

Half-Past Three (The Poet), 1911
Philadelphia Museum of Art: The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection, 1950



For more than eighty years Marc Chagall cultivated an art practice inspired by love, memories, Russian and Jewish traditions, and the historical or artistic events he witnessed and in which he often played a part. This retrospective traces his artistic development chronologically and examines the main themes that pervade the work of this artist, who is essential in envisioning the twentieth century.

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza

The Path of poetry

Russia/France/United States, 1909-1947

Russia: Sources and Traditions

Vitebsk, Chagall's native town, was home to a large Jewish community nourished by the traditions of the past, which underpinned their identity. It was a world full of rites and customs which nevertheless showed great resistance to innovation. Ever attentive to the expressions of life, Chagall painted the everyday existence of his town and his family, and also the soul of the Russian people.

Tradition and Innovation

Chagall's challenge to painting marked a genuine break with tradition. In the 1910s he settled in Paris; this rekindled his deep-seated nostalgia for Vitebsk and for his cultural roots, which was further heightened by the distance. Dreams populated his imagination, between the real and the unreal, between earth and heaven...

The Sacred and Poetry

Between his inner life and the boundless world of his dreams, the sacred always occupied a prominent place in Chagall's creation. Poetry was also a constant resource: himself a poet, he befriended all the important writers of the period, from Cendrars and Apollinaire to Breton, Aragon and Malraux, among others.



The Poet Reclining, 1915
Tate, purchased 1942

Dream and Reality

It is usually reality that sets the tone for the main themes Chagall paints, but they are often transformed radically by dreams. He thus creates an odd and marvellous world that is alien to painting of the period.

The Light of Colour

The light that pervades Chagall's painting stems from a palette of transparencies and oriental tones which construct the major sequences of his oeuvre. **Marc** Chagall sums up this pictorial reality in the word *chemistry*.

Tales and Fables

Gogol's *Dead Souls* and La Fontaine's *Fables* possess the same sense of freedom and the absolute as Chagall's own approach to these essential authors. The satirical and the picturesque are predominant in these engravings, which capture with full intensity the eloquent scenes of their authors, one Russian the other French. Chagall illustrated these two great books between 1924 and 1927, commissioned by Ambroise Vollard. They were published in 1948 and 1952 respectively by Tériade.



Midsummer Night's Dream, 1939
Musée de Grenoble. Gift of the artist, 1951

The Bible and Palestine

In 1930 Ambroise Vollard asked Chagall to illustrate the Bible. Before starting on this series of one hundred etchings, the artist travelled to Palestine in 1931. The time he spent in the Holy Land left a deep mark on him. The Bible had always fuelled his imagination, raising constant questions about his identity and the authenticity of his roots. These works are unique and powerfully intense for their fervent spirituality.

The Supernatural

The poet Guillaume Apollinaire described Chagall's art as "supernatural," thereby preventing him from falling into the trap of his other friends, the Surrealists, who attached priority to the subconscious. As a free man, he incessantly sought new sources of inspiration, remaining in contact with life.

War and Exodus

Chagall's life spans the whole of the twentieth century. He experienced two world wars, the October Revolution of 1917, different countries and cultures and constant exoduses. Although he painted the ravages of war and the misfortune of the Jewish people, he never lost his hope in mankind or his love of life.

Between Dog and Wolf, 1938-43
Private collection



The Bride with the Double Face, 1927
Private collection

The Madonna of the Village, 1938-42
Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza
Paseo del Prado, 8
28014 Madrid
mtb@museothyssen.org
www.museothyssen.org

Dates
14 February to 20 May 2012.

Venue
Temporary exhibition galleries, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza. Second part on show at the Fundación Caja Madrid.

Opening Hours
Tuesdays to Sundays, 10am to 7pm.
The temporary exhibition will be opened until 11pm on Saturdays. Closed on Mondays. Closed 1 May. Visitors are asked to leave the galleries 5 minutes before closing.

Transport
Metro: Banco de España.
Buses: 1, 2, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 20, 27, 34, 37, 45, 51, 52, 53, 74, 146 and 150.
Train: Atocha, Sol and Recoletos stations.

Information Service
Tel.: 902 760 511
cavthyssen@stendhal.com

Bookshop/Giftshop
Ground floor.
Catalogue of the exhibition on sale.

Cafeteria-Restaurant
Ground floor.

Audio-Guide
Available in Spanish, English and French.

Ticket Sales
Limited entry numbers. Early booking is recommended to ensure entry for the chosen day and time. Ticket sales offering guaranteed entry for the selected day and time.

Pre-booked tickets:
• At the Museum's ticket desks
• www.museothyssen.org
• 902 760 511

Ticket Prices
General:
• Thyssen-Bornemisza Collections: 9,00 €
• *Chagall* exhibition: 9,00 €
• Combined ticket for Thyssen-Bornemisza Collections and *Chagall* exhibition: 14,00 €

Reduced (with proof of status):
People aged over 65, Pensioners, students, Fine Arts teachers, large family members, Carné Joven holders and disabled with 33% rating:
• Thyssen-Bornemisza Collections: 6,00 €
• *Chagall* exhibition: 6,00 €
• Combined ticket for Thyssen-Bornemisza Collections and *Chagall* exhibition: 8,00 €

Free admission:
Accompanied children under 12 and officially unemployed people.
During 2012, on occasion of the Museum 20th anniversary, those born in 1992, with proof of status.

