

A vibrant, abstract painting by Marc Chagall. The composition is dominated by warm, expressive colors: a large, bright yellow background on the right, a deep red and orange area on the left, and a central pinkish-red section. The brushwork is thick and textured, with visible, energetic strokes. In the upper right, a woman's face is depicted with a serene expression, looking towards the center. Below her, a man with a long, dark beard and hair is shown in profile, looking down. The overall mood is intimate and celebratory, characteristic of Chagall's style. The text 'MARC Chagall' is overlaid in white, and 'OPERA GALLERY' is at the bottom.

MARC

Chagall

OPERA GALLERY

MARC

chagall

Preface

"In our life there is a single color, as on an artist's palette, which provides the meaning of life and art. It is the color of love."

Marc Chagall

It is an honor and a privilege for Opera Gallery New York to bring to you this curated, solo exhibition of important artworks by Marc Chagall, exhibited together for the first time in our flagship gallery on Madison Avenue.

Marc Chagall is one of the most celebrated and important art figures of 20th century art, with works held and cherished by most significant museums and art collections worldwide and major commissions during his lifetime including the ceiling of Opéra Garnier, Paris and two mighty frescoes at the NYC Met Opera. His artworks comprise many mediums, however Chagall worked predominantly with paint capturing, with vivid, passionate color and energy, the internal and the external human experience.

Chagall was born in Vitebsk in Belarus in 1887. His Jewish heritage remained a major influence on his life as an artist through his attempts to reference and maintain the traditions in which he had grown up but which were fast disappearing or under perennial threat. This remained at the root of his practice throughout his life, later stating "I am a little Jew of Vitebsk. All that I paint, and all that I do, all that I am, is just the little Jew of Vitebsk". Despite this very particular and idiosyncratic lens Chagall saw his work as "not the dream of one people but of all humanity".

Chagall's dreamlike figurative depictions are associated with several major artistic movements of the 20th century including Fauvism, Cubism and Surrealism. In his early twenties Chagall relocated to Paris to further develop his artistic vision, arriving from Russia with an unapologetic sentimentality which he maintained.

He continued to paint the subjects from his memories alongside the Parisian scenes which now surrounded him, continually drawing renewed inspiration from his adoration for his beloved wife Bella. He developed a whole repertoire of motifs: ghostly figures floating in the sky, the fiddler dancing on miniature dollhouses, the livestock and transparent wombs with tiny offspring sleeping upside down, and in a sense they remained dreams of home with the nostalgic undertone of yearning and loss.

During WWII Chagall relocated to New York City, joining a plethora of writers, painters, and composers who like himself had fled the Nazi occupation across Europe, no doubt adding to the artistic and cultural boiling pot of what New York City has become today. Despite obvious artistic relationships, Chagall did not want his work to be too closely associated with any specific school or movement, considering his own singular vision, personal language and folk symbolism of greater purpose and importance to himself.

From such humble beginnings, Chagall went on to experience enormous success during his lifetime and beyond, receiving major honors and accolades and leaving an enormous and profound creative legacy. Opera Gallery New York look forward, with huge anticipation, to sharing these revered works, part of the heritage of this cherished artist, with our esteemed guests.

Gilles Dyan

Chairman and Founder, Opera Gallery Group



Marc Chagall painting *Les Arlequins*, 1938-44, © Archives Marc et Ida Chagall, Paris

Inhabiting the Dreamworld: The Art of Marc Chagall

Introduction

The vivid, fantastic dreams of Marc Chagall can be seen everywhere. His mosaics and tapestries adorn a state hall in the Knesset in Jerusalem; his 'America Windows' stained glass commission at the Art Institute of Chicago makes a cameo in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*; his etchings illustrate printings of Gogol's *Dead Souls* and the Holy Bible. He designed the stage and costumes for early ballets from the now-legendary American Ballet Theatre and theater murals for the Moscow State Yiddish Theater. A mosaic of his wraps around a plaza in Chicago's Loop District whilst his painting decorates the ceiling at the venerable Paris Opéra. Few artists' works have appeared in such diverse settings, in such a variety of mediums, not to mention the long list of museums and venues that have hosted his work, from the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Florida to the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Jewish Museum in New York, and the national Musée Marc Chagall in Nice.



L'Hiver : arbre en hiver (les 4 saisons), 1972-74

Chagall became famous for creating poignant fantasy worlds tinted in dreamlike colors, where people float unconstrained by gravity, as if buoyed by joy or untethered to the life below them. His work and life have rippled outward to inspire musical titles, theater shows and folk songs, from the title for the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* (drawn from his paintings of violinists perched above their

towns) to the Cornwall, England-based Kneehigh Theatre's play *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk* and the song *Painting by Chagall* by the American indie pop-folk band The Weepies.



Detail of *Mosaic Four Seasons*, Exelon Plaza, Chicago



Mosaic Four Seasons, Exelon Plaza, Chicago

Now most known for his avant-garde paintings, Chagall was as versatile as he was prolific, working in lithography, etching, mosaic, tapestry, sculpture, ceramic, stained glass, stage design and book illustration – in addition to writing poetry and prose. His work is striking both for the strength of its imaginative power and its composition, which often breaks up the plane of the canvas.

His themes are repeated and became signature motifs: floating lovers, whimsically colored animals, snippets of the circus, and vignettes of village life. In some respects, his work went against the grain of 20th century art by depicting allegorical and figure-centric scenes as opposed to abstract geometric shapes.

Filled with metaphor, his works recalled the Vitebsk of his boyhood, celebrated his romances and stood against world war horrors, communicating nostalgia, joy and darkness. Some critics found him difficult: having absorbed a variety of modern art trends early in his career, he borrowed from them without ever fully joining them. As the French art historian Pierre Schneider argues, "He used them only to suit his own aesthetic purposes. That makes it hard for art critics and historians to label him. He can't be pigeonholed."

If his work is now ubiquitous to the point of familiarity, it was stunningly original then. Drawing from elements of folk art and the Russian icon tradition, Chagall created narratives in his compositions and infused them with wonder, juxtaposing humans and creatures while altering them to seem otherworldly. His choice to string together seemingly unrelated elements into a surreal mixture gives his paintings their ambiguity and their power to evoke feeling, pioneering a method for telling dreamlike stories that anticipated the rise of the Surrealist movement. "I don't know where he gets those images," Pablo Picasso once said, "he must have an angel in his head."

Chagall's life overlapped with the most politically tumultuous events of twentieth-century Europe, which steered the trajectory of his life and art. War, revolution, and persecution drove him for a time from the places that had meant the most to him. His hunger for the places he left echoes in his art, the melancholy of the exile haunted by the memory of lost homes.

Early Life: Vitebsk

Marc Chagall was born Moishe Zakharovich Shagal in 1887 into a Jewish family in a Russian

Empire that confined Jewish settlement to its western part and restricted the movement of Jewish people. His hometown was Vitebsk, in the northeast of what is now Belarus. "Vitebsk is a place like no other," he wrote. "A strange town, an unhappy town, a boring town." Despite this dismissal, Vitebsk followed him throughout his life: the village featured in many of his paintings, becoming a scrambled theme repeating in his work. Decades later, he would publish a letter to the city, writing "I did not live with you, but I didn't have one single painting that didn't breathe with your spirit and reflection."

Chagall began studying in an art school run by a local portraitist before maneuvering around the Czarist restrictions on Jewish resettlement to move to St. Petersburg and attend art school in 1906. For a time, he worked under artists famous for designing sets and costumes; he would be part of the theater world time



Visions de Paris, 1953

and again, and its rules would influence his art. In 1909, he met one Bella Rosenfeld, the accomplished daughter of a wealthy family studying to be an actress under Stanislavsky, to whom he would become engaged and who would be his most famous muse.

Over and over he would depict two figures floating together, their love defying gravity.

Paris: Center of the Art World (1910-1915)

Chagall left Russia for Paris in 1910, the heart of new movements in the art world of the time. Paris had the Louvre, salons and galleries to fuel a young artist's inspiration. "I penetrated to the heart of French painting of 1910. I hooked myself there," he wrote.

From here, he joined the forefront of the modernist movement and became part of the international avant-garde. In Paris, he developed his style, absorbing the trends of Cubism, Fauvism, and Expressionism. Whilst certainly avant-garde, his work did not fit easily into the category of Modernism, and he rejected materialism in favor of examining what lay below the surface of the objects.

A year and a half after arriving, Chagall moved to Montparnasse into a building known as "La Ruche" for its beehive structure. The low-rent building became an artists' colony, housing the expressionist Chaim Soutine and abstract colorist Robert Delaunay. Chagall's studio was next to the Italian painter Amedeo Modigliani's. At La Ruche, he also befriended several writers, befitting his interest as a writer and poet and the unusual narrative quality of his visual art.

One of them, the poet Blaise Cendrars, memorialized his studio in a poem that reads in part: "And behind your back / Behind your back / Frenetic works / sketches designs frenetic works / And oil paintings..."

