

Marc Chagall

THE COLOUR OF LOVE

GILDEN'S
Arts Gallery



Marc Chagall

THE COLOUR OF LOVE

THE MASTER OF COLOUR

Marc Chagall, who died on the 28 March 1985 at the age of 97, was the last great representative of the Ecole de Paris. He reached out to people like no other artist in the 20th Century, inspiring fascination and admiration across the world.

He managed to combine his Russian roots and the Parisian avant-garde, with its Fauvist, Cubist, Expressionist styles, to create a visual language of his own. Throughout his life, he preferred the company of poets to that of painters, mistrusting theories of painting, especially dogmatic ones. Thus he did not fall under the name of any school, founded no school of his own and had no followers or successors. Visiting Chagall in his studio in 1913, Apollinaire called the artist's paintings "sur-naturel", accurately describing the "super" or "trans-natural" pictorial contents of the unconscious, of dream-like memory. Some ten years later the Surrealists drew their images from the same source. "The good days have passed when art nourished itself exclusively on elements of the external world, the world of forms, lines and colours. Today we are interested in everything, not just the external wall, but also the inner works of dream and imagination", Chagall said many years later in a lecture on the nature of his paintings. In 1941, Andre Breton, the founder and theoretician of Surrealism, wrote in a late tribute to Marc Chagall when both were in "exile" in the US: "His great lyrical explosion happened around the year 1911, when solely through Chagall metaphor made his triumphant entry into modern painting". Although, with his imagery, he was in effect one of the main pioneers of Surrealism however in the 1920s he refused an invitation from Max Ernst and Paul Eluard to publicly align himself with the Movement.

His palette became brighter and he turned into the great colourist, of whom Picasso later said: "Now that Matisse is dead, Chagall is the only painter who really understands what colour is... There is never been anybody since Renoir who has the feeling for light that Chagall has." His ability to depict striking colours was seen in his first flower compositions, which show Chagall's quite loving immersion in the wonders of nature. His happy mood of the 1920s and early 1930s is also reflected in other subject matters: lovers, animals, musicians and circus. As the first signs of the persecution of the Jews in Germany became manifest, Chagall devoted himself to biblical themes which he illustrated wonderfully using all the colour techniques he experimented.

In exile in America his pictorial status condensed, on the basis of the old iconographies, to hermetic picture parables with a dark serious character. At the same time, however, he had an unexpected opportunity to design stage sets. This décor shows Chagall's colours singing again in their freedom and even more when he returned to France where he worked on numerous public commissions. Chagall lived through the most turbulent years of 20th century. He endured war and revolution, escaped the Holocaust in exile in the USA.

Despite all this, the central theme of the artist's oeuvre is love: "Despite all the troubles of our world, in my heart I have never given up on the love in which I was brought up or on man's hope in love. In life, just as on the artist's palette, there is but one single colour that gives meaning to life and art - the colour of love". This conviction was Chagall's lifelong credo.

THE MASTER OF PRINTMAKING

Marc Chagall began his distinguished career as a printmaker in 1922 in Berlin. He first experimented with the etching and dry point technique, depicting scenes and figures from his youth in Vitebsk. Chagall's first major commission was an illustration of *The Fables de Jean de la Fontaine* – of which we have examples on page 16 - and which was ordered by the French dealer Ambroise Vollard. Chagall loved books and had a great respect for printmaking. He happily accepted to illustrate this book for Vollard.

The Bible series (pages 19 to 21, 24 to 27) was also commissioned by Vollard. To find inspiration Chagall prepared a trip to the Holy Land and mentioned "Since my earliest childhood, I have been captivated by the Bible. It has always seemed to me the greatest source of poetry of all time." In 1931, Vollard tragically died in a car accident and thus the Bible series was postponed to be finally published in 1956 by Teriade.

From the 1950's onwards the master realised an exceptional body of lithographic works comprising 1,100 lithographs depicting his favourite subject matters: marriages, flowers, animals, birds, the prophets from the Bible and the Circus (pages 34 to 37).

It is not possible to show Chagall's immense graphic oeuvre without talking about his collaborator Charles Sorlier who from the 1960's helped Chagall in the lithographs he realised. (see example pages 45 to 46, 48 to 49) Sorlier was particularly involved in the lithographs from Saint-Paul de Vence. Expert in his field, Chagall treated him as a son rewarding him with multitude of prints, gouaches and drawings.

Chagall's creativity with this medium was limitless and we hope the artworks in this catalogue will give an extensive vision of the immense body of work printed by the artist.

