

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

## CHAGALL: THE JERUSALEM WINDOWS

324  
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FOR RELEASE:

Sunday, Nov. 19, 1961

PRESS PREVIEW:

Friday, Nov. 17, 1961

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The twelve stained glass windows designed by Marc Chagall for the new Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center in Jerusalem will be on view at the Museum of Modern Art from November 19 through January 3. This is the only showing in this country of the already famous windows which will be installed in their permanent setting in the synagogue of the Center on February 6, 1962.

Each of the 11 x 8 foot windows symbolizes one of the 12 tribes of Israel. Executed in brilliant reds, blues, yellows and greens the iconography is confined to animals, fish, flowers and trees following Judaism's injunction against depicting human images. Chagall's interpretation, based on a lifetime study of the Bible, follows the 49th chapter of Genesis and the 33rd chapter of Deuteronomy.

The windows, which took two years to complete, were made in the Atelier of Jacques Simon in Reims. Charles and Brigitte Marq, young French artists, collaborated with Chagall in translating the designs, first made in pen and ink, collage and gouache, into the new media.

The windows have been installed in specially built arches, like those in the ultimate setting, and are lit from behind by banks of fluorescent tubes to simulate the bright light of Jerusalem.

Sheets of approximately 50 colors, specified by Chagall, were blown and rolled at the St. Juste glassworks in the Loire Valley. There a new technique for staining glass by the mixture of pigments has been developed which accounts for the great variety and intensity of the color. At the Atelier in Reims, the glass was cut into patterns following Chagall's maquettes. Chagall then painted, etched and scratched on the glass, intensifying some colors, creating new patterns and designs before the glass was then fired again.

A model of the synagogue, designed by Joseph Neufeld, architect, in which the windows will be installed is also on view at the Museum along with a selection of Chagall's original maquettes, including a series of collages, the final color sketch, and large gouaches done after the windows were finished.

The windows received international acclaim when exhibited last summer at the Louvre and are considered by many the crowning achievement of the famous 74-year old artist. He himself has said: "They have completely transformed my vision, they gave me a great shock, made me reflect. I don't know how I shall paint from now on, but I believe something is taking place."

more...

The windows were commissioned by Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, through Dr. Miriam Freund, who was national President at that time, for the new Hadassah-Hebrew/University Medical Center on the western outskirts of Jerusalem. Mrs. Siegfried Kramarsky, the President of Hadassah, announced that the entire center which was designed by Joseph Neufeld, is now functioning.

Peter Selz, Curator of the Museum's Department of Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions and director of the exhibition, believes that the Chagall windows are among the finest work done in stained glass since medieval times. The installation in the Museum which took almost two months, was designed by Rene d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum. Charles Marq and his wife, Brigitte, came from Reims to assist in the erection of the windows. Two stained glass workers from the J. R. Lamb Studios in Tenafly, New Jersey, also assisted in the delicate work of placing the windows, each of which came in twelve sections. Lighting consultants were Century Lighting, Inc., New York City.

President John F. Kennedy sent the following telegram to Dr. Miriam Freund, Chairman of the Hadassah Chagall exhibition committee:

It is with great pleasure that I send greetings to Hadassah, to the Museum of Modern Art and to the individuals who have made it possible for people in the United States to see the extraordinary Chagall stained glass windows. The inspiration of an ancient and noble history and the inspiration of modern artistic genius are combined in these windows. The importance of this cultural event is deepened for us by our knowledge that the windows are destined for the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center near Jerusalem and that by their beauty they will serve and encourage the scientific and humanitarian work done there.

John F. Kennedy

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Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York 19, New York CI 5-8900.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 West 53rd Street

Weekdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursday evenings to 10 p.m.; Sundays, 1 to 7 p.m.

Closed only on Christmas Day

# CHAGALL The Jerusalem Windows

These windows for the Synagogue of the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center — Joseph Neufeld, architect — were designed by Marc Chagall in 1959 and executed by Chagall and Charles and Brigitte Marq at the Atelier Simon in Reims in 1960-1961. They will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art through January 3. This is the only showing in the United States of these already famous windows, which will be installed in their permanent setting in February.

Each of the 11 x 8 foot stained-glass windows symbolizes one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Executed in brilliant reds, blues, yellows and greens, the iconography, based on the 49th chapter of Genesis and the 33rd chapter of Deuteronomy, is confined to animals, fish, flowers and trees. Following the Jewish tradition no human figures are represented. Never dogmatic, the imagery throughout is an expression of Chagall's own poetic vision — composed here on an heroic scale. His earlier religious works — the portraits of rabbis of 1912, the crucifixion scenes painted during the thirties, the illustrations for the Bible, or the decorative mural and reliefs of Assy — use a private folkloric vocabulary. In the conception and execution of the Jerusalem windows, however, he was fully conscious of making a public statement.

These windows may be the finest in the revival of stained glass that has occurred in France since World War II. Unlike Matisse's almost transparent windows at Vence, the somber glass by Rouault and Bazaine at Assy, or Léger's stained glass set in concrete at Audincourt, Chagall's were actually worked on by himself

throughout their production. Thus, they retain the intensity of the original concept. Always interested in working with light, he was inspired by the new possibilities and challenges inherent in the translucent and luminous qualities of stained glass.

