

A surrealist painting by Marc Chagall. The central figure is a woman with long, dark, flowing hair and a pale face, looking slightly to the right. She is surrounded by vibrant, swirling colors of red and blue. To her right, there is a blue goat head with a single eye. Below the goat head, a small bird is visible. In the background, there are faint, dark shapes that resemble buildings and a horse. The overall style is characteristic of Chagall's work, with bold colors and a dreamlike, narrative quality.

Chagall

Mega Square

Sylvie Forrestier
Chagall

«Parkstone International Publishing»

2016

Forrestier S.

Chagall / S. Forrestier — «Parkstone International Publishing», 2016 — (Mega Square)

ISBN 978-1-78160-935-4

Marc Chagall was born into a strict Jewish family for whom the ban on representations of the human figure had the weight of dogma. A failure in the entrance examination for the Stieglitz School did not stop Chagall from later joining that famous school founded by the Imperial Society for the Encouragement of the Arts and directed by Nicholas Roerich. Chagall moved to Paris in 1910. The city was his “second Vitebsk”. At first, isolated in the little room on the Impasse du Maine at La Ruche, Chagall soon found numerous compatriots also attracted by the prestige of Paris: Lipchitz, Zadkine, Archipenko and Soutine, all of whom were to maintain the “smell” of his native land. From his very arrival Chagall wanted to “discover everything”. And to his dazzled eyes painting did indeed reveal itself. Even the most attentive and partial observer is at times unable to distinguish the “Parisian”, Chagall from the “Vitebskian”. The artist was not full of contradictions, nor was he a split personality, but he always remained different; he looked around and within himself and at the surrounding world, and he used his present thoughts and recollections. He had an utterly poetical mode of thought that enabled him to pursue such a complex course. Chagall was endowed with a sort of stylistic immunity: he enriched himself without destroying anything of his own inner structure. Admiring the works of others he studied them ingenuously, ridding himself of his youthful awkwardness, yet never losing his authenticity for a moment. At times Chagall seemed to look at the world through magic crystal – overloaded with artistic experimentation – of the Ecole de Paris. In such cases he would embark on a subtle and serious play with the various discoveries of the turn of the century and turned his prophetic gaze like that of a biblical youth, to look at himself ironically and thoughtfully in the mirror. Naturally, it totally and

uneclectically reflected the painterly discoveries of Cézanne, the delicate inspiration of Modigliani, and the complex surface rhythms recalling the experiments of the early Cubists (See-Portrait at the Easel, 1914). Despite the analyses which nowadays illuminate the painter's Judaeo-Russian sources, inherited or borrowed but always sublime, and his formal relationships, there is always some share of mystery in Chagall's art. The mystery perhaps lies in the very nature of his art, in which he uses his experiences and memories. Painting truly is life, and perhaps life is painting.

ISBN 978-1-78160-935-4

© Forrestier S., 2016
© Parkstone International
Publishing, 2016

Содержание

Biography	7
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	67

Sylvie Forestier Chagall

“The dignity of the artist lies in his duty of keeping awake the sense of wonder in the world. In this long vigil he often has to vary his methods of stimulation; but in this long vigil he is also himself striving against a continual tendency to sleep.”

Marc Chagall

© Confidential Concept, worldwide, USA

© Parkstone Press International, New York, USA

Biography



Self-Portrait

1909

Oil on canvas, 57 × 48 cm

Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf

7 July 1887: Marc Zakharovich Chagall, the son of a fish vendor, was born in Vitebsk.

1906: Studied at the art school of Yuri Pen in Vitebsk, leaving for St. Petersburg in the winter.

1907–1910: Studied at the Drawing School of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, St. Petersburg (then directed by Nicholas Roerich) and the private school of S. Saidenberg; entered

the private art school of Yelizaveta Zvantseva, where he studied under Léon Bakst and Matislav Dobuzhinsky. Showed his works at the school exhibition held in the office of the magazine Apollon.

1910–1914: Lived in Paris, on the Impasse du Maine. In 1911, moved to La Ruche. Met Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Fernand Léger, Amedeo Modigliani, Alexander Arkhipenko, Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Blaise Cendrars, and other famous artists and writers. Exhibited at the Salon des Independants and the Salon d'Automne in Paris, with the Donkey's Tail group in Moscow, at Der Sturm Gallery in Berlin (first one-man show) and also in St. Petersburg and Amsterdam. On the eve of the war, returned to Vitebsk.

July 1915: Married Bella Rosenfeld.

1915–1917: Worked in Petrograd, served on the military-industrial committee. Exhibited in Moscow and Petrograd.

1916: Birth of his daughter Ida.

1918–1919: Appointed Commissar for the Arts in the Regional Department of People's Education in Vitebsk. Set up and ran (from early 1919) an art school in Vitebsk, where the teachers included Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, Ivan Puni and Kasimir Malevich. Headed the Free Painting Workshop (Svomas) and the museum. Organized the celebrations in 1918 for the first anniversary of the October Revolution. Took part in the First State Free Exhibition held in the Winter Palace, Petrograd.

1920–1921: Conflict with Malevich and Lissitzky forced Chagall to leave Vitebsk. He lived in and near Moscow, producing works for the Jewish Chamber Theatre and teaching in the Malakhovka and Third International colonies for homeless children. Began work on the book *My Life*.

1922: Joint exhibition in Moscow with Nathan Altman and David Sterenberg.

1922–1923: Travelled to Kaunas with an exhibition of his works. Visited Berlin and Paris. Settled in Paris in September 1923. Produced etchings for *My Life* and began work on illustrations to Gogol's *Dead Souls*.

1926: One-man shows in Paris and New York.

1930–1931: Worked on illustrations for the Bible. Travelled to Switzerland, Palestine, Syria and Egypt. Exhibitions in Paris, Brussels and New York.

1933: At Goebbels' command, Chagall's works were burnt in public in Mannheim. Exhibition in Basle.

1935: Visited Poland.

1937: Granted French citizenship. Travelled to Italy.

1939: Carnegie Prize (USA).

1940: Moved to the Loire and then to Provence.

1941: Arrested in Marseille and then freed. Moved to the USA.

1942: Worked for theatres in the USA and Mexico.

1944: Death of Bella Chagall in New York.

1945: Set designs and costumes for Stravinsky's ballet *The Firebird*.

1946: Exhibitions in New York and Chicago.

1947: Exhibition at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris.

1948: Returned to France. Publication of *Dead Souls* with illustrations by Chagall. Exhibitions in Amsterdam and London. Travelled widely in this and the following years.



- 1950: Moved to Vence, near Nice. Worked on lithographs and ceramics.
- 1951: First stone sculptures. Large exhibitions in Bern and Jerusalem.
- 1952: Married Valentina Brodsky. Visit to Greece.
- 1953–1955: Major exhibitions in Turin, Vienna and Hanover.
- 1956: Publication of the Bible with illustrations by Chagall.
- 1957: Began work on stained-glass windows (for Assy, Metz, Jerusalem, New York, London, Zurich, Reims, Nice). Exhibitions of graphic works in Basle and Zurich.
- 1959: Murals in the foyer of the Theatre in Frankfurt am Main. Exhibitions in Paris, Munich and Hamburg.
- 1963: Exhibitions in Japan.
- 1964: Ceiling paintings in the Opera in Paris. First mosaics and tapestries.
- 1966: Moved to Saint-Paul-de-Vence. Painted murals in the Metropolitan Opera in New York.
- 1969–1970: Foundation of the Musée Chagall in Nice. Major retrospective exhibition at the Grand Palais in Paris.
- June 1973: Trips to Moscow and Leningrad at the invitation of the USSR Ministry of Culture.
- July 1973: Opening of the Musée Chagall in Nice.
- October 1977: Exhibition of paintings produced between 1967 and 1977 in the Louvre.
- 1982–1984: Major exhibitions in Stockholm, Copenhagen, Paris, Nice, Rome and Basle.
- 28 March 1985: Marc Chagall died at Saint-Paul-de-Vence in the ninety-eighth year of his life.
- 1987: Major exhibition of Chagall's works in Moscow.

