of the pride with which he recalled in his autobiography his grandfather painting on the walls of the synagogue of Mohilev. More opulent than *Aleko's*, his *Fire Bird* curtains seemed a release of all those pent-up emotions and memories that had been haunting and saddening his work during the preceding months. And in the paintings that immediately followed he is once again the poet of his young days, but with a maturity of technique and a warmth and control of color he had never previously achieved.

Chagall is a conscious artist. While the selection and combination of his images may appear illogical from a representational viewpoint, they are carefully and rationally chosen elements for the pictorial structure he seeks to build. There is nothing automatic in his work. In fact his much talked of illogicality appears only when his paintings are read detail by detail; taken in the composite they have the same pictorial integrity as the most naturalistic painting, or the most architectural cubist work of the same level of quality. He is an artist with a full color sense. He has a deep regard for technique. He is a subtle craftsman who, rather than dull his hand in virtuosity, affects clumsiness. He is an artist who has been content with a limited repertory of representational forms. But his work of nearly forty years shows a persistent effort to bring out new and richer effects from his consciously limited thematic material by unaccustomed arrangements and by a steady development of a more complex technique. In an age that has fled from sentiment he has drawn constantly on it for his stimulation. And our debt to Chagall is to an artist who has brought poetry back into painting through subject matter, without any sacrifice of his painter's interest in the picture for itself, and entirely aside from any communication that can be put into words.

JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY



## THE PRINTS OF MARC CHAGALL

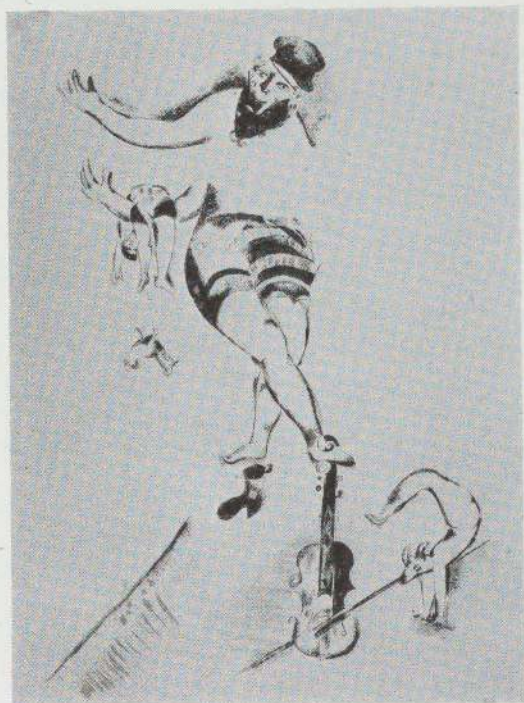
Famous though Marc Chagall is as an artist, it can hardly be said that his reputation was built up to any appreciable extent through his work as a printmaker. Yet Chagall has executed close to four hundred different subjects in various graphic media. Best known among them are the twenty plates of the autobiographic series which was published in 1923 by Paul Cassirer in Berlin under the title *Mein Leben*. A few odd plates closely connected with *Mein Leben* were issued separately by Cassirer about the same time. Then, here and there, we find a little etching of his in one book or another. And that is about all we know of Marc Chagall, one of the outstanding printmakers of the 20th century.

Chagall's career as a printmaker was closely linked to the French picture dealer and publisher Ambroise Vollard. It was Vollard who, having seen Chagall's early paintings, encouraged him to continue to make prints by commissioning him to illustrate a book. The plan, like everything conceived by Vollard, was an ambitious one. Chagall was to etch ninety-six illustrations for Gogol's *Dead Souls*. This was in 1923. But even before this first project was finished, the restless Vollard approached Chagall with another plan: he asked him to illustrate La Fontaine's *Fables*. There were to be one hundred plates, in full color. Chagall set to work and painted a series of one hundred gouaches. A special workshop was set up by Vollard. Here the tedious and complicated process of preparing the many color plates for each subject was to be carried out by a whole staff of engravers under the supervision of the master-printer Maurice Potin. But Chagall's rich and delicate color scale proved too much for the plan and the color plate project was abandoned. Not so the plan of creating one hundred illustrations for the *Fables*. Urged by Vollard, Chagall tackled the work himself and created one hundred etchings in black and white which belong among his best plates. This project was completed as far as Chagall's share was concerned in 1931.

39 /  
^  
Again, before the end of the second project, Vollard thought of a new book for Chagall to illustrate: the Bible. The artist, who was dissatisfied with his first trial plates for the set, decided he must study the actual landscape and people of the Holy Land in order to accomplish his aims. In 1931 he went to Egypt, Palestine and Syria. Then, back in Paris, he began this new set of plates on which he worked until Vollard's death in 1940. By that time he had finished a total of 105 plates.

Of each of the three sets of illustrations almost the entire editions were pulled, then stacked in warehouses awaiting completion of the typography, the book *per se*. But, through some odd quirk in Vollard's curious character, this important part of the work was never completed. Consequently these three hundred plates created for Vollard—almost three-quarters of Chagall's entire output of prints—have never come into circulation. Occasionally magazines have called attention





(left) Acrobat with Violin. 1924. Etching and drypoint,  $16\frac{3}{8} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ ". (right) Acrobat with Violin. 1924. Etching and drypoint with watercolor.

to Chagall's illustrations, reproducing a few, but there has never been a comprehensive exhibition of his graphic work. No public or private collection—with the exception of the artist's own—offers an opportunity to study any but the early prints of Chagall. Yet when Chagall's prints become better known he will probably prove to be one of the really great printmakers of our day.

Chagall's earliest experiments in printmaking were in woodcut and lithography. They all have a rather somber quality about them. This they never quite lose, even when brightened up with watercolor, as the artist to this day likes to do. Almost all of these early attempts remain unpublished, and there are only a few impressions of each block or stone. Neither of these media appealed to the artist, perhaps because they do not quite permit the radiance and transparency, the richness of color and tone that can be achieved on the copper plate.

Within the first year of his experiments Chagall found that etching and drypoint were his true media. In them, all that is so fantastically exuberant in his painting finds translation into terms of black and white.



His early plates, published and unpublished, some on zinc but the majority on copper, are fairly simple and direct technically. Drypoint seems to predominate, though some show etched lines to accentuate certain contours, or to bring out details. Frequently drypoint is used to work up a black surface patch and to achieve a soft contour which looks as if it had been applied with a brush. In these early prints there are few changes once the original conception has been etched or scratched into the plate. But occasionally we find later states in which radical changes in the composition have been made as in *Das Grab des Vaters* in the set of *Mein Leben*. These changes, however, are rather the exception than the rule.

The same holds true of his first set of illustrations for Vollard, Gogol's *Dead Souls*. Though quite different in composition and general approach from his earlier plates his technique has not changed greatly. We find that he uses etching more frequently; there is more pure line work. The broad brush-like contours have disappeared; broader black drypoint patches, however, occur more frequently. Nevertheless the conception appears purely graphic as color plays an insignificant part in the plate.

During this earlier period, from 1923 to 1926-27, Chagall created a small group of prints which are quite unique in their combination of etching, watercolor and drawing. He would take a few impressions of his etchings, touch them with watercolor or gouache, sometimes to such a degree that hardly anything remained of the line work. At other times he would add figures, animals, houses on an impression of the same print, completely transforming the composition, developing a story, carrying one theme into another, as in a folk-tale. They are like variations on a basic theme in which the artist gives full rein to this creative playful fantasy. Here we find the artist abandoning himself to his imagination, discarding conventions (so readily bound by a single technique) and full of whimsical ideas.