OUR EXHIBITION

We are glad to be able to show an outstanding collection of important works by Marc Chagall. The highlight of our collection is the wonderful oil on canvas titled "*Study for the Woman in Red*", realised in 1956, and previously part of the artist collection and of the Marc Chagall Estate. The work also comes with a certificate of authenticity issued by the Chagall committee (page 7).

The other two rare pieces are the two oil monotypes "*The Clock*" and "*Red Boot*". Marc Chagall began to produce monotypes only when Gerald Cramer, his Swiss publisher at the time suggested it to him in 1961. From that point, Chagall worked with Cramer and the printer Jacques Frelaut to produce an outstanding group of 306 monotypes including our works (pages 12 to 15). Monotype is the most painterly method among the printmaking techniques and is often called "the painterly print" or the "printer's painting. The works were painted with oil paint on a copper plate and then they were pulled on paper. These works are therefore unique pieces.

An exhibition of examples from the Chagall monotypes body of works was presented at the MOMA (Museum of Modern Art) in New York between November 1979 and January 1980. Riva Castlemain, Director of the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books at the MOMA, interestingly noted at the time that "This exhibition is about the creative interaction of three devoted people".

Other important works are represented by a group of drawings coming directly from the David McNeil collection (the artist's son): "*Young Woman with Bouquet*" (page 8), "*Standing Nude*" (page 9), "*The Bridge*" (page 11). From "*The Fables de la Fontaine*", realised in 1927 (page 16) to the 1960's lithographs illustrating the Bible, it seems that Marc Chagall has always been a brilliant and exceptional printmaker. His ability to create wonderful

works such as in the “*Saint Jean de the Cap Ferrat*” (page 45) and in the “*Bouquet of Roses*” (page 46) was limitless. His use of colours, of lines and his recurrent motifs such as the rooster, the lovers and the clock made him one the greatest artistic minds of the 20th century. Printmaking was crucial to his oeuvre, as the artist himself declared: “It seems to me that something would have been lacking in my art if, besides my painting, I had not also produce etchings and lithographs”.

Chagall’s love of art was profound and we hope this exhibition will transmit the passion that animated this great Master during in his long prolific life. All works in the catalogue are for sale, with prices ranging from £350 to £90,000. Each work is accompanied by the gallery’s certificate of authenticity.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in our Hampstead gallery!

Kind regards,

Daniela, Emmanuelle, Amy and Ofer

Ofer Gildor – Director
Daniela Boi – Manager
Emmanuelle Loïselle – Curator and Exhibitions
Amy Martin – Gallery Assitant

Design – Karolina Urbaniak

STUDY FOR THE WOMAN IN RED, 1956

A pervasive theme throughout his career, Chagall's portrayal of lovers in flight can first be traced back to *L'Anniversaire* of 1915, which shows the artist and his wife about to fly through an open window. By the time *Study for the Woman in Red* was executed, Chagall's lovers have taken full flight above a snowy landscape. They embrace and entwine as one, merged both by the artist's sinuous line and use of unifying colour. Painted in a throbbing vermillion, their colour and vibrancy seeps into the sky before them and adds to the upward diagonal movement of the whole work. Observed by a tumbling bird, flanked by a vivid bouquet of flowers and what appears to be a basket of food, the man and woman are surrounded by symbols of abundance, hope and life. The flowers provide a counterpoint of colour in the otherwise stark background and combine with Chagall's expressive palette to emphasise the couple's happiness: 'As for Chagall, he is a painter who was born a Romantic.' Tériade, quoted in *ibid.*, p.136).





STUDY FOR THE WOMAN IN RED, 1956

Original Signed Oil and Ink Painting on Canvas

20.4 x 24.2 cm / 8 x 13 in

Provenance: Collection of the artist - The Estate of the artist. The work is accompanied by a photo-certificate from Comité Chagall, Paris dated 3rd of July 2012



The spontaneous brushstrokes used in *Jeune fille au bouquet* prove how far Chagall is ready to free himself from any artistic theory or 'ism' school. He does not hesitate to let his mind express itself through this sketch, in which the woman carrying flowers stands out against the dark background and this subject will often feature in Chagall's paintings. Using ink wash as his medium, Chagall attempts to plunge his female figure in a mysterious world, as she seems to be an apparition coming out from a dream.

Provenance: David McNeil (the artist's son), Paris, by descent from the artist (no. D 1079).

Acquired from the above by the owners in 1987.

This work is accompanied by a photocertificate from David McNeil.