* * *

Through one of those curious reversals of fate, one more exile has regained his native land. Since the exhibition of his work at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow in 1987 which gave rise to an extraordinary popular fervour, Marc Chagall has experienced a second birth.





Kermis

1908

Oil on canvas, 68 × 95 cm

Wright Ludington Collection Santa Barbara (California, USA)

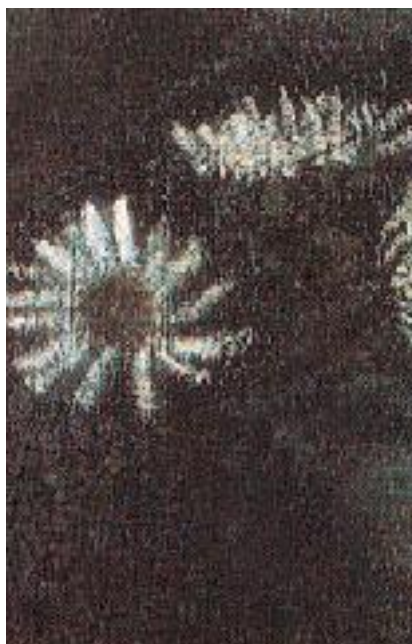
Here we have a painter, perhaps the most unusual painter of the twentieth century, who at last, attained the object of his inner quest: the love of his Russia. Thus, the hope expressed in the last lines of *My Life*, the autobiographical narrative which the painter broke off in 1922 when he left for the West – “and perhaps Europe will love me and, along with her, my Russia” – has been fulfilled.





My Fiancée in Black Gloves
1909
Oil on canvas, 88 × 65 cm
Kunstmuseum, Basle

A confirmation of this is provided today by the retrospective tendency in his homeland which, beyond the all-in-all natural re-absorption of the artist into the national culture, also testifies to a genuine interest, an attempt at analysis, an original viewpoint which enriches our study of Chagall.





Self-Portrait

1909

Oil on canvas, 57 × 48 cm

Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf

Contrary to what one might think, this study is still dogged by uncertainties in terms of historical fact. As early as 1961 in what is still the main work of reference, Franz Meyer emphasised the point that even the establishment of, for example, a chronology of the artist's works, is problematic.





The Artist's Sister (Mania)
1909
Oil on canvas, 93 × 48 cm
Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne

In fact, Chagall refused to date his paintings or dated them *a posteriori*.

A good number of his paintings are therefore dated only approximately and to this, we must add the problems caused to Western analysts by the absence of comparative sources and, very often, by a poor knowledge of the Russian language.





Sabbath

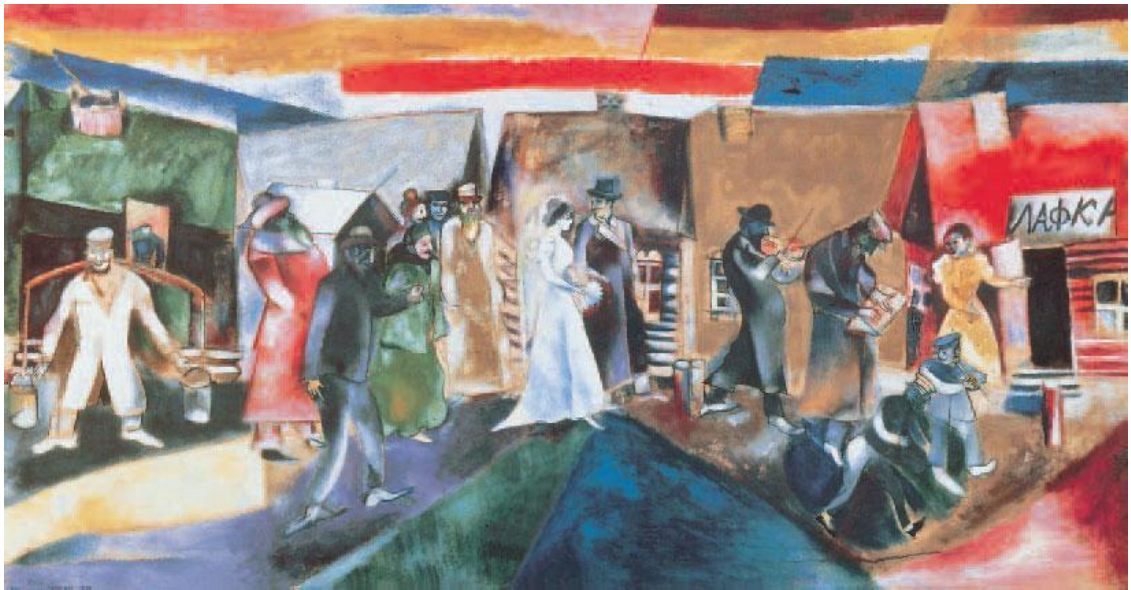
1910

Oil on canvas, 90 × 98 cm

Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne

Therefore, we can only welcome such recent works as that of Jean-Claude Marcadé who, following the pioneers Camilla Gray and Valentina Vassutinsky-Marcadé, has underlined the importance of the original source – Russian culture – for Chagall's work. One must rejoice even more in the publications of contemporary art historians such as Alexander Kamensky and Mikhail Guerman with whom we now have the honour and pleasure of collaborating.