With the illustrations of *La Fontaine* Chagall entered into an entirely new sphere of his graphic *oeuvre*. As mentioned before, each plate was preceded by a painting in gouache. Thus these prints were conceived primarily from a painter's point of view. Black and white surfaces, reminiscent of brush strokes, dominate all line work. A broad painting-like treatment replaces the purely graphic concision and directness of much of Chagall's earlier work. A brilliance of tonality is achieved which was absent before. His technique is carried along by a burst of temperament. Where it was orthodox before—almost conventional—he now devises a system of broken surface tints (partly in aquatint), lines, scratches, dots and whatever to achieve effects similar to those in his preceding gouaches. He recreates his preliminary paintings, elaborates or simplifies them at will. But he never copies them. In his plates, however, he preserves the effect of color above all else.

The aquatint, or aquatint-like tone, is used extensively for the first time in the *Fables*. White highlights are achieved through application of stopping-out varnish with the brush. This greatly contributes to the painterly effect of these prints. In the plates themselves only minor changes seem to have been made during the etching process. Few states occur, which is not surprising since the pictorial composition had already crystallized in the preceding gouaches. When states do occur they frequently show only alterations of detail to emphasize or elaborate the story.





*Bible.* 1931-39: The Apparition of the Angel to Joshua (first state). Etching and drypoint,  $13\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$ ".



The Apparition of the Angel to Joshua (last state). Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ ".

In a few cases, however, the plates are first lightly etched and then undergo considerable change, not so much in the basic design as in the working out of light and shadow.

In looking over the superb set of illustrations one cannot help feeling how fortunate it was that Vollard's original plan of having color plates made after the gouaches could not be carried out. The color plates engraved by craftsmen could never have compared with Chagall's masterful re-interpretations in black and white. A certain artificiality and mechanization is inevitable in the involved color plate process. Furthermore, professional craftsmen can only copy; the artist himself recreates in translating from color to black and white.

With the illustrations for the Bible Chagall tackled his largest print enterprise. It was not only the largest in the actual number of plates but also the most elaborate and ambitious pic-



torially and dramatically. Again his technical approach to the problem became fundamentally different. The general tone is somber, in keeping with the emotional and dramatic content: heavy blacks and sharp contrasts of light and shadow are frequent. Many of the plates were preceded not by one but by a number of gouaches and black and white sketches. Notwithstanding these preliminary studies, almost every plate underwent a profound evolution in the course of its preparation. As many as twelve states of one plate have been found, each state showing great changes over the preceding one. At times as much as half of the composition was completely erased and reconstructed on the blank surface of the plate. Figures were added, then eliminated; an entire composition thrown into darkness where it had been light before. Throughout he made extensive use of the burnisher, polishing highlights into dark areas, evening out contrasts, adding gray tones where they had been black. Through the whole series we get the impression of a profound struggle within the artist himself, as well as a struggle with his subject and his technique. He put his entire talent as a craftsman to a final and supreme test. In none of his earlier work did he ever appear under such emotional stress and strain.

Chagall has watched the fate of his extensive, unpublished graphic work with understandable anxiety and concern. That one of the wishes closest to his heart should be the realization of his projected publications is only natural. Plans have been made to bring the three projects to the desired conclusion as soon as circumstances are more favorable.

Undaunted by these great disappointments, however, Chagall took up etching again when he came to this country. His work in Stanley William Hayter's *Studio 17* in New York has had a refreshing and vitalizing influence on his prints. He has taken up a new project: the publication of a set of subjects on the circus. It is less ambitious than the Vollard sets. Up to now twenty-five plates have been completed and Chagall plans to add others. Technically they are greatly simplified in comparison particularly with the plates for the Bible, but in them he has made some interesting experiments, particularly in the inking and printing of the plates.

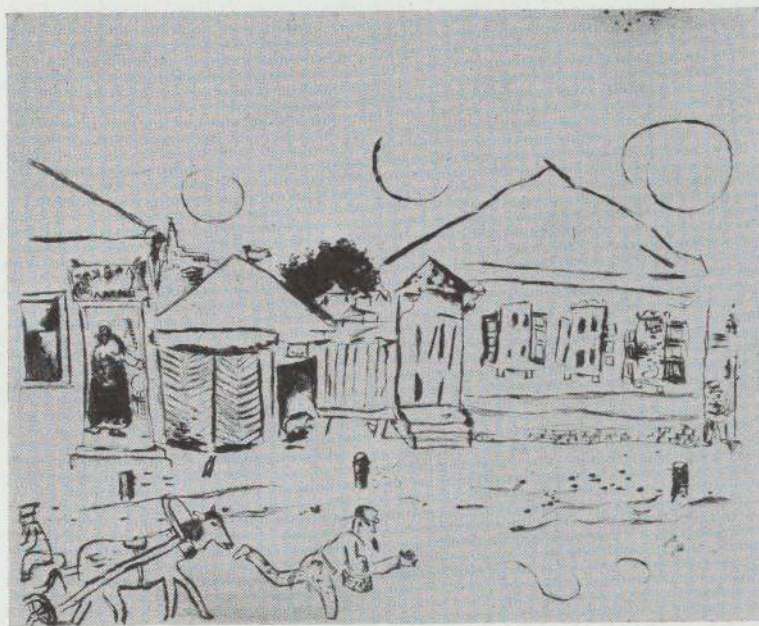
Almost completely unknown to the print world, Chagall nevertheless must be regarded as one of the great etchers of our day. From the beginning he has shown a love and understanding of black and white which is unique among his contemporaries. He has never fallen into the fatal routine performance of the professional printmaker. He has always preserved the freedom of the painter and, above all else, in every one of his prints his great imagination always leads him to new and interesting results.

CARL O. SCHNIEWIND





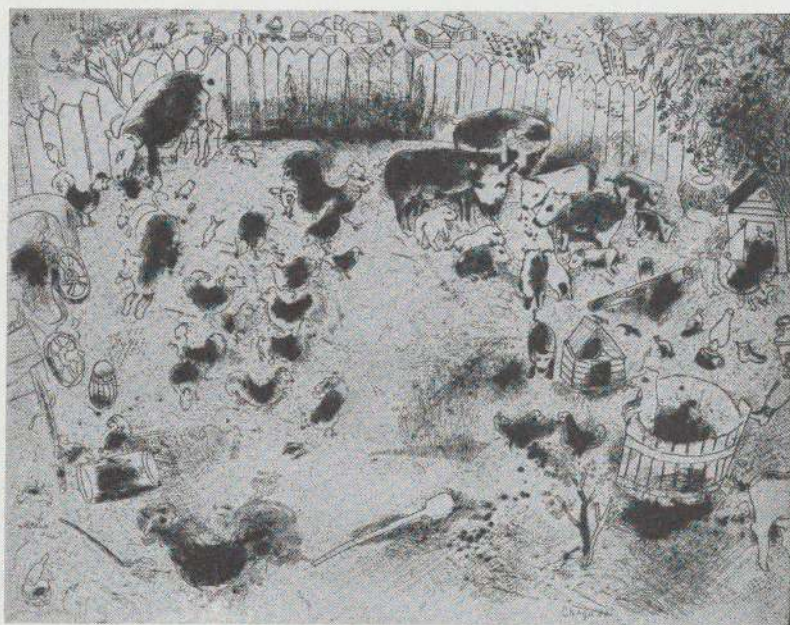
*Mein Leben*. 1923: (right) The Grandfathers. Drypoint,  $10\frac{7}{8} \times 8\frac{7}{16}$ ". (below) Pokrowa Street. Drypoint,  $7\frac{1}{16} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ ".