Literature:

V. Rakitin, Chagall, Disegni inediti dalla Russia a Parigi, Milan, 1989, p. 112 (ill. p. 113).

YOUNG WOMAN WITH BOUQUET / JEUNE FILLE AU BOUQUET, 1926

Original Signed and Dated Watercolour, brush and India ink and pencil on thin card

25.2 x 20.1 cm / 10 x 8 in

This is an early and rare original drawing by Marc Chagall. It was drawn in 1908.

In Paris, Chagall started to attend life drawing classes alongside Fernand Leger as well as two different academies in the French capital. Nudes were not part of the Russian Beaux Arts tradition. In France, Chagall experimented with French passion for love and women

Provenance: David McNeil (The artists son), Paris, by descent from the artist (no. D 796).
Acquired from the above by the owners in 1987.

This work is accompanied by a photo-certificate from David McNeil.

Literature:

V. Ratikin, Chagall, Disegni inediti dalla Russia a Parigi, Milan, 1989, p. 30 (ill. p. 31).



STANDING NUDE / NU DEBOUT, 1908
Original Hand Signed Pencil Drawing on paper
33.7 x 22.5 cm / 13.25 x 8.8 in

BRIDGE / PAYSAGE, 1910

This work is signed and dated 'Chagall 1910' at the lower left corner and inscribed in Cyrillic 'most' at the lower right corner.

It was painted in 1910.

It is accompanied by a photo-certificate from David McNeil.

Chagall chose the simple subject of a bridge, probably one over the Dvina River by Vitebsk, yet he executed it with such movement and violent expressionistic brushstrokes. The whole scene seems turbulent and stormy, with the dark sky and the criss-cross of lines constructing the bridge. Even the dark figure on the bridge seems to be fighting its way against the flow of Chagall's brushstrokes. The Cyrillic inscription of 'the bridge' could perhaps be a reference to Chagall's encounter with Bella, whom he had met the preceding year through Thea Brachman. One of the chapters in Bella's book of memories, *Erste Begegnung* bears the title *The Bridge*, where she describes how fascinated she was by Chagall, with his wild and ambitious character. The river appears to have had a deep significance for Chagall in his inner search for the soul, as he writes in *My Life*, 'I see the river flowing away into the distance, the bridge beyond, and close at hand, the eternal barrier, the earth, the grave. Here is my soul. Look for me here' (p. 16).

Provenance: David McNeil (the artist's son), Paris, by descent from the artist (no. D 883). Acquired from the above by the owners in 1987.

Literature: V. Rakitin, Chagall, *Disegni inediti dalla Russia a Parigi*, Milan, 1989, p. 42 (ill. p. 43).



BRIDGE / PAYSAGE, 1910

Original Hand Signed and Dated Drawing in wash, brush and ink, pencil and crayon on paper
21.7 x 16.3 cm / 8.4 x 6.4 in

THE RED BOOT / LA BOTTE ROUGE, 1965

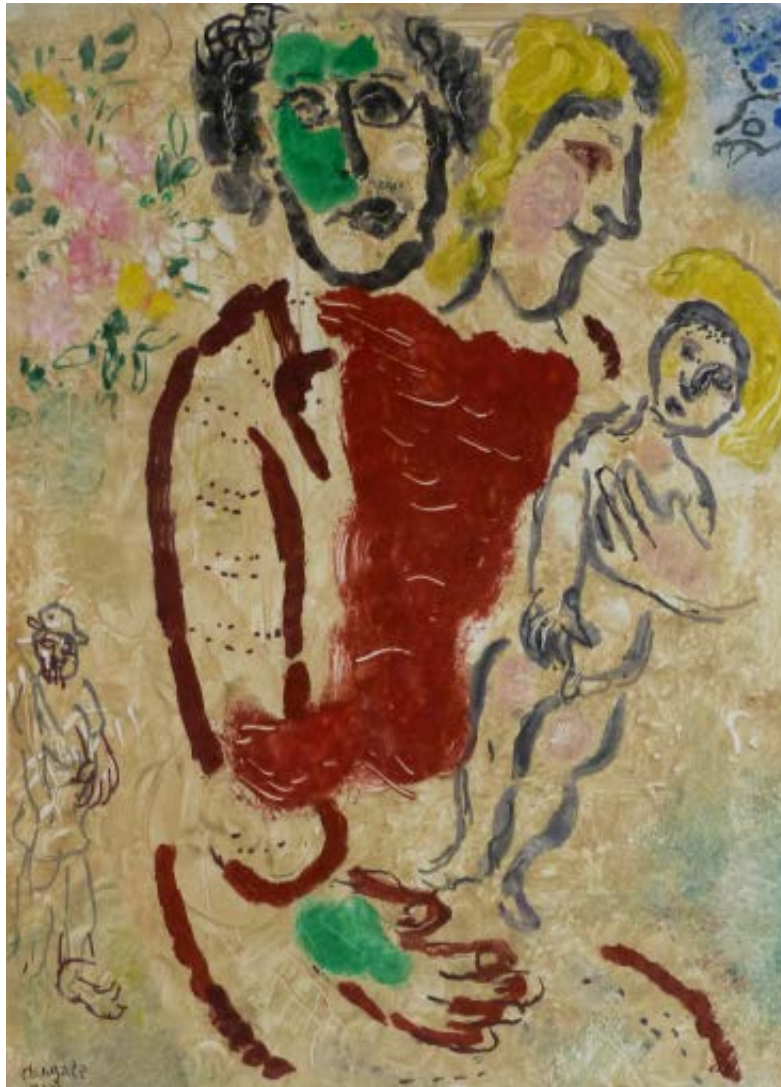
These colour monotypes were painted with oil paint on a copper plate by Chagall and then it was pulled on paper by Jacques Frelaut in 1975.