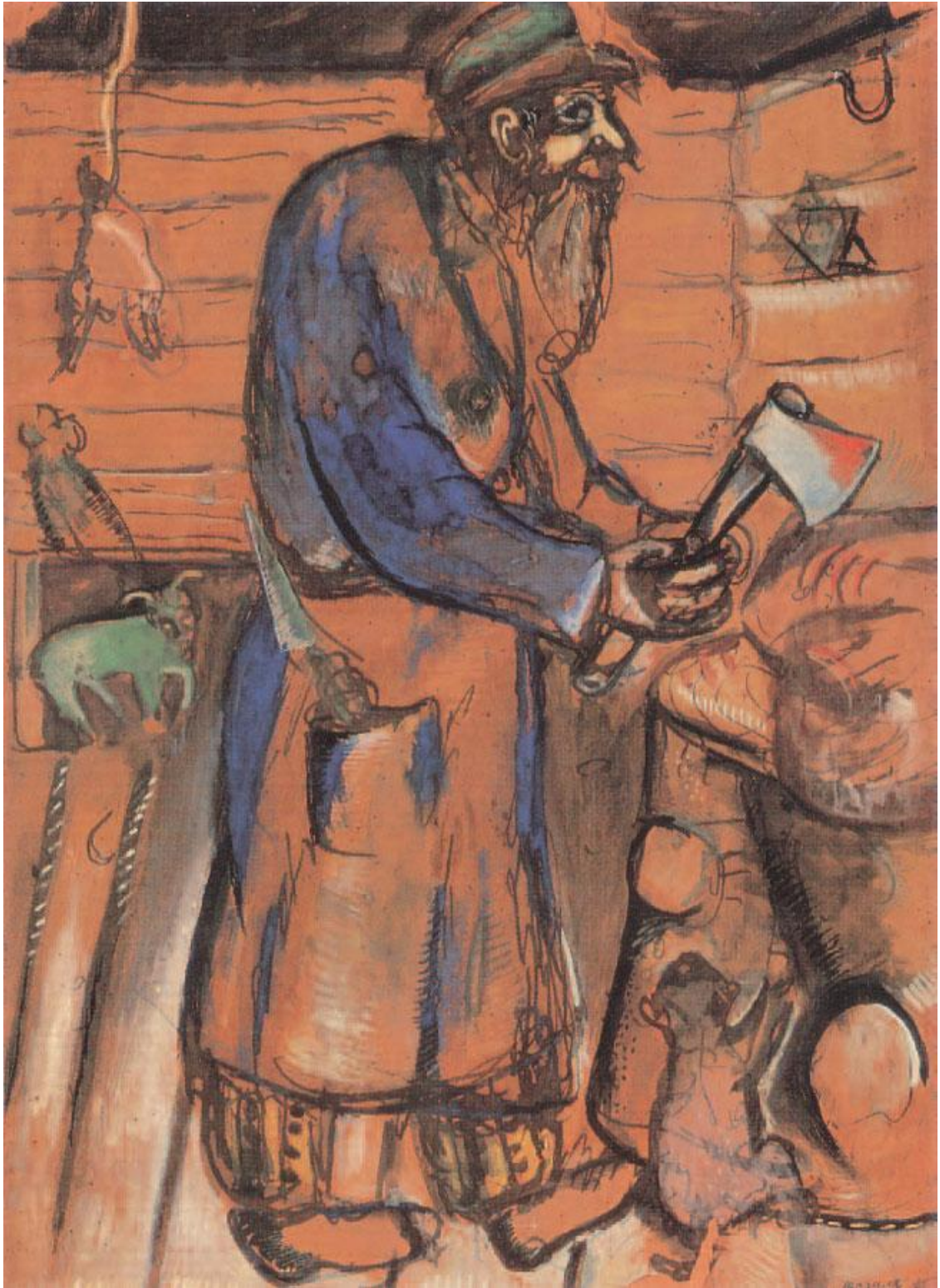




The Wedding
1910
Oil on canvas, 98 × 188 cm
Collection of the artist's family, France

Yet, Marc Chagall has inspired a prolific amount of literature. The great names of our time have written about his work: from the first serious essay by Efros and Tugendhold, *The Art of Marc Chagall*, published in Moscow in 1918 when Chagall was only 31, to Susan Compton's erudite and scrupulous catalogue, *Chagall*, which appeared in 1985, the year of the artist's death.





The Butcher
1910
Gouache on paper, 34 × 24 cm
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

On the occasion of the exhibition at the Royal Academy in London, there has been no lack of critical studies, but all this does not make easy our perception of Chagall's art. The interpretation

of his works – now linking him with the Ecole de Paris, now with the Expressionist movement, now with Surrealism – seems to be full of contradictions.





Jewish Wedding

1910s

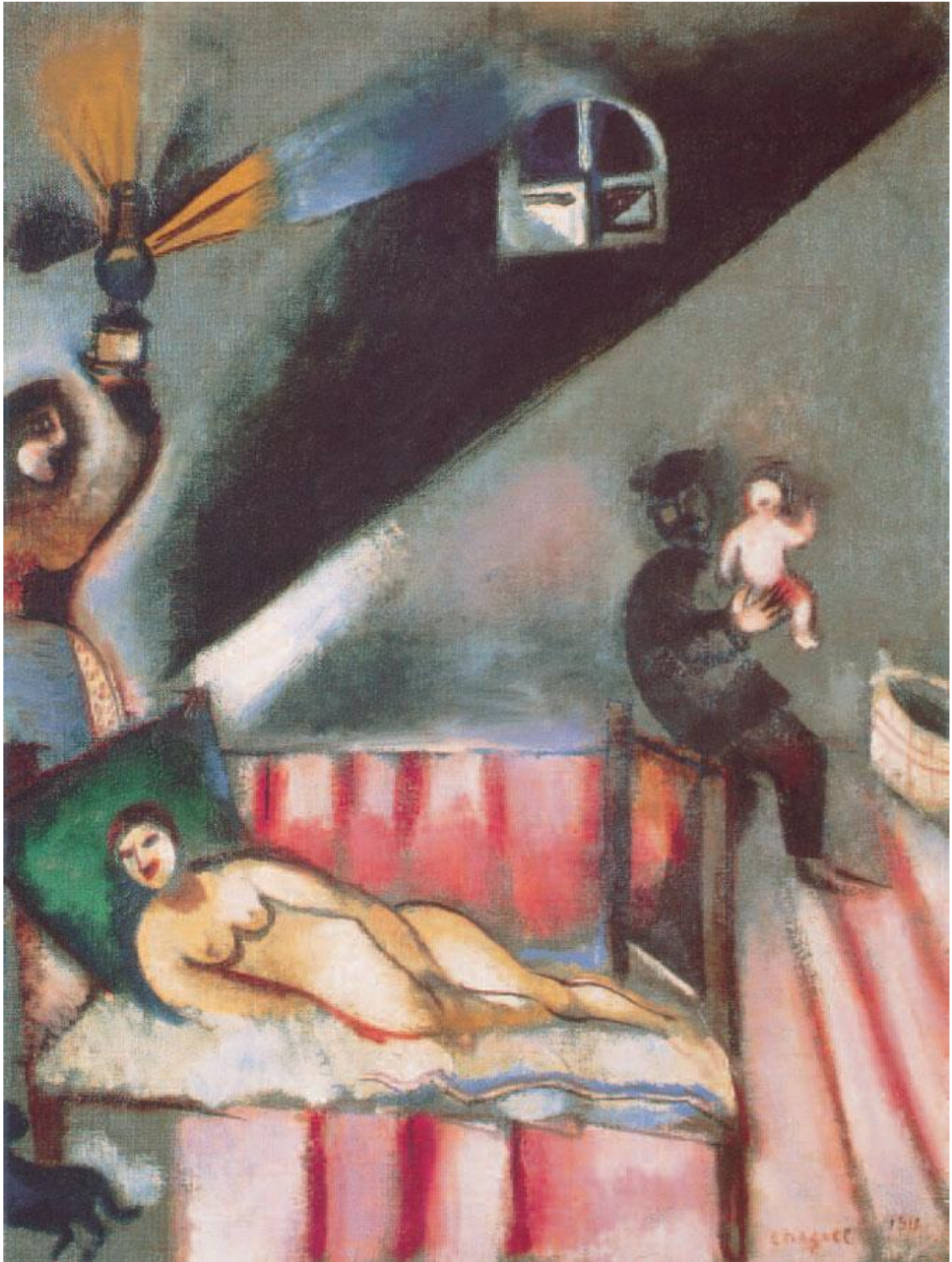
Pen and Indian ink on paper mounted on cardboard

20.5 × 30 cm

Z. Gordeyeva Collection, St. Petersburg

Does Chagall totally defy historical or aesthetic analysis? In the absence of reliable documents – some of which were clearly lost as a result of his travels, there is a danger that any analysis may become sterile. This peculiarity by which the painter's art seems to resist any attempt at theorization or even categorization is moreover reinforced by a complementary observation.





Birth of a Child

1911

Oil on canvas, 65 × 89.5 cm

Collection of the artist's family, France

The greatest inspiration, the most perceptive intuitions are nourished by the words of poets or philosophers. Words such as those of Cendrars, Apollinaire, Aragon, Malraux, Maritain or Bachelard... Words which clearly indicate the difficulties inherent in all attempts at critical

discourse, as Aragon himself underlined in 1945: “Each means of expression has its limits, its virtues, its inadequacies.