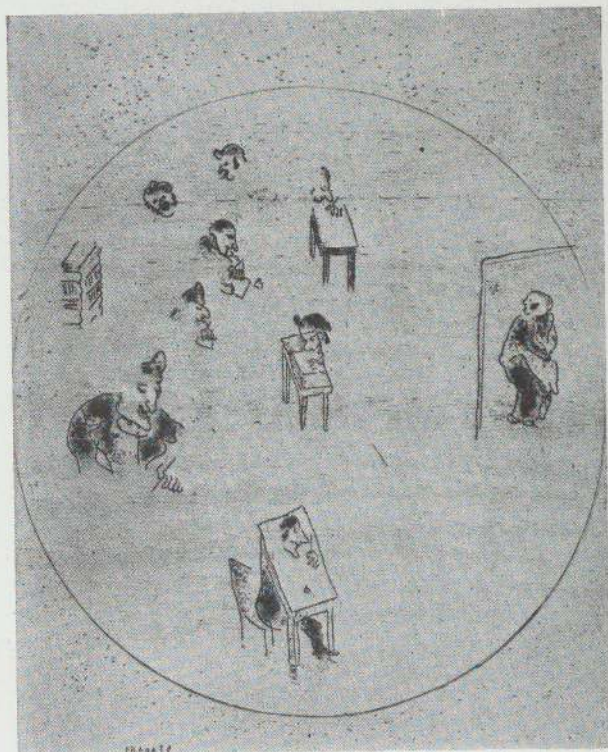




*Dead Souls. 1923-27: (left) Mme Korobotchka. Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$ ". (below) The Barn Yard. Etching and drypoint,  $9 \times 11\frac{9}{16}$ ".*







*Dead Souls*. 1923-27. (left) Chancellery. Etching and drypoint, 11 x 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". (below) Chitchikov and Sobakevitch. Etching and drypoint, 8 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ ".





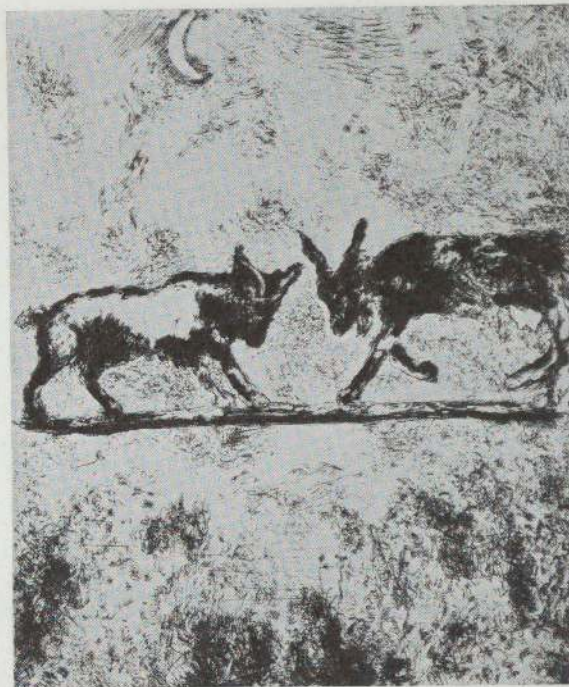


*The Fables. 1927-31: The Fox and the Grapes. Etching and drypoint, 11½ x 9⅞".*



*The Cat Metamorphosed into a Woman. Etching and drypoint, 11⅝ x 9½".*





*The Fables. 1927-31: The Two Goats.*  
Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{5}{16}$ ".



*The Ass Loaded with Salt and the Ass Loaded with Sponges.* Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{9}{16}$ ".

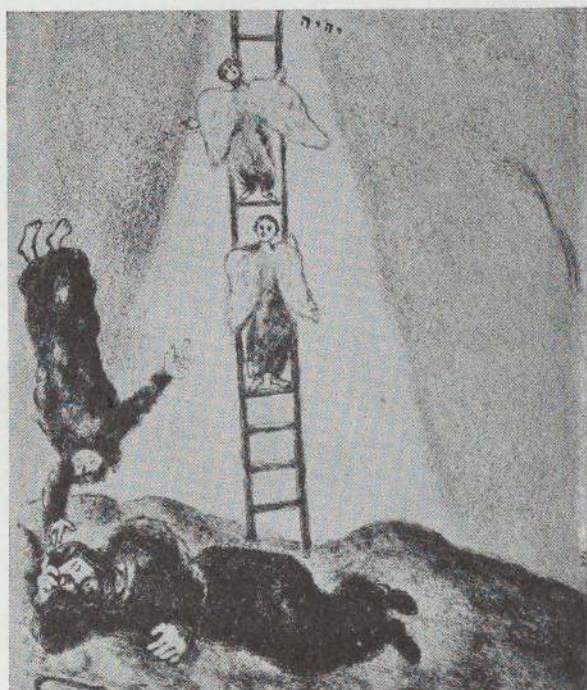




*The Fables*. 1927-31: *The Lark and the Farmer*. Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ ".



*Bible. 1931-39: Abraham Mourns Sarah.*  
Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ ".



*Jacob's Dream. Etching and drypoint,*  
 $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{5}{8}$ ".





