



Marc Chagall Revealed

October 6, 2012

by Pat Rogers

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ROSLYN, NY

Curious about what made Marc Chagall tick? Two in-depth talks at the Nassau County Museum of Art will reveal insights to the Russian-born artist who told stories with paint. The talks are held in conjunction with a major Chagall exhibition on view through Nov 4 at the museum.

The first talk will be held today (Oct 6) at 3 p.m. *"Talking About Chagall"* features Constance Schwartz, the exhibition curator and Director Emerita, and Arnold Saltzman, a major Chagall collector. Saltzman lent two paintings for the Chagall exhibit and has first-hand and intimate information about the painter, said Schwartz.

On Saturday, Oct 13 at 3 p.m., Charles A. Riley II, Ph.D will present *"Chagall on Stage."* Chagall was of intense interest by the worlds of opera and dance, according to the museum. Public commissions by major arts organizations include massive paintings at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. In his talk, Riley will share "backstage secrets" about Chagall. Riley authored the official book on the art collection of Lincoln Center.



"Le peintre et le grand nu", 1984. Oil and ink on canvas, 23 X 36 inches. Held by a private collector. Chagall © 2012 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

The Chagall exhibition presents "a significant selection" of Chagall's 1957 series of hand-colored etchings of Bible stories, according to the museum. Around half are on view. This is the first time the series has been publicly exhibited on Long Island.

Taken as a whole, the show portrays Chagall as a storyteller whose optimism and fantastical dreams created a visual world that pulled threads from his early Russian-Jewish heritage to weave, with paint, colorful narrative tapestries where heaven and earth become willing partners.

Chagall's paintings conjure worlds where couples are always in love and the laws of gravity don't apply to people or animals. Memories of time spent with family unfold in brightly-colored works with scenes from his native Vitebsk as backdrop.



“La Famille et le Coq 2” by Marc Chagall, 1979. 36 x 26 inches.

During today’s talk, Schwartz and Saltzman will discuss the painter’s muses and delve into the depth that lies beyond the bright and color-drenched paintings.

This includes the importance of Russia and his home village and the impact being exiled and the resulting alienation influenced his art. The ways that his paintings reflect Chagall’s heritage of being a Hasidic Jew and manifest characteristics of Hasidism. Chagall’s relationship with his wives (he was married twice) and imagery influenced by these relationship will also be discussed.

Chagall’s rejection of the invitation to become part of the Surrealist group is another planned topic for discussion. Schwartz pointed out that even though his paintings contain private symbols and invoke the sensation of emerging from a dream, his work is not surrealism. Saturday’s talk will reveal the meaning of some of his private symbols and the logic behind Chagall’s declining to link with the Surrealists.



“La caleche fantastique (Fantastic Horse Cart)” by Marc Chagall, 1949. Gouache and pastel on paper 23.25 x 18.12 inches. Gift of Ann R. Smeltzer, Blanden Art Museum. Marc Chagall © 2012 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.



“House at Vitebsk” by Marc Chagall, 1917. Oil on paper on canvas, 18 3/4 X 24 inches. National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John U. Nef and Mr. and Mrs. William Wood, 1973. Marc Chagall © 2012 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.



“Aniuta (The Artist’s Sister)” by Marc Chagall, 1910. Oil on canvas, 25 x 21 inches. Courtesy Edward Albee. Marc Chagall © 2012 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.



“Fruits et fleurs” by Marc Chagall, 1970. Gouache on paper, 26 x 20 inches. Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation. Marc Chagall © 2012 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

BASIC FACTS: “Marc Chagall” is on view through Nov 4, 2012 at the Nassau County Museum of Art. The museum is located at One Museum Drive (just off Northern Boulevard, Route 25A), Roslyn Harbor, NY.

Film screenings of “Artists of the 20th Century: Marc Chagall” take place daily at 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. The 50-minute film explores Marc Chagall’s attraction to the sights, legends and heritage of his Russian-Jewish village of Vitebsk. The screenings are free with museum admission. No reservations are required.

On Saturday, Oct 6, 2012 at 3 p.m., “**Talking About Chagall**” will be presented by exhibition curator and museum Director Emerita Constance Schwartz with major Chagall collector Arnold Saltzman. Admission is \$15 (members, \$5) and includes museum admission. Register at nassaumuseum.org/events. There is a \$2 parking fee on weekends (free for members).

On Saturday, Oct 13, 2012 at 3 p.m., “**Chagall on Stage**” will be presented by Charles A. Riley II, Ph.D. Admission is \$15 (members, \$5) and includes museum admission. Register at nassaumuseum.org/events. There is a \$2 parking fee on weekends (free for members).

A video of the exhibition presented by Constance Schwartz can be found by clicking:

http://www.mylitv.com/articles/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1353:the-art-of-marc-chagall-at-the-nassau-county-museum-of-art-presents&catid=46:long-island-museums-and-historical-societies

The Nassau Country Museum of Art is located at One Museum Drive (just off of Northern Blvd, Route 25A, Roslyn Harbor, NY. <http://nassaumuseum.org>