Both monotypes are unique piece and they are accompanied by a certificate of authenticity signed by Patrick Cramer, the internationally recognized expert for Chagall's Monotypes. Marc Chagall began to produce monotypes only when Gerald Cramer, his Swiss publisher at the time suggested it to him in 1961. These works, *The Clock and the Red Boot*, has many typical aspects of Chagall's iconography such as the clock, the goat and the workers cottage reminiscent of his home in the Ukraine.

Provenance: The Estate of Marc Chagall

Literature: Cramer Gerald, Marc Chagall Monotypes 1966-1975 - Volume II. Geneve: Editions Gerald Cramer Reference: Cramer 261 (illustrated)





THE RED BOOT / LA BOTTE ROUGE, 1965
Original Hand Signed Oil Monotype on Japan nacré paper
56.5 x 44 cm / 22.2 x 17.3 in

THE CLOCK / L'HORLOGE, 1975

This monotype is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity signed by Patrick Cramer, the internationally recognized expert for Chagall's Monotypes. Patrick Cramer was himself present when many of Chagall Monotypes were created.

Provenance: The Estate of Marc Chagall

Literature: Cramer Gerald, Marc Chagall Monotypes 1966 - 1975 - Volume II.

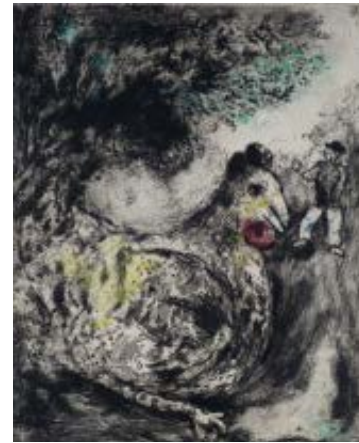
Geneve: Editions Gerald Cramer

Reference: Cramer 261 (illustrated)





THE CLOCK / L'HORLOGE, 1975
Original Hand Signed Oil Monotype on Japan nacré paper
66.5 x 51.5 cm / 26.1 x 20.2 in



Realised by Chagall in 1927 but only published in 1952, *The Fables de la Fontaine* with their fantasy, poetry and irony embody the French 'esprit' and are considered the classic work of French literature.

These works are all original etchings hand colour with watercolour on Montval paper.

LES FABLES DE LA FONTAINE

Size (each): 36 x 29 cm / 14.2 x 11.4 in.

From left to right and top to bottom: *The Villager and the Snake*, *The Hen and the Golden Eggs*, *The Fish and the Fisherman*, *The Lion and the Midge*, *The Rooster and the Pearl*, *The Woodcutter and the Mercury*, 1927/1952



AFFICHE DE L'EXPOSITION CHAGALL A LA FONDATION MAEGHT, 1967

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on Arches wove paper

76.2 x 57 cm / 30 x 22.4 in



According to the Chagall Catalogue Raisonné of engraved work that was written by Eberhard Kornfeld, there are only 4 known proofs printed of the first state before Chagall re-worked the plate and before the final edition.

Of these 4 proofs only one is in black and white (like ours) while the other three are hand coloured. It is very likely that our impression is an extremely rare additional proof of this state and the only other black and white proof is now in the collection of the Chagall Archives in Saint-Paul-de-Vence.