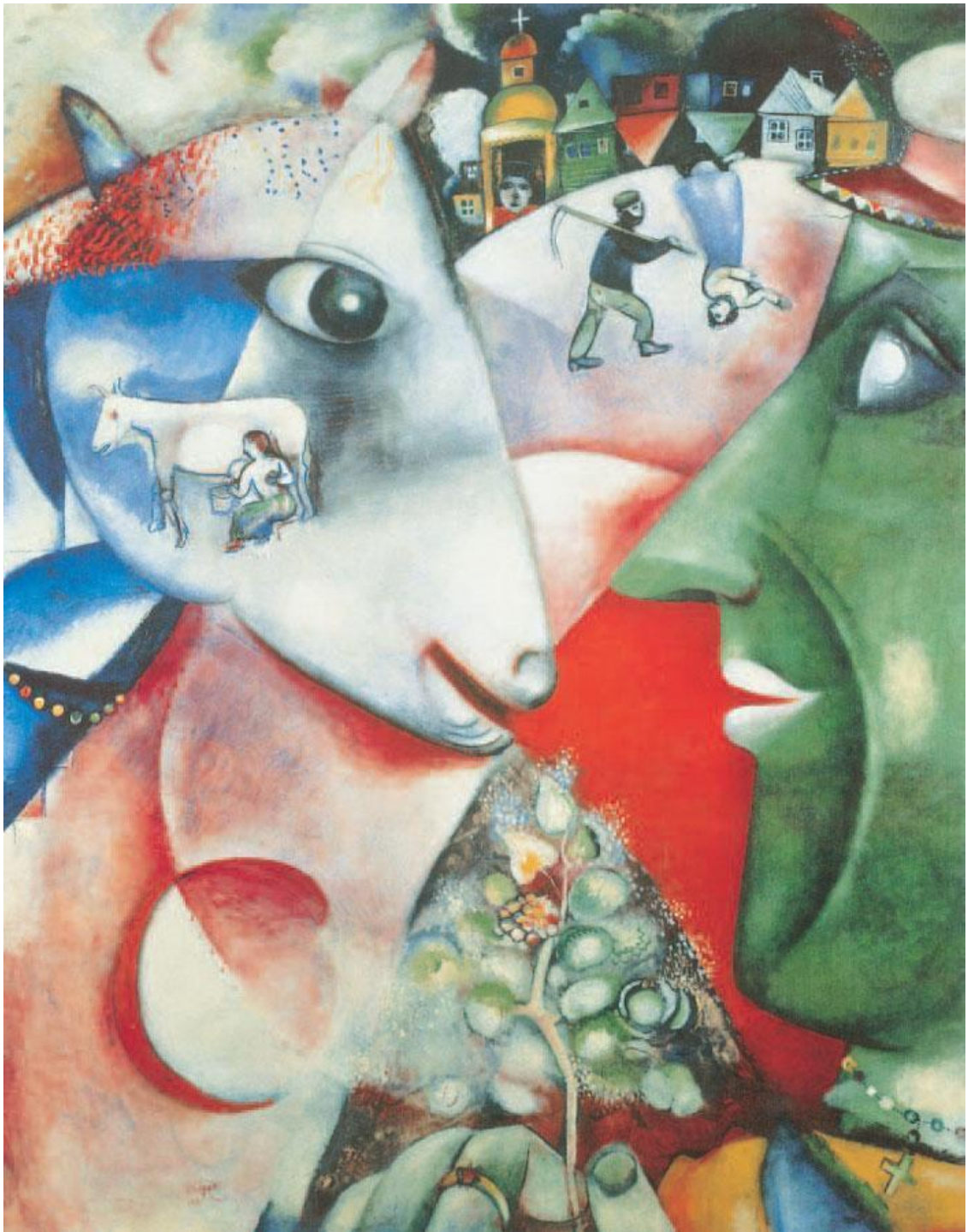




Self-Portrait with Seven Fingers
1911
Oil on canvas, 128 × 107 cm
Royal Collection, The Hague

Nothing is more arbitrary than to try to substitute the written word for drawing, for painting. That is called Art Criticism, and I cannot in good conscience be guilty of that.” Words which reveal the fundamentally poetic nature of Chagall’s art itself. Even if the arbitrariness of critical discourse appears to be even more pronounced in the case of Chagall, should we renounce any attempt at clarifying, if not the mystery of his work, then at least his plastic experience and pictorial practice?





