

Marc Chagall, Master of Colour

Stern Pissarro Gallery, 66 St James's Street, London



Where: Stern Pissarro
Gallery, 66 St
James's Street,
London SW1 1NE

Times: Monday to Friday
10:00 - 18:00 and
Saturday 10:00 -
17:00

About the event

“When Matisse dies, Chagall will be the only painter left who understands what colour is.”

- Pablo Picasso

Mayfair's Stern Pissarro Gallery will host a major Marc Chagall exhibition from 16 June – 16 July 2016. The exhibition will include over forty oil paintings and works on paper.

Learning that 24 Chagalls were being stored in a bank vault in Switzerland, the owners of the gallery, David Stern and Lélia Pissarro, decided to trace down the collectors. Purchased from Marc Chagall's son forty years ago, these pieces had remained in the same family's vault since then, with the sole exception of being released to a 1989 Chagall exhibition at the Kunstmuseum in Bonn where they were all displayed. These pieces are particularly significant as they were preliminary works for the artist's Verve publications that he started working on in the 1930s and after extensive work were published in 1956 and 1960 as a series of lithographs illustrating the Hebrew bible.

Chagall once stated, “It has always seemed to me, and it seems to me still, that the bible is the greatest source of poetry of all time.” In these unique pieces Chagall the painter-poet creates unorthodox biblical depictions using Eastern European interpretations as well as displaying surprising depth of emotion, allowing room for several interpretations.

According to David Stern, “This will be the last time these works will be owned by a single collector; seeing these 24 works all together should be a treat to the eye, as well as something quite rare.”

The international popularity of Chagall is connected to his love and use of colour. This exhibition focuses on how brilliant colours infuse Chagall's canvases with a dreamlike, non-realistic simplicity. Through the use of vivid colours, Chagall transcends a pictorial language intertwined with symbolism rooted in Russian folklore, Jewish tradition and the love for his first wife and muse Bella.

Between 1937 to 1945 Chagall created a triptych to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution in Russia, titled in sequence Resistance, Resurrection, Liberation, these paintings are on permanent display at the Chagall museum in Nice. The final preparation version for Liberation will be included in the exhibition, on loan from a private collection.

This exhibition offers a unique opportunity for the London public to see works from various periods of Chagall's extensive career covering themes of Jewish tradition and his home town of Russia.