After the fifth and final studies were completed early in 1960, Charles Marq went to the glassworks of Saint-Just-sur-Loire, where the correct hues, values and thicknesses were obtained during the many months of experimentation. Trial panels were then taken to Jerusalem for light correction.

In the autumn of 1960 the windows were assembled at the Atelier Simon in Reims where Chagall proceeded to paint, etch and scratch each pane of glass. This direct execution by the artist — working with a free, water-soluble medium — accounts largely for the vitality of the windows. When Chagall had completed his work on the windows they were fired into their present state.

A model of the synagogue, designed by Joseph Neufeld, in which the windows will be installed is also on view at the Museum along with a selection of Chagall's original maquettes, including a series of collages, the final color sketches, and large gouaches done after the windows were finished.

The windows were commissioned by Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, through Dr. Miriam Freund, who was national President at that time. Museum installation closely follows Chagall's own design for their placement in the synagogue.

P.S.

**1. REUBEN (blue):** The eldest of Jacob's twelve sons, his symbols were a mandrake (the flower he brought to his mother) and a fish, sign of fruitfulness. "... the first born of Israel ... unstable as water ..."

**2. SIMEON (blue):** "... cursed be their anger, for it is fierce ... and their wrath, for it is cruel ..."

**3. LEVI (yellow):** From him came the Kohanim (priests) and Levites. His tribe guarded the holiness of the Torah, symbolized here by the Ten Commandments. "... they shall teach thy ordinances unto Jacob, and thy law unto Israel ..."

**4. JUDAH (red):** "... like a lion's whelp ... the sceptre shall not depart from Judah ..."

**5. ZEBULUN (red):** Because he was destined to "dwell at the haven of the sea," Zebulun's symbol was a vessel. The tribe became noted for commerce, navigation and glassmaking.

**6. ISSACHAR (green):** Here are Jacob's hands blessing Issachar who was compared with a donkey, an animal so lazy that it ends as a beast of burden. "... is a strong ass couching down between two burdens ..."

**7. DAN (blue):** A snake and the scales of justice represented Dan, whose father said Dan would "judge his people" and "be a serpent in the way."

**8. GAD (green):** "... whom a troop shall overcome, but he shall overcome at the last ..."

**9. ASHER (green):** It was foretold that he would be rich in oil; in the Holy Land, Asher lived in an area noted for olive trees and often provided all Israel with olive oil. "... more than all the children be Asher blessed ... he shall bathe his foot in oil ..."

**10. NAPHTALI (yellow):** Alert and nimble, Naphtali was likened to a "fleet hind." He was the first to reach Jacob with the news that Joseph was alive in Egypt.

**11. JOSEPH (yellow):** "... is a fruitful bough by a spring ..."

**12. BENJAMIN (blue):** The youngest son of Jacob and Rachel, Benjamin "... the beloved of the Lord, he shall dwell in safety ..."

*At the request of Hadassah, owner of the windows, no photographs may be taken during the exhibition.*

*2" x 2" color slides (\$1.25 each) of the Chagall windows will be sold by Sandak, 39 West 53 Street, New York City*

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## CHAGALL: THE JERUSALEM WINDOWS

Museum of Modern Art

Nov. 19 - Jan. 3, 1962

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"... the first born of Israel..unstable as water.."
2. Simeon (Blue): "... cursed be their anger, for it is fierce..and their wrath, for it is cruel.."
3. Levi (Yellow): From him came the Kohanim (priests) and Levites. His tribe guarded the holiness of the Torah, symbolized here by the Ten Commandments.  
"... they shall teach thy ordinances unto Jacob, and thy law unto Israel.."
4. Judah (Red): "... like a lion's whelp...the sceptre shall not depart from Judah.."
5. Zebulun (Red)" Because he was destined to "dwell at the shore of the sea and be a haven for ships," Zebulun's symbol was a vessel. The tribe became noted for commerce, navigation and glassmaking.
6. Issachar (Green): Here are Jacob's hands blessing Issachar who was compared with a donkey, an animal so lazy that it ends as a beast of burden.  
"... is a strong ass couching down between two burdens.."
7. Dan (Blue): A snake and the scales of justice represented Dan, whose father said Dan would "judge his people" and "be a serpent in the way".
8. Gad ( Green): "... whom a troop shall overcome, but he shall overcome at the last.."
9. Asher (Green): It was foretold that he would be rich in oil; in the Holy Land, Asher lived in an area noted for olive trees and often provided all Israel with olive oil.  
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12. Benjamin (Blue): The youngest son of Jacob and Rachel, Benjamin was described by his father as "a hungry wolf."  
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Dec. 14. 8:30 p.m. Museum Auditorium

CHAGALL: THE JERUSALEM WINDOWS

Illustrated lecture by Alfred Werner,  
author and teacher, contributing editor  
of Arts.

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\$ 1.50

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\$ 2.00

Includes admission to Museum and Galleries