Besides the paintings, Cendrars records an old stewpan full of chocolate, a sea of empty bottles, and the label on a catsup bottle. In all of this, he wrote, was "Chagall / Chagall / Astride ladders of light."

The Collapse of Russia's Revolutionary Promise

Chagall returned to Russia and married Bella in 1915. "I had only to open the window of my room and blue air, love and flowers entered with her," Chagall later wrote. While he was there, World War I trapped him in Petrograd (St. Petersburg). Then the Bolshevik Revolution came, offering the promise of full rights for Jewish citizens and a new role for Chagall within the art establishment. He became Arts Commissar for the province of Vitebsk and founded a school. A few short years later, that promise collapsed. Chagall's art fell out of favor and the persecution of Jews began again. He and Bella left for Berlin and found their way back to France, where they spent several decades. Having settled, he created works like *La Poule aux œufs d'or* (1926-1927) and *La Danse* (1928). He painted *Vase de Fleurs* around 1940, their last year in France.



La Danse, 1928

The Artist in Exile: Life in New York (1941-1948)

As the persecution of European Jews rose with German control of France in World War II,

Chagall and Bella fled the continent. In June 1941, they boarded a boat bound for the United States, where Chagall lived for seven years as an artist in exile, painting with darker colors. There he would paint *Vitebsk*, yellow, green and burning, in 1943. Many of Vitebsk's Jews would die at Nazi hands in a 1941 massacre, part of the near-extirpation of the Jewish population in Belarus.

performance of Stravinsky's *Firebird*.

For two years, he lived in a small town in New York where he kept mostly to himself and is reported to have tried to barter paintings for local services. Though he left New York in 1948, he continued creating art for the city and for the United States, devising iconic pieces that continue to draw audiences. In the 1960s, he created the Peace Window



New York Metropolitan Opera: *Le triomphe de la Musique* and *La source de la musique*, 1967

With Bella's sudden death in 1944, Chagall did not paint again for months. Virginia McNeil, hired to be his housekeeper, became his romantic companion as he became involved in producing more public works, including a return to the world of theater, where he had worked in his youth.

In 1942, the choreographer Leonid Massine with the New York Ballet Theatre had Chagall design the costumes and sets for the new ballet *Aleko*, set to the music of Tchaikovsky. In 1945, he worked on designs for a

for the United Nations in memory of Dag Hammarskjöld, the secretary-general who died in a 1961 plane crash. In the same decade, he designed the sets and costumes for the Metropolitan Opera's 1967 production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, part of its first season in its then-new home at the Lincoln Center. The Metropolitan Opera also commissioned a pair of murals for the 1966 of its new opera house. Chagall painted the large-scale murals in his Paris studio and had them shipped to New York.

His work turns up in smaller, less-expected, places, too: nine of his stained-glass windows adorn the small Union Church of Pocantico in Tarrytown, commissioned by the Rockefeller family.

France, Part Two (1948-1985)

Chagall once wrote, “the sun has only ever shone for me in France.” In 1948, he would return there, meeting Valentina Brodsky, known as Vava, who would shortly become his second wife. After his return, he painted *Visions de Paris* in 1953, returning to a darker color palette. The blue tones of *La Fenêtre dans le ciel* (1957) cast a melancholy monochrome over the city above which another female figure floats, accompanied by a small animal.



La Fenêtre dans le ciel, 1957

In his later years, he would conjure up the past over and over again, calling up on memory and adding new elements. His village violinists reappear and floating figures too. In some works, he painted himself young again, fused with his beloved’s body as they ride a red horse together in *Soleil au cheval rouge* (1977), recalling a long fascination with the circus. In 1966, he said, “I would like to go up to that bareback rider who has just



Soleil au cheval rouge, 1977

reappeared, smiling; her dress, a bouquet of flowers. I would circle her with my flowered and unflowered years. On my knees, I would tell her wishes and dreams, not of this World. I would run after her to ask her how to live, how to escape from myself, from the World, whom to run to, where to go.” While no longer seeking a literal escape, Chagall continued to travel the world, aiding in the installation of many of his commissions. While he brought his work to cities the world over, he only ever returned to Russia once.

At his death in 1985, at the age of 97, his New York Times obituary heralded him as one of modern art’s giants, recognizing him as “the originator of images that had an almost universal potency and a master of large-scale commissions that have left a permanent mark on the cities in which they were located.” Throughout all his work, much of the vibrancy came through in his mastery of light and color. His friend and rival Picasso once said that “when Matisse dies, Chagall will be the only person left who understands what color really is.”

Emily Walz is a writer, book reviewer and policy researcher, who specializes in the intersection of politics and art.

*“I don’t know where he gets those images,
he must have an angel in his head.”*

Pablo Picasso

La Poule aux œufs d'or (Fables de La Fontaine), 1927

Signed on the lower left

Gouache and black pencil on colored ochre paper

20.1 x 16.3 in - 51.1 x 41.5 cm

Provenance

Galerie Motte, Geneva, 28 June 1968, lot 48 bis

Collection of Gabriel Sabet, Geneva

Sotheby's, London, 8 December 1998, lot 191

Private collection

Exhibited

London, O'Hana Gallery, *Summer Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture of the 19th and 20th centuries*, 1968, no. 5

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



La Danse, 1928

Signed on the lower right
Gouache over pencil on paper laid down on board
19.7 x 25.6 in - 50 x 65 cm



Provenance

Private collection, Prague
Private collection (circa 1970)
Private collection, Europe
Sotheby's, London, 25 June 2009, lot 115
Private collection

Literature

Franz Meyer, Marc Chagall, Life and Work, H.N. Abrams, New York, 1961,
no. 501, ill. n.p. (with incorrect measurements)

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Nu dans les champs, 1937 - 1938

Signed on the lower right

Watercolor, gouache, ink and crayon on cream colored paper

18.8 x 24.8 in - 47.8 x 63 cm



Provenance

Private collection

Lempertz, Cologne, 4 December 2001, lot 33

Private collection

Literature

Franz Meyer, Marc Chagall, Life and Work, H.N. Abrams, New York, 1961, no. 656

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Vase de fleurs, *circa* 1940

Signed on the lower right
Gouache, watercolor, pastel, wax crayon and pen on paper
25.7 x 19.7 in - 65.4 x 50 cm

Provenance

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York
Private collection, USA (1946)

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



Gouache pour l'album *Les mille et une nuits* (planche 4), 1946

Signed on the lower left

Gouache, watercolor, colored pencils, black pen and pastel on paper
24.2 x 18.1 in - 61.4 x 46 cm

Provenance

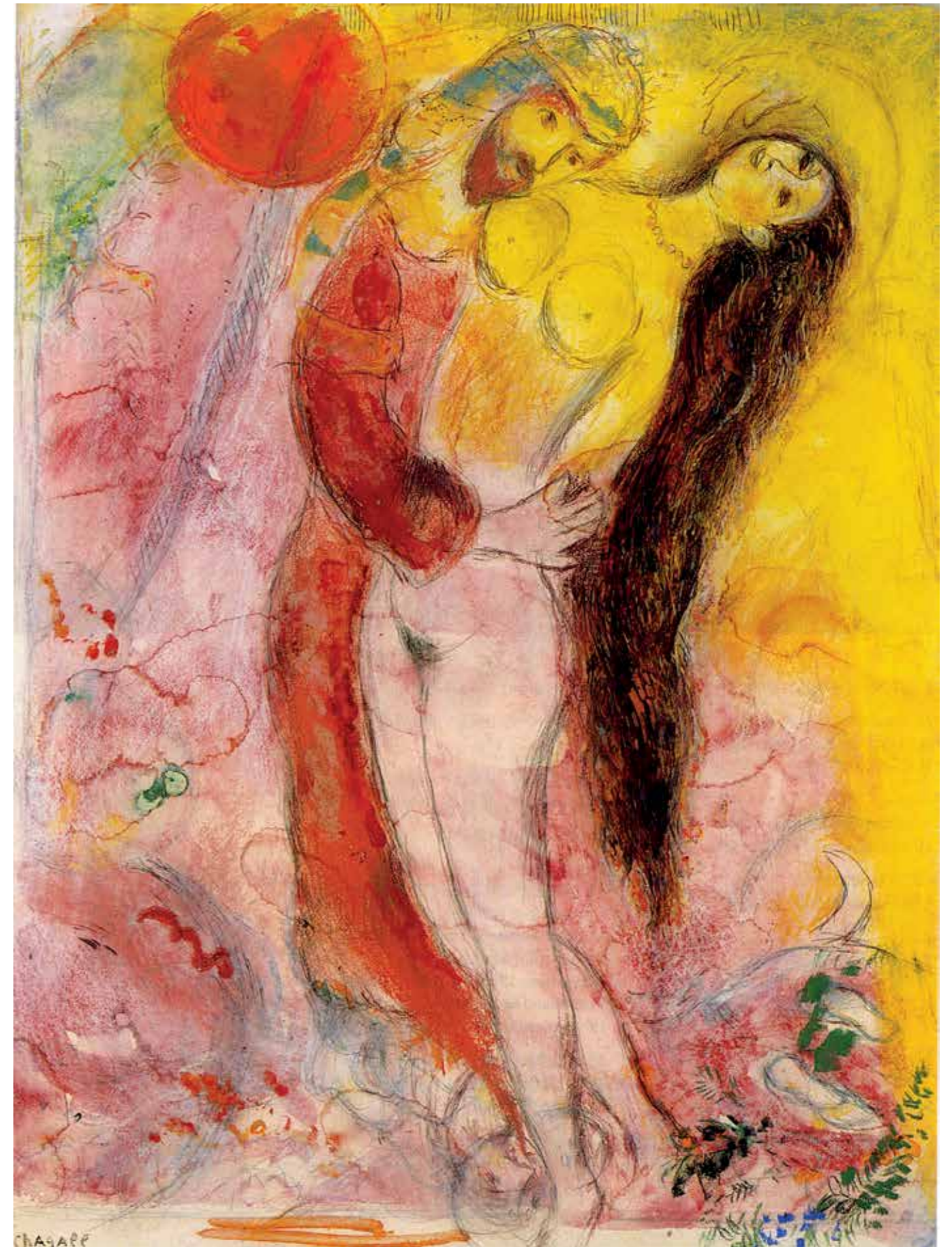
Börjeson Konstgallerie, Gothenburg
Private collection, Sweden (circa 1950)
Sotheby's, London, 8 December 1998, lot 191
Private collection