I and the Village

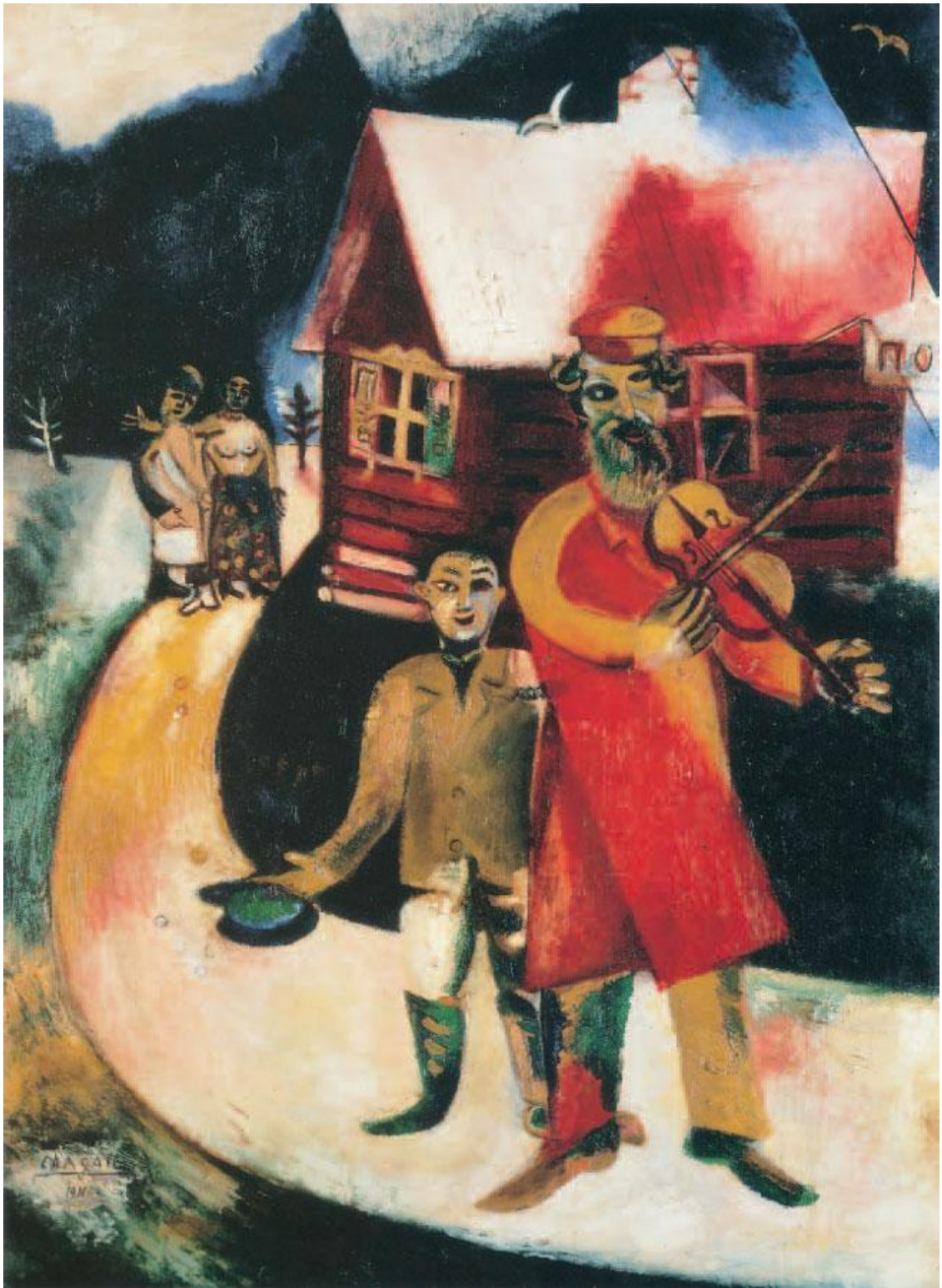
1911

Oil on canvas, 191.2 × 150.5 cm

Museum of Modern Art, New York

Should we limit ourselves to a mere lyrical effusion of words with regard to one of the most inventive individuals of our time? Should we abandon research of his aesthetical order, or on the contrary persist in believing that his aesthetic lies in the intimate and multiform life of ideas, in their free and at times contradictory exchange?





The Violonist

1911

Oil on canvas, 94.5 × 69.5 cm

Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf

If this last is the necessary pre-requisite of all advance in thought, then the critical discourse on Chagall can be enriched by new knowledge contributed by the works in Russian collections

which have up to now remained unpublished, by archives which have been brought to light and by the testimony of contemporary historians.



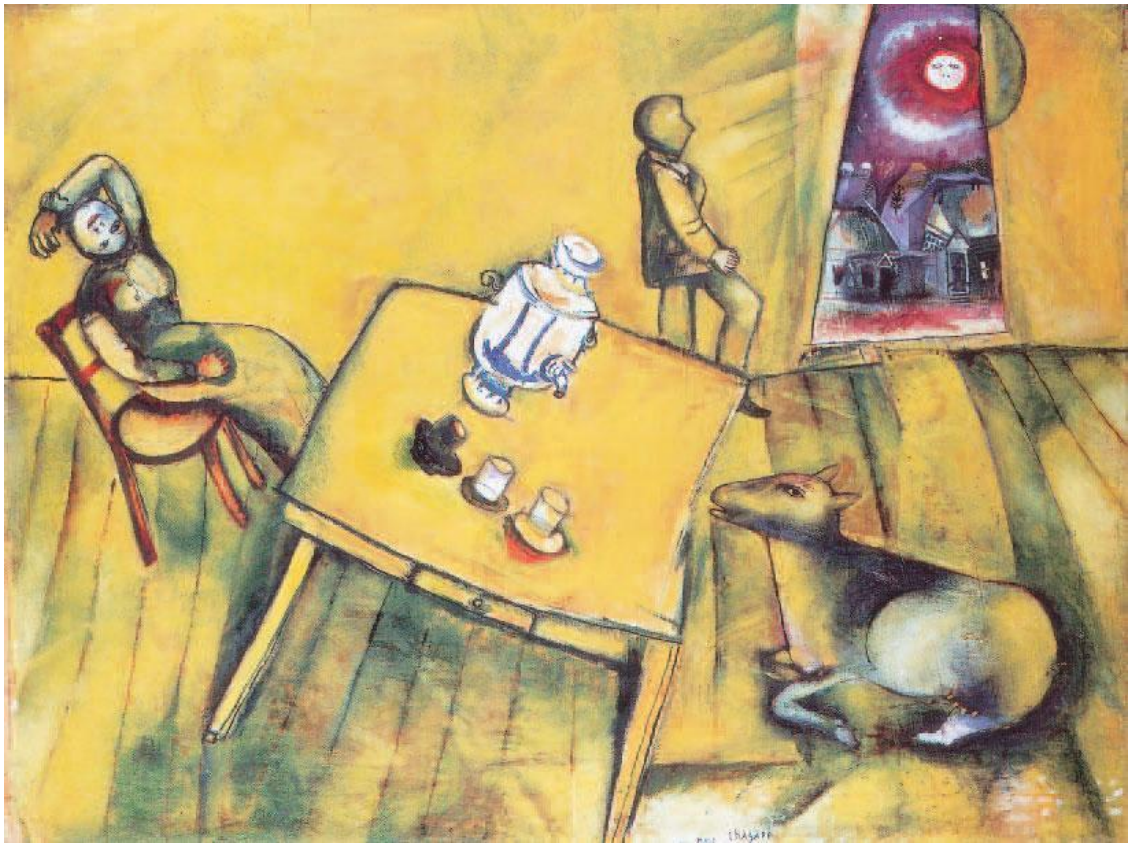


The Poet (Half Past Three)
1911
Oil on canvas, 197 × 146 cm
Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA

The comparison gives us a deeper comprehension of this wild art that exhausts any attempt to tame it despite efforts to conceptualize it. About 150 paintings and graphic pieces by Chagall are analysed here by the sensitive pen of the author. They were all produced between 1906–1907 –

Woman with a Basket – and 1922, the year in which Chagall left Russia for good, with the exception of several later works, *Nude Astride a Cockerel* (1925), *Time is a River without Banks* (1930–1939) and *Wall-clock with a Blue Wing* (1949).