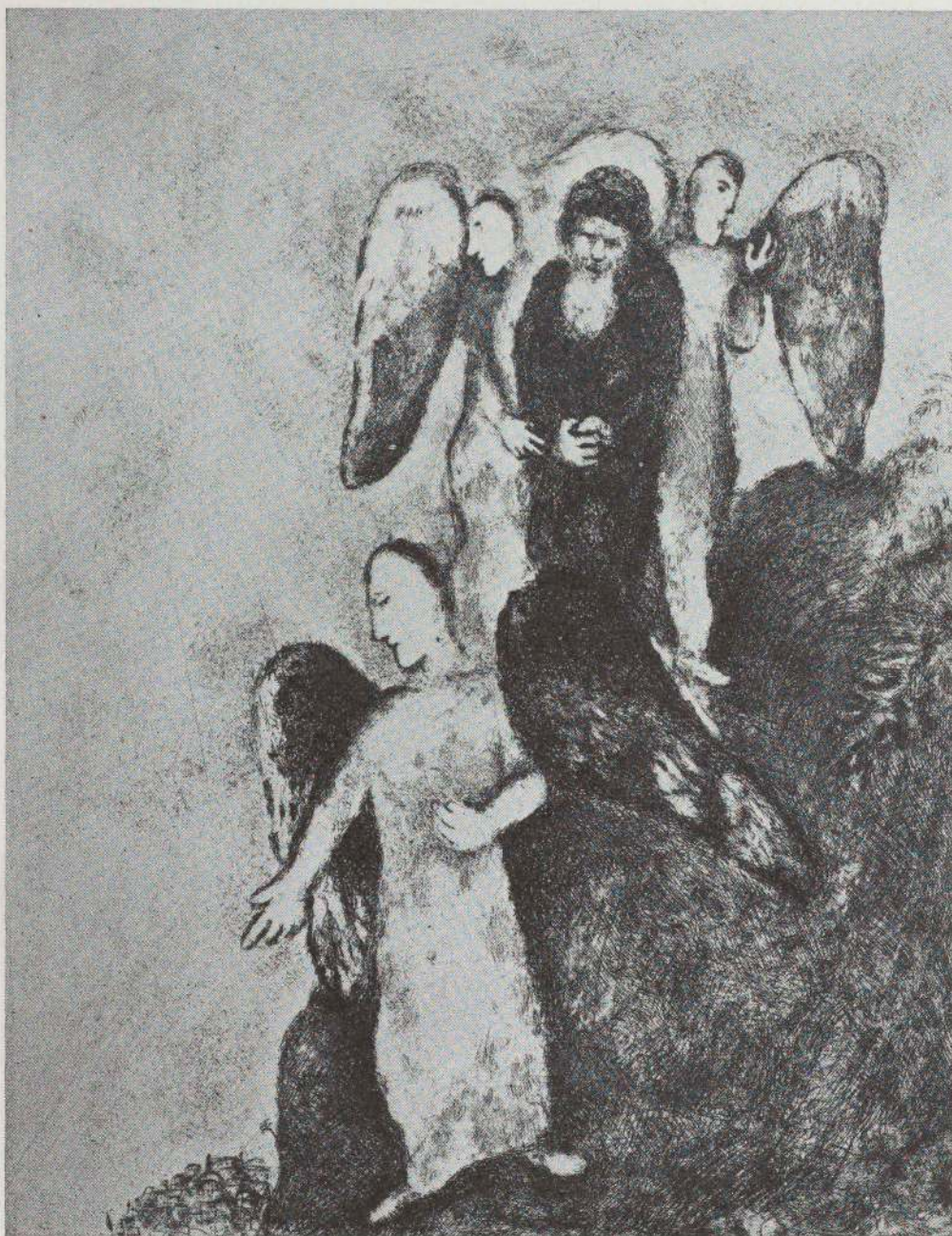
*Bible. 1931-39: David with the Head of Goliath. Etching and drypoint, 11 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".*





*Bible*. 1931-39: Untitled (for one of the books of the Prophets). Etching and drypoint,  $13\frac{5}{8} \times 10\frac{7}{8}$ ".





*Bible. 1931-39: Abraham Approaching Sodom with Three Angels. Etching, 12 $\frac{1}{16}$  x 9 $\frac{5}{16}$ ".*



## CATALOG OF THE EXHIBITION

An asterisk (\*) preceding the title indicates that the work is illustrated in the text. Alternative titles are given in parenthesis; (dated) means that the date appears on the picture. In dimensions height precedes width.

### Paintings

- \* 1 CANDLES IN THE DARK STREET (LA MORT). 1908 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $26\frac{3}{4} \times 34$ ". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 9.*
- \* 2 PORTRAIT OF MY FIANCÉE IN BLACK GLOVES. 1909 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $34\frac{3}{4} \times 25\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by Baron Edward von der Heydt, Ascona, Switzerland. *Ill. p. 10.*
- \* 3 THE WEDDING. Paris, 1910 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $39\frac{1}{8} \times 74\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 16.*
- \* 4 MY STUDIO. Paris, 1910 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $23\frac{3}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ ". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 12.*
- \* 5 TO RUSSIA, ASSES AND OTHERS. 1911 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $61\frac{5}{8} \times 48\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York. *Ill. p. 25.*
- \* 6 HALF-PAST THREE (THE POET). 1911 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $78 \times 57$ ". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Walter C. Arensberg, Hollywood. *Ill. p. 17.*
- \* 7 I AND THE VILLAGE. 1911 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $75\frac{5}{8} \times 59\frac{5}{8}$ ". The Museum of Modern Art. Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund. *Ill. p. 19.*
- 8 INTERIOR. 1911 (dated). Gouache,  $7\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- \* 9 DEDICATED TO MY FIANCÉE. 1911 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $77 \times 45\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 21.*
- \* 10 THE CATTLE DEALER. 1912. Oil on canvas,  $38\frac{1}{8} \times 78\frac{7}{8}$ ". Lent by Frau Nell Urech-Walden, Schinznach-Bad, Switzerland. *Ill. p. 26.*
- \* 11 THE SOLDIER DRINKS. 1912. Oil on canvas,  $43 \times 37\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by Frau Nell Urech-Walden, Schinznach-Bad, Switzerland. *Ill. p. 22.*
- \* 12 THE PREGNANT WOMAN. 1913 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $76\frac{3}{8} \times 45\frac{3}{8}$ ". Lent by P. A. Regnault, through the courtesy of the Municipal Museum, Amsterdam. *Ill. p. 27.*
- \* 13 PARIS THROUGH THE WINDOW. 1913 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $52\frac{1}{4} \times 54\frac{3}{4}$ ". Lent by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York. *Ill. p. 28.*
- 14 MUSICIAN. 1912-13 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $74 \times 62\frac{1}{2}$ ". Lent by P. A. Regnault, through the courtesy of the Municipal Museum, Amsterdam.
- 15 PARIS SELF-PORTRAIT WITH SEVEN FINGERS. 1912-13. Oil on canvas,  $49\frac{3}{8} \times 42\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by P. A. Regnault, through the courtesy of the Municipal Museum, Amsterdam.
- 16 THE DRUNKARD (INTERIOR). 1912-13 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $33\frac{1}{8} \times 45\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by Hjalmar Gabrielson, Gothenburg, Sweden.
- \* 17 BURNING HOUSE. 1913 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $42 \times 47\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by Frau Nell Urech-Walden, Schinznach-Bad, Switzerland. *Ill. p. 30.*
- \* 18 THE PRAYING JEW (THE RABBI OF VITEBSK). 1914. Oil on canvas,  $46 \times 35$ ". Lent by the Art Institute of Chicago, The Joseph Winterbotham Collection. *Ill. p. 35.*
- 19 LISA. 1914. Oil on canvas,  $31 \times 18\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- \* 20 SELF-PORTRAIT WITH WINEGLASS (DOUBLE PORTRAIT). 1917. Oil on canvas,  $92\frac{1}{2} \times 54$ ". Lent by the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York. *Ill. p. 41.*
- 21 HOMAGE TO GOGOL. 1917. (Design for theatre curtain.) Watercolor,  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{3}{4}$ ". The Museum of Modern Art. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.
- \* 22 THE MARKET PLACE. c. 1917. Oil on canvas,  $26 \times 38\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent anonymously, through the courtesy of the Worcester Museum. *Ill. p. 40.*
- \* 23 CEMETERY. 1917 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $27\frac{1}{4} \times 39\frac{1}{2}$ ". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 42.*
- 24 GATE TO THE CEMETERY. 1917 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $34\frac{3}{4} \times 27\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- \* 25 THE GREEN VIOLINIST. 1918. Oil on canvas,  $77 \times 42\frac{1}{2}$ ". Lent by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York. *Ill. p. 43.*
- \* 26 BLUE HOUSE. 1920 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $26\frac{1}{8} \times 38\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by the Museum of Fine Arts, Liège, Belgium. *Ill. p. 50.*