This extremely rare work was purchased in the 1930's by William Lamshead, of the Lamshead and Deller Family, De on. Thence by descent and remained in the owner family for the past 70 years.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE ANGEL I, 1924/1925

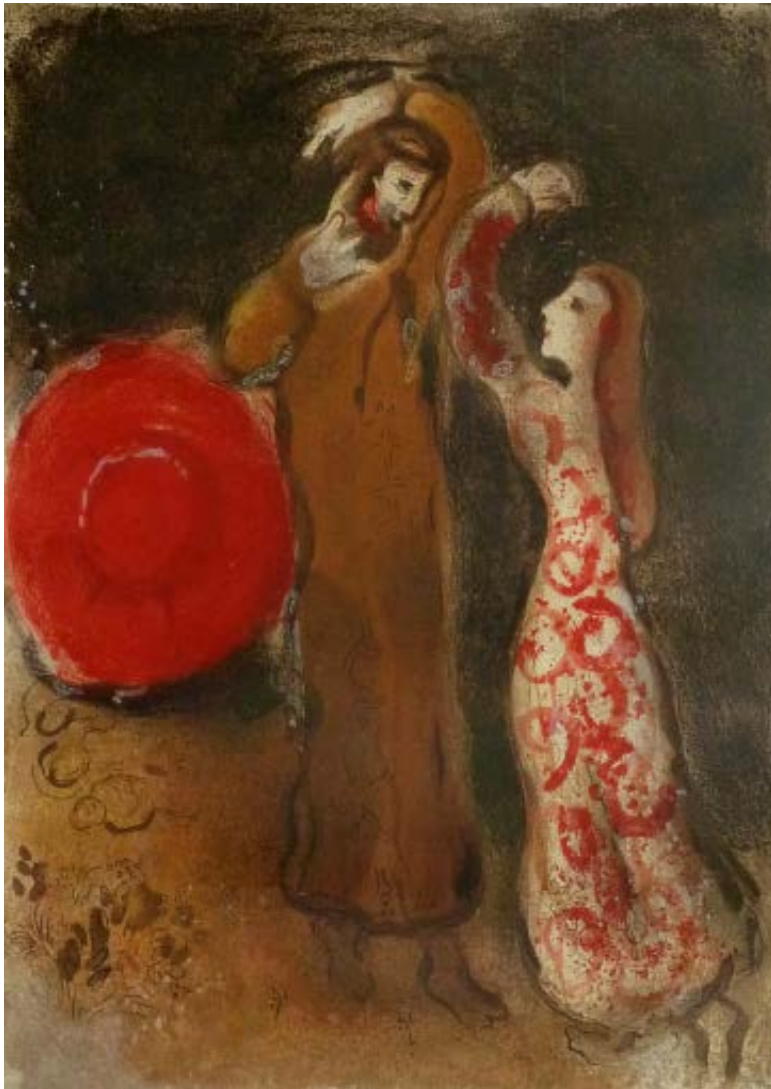
Original Hand Signed and Inscribed Etching with Aquatint on old Arches paper
53 x 37.5 cm / 20.8 x 14.7 in

'For me, fulfillment in art and in life comes from the biblical source. Without this spirit, the mechanics of logic and constructivism in art as in life, cannot bear fruit'
– Marc Chagall



MOSES, 1956

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on Arches vellum paper
37.6 x 26.3 cm / 14.8 x 10.3 in



MEETING OF RUTH AND BOAZ, 1960

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in Colour on Arches vellum paper
52.2 x 38 cm / 20.5 x 14.9 in



MOSES, 1960

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on Arches vellum paper
75.1 x 52.5 cm / 29.5 x 20.6 in



THE LADDER, 1957

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on Arches vellum paper
38.2 x 28.6 cm / 15 x 11 inches

On the following pages, we are presenting the complete series of lithographs (size 35.5 x 26.5 cm / 14 x 10.4 in) which Chagall created to illustrate the Bible in 1960. From the 1950s, Chagall returned to Biblical subjects who allowed him to be swept back to his childhood and to the world of Jewish Vitebsk, his birth town. The ability to merge the power of his imagination with reality gives his religious themes a secular meaning appealing to the twentieth century audience.

“I did not see the Bible, I dreamed it. Ever since early childhood, I have been captivated by the Bible. It has always seemed to me and still seems today the greatest source of poetry of all time.”