Mobile telephones must not be used in the exhibition rooms.

Dance, 1950-52 (detail)
Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne/Centre de création industrielle.
Dation 1988. On loan, Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice



Bankia



Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza
Fundación Caja Madrid

Chagall



Lovers on the Stake, 1951 (?), Cathy Odermatt-Vedovi

Fundación Caja Madrid

The great Game of colour

France, 1948-1985

Return to France

Chagall left the United States for good after the Second World War. He went to rebuild his life in France, settling in Vence in the south of the country. He also painted Paris, the beauty of the city he so loved and its monuments: the Louvre, the Bastille, the Notre Dame and the Opera...

Pottery and Sculpture

The possibility of inventing new forms and controlling the action of colour on clay enabled Chagall to establish close ties with an art rooted in popular tradition. In the fifties he began to explore ceramics, which led him shortly afterwards to create works in a different universe of everlasting materials, the world of sculpture.



Two Nudes, 1953
Private collection



Red Rooftops, 1953
Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne/Centre de création industrielle. Dation 1988

Black is a Colour

Over time Chagall's palette shifted in new directions. At times it is more sombre, and blacks and their opposites, whites, display a new density. Black is thus a counterweight that invigorates nocturnal dreams. The bright, limpid, India ink wash is the agent that develops the picture.

Lights of the Mediterranean

Having settled in Vence and later in Saint-Paul, villages in southern France where he decided to live, Chagall toured the Mediterranean region. Its impalpable light infuses the colour of the sky with eternity in the paintings of this last period. Light is also a vehicle for his faith in man and in human thought.

Late Work: Flashes of Brilliance

With his forays into other media, other supports, ceramics, sculpture and stained glass, Chagall enriched his oeuvre with another possible reading. The cut of fabrics and the brightness of patterns heighten the freshness and energy of gestures. This splendour also reveals a renewal of his poetry in his final output.



War, 1964-66. Kunsthau Zürich, Vereinigung Zürcher Kunstfreunde



Flowers Before a Window, 1959
Duques de Alba Collection

Books

Chagall remained in contact with writers throughout his life. Many poets dedicated compositions to him. And he fascinated them with his great books illustrated with prints that reflect his thoughts. With the aid of lithography and engraving, he gave fresh, innovative impetus to his work.

The Circus

Chagall adored the world of circus animals and people. He sang the praises of clowns and tightrope walkers transfigured by the sound of the musicians and sumptuously dressed animals. The lively atmosphere of the circus intensified the dreams of the artist, who captured this magical world with the aid of the power of colour.

Vava, 1968-71
Private collection



The Red Circus, 1956-60
Private collection



Fundación Caja Madrid
Plaza de San Martín, 1
28013 Madrid
www.fundacioncajamadrid.es

Dates
From 14 February to 20 May 2012.

Venue
Temporary exhibition space, Fundación Caja Madrid.
First part on show at the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza.

Opening Times
Tuesdays to Sundays, 10am to 8pm.
Closed on Mondays. Closed 1 May 2012.

Free entry

Exhibition catalogue on sale at the reception desk of the Fundación Caja Madrid exhibition galleries.

Transport
Metro: Sol, Ópera and Callao.
Buses: 1, 2, 3, 5, 15, 20, 25, 29, 39, 44, 50, 51, 52, 53, 74, 75, 133, 146, 147, 148, 150 and 202.

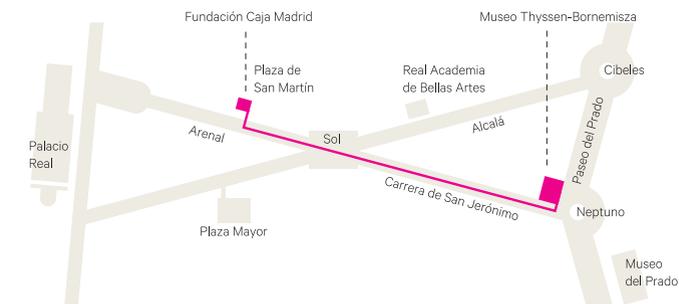
Information Service
Tel: 902 246 810

Audio-Guide
Available in Spanish, English and French.

Guided Tours
Booking:
www.fundacioncajamadrid.es
More information on tel. 913 792 050.
Tuesdays to Fridays, 10am to 2pm.
Free.

Mobile telephones must not be used in the exhibition rooms.

More information on:
www.fundacioncajamadrid.es



The Blue Circus, 1950-52 (detail)
Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne/Centre de création industrielle.
Dation 1988. On loan, Musée national Marc Chagall, Nice

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