- 27 ENVIRONS OF VITEBSK. 1922. Oil on canvas,  $28\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by the artist. (Variant of a 1914 canvas of same title, now Collection Charles Im Obersteg, Basel, Switzerland.)
- \* 28 THE BIRTHDAY. 1915-23. Oil on canvas,  $31\frac{7}{8} \times 39\frac{3}{8}$ ". Lent by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York. *Ill. p. 37.*
- 29 GIRL BEFORE THE WINDOW. 1924. Oil on canvas,  $41 \times 39\frac{5}{8}$ ". Lent by P. A. Regnault, through the courtesy of the Municipal Museum, Amsterdam.
- \* 30 DOUBLE PORTRAIT. 1924 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $51\frac{1}{4} \times 37\frac{3}{8}$ ". Lent by Philippe Dotremont, Uccle-Brussels, Belgium. *Ill. p. 52.*
- \* 31 THE TROUGH. 1925. Oil on canvas,  $57\frac{5}{8} \times 45\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by the Vicomte de Noailles, Paris. *Ill. p. 55.*
- \* 32 THE CIRCUS. 1926 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $46 \times 35$ ". Lent by Dr. Potvin, Brussels. *Ill. p. 57.*
- 33 THE MILLER, HIS SON AND THE ASS. For *The Fables of La Fontaine*. 1926 (dated). Gouache,  $20 \times 16$ ". Lent by Mme Helena Rubinstein, New York.
- 34 CIRCUS RIDER. 1927. Gouache,  $25 \times 19$ ". Lent by Mme Helena Rubinstein, New York.
- 35 THE BRIDE WITH THE DOUBLE FACE. 1927 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $39\frac{3}{8} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ ". Lent by the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.
- 36 HOMAGE TO THE EIFFEL TOWER. 1928. Oil on canvas,  $35\frac{1}{8} \times 45\frac{7}{8}$ ". Lent by Mlle Marcelle Bert de Turique, Neuilly-sur-Seine.
- \* 37 IN THE MOUNTAIN. 1930 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $28 \times 23$ ". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bissett, New York. *Ill. p. 58.*
- 38 THE CREATION. 1930 (dated). Gouache,  $25 \times 18\frac{3}{4}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- 39 THE SACRIFICE OF ABRAHAM. 1931 (dated). Gouache and oil on paper,  $26\frac{1}{4} \times 20\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- \* 40 THE LOVERS IN THE FLOWERS (LILACS). 1931. Oil on canvas,  $51 \times 35$ ". Lent by Josef von Sternberg, Hollywood. *Ill. p. 59.*
- 41 THE SACRIFICE OF NOAH. 1932 (dated). Gouache,  $24\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- 42 THE WAILING WALL. Jerusalem, 1932 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $29 \times 36\frac{1}{2}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- \* 43 SOLITUDE. 1933 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $43\frac{3}{8} \times 66$ ". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 60.*
- 44 NUDE OVER VITEBSK. 1933 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $34\frac{7}{8} \times 45\frac{3}{4}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- 45 PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST'S WIFE. 1934-35. Oil on canvas,  $39\frac{3}{8} \times 32$ ". Lent by P. A. Regnault, through the courtesy of the Municipal Museum, Amsterdam.
- \* 46 WHITE CRUCIFIXION. 1938. Oil on canvas,  $61 \times 55$ ". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 62.*
- \* 47 THE CELLO PLAYER. 1939 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $39\frac{1}{2} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ ". Lent by P. A. Regnault, through the courtesy of the Municipal Museum, Amsterdam. *Ill. p. 67.*
- \* 48 THE BRIDE AND GROOM OF THE EIFFEL TOWER. 1938-39 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $58\frac{3}{4} \times 54\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York. *Ill. p. 68.*
- \* 49 TIME IS A RIVER WITHOUT BANKS. 1930-39. Oil on canvas,  $39\frac{3}{8} \times 32$ ". The Museum of Modern Art. Given anonymously. *Ill. p. 65.*
- 50 SNOWING (LE NEIGE). 1939. Gouache and pastel,  $25\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{1}{2}$ ". Lent by the City Art Museum of St. Louis.
- \* 51 THE RED COCK. 1940 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $29 \times 36$ ". Lent by Miss Mary E. Johnston, Glendale, Ohio. *Ill. p. 64.*
- 52 THE MADONNA OF THE VILLAGE. 1938-42 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $38 \times 36$ ". Lent by Adolphe A. Juviler, New York.
- 53 THE JUGGLER. 1943 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $43\frac{1}{2} \times 31$ ". Lent by Mrs. Charles B. Goodspeed, Chicago.
- 54 IN THE NIGHT. 1943. Oil on canvas,  $18\frac{1}{4} \times 20\frac{1}{4}$ ". Lent by Louis E. Stern, New York.
- 55 BETWEEN DARKNESS AND LIGHT. 1943. Oil on canvas,  $39\frac{1}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ ". Lent by the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.
- 56 RED HORSE AND LOVERS. 1938-1944 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $45\frac{1}{8} \times 40\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by the artist.
- 57 THE RED COCK IN THE NIGHT. 1944. Oil on canvas,  $26\frac{3}{4} \times 31$ ". Lent by John S. Newberry, Jr., Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan.
- \* 58 LISTENING TO THE COCK. 1944. Oil on canvas,  $38\frac{1}{2} \times 28$ ". Lent by Adolphe A. Juviler, New York. *Ill. p. 69.*
- 59 HOUSE WITH EYE. 1945. Oil on canvas,  $23\frac{1}{8} \times 20\frac{1}{8}$ ". Lent by Miss Ida Gordey, New York.
- \* 60 SPIRIT OF THE TOWN. 1945 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $42 \times 32$ ". Lent by the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York. *Ill. p. 70.*
- 61 MORNING REVEILLE. 1945 (dated). Oil on canvas,  $39\frac{7}{8} \times 33$ ". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Paepcke, Chicago.



## Prints

All dimensions describe plate size. Unless otherwise noted all prints have been lent by the artist.

### MEIN LEBEN. Berlin, 1923

Series of 20 plates illustrating the artist's autobiography. Issued in album form without text by Paul Cassirer. *In this listing titles are followed by the original album number.*

- \* 63 THE GRANDFATHERS. (#3) Drypoint,  $10\frac{7}{8} \times 8\frac{7}{16}$ ". *Ill. p. 77.*
- 64 HOUSE IN VITEBSK. (#11) "La Calèche Volante" inscribed in pencil. Drypoint with watercolor,  $9\frac{7}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$ ". Lent by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation.
- 65 GRANDFATHER'S HOUSE. (#12) Drypoint,  $6\frac{5}{16} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ ".
- 66 THE FATHER'S TOMB. (#20) "La Tombe, 1914" inscribed in pencil. Drypoint and etching with watercolor,  $4\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$ ". Lent by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation.

### INDEPENDENT PRINTS

- \* 67 ACROBAT WITH VIOLIN. Paris, 1924. Etching and drypoint with watercolor (trial proof),  $16\frac{3}{8} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ ". *Ill. p. 73.*
- 68 SELF-PORTRAIT WITH GRIMACE. Paris, 1924-25. Etching with aquatint,  $16\frac{3}{8} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ ".