Exhibited

Gothenburg, Konstmuseet, *Falk Simons, Samling av malningar och teckningar*, 1955, no. 36, ill.

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



Fleurs et corbeille de fruits, 1949

Signed on the lower center
Watercolor, pastel, pencil and ink on paper laid down on board
25.6 x 19.9 in - 65 x 50.5 cm

Provenance

Ruth O'Hara Gallery, New York
Private collection
Christie's, New York, 4 November 2009, lot 109
Private collection

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



Femme avec coupe de fruits, *circa 1952*

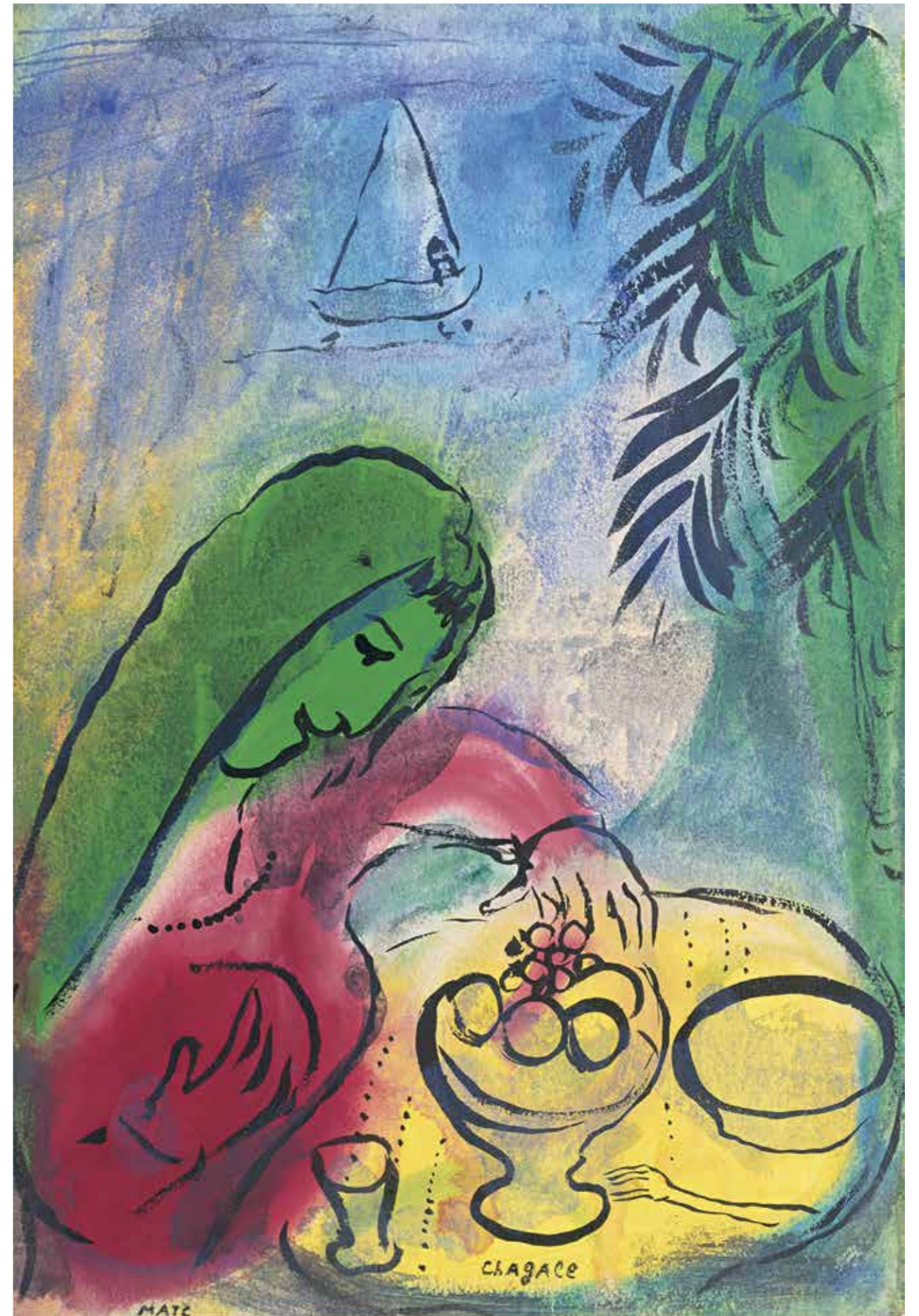
Signed on the lower left and on the lower center
Gouache, pastel and India ink on paper laid down on canvas
22.6 x 15.3 in - 57.5 x 39 cm

Provenance

Schoneman Galleries Inc., New York (acquired by 1953)
Agnes Bauer, USA
Sotheby's, New York, 12 May 1987, lot 206
Private collection
Germann Auktionshaus AG, Zurich, 13 May 1998, lot 30
Private collection
Christie's, London, 22 June 2011, lot 173
Private collection

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



Visions de Paris, 1953

Stamped with the signature on the lower right
Oil on canvas
13 x 18.1 in - 33 x 46 cm



Provenance

Galleria Contini, Venice
Private collection, Europe

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Le Cirque rouge, variante, 1956 - 1960

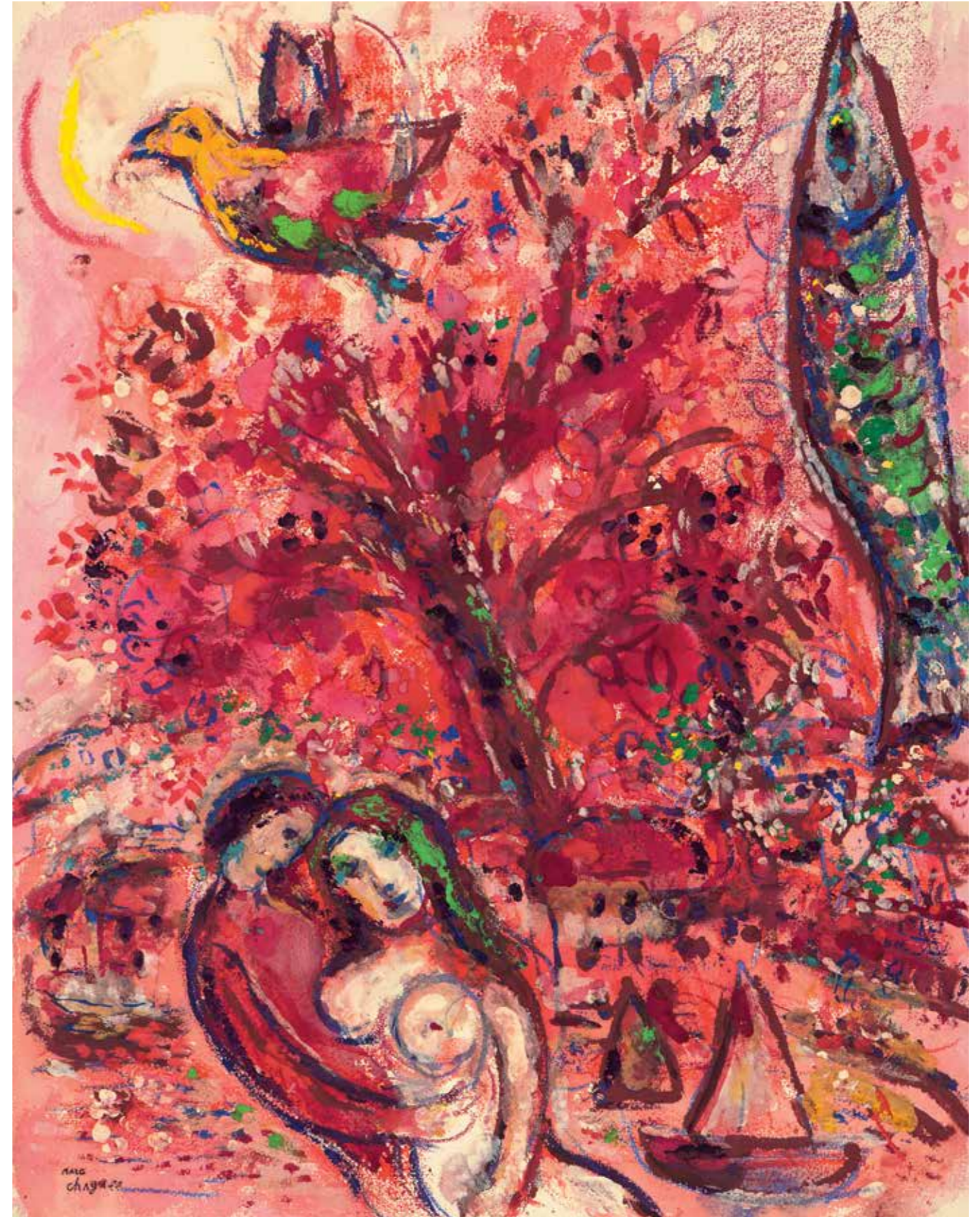
Stamped with the signature on the lower left
Gouache and pastel on paper
22.2 x 17.5 in - 56.5 x 44.5 cm

