

## **“Chagall – Stained Glass Windows for Jerusalem” Exhibition at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs – 01/18/1961**

00:00:20

*Marc Chagall:* Chagall, One of the Greatest Painters of the Twentieth Century Marc Chagall, friend of Apollinaire, Cendrars, Max Jacob, Modigliani. Chagall who gave his eyes back to childhood and was, according to André Breton, one of the precursors of surrealism, Marc Chagall, who sang the song of Bella with colors and dreams, is presenting the stained glassed windows that he's just made for Jerusalem at the Jardin des Tuileries until September. A special building was constructed behind the Pavillon de Marsan to house these precious manifestations of contemporary art.

00:00:50

*Luc Bérimont:* Marc Chagall, it would appear that your painting is rather close to stained glass. But how did you end up doing stained glass?

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*Marc Chagall:* You know, it's like I already said recently. It always seems to me that destiny is what pushes me towards one craft or another. For example, Vollard nudged me towards etching and books. I did Gogol, La Fontaine, the Bible. When someone's behind me, he pushes me towards a given craft. I was living in Venice. I was forced to make ceramics. And all of a sudden, people were approaching me about the Plateau d'Assy, to make stained glass windows and for the cathedral of Metz. And afterwards, it was the Hadassah societies from America who asked me to make the twelve stained glass windows, which is to say the twelve biblical tribes. There's something that pushes me. There you have it. And I was happy to accept. I worked in Reims, in Jacques Simon's workshop, with help from Charles Marq and I made this. And now the government, the minister Malraux has been so nice. He was willing to build a pavilion where these things will be exhibited, tomorrow actually, and I'm grateful. I'm happy to be doing this.

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*Luc Bérimont:* For you is there a major difference between painting, painting on canvas and painting on glass, in a way?

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*Marc Chagall:* Oh yes.

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*Luc Bérimont:* Is it completely different?

00:02:19

*Marc Chagall:* It's the color. It's the painting of the color that comes from the sky. And you, one must, excuse me, deserve, so that you won't be let go, let go by this cloud that's crossing, that nourishes and that enters the desires of the spectators. Yes, I can't explain my opinion of this problem for very long. It's about feelings. There are the theories. You can have a lot of theories in your mind. It stays in your mind, but that luminosity that comes from the window, like the luminosity that comes from the paintings, it's about destiny, gifts, I don't know how to explain this to you. And the technique is in your soul.

00:03:04

*Luc Bérimont:* But I imagine that it's something completely different, between the cartoon we make for a stained glass window and the stained glass window itself?

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00:03:12

*Marc Chagall:* Oh no, non, no. I’ve made cartoons, we’ve made cartoons, that’s painting.

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*Luc Bérimont:* Yes.

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*Marc Chagall:* And afterwards, to make it become the painting of the sky, that’s another story. Because when you see the exhibition, there are mockups, but they weren’t copied. They were transformed and retrieved from the studio, but that’s something else entirely.

00:03:34

*Luc Bérimont:* And obviously there’s a collaboration.

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*Marc Chagall:* Oh yes, with artisans, you know it was the studio of... I don’t know from which century you know, but I’m lucky to end up with artisans who are flexible, right? Well, I kind of hypnotized them, as one should, and what comes of it comes of it.

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*Luc Bérimont:* The theme you chose is...

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*Marc Chagall:* The theme is the biblical tribes and there wasn’t much in terms of documentation. There’s just one psalm, if it can be said, in the Bible, where Jacob, before he died, blesses his children and speaks about each child. He characterizes them: “you are this and that and this,” you know, he has sons he scolds. He has sons like Joseph, of whom he speaks very highly. That’s all there is. A little later there’s the passage where Moses speaks to the children of Jacob. That’s all the documentation. But even though I can’t travel through time in 1931, when I did the Bible, when I got the commission to do the Bible, if I hadn’t gone on three trips, three journeys, to Israel, to Palestine, back then, I wouldn’t be able to do this.

00:04:41

*Luc Bérimont:* Yes, but what counts isn’t necessarily the historical data, but rather the world of Chagall.

00:04:46

*Marc Chagall:* I can’t speak about either history nor Chagall, because I’m not a wise man and I’m not a Chagall critic either.