### DEAD SOULS. Paris, 1923-27

Novel by Nikolai V. Gogol, illustrated by 96 etchings, as well as vignettes and historiated initial letters. Commissioned by Ambroise Vollard. Unpublished. *In this listing the plate number following the title refers to the Vollard edition.*

- 69 THE DEPARTURE OF CHITCHIKOV. (Pl. 9) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{5}{8}$ ".
- \* 70 MME KOROBOTCHKA. (Pl. 15) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$ ". *Ill. p. 78.*
- \* 71 THE BARN YARD. (Pl. 17) Etching and drypoint,  $9 \times 11\frac{3}{16}$ ". *Ill. p. 78.*
- 72 WELCOME TO CHITCHIKOV. (Pl. 20) Etching and drypoint,  $11 \times 9\frac{1}{8}$ ".
- 73 SOBAKEVITCH. (Pl. 33) Etching and drypoint,  $10\frac{7}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ ".

74 MME SOBAKEVITCH. (Pl. 34) Etching and drypoint,  $10\frac{7}{8} \times 8\frac{3}{8}$ ".

\* 75 CHITCHIKOV AND SOBAKEVITCH. (Pl. 38) Etching and drypoint,  $8\frac{3}{8} \times 10\frac{7}{8}$ ". *Ill. p. 79.*

76 LANDSCAPE. (Pl. 42) Etching and drypoint,  $11 \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ ".

77 INTERIOR. (Pl. 49) Etching and drypoint,  $11 \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ ".

\* 78 CHANCELLERY. (Pl. 64) Etching and drypoint,  $11 \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ ". *Ill. p. 79.*

### THE FABLES. PARIS, 1927-31

Poems by Jean de la Fontaine, illustrated by 100 etchings. Commissioned by Ambroise Vollard. Unpublished. *In this listing numerals following the title refer to the number of the book and poem under which the fable may be found in any standard edition of the text.*

- \* 79 THE TWO GOATS. (XII:14) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{5}{16}$ ". *Ill. p. 81.*
- 80 THE EAGLE AND THE BEETLE. (II:18) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$ ".
- 81 THE SUN AND THE FROGS. (XI:10; or VI:12) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{7}{16} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$ ".
- 82 THE CROW WHO WISHED TO IMITATE THE EAGLE. (II:16) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{7}{16}$ ".
- 83 THE JAY DRESSED IN PEACOCK FEATHERS. (IV:9) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{3}{8} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ ".
- 84 THE WOLF AND THE STORK. (III:9) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{5}{16}$ ".
- 85 THE FUNERAL OF THE LIONESS. (VIII:14) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$ ".
- 86 THE FOX WITH THE CROPPED TAIL. (V:5) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{7}{8}$ ".
- 87 THE TWO PIGEONS. (IX:2) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$ ".
- \* 88 THE ASS LOADED WITH SALT AND THE ASS LOADED WITH SPONGES. (II:10) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{9}{16}$ ". *Ill. p. 81.*
- \* 89 THE LARK AND THE FARMER. (IV:22) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ ". *Ill. p. 82.*
- \* 90 THE FOX AND THE GRAPES. (III:11) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{7}{16}$ ". *Ill. p. 80.*
- 91 THE TWO PARROTS, THE KING AND HIS SON. (X:11) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$ ".
- \* 92 THE CAT METAMORPHOSED INTO A WOMAN. (II:18) Etching and drypoint,  $11\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ ". *Ill. p. 80.*



# THE BIBLE. Paris, 1929-39

Illustrations commissioned by Ambroise Vollard. At the time of Vollard's death 105 plates, or more than half of the series, had been completed. In the projected edition extracts from the biblical text were to serve as titles for the plates. *Titles listed below are identification titles.*

- 93 THE APPARITION OF THE RAINBOW TO NOAH. Etching and drypoint, 12 x 9".
- \* 94 THE APPARITION OF THE ANGEL TO JOSHUA. Etching and drypoint, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". *Ill. p. 75.*
- \* 95 UNTITLED (for one of the books of the Prophets). Etching and drypoint, 13 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". *Ill. p. 85.*
- \* 96 ABRAHAM MOURNS SARAH. Etching and drypoint, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". *Ill. p. 83.*
- 97 PROPHET KILLED BY A LION. Etching and drypoint, 12 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ ".
- \* 98 JACOB'S DREAM. Etching and drypoint, 11 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". *Ill. p. 83.*
- 100 THE SACRIFICE OF ABRAHAM. Etching and drypoint, 12 x 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ ".
- 101 KING DAVID PLAYING HIS HARP. Etching and drypoint, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ ".
- 102 THE SACRIFICE OF NOAH. Etching and drypoint, 11 $\frac{13}{16}$  x 9 $\frac{7}{16}$ ".
- 103 THE VISION OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH. Etching and drypoint, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ ".
- \* 104 DAVID WITH THE HEAD OF GOLIATH. Etching and drypoint, 11 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". *Ill. p. 84.*
- \* 105 ABRAHAM APPROACHING SODOM WITH THREE ANGELS. Etching, 12 $\frac{1}{16}$  x 9 $\frac{5}{16}$ ". *Ill. p. 86.*

## Theatre Designs

- 106 Preparatory drawing with watercolor for mural in State Jewish Theatre, Moscow. 1919. Lent by the artist.
- \* 107 Stage set for *Congratulations*. 1919. Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 48.*
- 108- Costume designs for *Congratulations*, *That's a Lie* and *The Police*. 1919. Lent by the artist.
- 114- Four curtain designs, 10 costume designs and 129 2 choreographic sketches for the ballet *Aleko*. 1942. The Museum of Modern Art, Dance and Theatre Design Collection.
- 130- Four curtain designs, 10 costume designs for the ballet, *Firebird*. 1945. Lent by the artist.

## ONE-MAN EXHIBITIONS

- 1914 BERLIN. *Der Sturm* gallery.
- 1921 MOSCOW. *State Jewish Theatre* (auditorium).
- 1923 BERLIN. *Galerie Lutz*.
- 1924 BRUSSELS. *Galerie du Centaure*. March 22-April 2. PARIS. *Galerie Barbazanges-Hodebert*. Dec. 17-30. (Retrospective)
- 1925 COLOGNE. *Kölnischer Kunstverein*. April. DRESDEN. *Galerie Ernst Arnold*. Aug.-Dec. PARIS. *Aux Quatre Chemins*. Oct. 27-Nov. 10.
- 1926 NEW YORK. *Reinhardt Galleries*. Jan. 9-30. (Retrospective) CHICAGO. *The Arts Club of Chicago*. March. PARIS. *Galerie Granoff*. June 14-July 5. PARIS. *Galerie Granoff*. Nov. 22-Dec. 11.
- 1928 PARIS. *Galerie Le Portique*. March 10-17.
- 1929 COLOGNE. *Kunstgewerbe Museum*. BRUSSELS. *Galerie L'Epoque*. March.
- 1930 PARIS. *Galerie Bernheim-Jeune*. Feb. 10-21. BRUSSELS. *Le Centaure*. March 1-19. BERLIN. *Galerie Flechtheim*. April. The three exhibitions above consisted of gouaches for the *Fables* of La Fontaine. NEW YORK. *Demotte Gallery*. Nov. 10-Dec. 6.
- 1931 SAN FRANCISCO. *California Palace of the Legion of Honor*. March-April. PARIS. *Galerie Le Portique*. June 13-30.
- 1932 AMSTERDAM. *Society of Dutch Artists*.
- 1933 THE HAGUE. *Esher Surrey Gallery*. BASEL. *Kunsthalle*. Nov. 4-Dec. 3. (Retrospective)
- 1934 PRAGUE. *Dra Feigla Gallery*.
- 1935 LONDON. *Leicester Galleries*. April-May.
- 1936 NEW YORK. *New Art Circle*. (J. B. Neumann) Nov. 30-Dec. 31.
- 1938 BRUSSELS. *Palais des Beaux Arts*. Feb. 22-March 13. NEW YORK. *Lilienfeld Galleries*. Feb. 28-March 26.