Provenance

Galerie Kornfeld, Bern, 20 June 2014, lot 7
Private collection

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



La Fenêtre dans le ciel, 1957

Signed and dated on the lower left

Oil on canvas

28.7 x 36.2 in - 73 x 92 cm

Provenance

Vava Chagall

James Cohan Gallery, New York

Waddington Gallery, London

Private collection

Christie's, New York, 7 November 2001, lot 198

David and Leslee Rogath, Connecticut

Martin Lawrence Galleries, USA

Exhibited

Hamburg, Kunstverein, February - March 1959

Munich, Haus der Kunst, April - May 1959

Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, *Marc Chagall*, June - September 1959, ill., no. 170

Greenwich, Connecticut, Bruce Museum of Arts and Science, *Pleasures of Collecting: Twentieth Century and Contemporary Art*, January - April 2003

San Francisco, Martin Lawrence Galleries, *Marc Chagall: The Color of Love*, August - September 2003

Literature

Franz Meyer, *Marc Chagall: His Graphic Work*, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1957

Franz Meyer, *Marc Chagall: Life and Work*, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1963, cited on p. 558 and ill. on p. 565

Izis & McMullen, *The World of Marc Chagall*, Doubleday & Co., New York, 1968, ill. p. 38-39

Susan Compton, *Chagall*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, 1985

Nancy Hall-Duncan, *Pleasures of Collecting: Twentieth Century and Contemporary Art*, Bruce Museum of Arts and Science, Greenwich, 2003, ill. p. 28, p. 80



Les Offrandes, 1958

Signed on the lower right

Gouache, watercolor, colored ink and India ink wash on paper

14.7 x 22 in - 37.4 x 56 cm

Provenance

Galerie Maeght, Paris

Perls Galleries, New York (January 1959)

Mr. and Mrs. Monroe Geller, New York (March 1959)

Perls Galleries, New York

Joseph and Gioconda King, New York (1967)

Private collection

Exhibited

Tokyo, The National Museum of Western Art and Kyoto, Museum of Modern Art,
Marc Chagall, October - December 1963, p. 141, no. 206 bis, ill.

Toulouse, Musée des Augustins, *Chagall et le théâtre*, June - September 1967,
p. 110-111, no. 165

West Palm Beach, Norton Gallery and School of Art, 1981

Literature

Franz Meyer, *Marc Chagall: Life and Work*, Harry N. Abrams, New York,
1964, p. 762, no. 990, ill.

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



Roi David, 1963

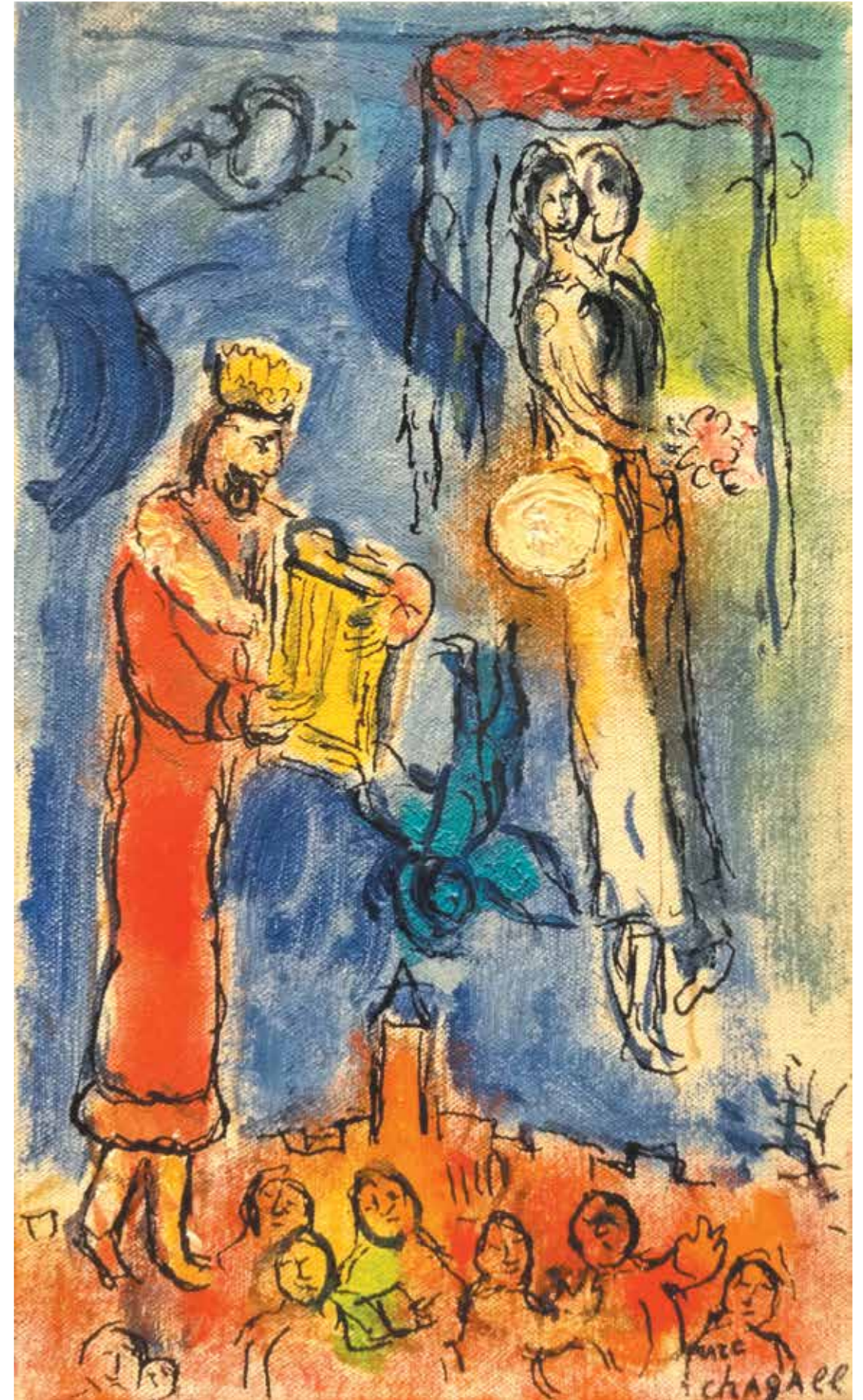
Stamped with the signature on the lower right
Oil and India ink on canvas
9.4 x 5.5 in - 24 x 14 cm

Provenance

Private collection, Germany
Beck & Eggeling, Dusseldorf
Private collection, France

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



L'Acrobate rouge, 1963 - 1964

Signed on the lower right
Watercolor, pastel, gouache and India ink on Japan paper
15 x 11.1 in - 38.2 x 28.2 cm