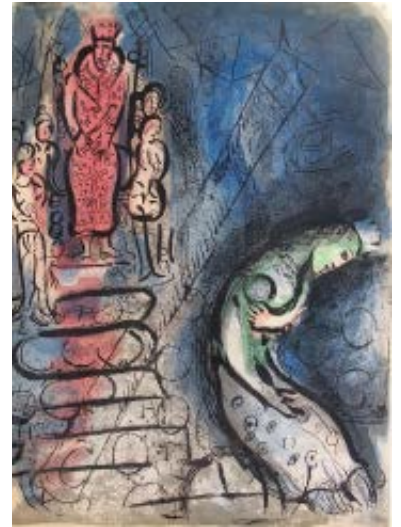
From left to right and top to bottom:
The Face of Israel, Paradise, Paradise, Creation, Adam and Eve and the Forbidden Fruit, Eve incurs God's displeasure



From left to right and top to bottom:
Adam and Eve are banished from Paradise, Cain and Abel, Sarah and Abimelech, Sarah and the Angels, Hagar in the Desert, Rachel hides her Father's Household Goods



From left to right and top to bottom:
Tamar - Daughter-in-Law of Judah, Rahab and the Spies of Jericho, Naomi and her Daughters-in-Law, Ruth Gleaning, Meeting of Ruth and Boaz, Ruth at the Feet of Boaz



From left to right:
Boaz wakes up and sees Ruth at his Feet, David saved by Michal, Ahasuerus sends Vashti away, Esther, Job praying, Job in despair



In this and next page we present a series of nice lithographs from 1957.

From left to right top to bottom:

Lovers in Grey, Maternity and Centaur, The Ladder, Christ in The Clock, The Green Eiffel Tower, Blue and Black Bouquet, Brown Still life
25 x 20 cm / 9.8 x 7.8 in



From left to right:
The Flute Player, The Accordionist, The Red Rooster, The Blue fish
 25 x 40 cm / 9.8 x 15.7 in



FOUR TALES FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS - PLATE 12, 1948

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on vellum paper

43 cm x 33 cm / 16.9 x 12.9 in



GRENADE FROM THE PAROLES PEINTES, 1962

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Etching with Aquatint on Richard de Bas paper

38 x 28.3 cm / 14.9 x 11.1 in

JACOB AND THE ANGEL, 1967





JACOB AND THE ANGEL, 1967
Original Hand Signed and Dedicated Lithograph with Pencil Drawing on Arches vellum paper
76 x 56 cm / 29.9 x 22 in

CIRCUS WOMAN, 1960

Like many fellow artists of his generation, Chagall loved the circus. He had been fascinated by travelling entertainers and acrobats in his youth. His first circus picture, *The Three Acrobats*, was painted in 1926. In the following year, the art dealer Ambroise Vollard, invited him frequently to his private box at Le Cirque d'Hiver in Paris, so that Chagall could make sketches for an album of prints on this theme. Although 19 gouaches were produced at that time; they were not published until the end of the Second World War. The circus kept its hold on Chagall's imagination to the end of his life. For him, it was a world of colours and drama in which tragedy and comedy were continually intermingled. In this page and in the next pages we show some example of the artist interest in circus scenes.





CIRCUS WOMAN, 1960
Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in Colours with Pochoir on Arches vellum paper
72.6 x 57.5 cm / 28.5 x 22.6 in



ON THE TRACK, 1965

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on Arches paper

65.2 x 40 cm / 25.6 x 17.7 in



MUSICAL CLOWN, 1956

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on Arches vellum paper
71.6 x 50 cm / 28.1 x 19.6 in



THE ARLEQUIN'S FAMILY, 1964/1965

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on BFK Rives paper

7 78 x 57.2 cm / 30.7 x 22.5 in



MY PIERROT, 1969

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph on Arches vellum paper
75.5 x 53.5 cm / 29.7 x 21.1 in



*"Paris, you are my second Vitebsk" –
"France is my real home"*

Chagall arrived in Paris in 1910. His first days in the city of lights were very difficult – Chagall didn't speak French and found himself alone in this new environment. But quickly, strolling through the streets and along the Seine, he realized that everything in Paris excited him: the shops, the markets, the fresh fruits and vegetables, the saltimbanques in Montmartre. Firstly inspired by Van Gogh, Chagall soon flirted with Cubism which he later mostly repudiated. Paris stayed in Chagall's oeuvre as a symbol of his love for French culture. In the following prints, Chagall used most of Paris's iconic buildings: La Place de la Concorde, Notre-Dame, La Seine, Le Pont des Arts and of course La Tour Eiffel.

