

## PORTFOLIO COPY

### BACKGROUND READING FOR ART PRESENTERS

Marc Chagall (Mark Sha GAHL) (1887-1984)

Source: My Weekly Reader Teaching Guide for Art Gallery II-1964

Marc Chagall was born in Russia. There were many church towers in his town. He was brought up in a very religious family and had many aunts and uncles. One of his uncles played the violin and is often in Chagall's paintings. Chagall left home at the age of seventeen with only a few coins in his pocket and went to study art in the big city of St. Petersburg. At twenty-one he went to Paris, France. Most of his early paintings were memories from his youth. Later on he created stained glass windows for the temple in Jerusalem.

Chagall painted figures and objects that sometimes float about. The paintings have a joyous quality that few paintings of that time had. They also have very bright colors. He included geometric shapes like triangles and squares in the paintings.

In the painting that we are going to look at "I and the Village", it is as much fun as it is beautiful. The eye of the cow, centered in the middle of the picture, sees many things. Chagall shows us the village from many points of view, right side up and upside down. The happiness of the artist and the life of the village is shown by the colorful beads worn by the cow and the smile on the lips of the person on the right.

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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### ART PRESENTER PROGRAM

First Grade

#### *I and the Village* Marc Chagall

1. What is a village?

(This painting is filled with memories of the village in which the artist grew up.)

2. What are some of the things that you see in the painting?

#### **Description:**

The painting can be broken down into **five** parts: 1) The first part (point to the top right)

is how he remembers his home town with a church, houses, and two people.

**Q:** Do you notice anything unusual about this town? (woman and houses are upside down)

2) Below the town is a man with a green face.

**Q:** Who do you think it is? (Some think it is the artist himself.)

3) At the bottom of the painting, we see a hand holding a branch.

**Q:** What is it holding? (flowers)

4) Next to that we see something that looks like a bouncing ball.

**Q:** Whose toy might it be? (The artist's)

5) Last, we see the head of the lamb with a milkmaid inside it.

#### **Color:**

**Q:** Does the artist use many colors or just a few? Are they bright or dull?  
Let's name some of the colors in the painting. What color do you think is meant to be the most important color?

#### **Design:**

**Q:** Besides the people, what shapes are used in the painting? Are they all in one spot or all over?

**Line:**

**Q:** Do you see any lines in the painting? What are some of the different kinds of lines? (straight, curved, wiggly, zigzag)

\*Sometimes Chagall created a line without actually painting it. He placed a light and dark shape next to each other. That made a line.

**Size:**

**Q:** Are all the objects the same size? Why do you think it is important to make things different sizes? (It makes it more interesting.)

**Reaction:**

**Q:** How does this painting make you feel? (happy, laughing, sad, etc.???)

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EXTENDED ACTIVITIES TO ACCOMPANY

*I and the Village*

Marc Chagall

### 1. Crayon rubbing

Materials: Circles, triangles, squares and other shapes cut from heavy paper. (a plastic

bag of shapes is included for your use)

Leaves, textured cloth or book covers, sandpaper and other objects that give varied textures.

Crayons, white paper

If possible have pieces of crayons without the paper so crayons can better be used to rub on their sides.

Give children paper and have them take turns using various textured surfaces.

Encourage

them to use different colors for different shapes. Discuss overlapping of shapes and colors. Place textured materials and shapes under paper and press hard with crayon to do rubbing.

### 2. There is a sample of a paper with lines and curves in the red bag. You could make copies of it for the students. These lines and curves are similar to the ones in the painting *I and the Village*. Students could then color and fill in the shapes with fanciful objects. (faces, toys, etc.)

Materials: copied paper with line/curves, crayons