Provenance

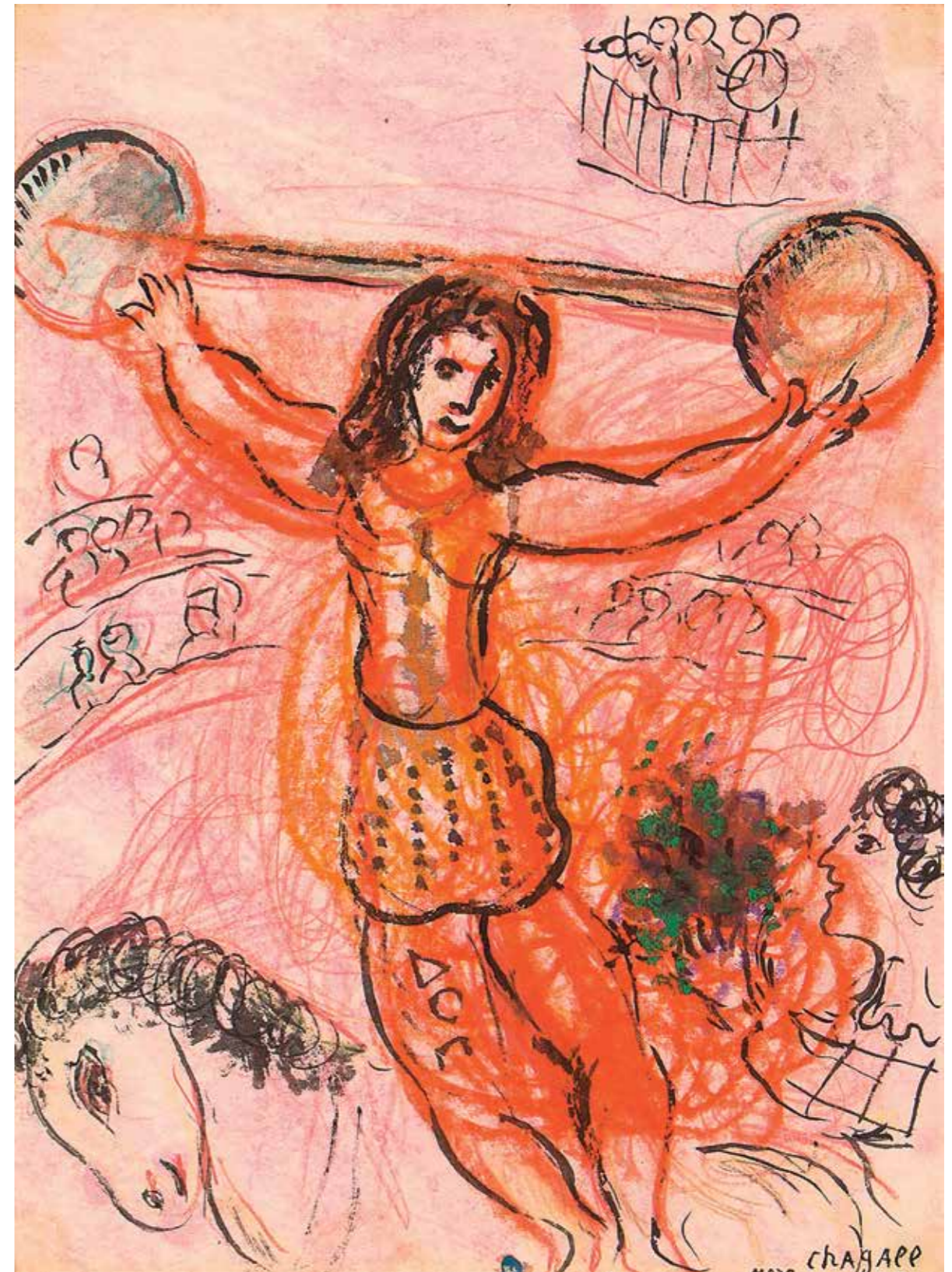
Estate of the artist
Christie's, London, 8 February 2007, lot 719
Private collection, Switzerland
Mainichi Auction, Tokyo, 7 November 2015, lot 324
Private collection

Exhibited

Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama, Takashimaya Shopping Centre, *Hommage à Chagall*,
April - June 1986, no. 67 (titled as *Le Cirque rouge*)

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



La Musique, 1964

Signed on the lower right and on the upper left
India ink wash, colored India ink, gouache and charcoal on paper
30 x 22.2 in - 76.2 x 56.4 cm



Provenance

Wally Findlay Galleries, New York
Private collection, USA (1969)

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Clowns et écuyère, circa 1965

Stamped with the signature on the lower center
Oil on canvas
16.1 x 13 in - 41 x 33 cm



Provenance

Private collection, France
Private collection, Europe
Sotheby's, London, 20 June 2012, lot 111
Private collection

Certificate

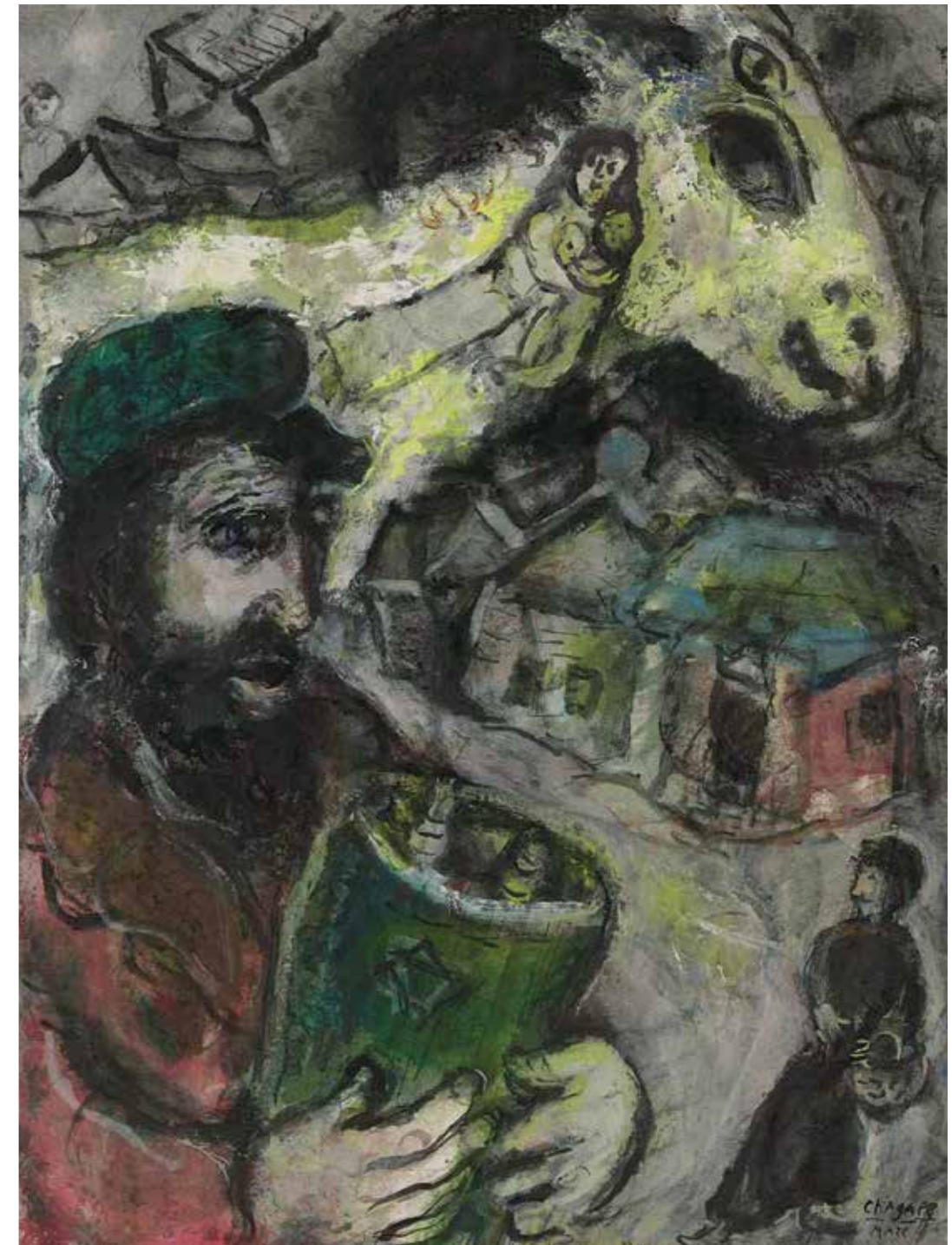
The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

La Chèvre jaune, 1966

Signed on the lower right

India ink wash, gouache and India ink on Japan paper

28.3 x 20.9 in - 71.9 x 53.1 cm



Provenance

Osper Gallery, Cologne

Private collection, Germany

Exhibited

Lucerne, Galerie Rosengart, *Chagall, lavis et aquarelles*, 1967, no. 17, ill. in the catalogue

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Scène de village à l'animal bleu, 1968

Signed on the lower right and on the reverse

Oil and tempera on canvas

18.1 x 21.7 in - 46 x 55 cm



Provenance

Galerie Lelong, Paris

Private collection, New York

Sotheby's, New York, 8 May 2014, lot 380

Private collection

Gros & Delettrez, Monaco, 21 July 2017, lot 700

Private collection

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Les Amoureux au carré vert, *circa 1970 - 1975*

Signed on the lower left and on the reverse

Oil on canvas

23.6 x 28.7 in - 60 x 73 cm



Provenance

Ida Chagall (daughter of the artist)