LA PLACE DE LA CONCORDE, 1963

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on Arches vellum paper

48.4 x 37.2 cm / 19.1 x 14.6 in



THE BLUE SKY, 1964

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in Colours on vellum paper

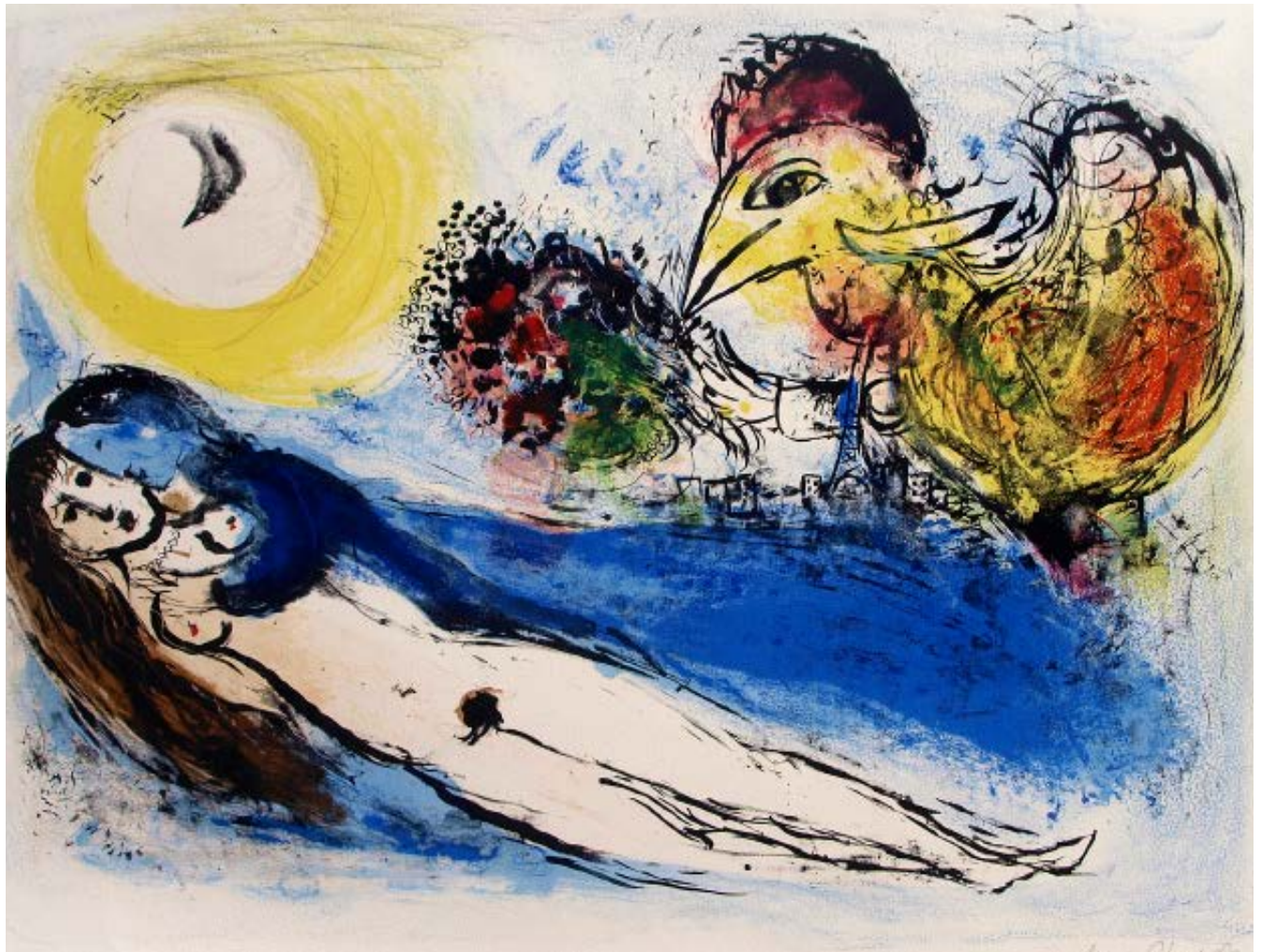
77 x 57 cm / 30.3 x 22.4 in



MOTHER AND CHILD IN FRONT OF NOTRE-DAME, 1952
 Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph on vellum paper
36.2 x 27 cm / 14.2 x 10.6 in

Page 43: THE TWO BANKS, 1980
 Original Hand Signed and Inscribed Lithograph
 in Colours on Arches vellum paper
116 x 75.5 cm / 45.7 x 29.7 in





BONJOUR SUR PARIS, 1952

Original Hand Signed and numbered Lithograph in Colours on vellum paper

47 cm x 54 cm / 18.5 x 21.2 in

NICE COTE D'AZUR SERIES

After the war, the Cote d'Azur became an artistic centre. Matisse and Picasso moved there and so did Chagall. He bought a nice villa called 'La Colline' in Saint-Paul de Vence where he settled a studio. His passion for the south of France and its characteristic light inspired him. From the early 1950's, Marc Chagall realised a series of lithographs, in collaboration with Charles Sorlier, all inspired by Nice and its bay of angels.