The Yellow Room

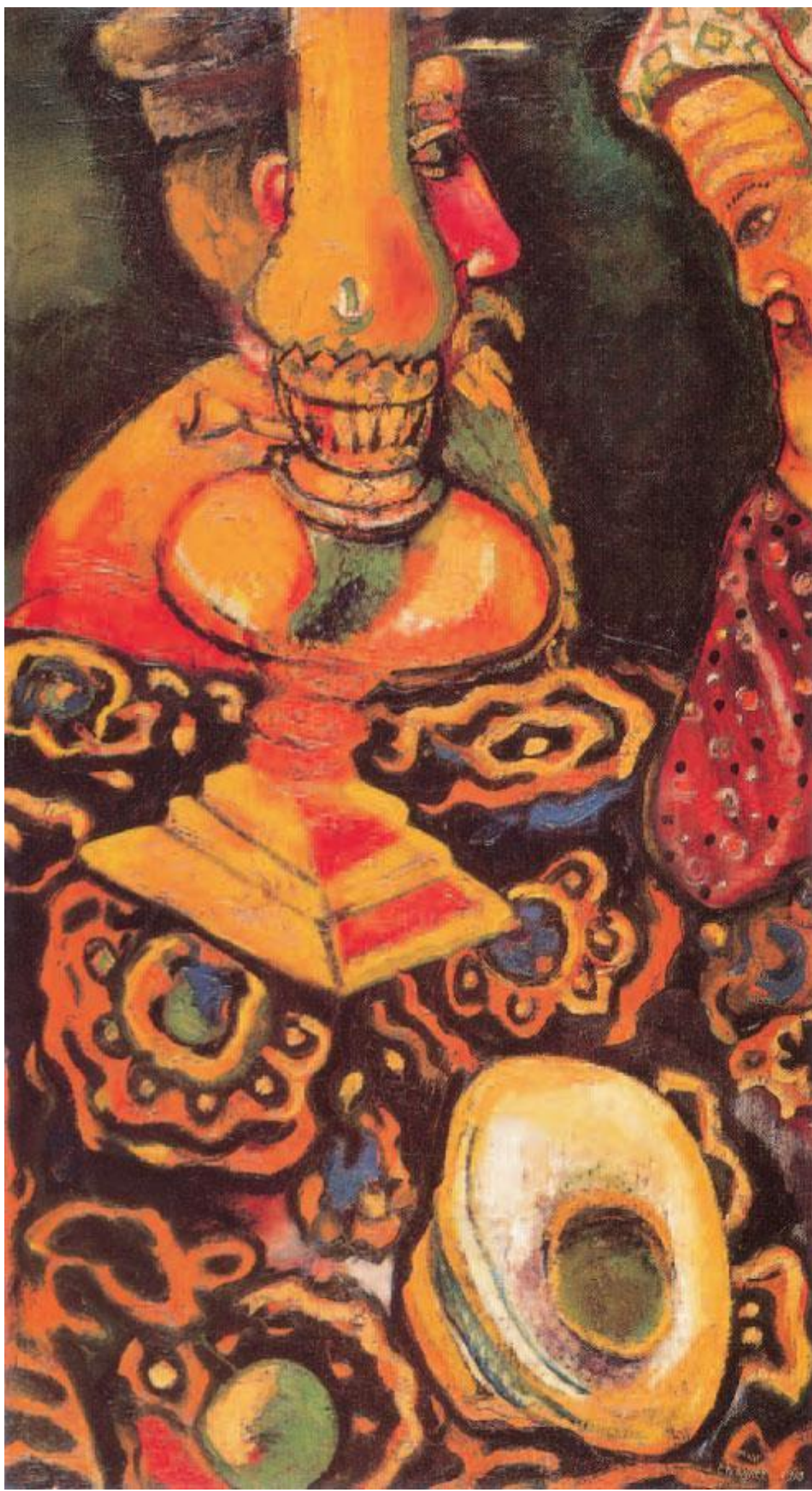
1911

Oil on canvas, 84 × 112 cm

Private collection, courtesy Christie's, London

The corpus of works presented provides a chronological account of the early period of creativity. The author's analysis stresses with unquestionable relevance the Russian cultural sources on which Chagall's art fed. It reveals the memory mechanism which lies at the heart of the painter's practice and outlines a major concept. It is tempting to say a major "tempo", that of time-movement perceptible in the plastic structure of Chagall's oeuvre.





Still-Life with Lamp

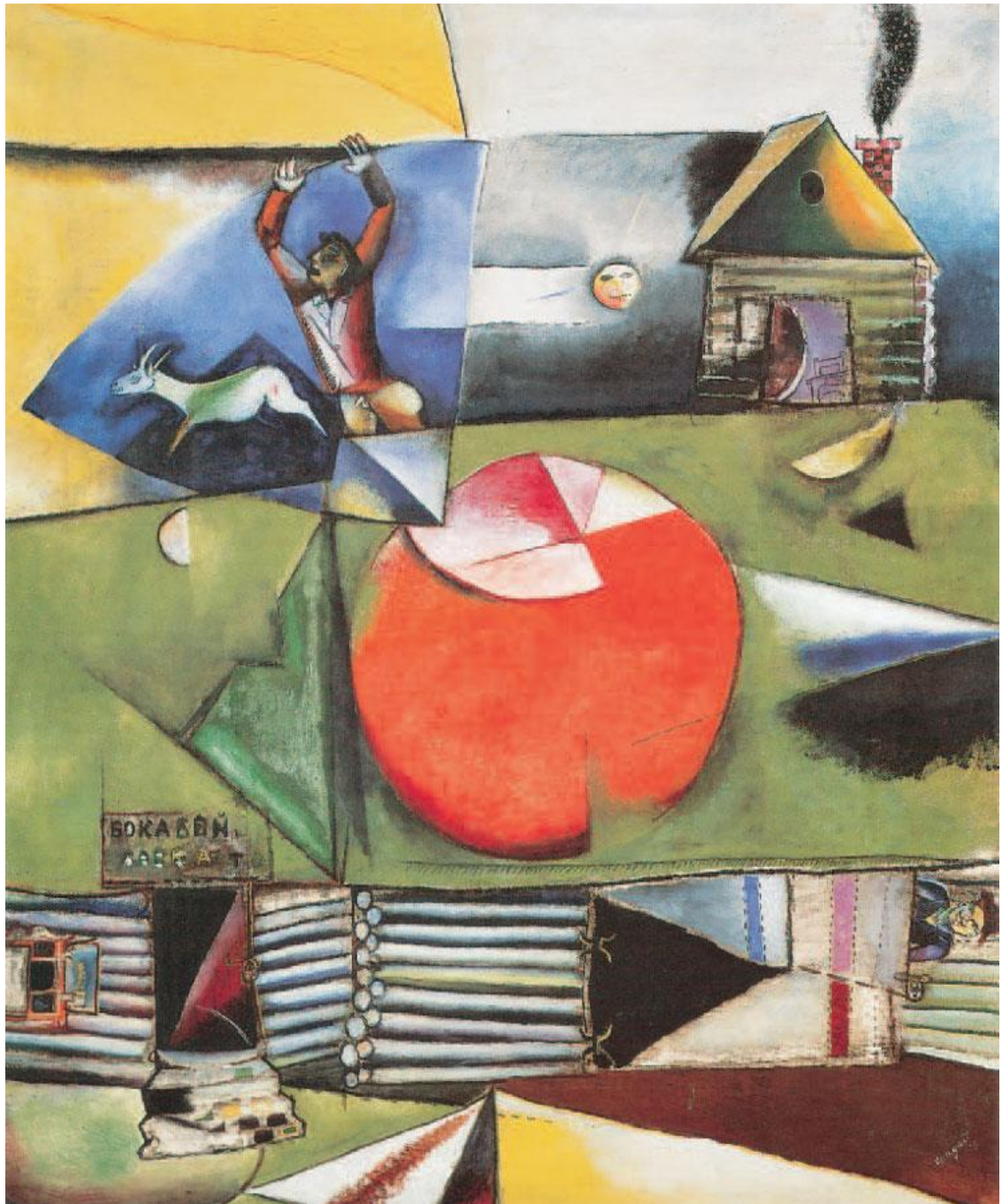
1910

Oil on canvas, 81 × 45 cm

Courtesy A. Rosengart Gallery, Lucerne

Thus we can much better understand the vivid flourishing of the artist's work with its cyclical, apparently repetitive (but why?) character, which might be defined as organic and which calls to mind the ontological meaning of creation itself as set out in the writings of Berdiayev.





Russian Village Under the Moon
1911
Oil on canvas, 126 × 104 cm
Staatsgalerie Moderner Kunst, Munich

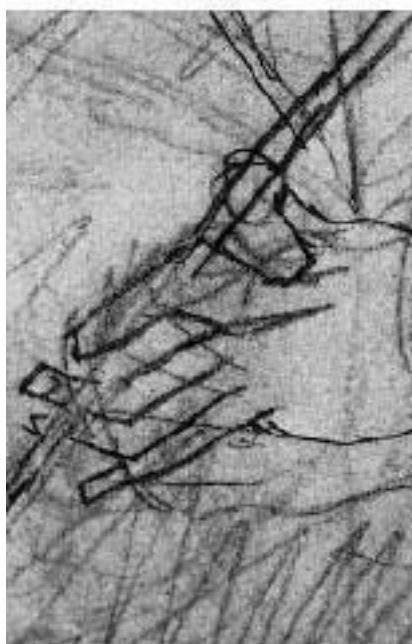
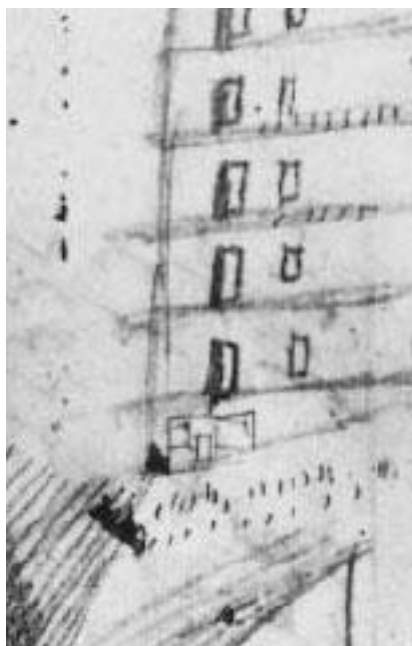
This primordial outpouring of creativity which brought the admiration of Cendrars and Apollinaire, this imperious pictorial paganism which dictates its own law to the artist, sets forth an aesthetic and an ethic of predestination which, for our part, we would like to clarify. It is in the immediacy of Chagall's pictorial practice, in the immediacy of each creative decision that his own identity lies, that he himself is to be found.