Private collection, Paris

Sotheby's, New York, 9 May 2007, lot 412

Private collection

Exhibited

Taipei, Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall, 1993

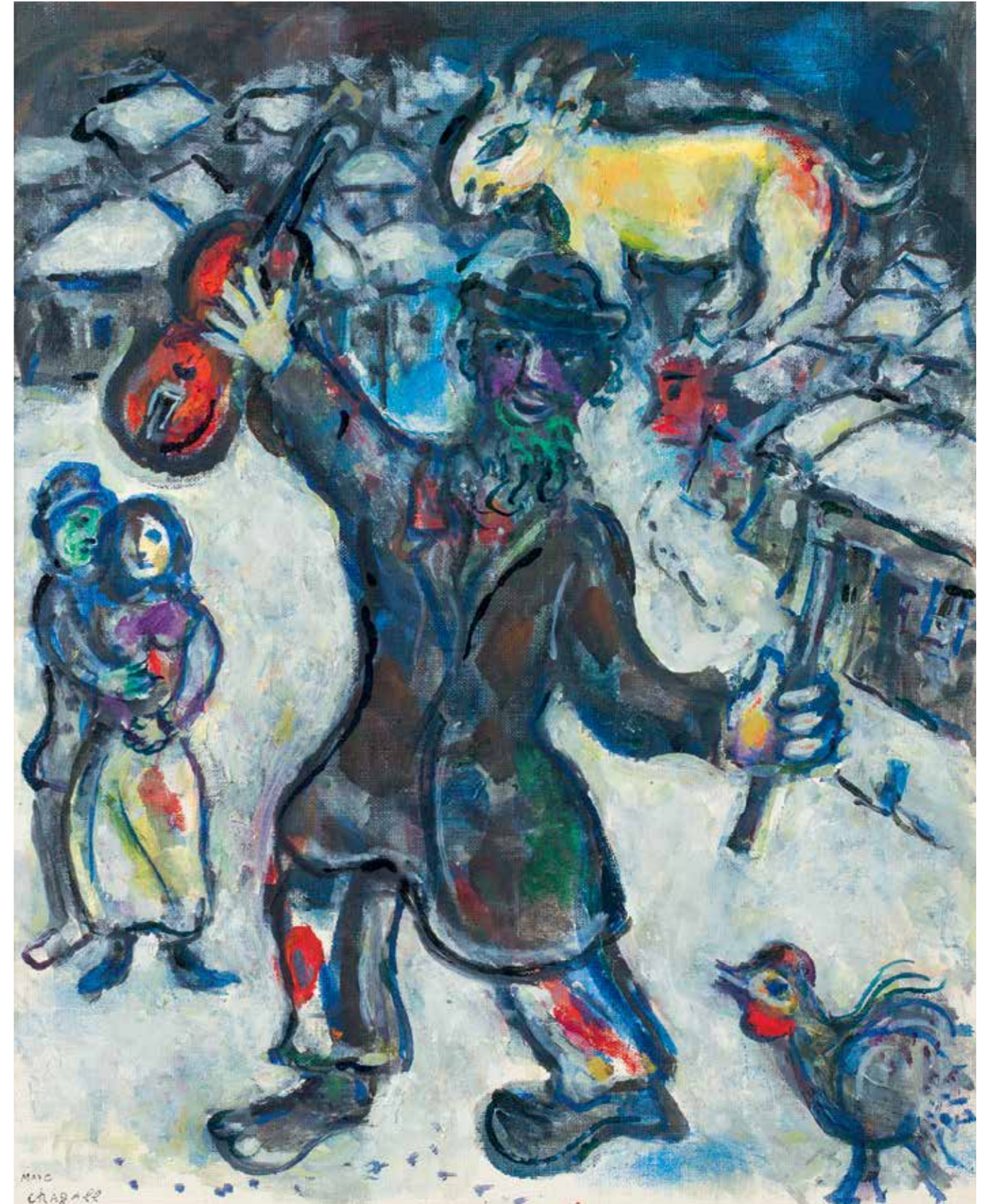
Beijing, Fine Art House of China, 1994

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Le Violoniste au village enneigé, 1973

Stamped with the signature on the lower left
Oil, India ink and color ink laid down on cardboard
16.2 x 13 in - 41.2 x 33 cm



Provenance

Estate of the artist
Private collection, Germany

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

L'Hiver : arbre en hiver (Les 4 saisons), 1974

Signed on the lower right and inscribed 'winter' in Cyrillic on the lower center
Gouache, watercolor, colored pencils, pastel and charcoal on paper
24.8 x 35.3 in - 63 x 89.6 cm



Provenance

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York
Sotheby's, New York, 15 November 1984, lot 204
Russeck Gallery, Palm Beach
Private collection, USA
Private collection, New York

Exhibited

New York, Pierre Matisse Gallery, *Chagall: The Four Seasons*, May 1975, no. 13

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Public notes

This artwork was a study for the Four Seasons Mosaic, Exelon Plaza, Chicago

Cirque multicolore, *circa* 1976 - 1978

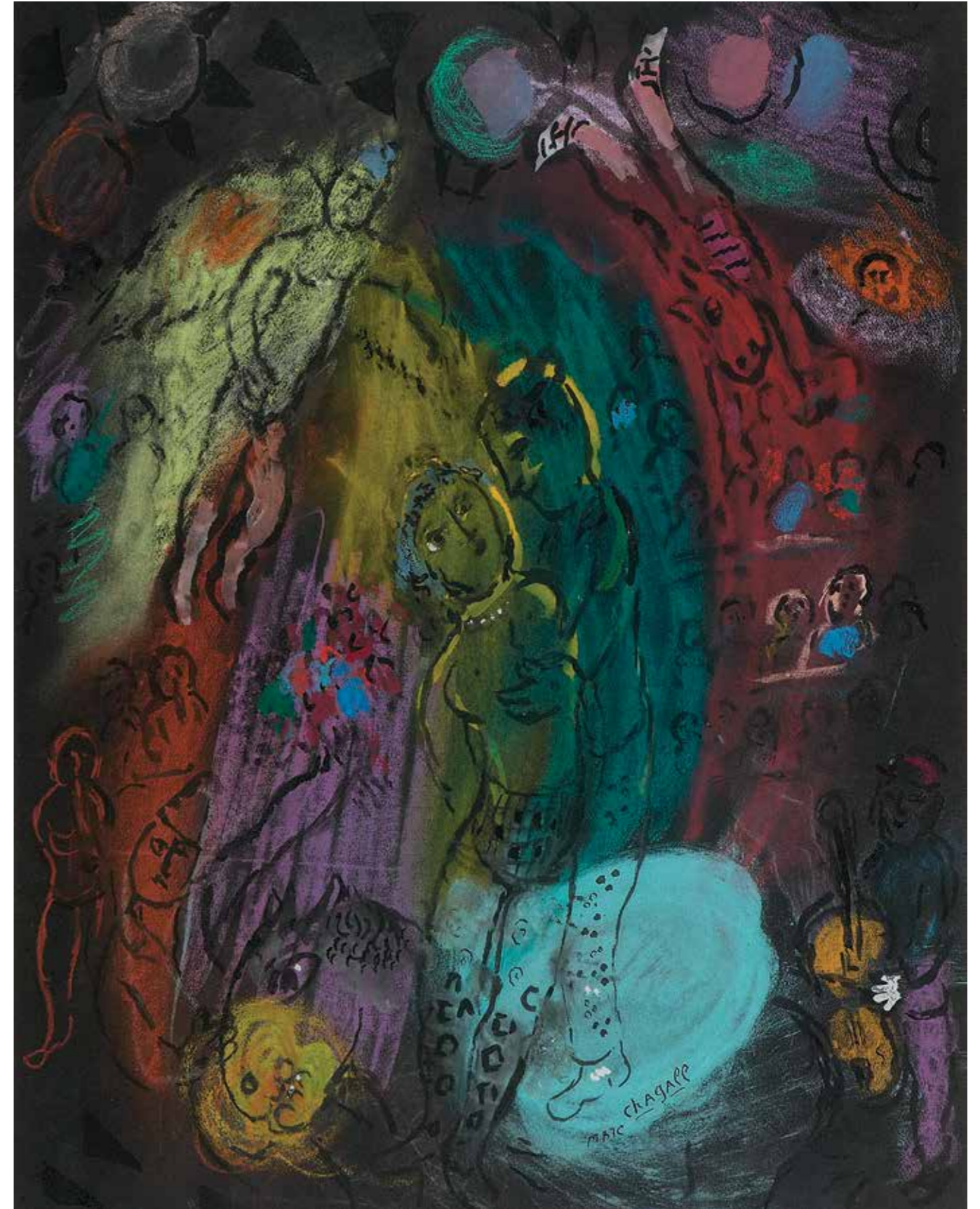
Signed on the lower right
Pastel and gouache on paper laid down on canvas
25.6 x 20.5 in - 65 x 52 cm