SAINT JEAN CAP-FERRAT, 1952-1953

Hand Signed and Numbered Color Lithograph Colour on Velin "Arches" paper

77.5 x 61 cm / 30.5 x 24 in



THE BAY OF ANGELS WITH BOUQUET OF ROSES (FROM NICE AND THE COTE D'AZUR), 1964

Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in Colours on Arches vellum paper

73 x 52.5 cm / 28.7 x 20.7 in



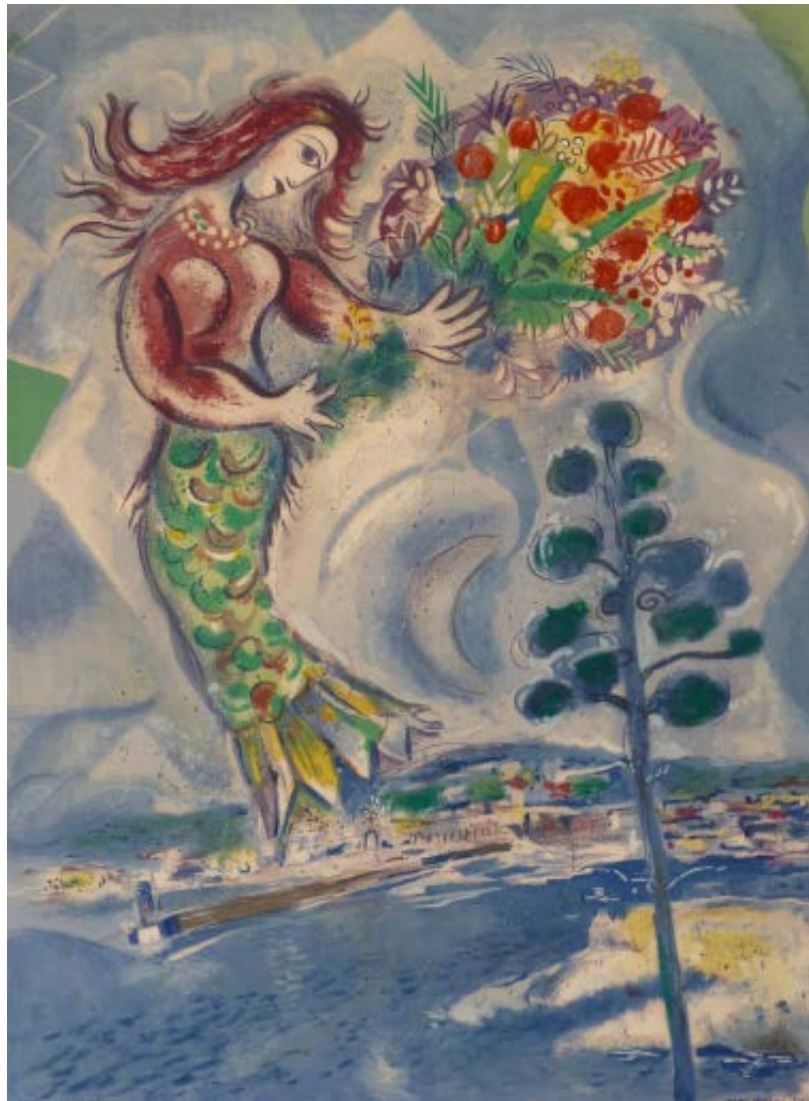
CELLO AND ROOSTER BY THE OPEN WINDOW, 1975-76

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Etching and Aquatint in colours on Japon paper

47 x 36.7 cm / 18.5 x 14.4 in

SIREN WITH PINE (FROM NICE AND THE COTE D'AZUR), 1964





SIREN WITH PINE (FROM NICE AND THE COTE D'AZUR), 1964
Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in colours on Arches vellum paper
74,5 x 52,5 cm / 29.3 x 20.7 in



THE PAINTER IN FRONT OF THE EASEL, 1975-76

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Etching and Aquatint on Imperial Japan paper
47.2 x 35.5 cm / 17.8 x 14 in



This lithograph is a vision of his studio at Saint-Paul where Chagall spent the last period of his long life.

THE STUDIO AT SAINT-PAUL / L'ATELIER A SAINT-PAUL, 1974

Original Hand Signed and Numbered Lithograph in Colours on Arches vellum paper

54 x 76 cm / 21.2 x 29.9 in



THE ROOSTER AND THE CLOCK, CIRCA 1956

Hand Signed and Numbered Etching with Aquatint on BFK Rives paper
55.2 x 38 cm / 21.7 x 14.9 in