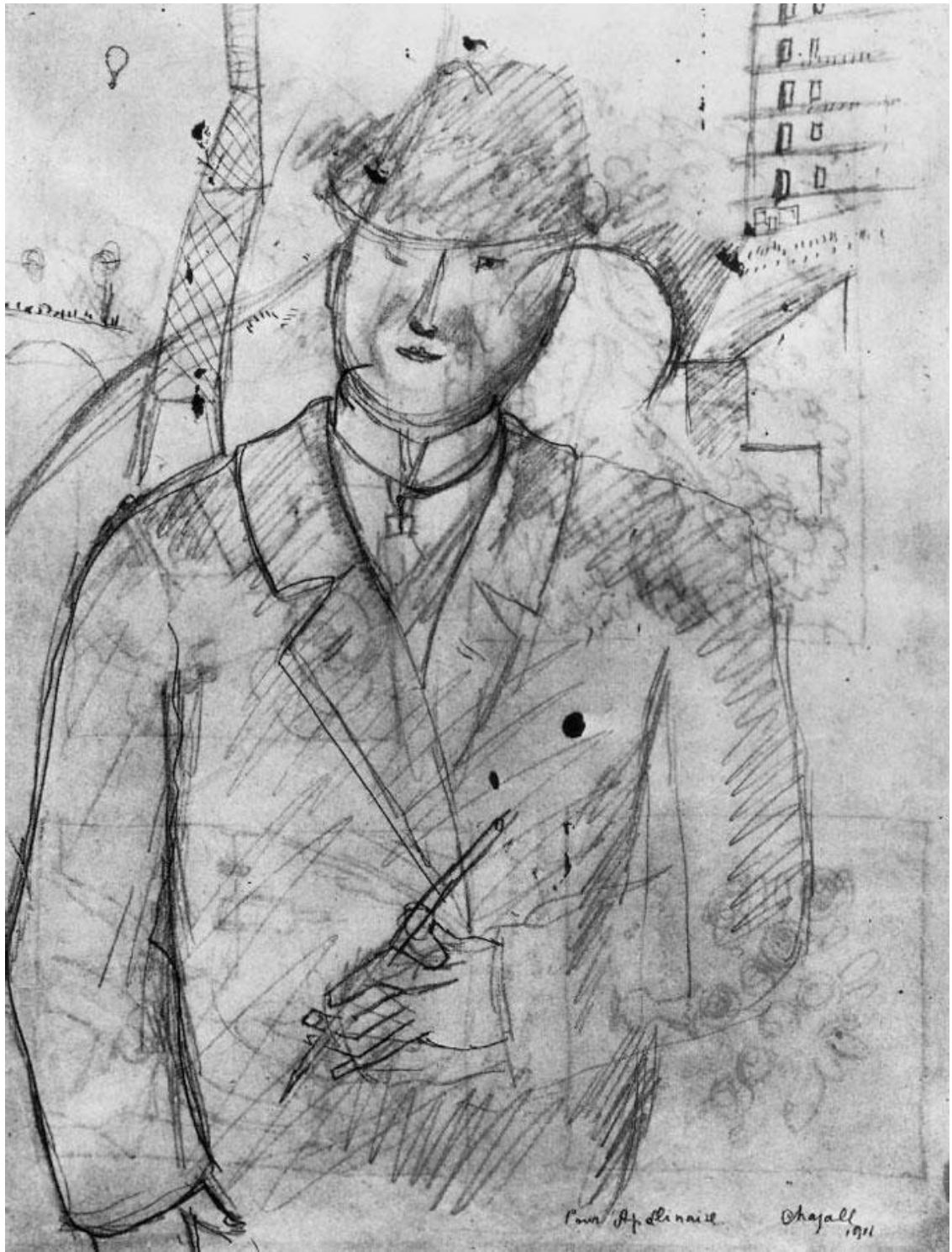




Dedicated to My Fiancée
1911
Oil on canvas, 196 × 114.5 cm
Kunstmuseum, Bern

This self-revelation is related to us by Chagall himself. The autobiographical *My Life*, written in Russian, first appeared in 1931 in Paris, in a French translation by Bella Chagall. Providing us with extremely precious evidence of a whole part of the artist's life, this text – tender, alert and droll – reveals behind its anecdotal nature the fundamental themes of his work and above all, its problematic character.





Apollinaire

1911

Pencil on paper, 33.5 × 26 cm

Collection of the artist's family, France

The tale as a whole is not moreover without some evocations of the artist's biographies studied by Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz who set out a typology. From the first lines one's attention is attracted by a singular phrase: "That which first leaped to my eyes was an angel!" Thus, the first

hours of Chagall's life were registered here specifically in visual terms. The tale begins in the tone of a parable and his life-story could not belong to anyone but a painter.





Study for “The Rain”