Provenance

Private collection, Milan
Sotheby's, London, 21 June 2005, lot 165
Private collection

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



Soleil au cheval rouge, 1977

Signed and dated on the lower left and on the reverse
Oil and gouache on canvas
35 x 45.7 in - 89 x 116 cm



Provenance

Galerie Maeght, Paris
Private collection
Sotheby's, London, 26 June 1990, lot 41
Private collection, Japan
Private collection, Europe

Exhibited

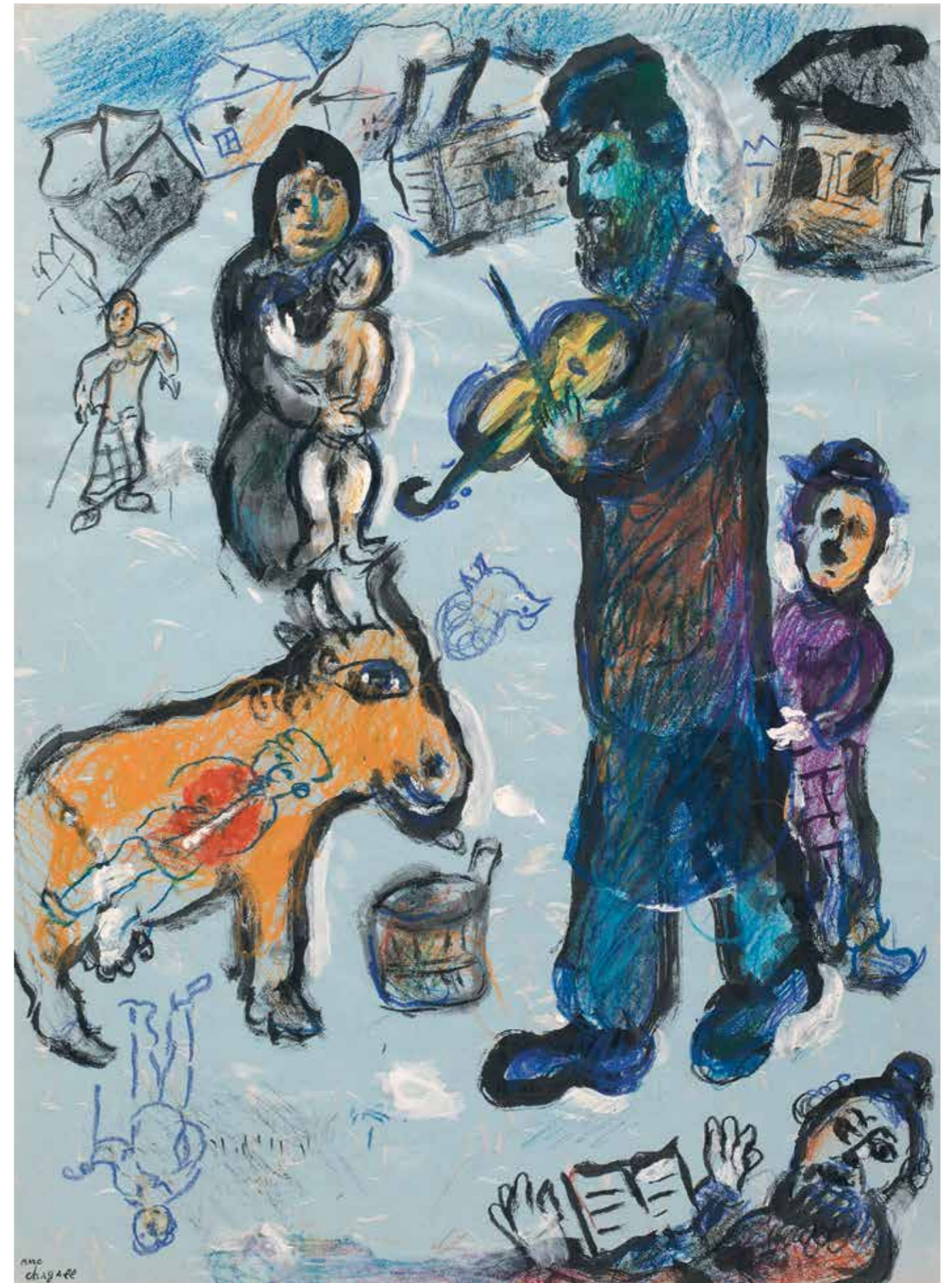
Paris, Galerie Maeght, *Marc Chagall, 1979*, no. 5, ill.

Literature

Vercors, Maeght Editions, *Derrière le Miroir* no. 235, Paris, October 1979, p. 30, ill.

Violoniste au village enneigé, 1977

Stamped with the signature on the lower left
Gouache, pastel, color crayons and India ink on light blue colored Japan paper
25.2 x 18.5 in - 63.9 x 47 cm



Provenance

Estate of the artist
Private collection

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Les Mariés sous le baldaquin, 1978 - 1980

Signed on the lower right and on the reverse

Oil and gouache on canvas

23.5 x 31.9 in - 59.7 x 81 cm



Provenance

Galerie Lelong, Paris

Private collection

Galerie Boulakia, Paris

Private collection, USA (2003)

Sotheby's, New York, 8 November 2007, lot 427

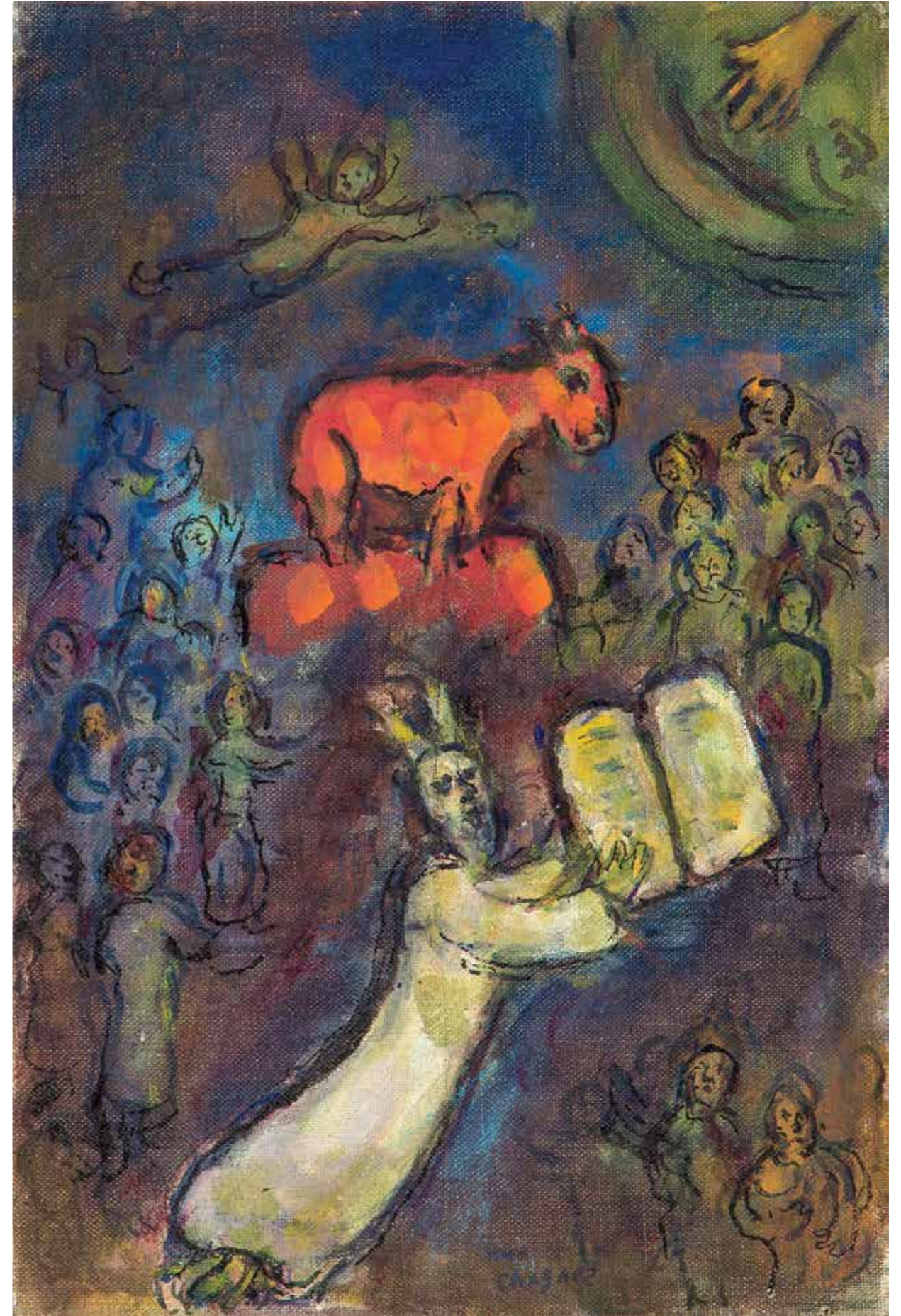
Private collection

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Moïse et le Veau d'or, 1979 - 1980