- 1939 NEW YORK. *Lilienfeld Galleries*. Dec. 5-Jan. 7.
- 1940 PARIS. *Galerie Mai*. Jan. 26-Feb. 24.
- 1941 NEW YORK. *Pierre Matisse Gallery*. Nov. 25-Dec. 13.
- 1942 NEW YORK. *Pierre Matisse Gallery*. Oct. 13-Nov. 7.
- 1943 NEW YORK. *Pierre Matisse Gallery*. Nov. 2-27.
- 1944 NEW YORK. *Pierre Matisse Gallery*. Oct. 31-Nov. 30.
- 1945 CHICAGO. *The Arts Club*. Jan.  
BOSTON. *Institute of Modern Art*. Jan. 24-Feb. 25  
(with Soutine).  
LOS ANGELES. *James Vigeveno Galleries*. April 1-30.  
NEW YORK. *Pierre Matisse Gallery*. June 5-23.
- 1946 NEW YORK. *Pierre Matisse Gallery*. Feb. 5-March 2.
- 1946 NEW YORK. *The Museum of Modern Art*. April 9-June 23.  
CHICAGO. *The Art Institute*. Oct. 24-Dec. 15.

#### WORKS BY CHAGALL IN AMERICAN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

- BALTIMORE, MD. The Baltimore Museum of Art  
1 gouache (on extended loan)
- BROOKLYN, N. Y. The Brooklyn Museum  
2 prints
- BUFFALO, N. Y. Albright Art Gallery  
2 oils  
1 gouache
- CAMBRIDGE, MASS. Fogg Museum of Art  
3 prints
- CHICAGO, ILL. The Art Institute of Chicago  
1 oil  
1 gouache  
1 print
- DETROIT, MICH. Detroit Institute of Art  
1 oil

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. Los Angeles Museum of History,  
Science and Art  
3 gouaches

NEW HAVEN, CONN. Yale University (*Société Anonyme*  
Collection)  
2 prints

NEW YORK, N. Y. Art of This Century  
1 oil

NEW YORK, N. Y. The Museum of Modern Art  
2 oils  
2 gouaches  
1 watercolor  
3 prints  
67 ballet costume and decor designs

NEW YORK, N. Y. New York Public Library. Print  
Room  
3 prints

NEW YORK, N. Y. Solomon R. Guggenheim Founda-  
tion  
10 oils  
10 watercolors  
1 gouache  
1 drawing  
2 etchings with watercolor

NORTHAMPTON, MASS. Smith College  
1 gouache

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. Philadelphia Museum of Art  
1 drawing  
3 prints

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. San Francisco Museum of Art  
1 watercolor

ST. LOUIS, MO. City Art Museum of St. Louis  
1 gouache

ST. LOUIS, MO. Washington University  
1 print

WASHINGTON, D. C. Phillips Memorial Gallery  
1 oil  
1 pastel

WORCESTER, MASS. Worcester Art Museum  
2 oils  
2 watercolors  
3 gouaches  
(Extended loans)



## ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

Only published books are listed below. Chagall's most important book illustrations, Gogol's *Dead Souls*, *The Fables of La Fontaine* and the Bible, all commissioned by Ambroise Vollard, are still unpublished. For information concerning them see pages 89-90 in the catalog of the exhibition.

- 1914 Niestor. *Tales*. Wilna, Klezkine.  
Reproductions of 9 drawings.
- 1915 Peretz. *The Magician*. Wilna, Klezkine.  
Reproductions of 3 drawings.
- 1920 Philippe Soupault. *Rose des Vents*. Paris, Au Sans Pareil.  
Reproductions of 4 drawings.
- 1922 D. Hofstein. *Trauer*. Moscow, Kulturliche.  
Reproductions of 6 drawings.
- 1925 Claire and Ivan Goll. *Poèmes d'Amour*. Paris, Budry.  
Reproductions of 4 drawings.
- 1925 Claire Goll. *Journal d'un cheval*. Paris, Budry.  
Reproductions of 4 drawings.
- 1926 Jean Giraudoux, Paul Morand, Pierre Mac Orlan, André Salmon, Max Jacob, Jacques de Lacretelle, Joseph Kessel. *Les Sept Péchés Capitiaux*. Paris, Simon Kra.  
15 etchings.
- 1926 Marcel Arland. *Maternité*. Paris, Au Sans Pareil.  
5 etchings.
- 1926 Gustave Coquirot. *En suivant la Seine*. Paris, Delpeuch.  
Reproductions of drawings.
- 1926 François Lehel. *Notre Art dément*. Paris, H. Jonquière et Cie.  
Limited edition contains one etching.
- 1927 Gustave Coquirot. *Suite provinciale*. Paris, Delpeuch.  
Reproductions of 92 drawings.
- 1927 Paul Morand. *Ouvert la nuit*. Paris, N.R.F.  
One portrait drawing of the author reproduced.
- 1927 Marcel Arland. *Etapas*. Paris, N.R.F.  
One portrait drawing of the author reproduced.
- 1928 Ilarie Voronca. *Ulise*. Budapest, Colectiunea interglad.  
One portrait drawing of the author reproduced.
- 1929 René Schwob. *Une Mélodie silencieuse*. Paris, Grasset.  
Reproduction of one drawing.
- 1931 René Schwob. *Marc Chagall et l'Ame juive*. Paris, R. A. Correa.  
Limited edition contains 2 etchings.

- 1931 Marc Chagall. *Ma Vie*. Paris, Stock.  
Reproductions of 32 drawings.
- 1933 Joseph Opatoshu. *Ein Tag in Regensburg*. New York, Malino.  
One drawing reproduced.
- 1938 Abraham Walt. *Songs and Poems, 1888-1938*. New York, Forward Association.  
Reproductions of 32 drawings.
- 1943 Raïssa Maritain. *Marc Chagall*. New York, Editions de la Maison Française.  
One drawing reproduced.
- 1944 Itzik Feffer. *Heinland*. New York, Icor Association.  
Reproductions of 8 drawings.
- 1945 Bella Chagall. *Brennendike Licht*. New York, Book League of the Jewish Peoples Fraternal Order.  
Reproductions of 25 drawings.
- 1946 Bella Chagall. *Burning Lights*. New York, Shoken Books Inc.  
Reproductions of 36 drawings.
- 1946 Claire Goll. *Diary of a Horse*. Brooklyn, Editions Hémisphères.  
Reproductions of 4 drawings.
- n.d. Pierre Reverdy. *Pierres Blanches*. Carcassonne.  
One drawing reproduced.

