

chagall

an invitation

**johndaviesgallery**  
Period, Modern & Contemporary Art

johndaviesgallery

Please join us at our Private View

## Marc Chagall

*Original lithographs and etchings*

Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 11am - 5pm

Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 11am - 3.30pm

Fizz from 12 noon

We look forward to seeing you in the gallery  
or phone 01608 652255 to order

*When Matisse dies,  
Chagall will be the only painter left  
who understands what colour really is.*

Pablo Picasso

The Russian-born painter and printmaker Marc Chagall (1887-1985) now has a deserved reputation as one of the 20th century's best-loved artists. Born in Vitebsk, Russia, Chagall studied in St Petersburg before travelling to Paris where he became an influential young member of the *avant-garde* circle of artists establishing their careers in the heart of the French capital.

Enthralled by the many sights, sounds and colours of the Paris streets, in 1917 Chagall returned to his native Vitebsk to make use of his new experiences as Director and Commissar of Fine Art. However, his bright, colourful, fantasy-based work irked the conservative local authorities, so he left for Moscow to design for the new Jewish Theatre.

Returning to Paris in 1923, he met the dealer and collector Ambroise Vollard, who would go on to commission and publish some of Chagall's

most important suites of prints in the following decade. Fear for his life as a Russian born Jew meant that between 1941-47 he moved between occupied France and the USA, eventually settling near Nice where he continued to paint and live out his final years.

Chagall was a prolific artist, his most cherished sources of imagery coming from memories of a Jewish childhood, Bible stories, and of the folklore from his early life in Russia. He died in 1985.



The Bible Series

lithographs, 1956 & 1960, 35.5 x 26 cm  
printed by Mourlot Frères in Paris.

Chagall's work drew principally from two areas of his life: his Jewish childhood growing up in Russia, and the Bible. Of the latter he wrote:

*Ever since my earliest youth I have been fascinated by the Bible. I have always believed that it is the greatest source of poetry of all time... The Bible is an echo of nature, and this I have endeavoured to transmit.*

In 1930 Volland, the famed Paris art dealer, commissioned him to produce a series of illustrations based upon Bible stories. Chagall travelled to Palestine in search of inspiration, but the project was a lengthy one, interrupted by Volland's sudden death in a car accident and the advent of World War II, and the series was not eventually completed until the early 1950s.

The first lithographs, printed by the great French lithographers Mourlot Frères, were published in 1956. They were met with such critical praise that Chagall produced a further set, published in 1960.



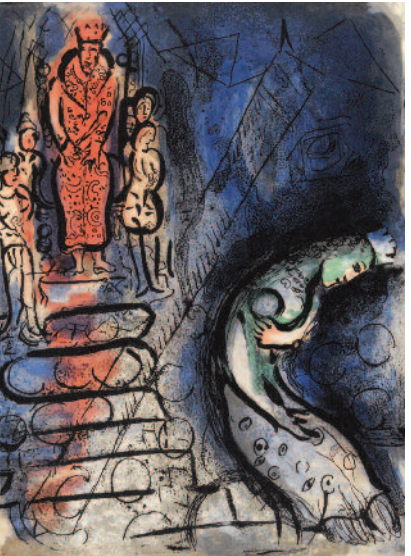
1 Job Praying, 1960, £700



2 Rahab and the Spies of Jericho, 1960, £700



3 Naomi and her Daughters in Law, 1960, £700



4 Ahasuerus Sends Vasthi Away, 1960, £750



5 David Saved by Michal, 1960, £700



6 Ruth Gleaning, 1960, £750



7 Job in Despair, 1960, £750





8 Angel of Paradise, 1956, £750



9 Abraham and Sarah, 1956, £750



10 Moses Receives the Tablets of the Law, 1956, £850



11 The Prophet Daniel with the Lions, 1956, £450



12 Jeremiah's Lamentations, 1956, £750



13 The Angel, 1956, £750



14 Moses III, 1956, £650



15 Moses I, 1956, £750



16 David and his Harp, 1956, £950



17 Esther, 1960, £950



18 Sarah and Abimelech, 1960, £650



19 Sarah and the Angels, 1960, £850



20 Eve Incurs God's Displeasure, 1960, £650



21 Rachel Hides her Father's Household Gods, 1960, £450



22 Adam and Eve and the Forbidden Fruit, 1960, £750





La Fables de la Fontaine  
from one of just 85 sets of the suite  
hand-painted by Chagall.  
etchings, 1952, signed in plate, 29 x 23.5 cm

By the late 1920s, Ambroise Vollard – publisher and defender of *avant-garde* artists – had become one of the most famous figures in the contemporary art world. Vollard commissioned Chagall's etchings to accompany the text of La Fontaine's *Fables*, but his personal advocacy for the artist – who was both a 'romantic' and a Jew – came under debate in the Chamber of Deputies.

