



**Marc Chagall**  
(Russian - French, 1887 - 1985)

## Biography

Marc Chagall was born Movsja Zacharovitsj Sjagal on July 7, 1887, in Vitebsk, Russia and learned painting in Paris, where he lived from 1910 to 1914, and Saint Petersburg, where he was based between 1915 and 1917. After the Russian Revolution he was director of the Art Academy in Vitebsk (1918-1919) and he was art director of the Moscow Jewish State Theater from 1919 to 1922. Chagall painted several murals in the theater lobby and executed the backdrops for numerous productions. Thereafter he returned to Paris.

During World War II, Chagall fled to the United States, where the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), New York, gave him a retrospective in 1946. In 1948 he permanently settled in France. Chagall is distinguished for his surrealistic inventiveness. He is recognized as one of the most significant painters and graphic artists of the 20th century. Chagall's personal and unique imagery is often suffused with exquisite poetic inspiration. His distinctive use of color and form is derived partly from Russian expressionism and was influenced decisively by French cubism. Crystallizing his style early on, he later developed subtle variations.

His numerous works represent characteristically vivid recollections of Russian-Jewish village scenes, as in *I and the Village* (1911, Museum of Modern Art, New York), and incidents in his private life, as in the print series *Mein Leben* (German for 'My Life', 1922), in addition to treatments of Jewish subjects, of which *The Praying Jew* (1914, Art Institute of Chicago) is one. Marc Chagall's work combines recollection with folklore and fantasy. Biblical themes characterize a series of etchings executed between 1925 and 1939 that illustrate the Old Testament, and the 12 stained-glass windows in the Hadassah Hospital of the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center in Jerusalem (1962). In 1973 Musée National Message Biblique Marc Chagall (National Museum of the Marc Chagall Biblical Message) was opened in Nice, France, to house hundreds of his biblical works. Chagall also executed many prints illustrating literary classics. A canvas completed in 1964 covers the ceiling of the Opéra in Paris, and two large murals (1966) hang in the lobby of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. An exhibition of the artist's work from 1967 to 1977 was held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, in 1977-78, and a major retrospective was held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1985. Chagall died March 28, 1985, in Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France.

### Selected Collections

Work by Marc Chagall is to be found in numerous museums, among others;

Art Institute of Chicago, USA  
Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio, USA  
Dallas Museum of Art, Texas, USA  
Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA  
Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA  
Musée National Message Biblique Marc Chagall, Nice, France  
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, USA  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Canada  
Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy  
The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, USA  
The family home on Pokrovskaya Street (now the Marc Chagall Museum), Vitebsk, Belarus  
The Museum of Biblical Art in Dallas, Texas, USA  
The Marc Chagall Yufuin Kinrin-ko Museum in Yufuin, Kyushu, Japan  
The Lincoln Center, New York, USA  
Metropolitan Opera House, New York, USA

### Selected Exhibitions

2013  
*Chagall entre guerre et paix*, Musée du Luxembourg, Paris, France

2007  
*Chagall of Miracles*, Il Complesso del Vittoriano, Rome, Italy

2003  
The Réunion des Musées Nationaux, Paris, France in conjunction with Musée National Message Biblique Marc Chagall, Nice, France and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, USA

1986  
*Futurismo & Futurismi*, Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy

1985  
The Royal Academy, London, United Kingdom

1982  
The Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Sweden

1973  
The Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia

1969-1970  
*Hommage a Marc Chagall*, Grand Palais, Paris, France

1967  
*Message Biblique*, Louvre, Paris, France

### Selected Literature

F. Maarschalkerveerd, 'And the winners are... Prins Bernhard, Marc Chagall, Oskar Kokoschka en de Erasmus Prijs 1960', *Jaarboek Oranje-Nassau* 2012, p. 175-183;

G. Morel, 'Introduction au Théâtre d'art juif de Marc Chagall', *Connaissance des Arts*, 651 (2007), p. 128-131;

B. Harshaw, *Marc Chagall and his Times: A Documentary Narrative*, Stanford 2003;

R. Carvalho de Magalhaes, 'El Greco in un Sogno di Chagall', *Critica d'Arte* 19 (december 2003), p. 66-80;

J. van Adrichem, *De ontvangst van de moderne kunst in Nederland 1910-2000. Picasso als pars pro toto*, Amsterdam 2001, p. 15;

P. Hulten [e.a.], cat.tent. *Futurismo & Futurismi*, Venetië (Palazzo Grassi), 1986, p. 446;

J.A. Keim, 'Chagall et les icones', *Connaissance des Arts*, juli 1967, p. 36-41.