## THEATRE DESIGNS

- 1917 Curtain designs for three plays by Gogol: *Marriage*, *The Cardplayers*, *The Departure*. Stage set and costume designs for *Marriage*. Hermitage Theatre, Petrograd. *Unexecuted*.
- 1919 Stage sets and costumes for three one-act plays by Sholom Aleichem: *Congratulations*, *The Police*, *That's a Lie*. State Jewish Theatre (GOSET), Moscow. *Produced by Granovsky, 1921*.
- 1920 Stage sets and costume designs for Gogol's *Revizor*. Theatre for Revolutionary Satire (TEREWSAT), Moscow. *Not produced*.
- 1921 Stage sets and costume designs for John Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*. Second Moscow Art Theatre. *Unexecuted*.
- 1942 Scenery and costumes for the ballet, *Aleko*. Book from Pushkin's poem *The Gypsies*; music, Tchaikovsky's Piano Trio; choreography, Leonide Massine. *Produced by The Ballet Theatre*.
- 1945 Scenery and costumes for the ballet, *Firebird*. Book from the Russian fairy tale; music by Igor Stravinsky; choreography, Adolph Bolm; artistic collaboration, Henry Clifford. *Produced by The Ballet Theatre*.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

In the compilation of this bibliography, the artist's scrapbooks as well as all known published lists of works on Chagall (see especially bibl.91,116,181) have been consulted. Not included here are references to exhibition notices which have appeared in American newspapers, and to most exhibition notices listed in Art Index, 1929-1945. Also omitted are a few references to material in foreign journals mentioned in bibl.91,116,181 which could not be verified by the compiler, and to some information in the artist's scrapbooks and elsewhere which was considered of lesser importance.

The arrangement is alphabetical, under the author's name, or under the title in the case of unsigned articles and collective works. Publications of museums are entered under the name of the institution when that name is distinctive; otherwise, under the name of the city in which it is located. Exhibition catalogs issued by private galleries and art organizations are listed under the name of the gallery or group. All material except items preceded by † has been examined by the compiler.

ABBREVIATIONS. Ag August, Ap April, Aufl Auflage, Bd Band, col colored, D December, ed editor(s), edited, edition, F February, hft Heft, il illustration(s), Ja January, Je June, Jy July, Mr March, My May, N November, n.d. not dated, no number, ns new series, p page(s), por portrait(s), S September, ser series.

SAMPLE ENTRY for magazine article. CASSOU, JEAN. Marc Chagall. il Art et Décoration 34:65-76 S 1930.

EXPLANATION. An article by Jean Cassou, entitled "Marc Chagall," accompanied by illustrations will be found in *Art et Décoration*, volume 34, pages 65-76 inclusive, the September 1930 issue.

\* Items so marked are in the Museum Library.

HANNAH B. MULLER

### Writings by Chagall

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- 2 CHAGALL . . . RÉPOND À L'ENQUÊTE DE BEAUX ARTS SUR LE MÉTIER. Beaux-Arts (Paris) ns74no196:1 O 2 1936.

- 3 DELACROIX ET NOS PEINTRES. L'Intransigeant (Paris) Je 9 1930.

- 4 IN MEMORY OF M. M. VINAVER. Razsviet (Paris) p11 O 24 1926.  
Russian text. Also appeared in Zveno p23 O 24 1926.

- \* 5 MA VIE. Préface d'André Salmon. 253p il Paris, Stock, 1931.

Published in Yiddish in Die Zukunft (New York) 30:158-62, 211-14, 290-3, 407-10 Mr-Je 1925. Translated into Hebrew by Manasseh Levin 94p il Tel Aviv, "Sifriat Poalim" Workers' Book-Guild (Hashomer Hatzair), 1943. Excerpts published in

- \* Westheim, Paul, ed. Künstlerbekenntnisse. p159-63 il Berlin, Propyläen Verlag, n.d.; in View (New York) ser5no6:7,12,14 Ja 1946,
- \* in Commentary (New York) 1no6:30-3 Ap 1946; in Russian, in Razsviet (Paris) p6-7 My 4 1930, and in bibl.116.

—See also 167.

- \* 6 MESSAGE DE MARC CHAGALL AUX PEINTRES FRANÇAIS. Spectateur des Arts (Paris) no1:3 D 1944.

- 7 MODERN ART. Moznayim (Tel Aviv) 2no46-7:14-15; no48:12-13 Mr-Apr 1931.  
Hebrew text.

- 8 MY FIRST TEACHERS: PEN. il Razsviet (Paris) Ja 30 1927.  
Russian text.

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- \* 11 [RÉPONSE À UNE] ENQUÊTE: POUVEZ-VOUS DIRE QUELLE A ÉTÉ LA RENCONTRE CAPITALE DE VOTRE VIE. Minotaure no3-4: 106 1933.

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- 13 VOYAGE EN HOLLANDE. L'Intransigeant (Paris) My 3 1932.
- 14 VOYAGE EN PALESTINE. L'Intransigeant (Paris) Je 8 1931.
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- 16 AUDIBERTI, MARC CHAGALL. Nouvelle Revue Française 28:714-15 My 1 1940.
- 17 CENDRARS, BLAISE. Portrait; Atelier. In the author's Dix-neuf poèmes élastiques. p12-16 Paris, Au Sans Pareil, 1919.  
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- \* 18 FIERENS, PAUL. Visite à Chagall. In Marc Chagall. p3 Anvers, Éditions Sélection, 1929. (Sélection: chronique de la vie artistique. 6)
- \* 19 MARITAIN, RAÏSSA. Chagall. In the author's Marc Chagall. p9-11 New York, Éditions de la Maison Française, 1943.
- † 20 SALMON, ANDRÉ. Parole des comédiens en voyage. In the author's Métamorphoses de la harpe et de la harpiste, 1926.  
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Russian text.
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## APPENDIX

Translations of poems on pages 18 and 29-30.

### ROTSOGE

*To the painter Chagall*

*Your scarlet face your biplane convertible into hydroplane  
Your round house where a smoked herring swims  
I must have a key to eyelids  
It's a good thing we have seen Mr. Panado  
And we are easy on that score  
What do you want my old pal M.D.  
90 or 324 a man in the air a calf who gazes out of the belly  
of its mother  
I looked a long while along the roads  
So many eyes are closed at the roadside  
The wind sets the willow groves weeping  
Open open open open open  
Look but look now  
The old man is bathing his feet in the basin  
Una volta ho inteso say Ach du lieber Gott  
And I began to cry reminiscing over our childhoods  
And you show me a dreadful purple  
This little painting where there is a cart which reminded me  
of the day  
A day made out of pieces of mauves yellows blues greens and  
reds  
When I left for the country with a charming chimney holding  
its bitch in leash  
I had a reed pipe which I would not have traded for a French  
Marshal's baton  
There aren't any more of them I haven't my little reed pipe  
any more  
The chimney smokes far away from me Russian cigarettes  
Its bitch barks against the lilacs  
And the vigil lamp is burned out  
On the dress petals have fallen  
Two gold rings near some sandals  
Kindle in the sun  
While your hair is like the trolley cable  
Across Europe arrayed in little many-colored fires.*

Spring, 1914

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

### From ENFANCE

*In the wood there is a bird, his song stops you and makes  
you blush.*

*There is a clock that does not strike.*

*There is a pit with a nest of white creatures.*

*There is a cathedral that goes down and a lake that  
rises.*

*There is a little cart left behind in the coppice or that  
runs down the path, all ribbony.*

*There is a company of little actors in costume, just barely  
seen on the road through the skirt of the wood.*

*There is at last, when you are hungry and thirsty, some-  
one who chases you away.*

ARTHUR RIMBAUD



Seventeen thousand and five hundred copies of this book have been printed in May 1946 for the Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art by the Plantin Press, New York. The color inserts were printed by William E. Rudge's Sons, New York.



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