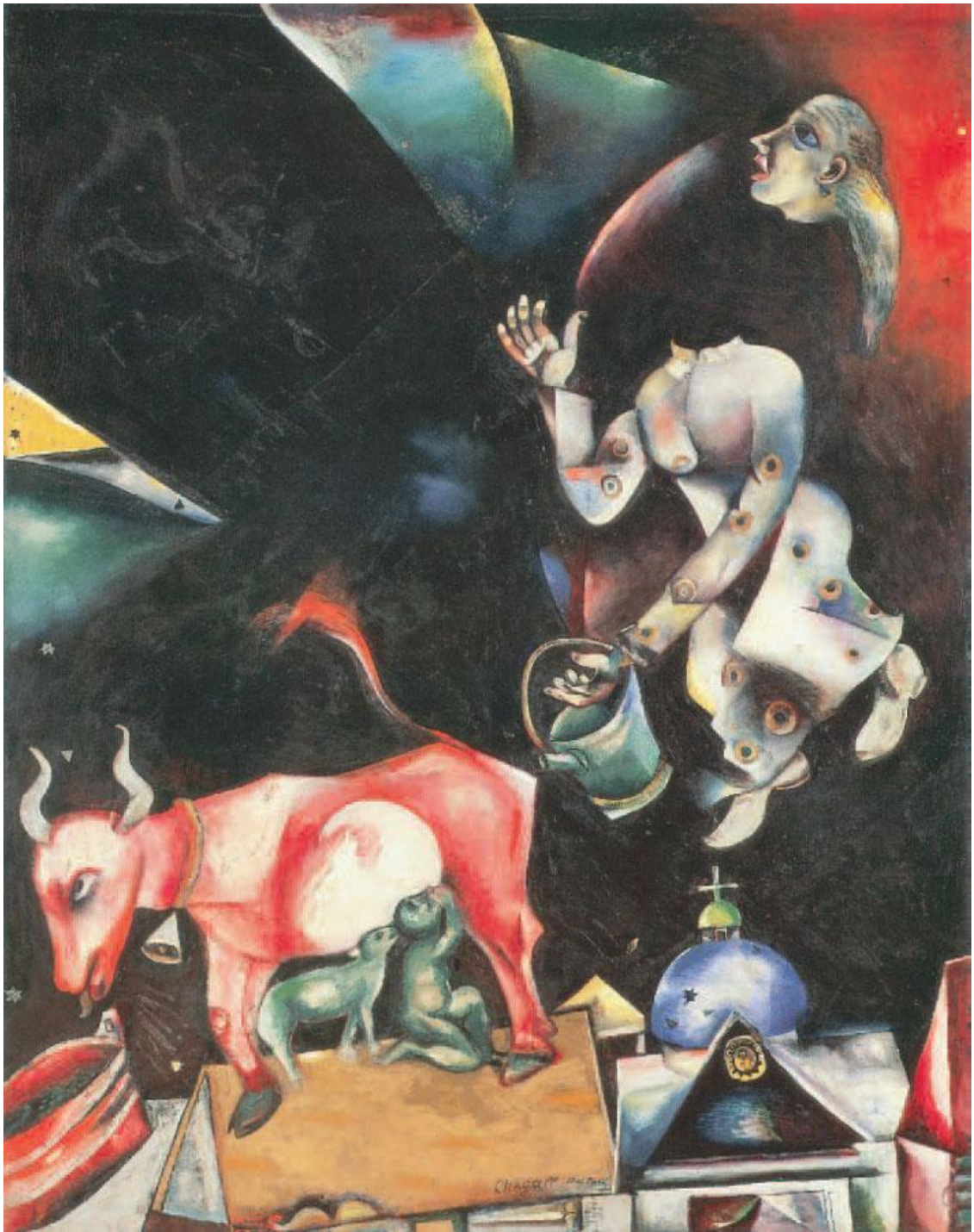
1911

Gouache and pencil on cardboard, 22.5 × 30 cm

Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

Chagall, who recalls the difficulties of his birth, writes: “But above all I was born dead. I did not want to live. Imagine a white bubble which does not want to live. As if it were stuffed with paintings by Chagall.” Thus, was living there perhaps meant to liberate that which lay inside him – painting?





To Russia, Asses and Others

1911–1912

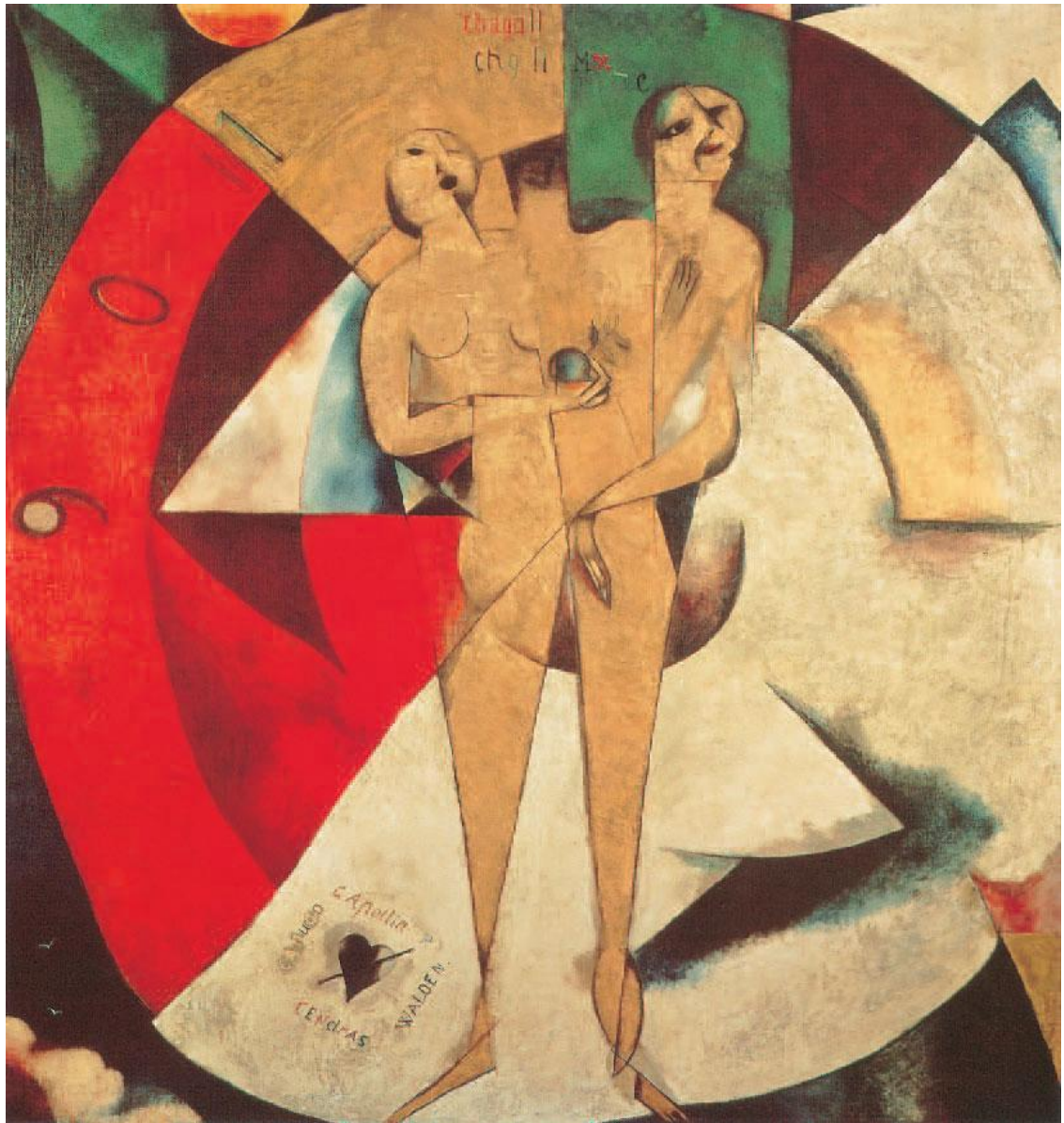
Oil on canvas, 156 × 122 cm

Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris

The theme of vocation contained within this premonitory dream, the obvious sign of a unique predestination, seems to us to be even more significant in that it determines the events in the artist's life and gives meaning to his destiny.

Marc Chagall was born into a strict Jewish family for whom the ban on representations of the human figure had the weight of dogma.





Hommage à Apollinaire
1911–1912
Oil on canvas, 109 × 198 cm
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

If one is unaware of the nature of traditional Jewish education, one can hardly imagine the transgressive force, the fever of being which propelled the young Chagall when he flung himself on the journal *Niva* (Field) to copy from it a portrait of the composer Rubinstein. This education was based on the historic law of Divine Election and covered the religious side of life only.

Le Saoul (The Drinker)
1911–1912
Oil on canvas, 85 × 115 cm
Private collection





The transmission to the very core of the Jewish hearth was essentially effected through oral means. Each prayer, each recitation from the Torah or the Talmud imposed on the believer was in a sing-song voice; reading lessons were held out loud; everyday life was given rhythm by the repetitive times of the ritual practice of songs and on the sabbath day, solemn benedictions. Each Jewish house is a place made holy by the liturgy of the word.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.