Stamped with the signature on the lower center
Oil, tempera, India ink and black pencil on canvas
13 x 8.7 in - 33 x 22 cm



Provenance

Private collection, Japan

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work

Couple au double-profil, 1980

Signed on the lower right and on the reverse
Tempera, oil and India ink on canvas
36.1 x 25.4 in - 91.8 x 64.5 cm

Provenance

David McNeil, Paris (son of the artist)
Galerie Malingue, Paris
Landau Fine Art, Montreal
Private collection

Certificate

The Comité Marc Chagall has confirmed the authenticity of this work



*“If I create from the heart, nearly everything works;
if from the head, almost nothing.”*

Marc Chagall

Biography

Marc Chagall (1887-1985) was born Moishe Shagal in Vitebsk, Russia (today's Belarus) in 1887 to a very devout and humble Hasidic-Jewish family. He was one of nine children. The first years of his life were influenced by numerous trips to his grandfather's farm, where he became familiar with Jewish customs, Russian folklore and learned to play the violin – the traditional musical instrument in Russian-Jewish culture. Memories from his early years later became strong recurring themes in his work, that would reflect a nostalgia for his village and landscape, as well as an ongoing fascination with animals and the daily affairs of his rural and farming environment.

When he was 20, Chagall moved to St. Petersburg to receive lessons in painting from Nicholas Roerich and Léon Bakst, with whom he asserted his talents as a colorist. He also worked in Léon Bakst's workshop creating decors for the Russian Ballet.

He became interested in the work of pioneer painters in Paris, including Paul Cézanne, Vincent Van Gogh, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Henri Matisse. He settled in the French capital in 1910 and rented a studio at La Ruche that he shared with Amadeo Modigliani and Chaim Soutine. It was there that he became influenced by Fauvism and painters using pure, bright and clear color. His first exhibition took place at the Salon des Indépendants. Living in Paris, he also met Guillaume Apollinaire, Blaise Cendrars and Fernand Léger with whom he became friends.

In 1914, Chagall had his first solo exhibition in Berlin. He returned to Vitebsk and WWI forced him to stay in Russia until 1922. There, he founded a museum and an art school, and began creating theatre settings and decors. In 1915, he married Bella Rosenfeld and their daughter Ida Chagall was born subsequently. His love for his wife became one of the primary subjects of his work, reflecting the rapture of being in love.

The couple moved to Berlin in 1922 where Chagall produced his first etchings published by Cassirer (Illustrations of his poetic autobiography *My Life*, 1922). He returned to Paris, 'his second Vitebsk', in 1923, and became a French citizen in 1937. Chagall founded a new studio and became acquainted with Sonia and Robert Delaunay, Louis Marcoussis and Juan Gris, which further developed his interest in Surrealism. Upon art dealer Ambroise Vollard's request he made several series of illustrations for *Dead Souls* by Nikolai Gogol, *The Fables* by Jean de La Fontaine. In 1940, he produced 40 gouaches illustrating the Holy Bible.

The Second World War, which threatened Jewish communities across Europe, forced him and his family to flee to New York in 1941, where he

remained until 1948. Whilst in America, he designed several ballet sets and costumes. After the death of his beloved wife Bella in 1944, Chagall stopped painting for several months, such was the effect of her passing. In 1946, he met Virginia Haggard with whom he had a son.

That same year the MoMA in New York, compiled a retrospective of his work and a series of solo exhibitions were subsequently organized throughout Europe in 1947 (Paris, Amsterdam, Bern, Zurich). When Chagall returned to France in 1948, he had become famous and celebrated worldwide. He settled in Vence, in the south of France, where he met Pablo Picasso and Aimé Maeght, who was to become his art dealer. Virginia left him in 1952, and the same year he met Valentina (Vava) Brodsky, who would become his second wife. Chagall started using a wider range of mediums and techniques: engraving, mosaic, stained glass, murals and ceramics, and was appointed to create several major commissions. At the age of 65, the publisher Tériade asked him to illustrate the work of Greek author Longus *Daphnis et Chloé*. This work was published in 1961, illustrated by 42 original lithographs.

In 1966 Chagall's Bible illustrations were exhibited at the Louvre, Paris, making him one of the very few artists to have had their work exhibited in the prestigious museum during their lifetime. In 1973 the Marc Chagall Museum was inaugurated in Nice, France. Chagall died in Saint-Paul-de-Vence on the 28th March 1985, aged 97.



Chagall in front of *Paravent*, France, 1965 © Yusuf Karsh

Chronology

7 July 1887

Birth in Vitebsk, Russia (now Belarus)

1907-1909

Works in Léon Bakst workshop creating decors of the Russian Ballet, in St. Petersburg, Russia

1911

First trip to Paris, France

1912-1913

Exhibition at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris, France

1914

First solo exhibition at Der Sturm Gallery in Berlin, Germany
Returns to Vitebsk

1915

Marries Bella Rosenfeld
Exhibition in Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia

1916

Birth of Ida Chagall

1920

Settles in Moscow, Russia, and works on decors for the Jewish Theatre

1922

Moves to Berlin, Germany
Creates illustrations of his poetic autobiography *My Life*

1923

Moves to Paris, France
Starts working with Ambroise Vollard who commissions illustrations for Gogol's *Dead Souls* and La Fontaine's *Fables*

1931

Creates 40 gouaches to illustrate the Holy Bible, commissioned by Vollard

1935

Following a trip to Poland, he is categorized as a 'degenerate artist' by the Nazis

1937

Obtains French citizenship

1941

Has to leave occupied France and moves to New York, USA

1944

Death of Bella Rosenfeld

1946

Retrospective at the MoMA in New York, USA
Meets Virginia Haggard with whom he had a son

1948

Returns to Paris, France

1950

Settles in Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France

1952

Meets Valentina (Vava) Brodsky, who would become his second wife

1966

Exhibition of his Holy Bible illustrations at the Louvre Museum in Paris, France

1973

Inauguration of the Marc Chagall Museum in Nice, France

28 March 1985

Death in Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France

Recent Museum Exhibitions

20 March 2018 - 16 July 2018

Chagall, Lissitzky, Malévitch... L'avant-garde russe à Vitebsk (1918-1922),
Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

27 May - 28 August 2017

Marc Chagall, Sculptures, Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice, France

28 January - 11 June 2017

Chagall : couleur et musique, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal, Canada

4 March 2016 - 8 January 2017

Chagall, Songes d'une nuit d'été, Carrières de Lumières, Baux-de-Provence, France

13 October 2015 - 31 January 2016

Marc Chagall : Le Triomphe de la musique, Philharmonie de Paris, France

28 February - 28 June 2015

Chagall, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels, Belgium

27 September 2014 - 3 January 2015

Picasso, Matisse, Chagall Prints, Sangre de Cristo Arts and Conference Center, Pueblo, USA

15 September 2013 - 2 February 2014

Chagall: Love, War, and Exile, The Jewish Museum of New York, New York, USA

16 June - 7 October 2013

Chagall devant le miroir, Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice, France

8 June - 6 October 2013

Chagall: Modern Master, Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, England

23 February - 20 May 2013

Marc Chagall, d'une guerre l'autre, Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice, France

21 February - 21 July 2013

Chagall, entre guerre et paix, Musée du Luxembourg, Paris, France

20 October 2012 - 11 February 2013

Chagall et le livre, Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice, France

13 October 2012 - 13 January 2013

Marc Chagall - L'épaisseur des rêves, La Piscine Museum, Roubaix, France

21 July - 4 November 2012

Marc Chagall, Nassau Country Museum of Art, Nassau, USA

14 February - 20 May 2012

Chagall, Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid, Spain

7 January - 29 July 2012

L'universo spiritual di Marc Chagall, Church of San Cristoforo, Lucca, Italy

19 November 2011 - 30 January 2012

Mais quel cirque !, Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice, France

18 October 2011 - 15 January 2012

Marc Chagall et l'avant-garde russe, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2 March - 5 June 2011

Chagall et la Bible, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire du Judaïsme, Paris, France

1 March - 10 July 2011

Marc Chagall and His Circle, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, USA

4 December 2010 - 14 March 2011

Chagall, Kupka, Deux Visions du Cantique des Cantiques, Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice, France



Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice

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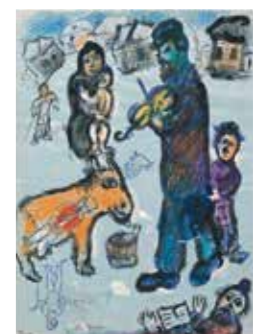
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Page 4: Mosaic Four Seasons, Exelon Plaza, Chicago - © D.R

Page 7: New York Metropolitan © Sarah Tarno, 2017

Page 64: Chagall in front of *Paravent*, France, 1965 - © Yusuf Karsh

Page 69: © Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice - © D.R

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