When asked *Why Chagall?* Vollard's response was simple: *Because his aesthetic seems to me in a certain sense akin to La Fontaine's, at once sound and delicate, realistic and fantastic.*

23 The Sick Stag, £3250

Chagall began by painting preparatory gouaches which were to be translated to the etching plates for printing. Realising that even the master printers charged with the task could not match the gradations of colour he desired, Chagall elected to prepare the plates himself.

A celebrated series which embodies the humility that is so typical of his work, Chagall's etchings for the *Fables* were issued in 1952 in an edition of just 200, with 85 special sets which were hand-painted by Chagall himself.



24 The Wolves and the Ewes, £2950



25 The Rat and the Elephant, £3250



26 The Bear and the Amateur Gardener, £3250



27 The Funeral of the Lioness, £2950





28 The Frog who would grow as big as the Bull, £2950



29 The Two Mules, £2950



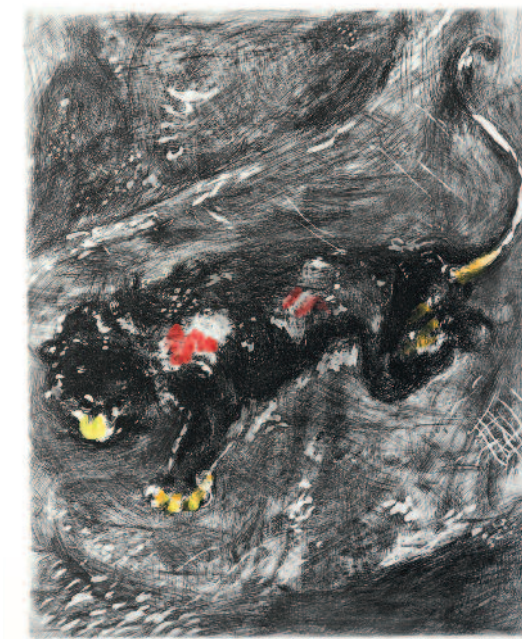
30 Death and the Woodsman, £2950



31 The Boy and the Schoolmaster, £3250



32 The Two Bulls and the Frog, £3250



33 The Lion and the Rat, £2950



34 The Fox and the Goat, £2950



35 The Wolf and the Stork, £3250





36 The Twelve Tribes of Israel, £1950  
12 lithographs, 1962, overall size 82 x 82 cm

The Twelve Tribes

lithographs after Chagall based on preliminary sketches for the Jerusalem stained-glass windows.

In 1959 Chagall was commissioned to design twelve stained glass windows for the new synagogue of the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Centre, situated in the Judean hills west of Jerusalem.

The number twelve is considered spiritual and sacred. These magnificent windows

symbolize the twelve sons of Jacob from whom sprang the twelve tribes of Israel.

Keen that his designs be more widely disseminated, Chagall was closely involved with the production of the set of lithographs based upon his studies, created by the world famous Mourlot Frères of Paris: the

publisher, James Parton, recalled how the artist *stood beside the lithographer to watch the single sheets pass through the hand-fed stone press, one colour at a time... to catch every nuance of shading. [He] threw out the whole first set of gravure plates: the yellow, he felt, was off a shade.*



37 The Twelve Tribes, £4950  
12 lithographs, 1962,  
overall size 146.5 x 88 cm

Can also be framed horizontally in two rows of six



### Celui qui Dit les Choses sans Rien Dire

etchings with aquatint, 1975/76, edition 225,  
39 x 29.5 cm

Published by Maeght, Chagall illustrated the words of the French poet Louis Aragon for this suite of 25 etchings with aquatint. Aragon was one of the founding members of the Surrealist movement which swept through the art world in the early 1920s.

Aragon's poetry was strange and diverse, often swaying between the lyrical and the overtly political. The title of Chagall's series – 'Those who speak without saying anything' – highlights the satirical bent to Aragon's poetry, but also the key surrealist concept of unconscious action: 'speaking' without 'saying'.

Delicate and intimate, Chagall's etchings were made in 1976 when he was 89 years old at the very end of his life. They were published in an edition of 225 only, one of the artist's last and most personal works.



38 Untitled, £2500



39 Untitled, £2500



40 Untitled, £2500



41 Untitled, £2500



42 Untitled, £2500





43 Tchitchikov Couchait au Bureau, £950

Gogol's 'The Dead Souls'

etchings, 1948, edition 368, 21 x 28 cm

In 1922 Chagall was living and working in Berlin. Here he received a letter from friend and poet, Blaise Cendrars, requesting he return to Paris as Vollard wished to discuss with him a commission for an illustrated book. Chagall arrived in Paris in 1923, meeting Vollard for the first time at his studio on the Avenue d'Orléans. Vollard had thought Chagall killed in the war,

but discovered that the painter was alive and well in Germany, where he had settled on his return from Russia. They discussed together which book Chagall might like to illustrate, and agreed on Gogol's acclaimed yet unfinished Dead Souls, widely considered one of the greatest works in the

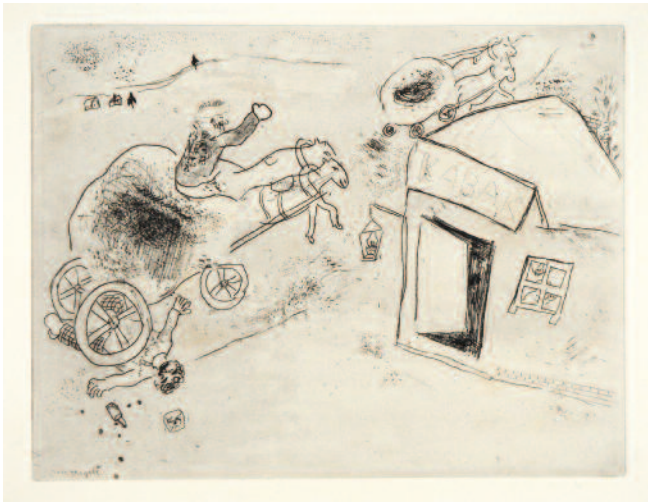


44 La Troïka au Soir, £950

Russian language. Chagall worked on the project from 1923 to 1927, finally making 96 etchings to accompany the text. The plates were printed on Rue St. Jacques, where many artists commissioned by Vollard used to work. An edition of 368 sets was made, of which 335 were eventually offered

for sale. The prints remained in Vollard's store-rooms until after his death, when they were acquired and finally issued in 1947. An aptly poetic interpretation of Gogol's text and its depiction of the Russian provinces, they are one of the earliest and most sought-after of Chagall's suites of etchings.





45 Mort de Mets les Pieds dans le Plat, £950



46 Grigori va Toujours et tu n'Arriveras pas, £950



49 La Britchka s'est Renversée, £950



50 Repas dans le Traktir, £950



47 L'Enterrement du Procureur, £950



48 Tchitchikov Douanier, £950



51 Collusion en Chemin, £950



52 On Passe à Table, £950





53 Lovers in Grey, £550  
lithograph, 1957, 23 x 20 cm



54 Brown Still Life, £450  
lithograph, 1957, 23 x 20 cm



55 The House in my Village, £750  
lithograph, 1960, 32 x 24.5 cm



56 Acrobats at Play, £750  
lithograph, 1963, 32 x 24.5 cm



57 Self Portrait, £950  
lithograph, 1960, 32 x 24.5 cm



58 Profile and Red Child, £750  
lithograph, 1960, 32 x 24.5 cm



59 The Bay of Angels, £750  
lithograph, 1960, 32 x 24.5 cm



60 Vision of Paris, £950  
lithograph, 1960, 32 x 24.5 cm





61 The Angels, £650  
lithograph, 1960, 32 x 24.5 cm



62 The Dance, £775  
lithograph, 1951, 33 x 25.5 cm



63 A Night in Paris, £2500  
lithograph, 1954, 31.5 x 27.5 cm



64 La Carrousel du Louvre, £2500  
lithograph, 1954, 38 x 28 cm



65 Vitreaux pour Jerusalem, £850  
lithograph, 1962, 32.5 x 24.5 cm



66 Candlestick, £850  
lithograph, 1960, 32 x 24.5 cm



67 Rêverie, £395  
lithograph, 1969, 30.5 x 40.5 cm



68 Homage to Julien Cain, £350  
lithograph, 1968, 18.5 x 24 cm





69 Chagall the Painter and his Double, £1500  
lithograph, signed in plate, centre fold as issued, 1981, 32 x 47 cm

# Marc

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Period, Modern & Contemporary Art

In association with Goldmark Art

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