

Marc Chagall's French passport

February 24th 1941

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

AMIC-1A-0006-001

Removal of Marc Chagall's French citizenship

May 29th 1943

Handwritten document

Archives Nationales, Paris

Removal of Marc Chagall's French citizenship

February 24th 1945

Typewritten form filled out in handwriting in French

Archives Nationales, Paris

**Denationalization commission:
“Russian Israelite, nationalization
without national interest”**

October 10th 1940

Archives Nationales, Paris

Facsimile

Le Monde Illustré **(Ilustrirte Welt), no. 1**

February 18th 1940

Magazine in Yiddish

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

Current affairs magazine, war news, and satirical drawings.
On the cover, *White Crucifixion* (1938), by Marc Chagall.

Marc and Ida Chagall in Marseille

1940

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

Exhibition print

Marc Chagall, "Down with Jews"

Gordes, fall of 1940

Text in Russian

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

Taking refuge with his family in Gordes (Vaucluse), where he thought they were safe, the artist, overcome with sadness and a feeling of guilt, relives the experience of the pogroms in Russia in the early 20th century, described with angst in these notes.

AMIC-3A-0023-015

Gordes, fall of 1940

Down with the Jews in France

Writings on the doors of my house and in the surroundings, and in all the upper part of the village. Jews, in the town, there are two, my wife and I. At dusk I am at the painter André Lhote's house. We hear Pétain's speech. Now I understand. We deserve what's happening to us. If only our Jewish leaders would not seek "the honors", etc. above all else and would work for the community...! I am ashamed of being surrounded by such "brothers". Perhaps they are preparing a generalized ghetto for us or a concentration camp for the postwar? Not a "ghetto" where I was born poetically, in some way, and where I lived in Czarist Russia, but another: living in chains, naked and with a right to nothing, like all the other Jewish mortals.

[I remember the first time that I arrived in Paris, in 1910-1911, I said to myself: here I am no longer a Jew from the ghetto. In 1940, in France, I have been made to understand that I am Jewish and that I am not at home... Mother, you are in your coffin, you have stayed down there, in the hill of Vitebsk, covered in worms and mud from the German bombs, in the earth, under the rocks I would lay down on to cry on and beg that you pray for the son and his brothers, as your sisters of antiquity had done, Rachael, Sarah, Leah, and Rebecca. Here I am choking, persecuted, a foreigner. What can I do with my "talent", with my paintings, which may be destroyed? Save me. Pray. I am deprived of the feeling of peace. I can no longer paint pictures under the impression that some French people, many, those that are called intellectuals, are happy not to be Jewish inside, and that none of this is their business [...] Man has made me feel like a dog. I am not at home anywhere. A Foreigner in all places. [...]

October 19th 1940

The French have also passed their "Jewish laws". What a shame it is to read them, poor me... It is the same France. Should I stay? Or flee in shame and pain of myself? Flee from everyone else. Flee where? It's raining. The sky is gray even in the south, in the "free" zone of France. [...]

October 20th 1940

When Hitlerianism took over in France, the powerful Jews saved themselves by signing up to the rescue and travel lists to America, and I was forgotten. Do what you wish. What beautiful people, the Jews... What an honor it is for me to be part of them.]

Letter from Varian Fry and telegram from Alfred Barr to Marc Chagall

December 17th 1940 and January 1941, Marseille,
New York

Letter in French; telegram in French

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

In a letter sent from the American Aid Center in Marseille, Varian Fry informs Marc Chagall that he has received a telegram from Alfred Barr, the director of MoMA, who is expecting the painter in New York in order to organize a retrospective. He should arrive with all his works. Fry offers his help to obtain the visas.

Letter from the Centre Américain de Secours (Marseille) to Marc Chagall

Marseille, April 15th 1941

Letter in French

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

The Centre Américain de Secours informs Marc Chagall that a place has been reserved for him and his wife on the Lisbon to New York journey aboard the ship Serpa Pinto, set to sail on May 24th. Annotation in pencil: "Companhia Nacional de Navegação Rua Insitututo Virgilio Machado".

Letter from Bella Chagall to Ida Chagall

May-June 1942

Letter in Russian

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

The Chagall couple lives as refugees in the countryside of the United States, in New Preston (Connecticut). Bella Chagall comments on what is happening in France and on the mandate of carrying the yellow star in the free zone.

AMIC-2A-0179-045

Apparently, it seems that in "free" France Jews must wear yellow armor! It's as if Hitler said: the French themselves want it. No one understands! But, anyway, it's all right; this armor will be worn by Jews on their chest as if it were a Talit, and the Star of David will be like the word of God on the exhausted body of the Jew. And the others, the non-Jews, will be ashamed of walking around naked like swine.

Marc and Bella Chagall during the opening of crates containing the works travelling to New York

1941

Marc and Ida Chagall, Paris

Exhibition print

Artists in Exile, New York, **Pierre Matisse Gallery**

March 1942

Exhibition catalog in English

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

Cover of the catalog and interior double page with the signatures of Pavel Tchelitchew, Roberto Matta, Kurt Seligmann, André Masson, Amédée Ozenfant, Marc Chagall, Yves Tanguy, Fernand Léger, Jacques Lipchitz, Max Ernst, Ossip Zadkine, Eugène Berman, André Breton, and Piet Mondrian

Appearing in the photograph from left to right, in front row: Roberto Matta, Ossip Zadkine, Yves Tanguy, Max Ernst, Marc Chagall and Fernand Léger; in the second row: André Breton, Piet Mondrian, André Masson, Amédée Ozenfant, Jacques Lipchitz, Pavel Tchelitchew, Kurt Seligmann, and Eugene Berman.

Marc Chagall and Solomon Mikhoels in New York

1943

Accordion photo album

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

These photographs were taken during Itzik Feffer and Solomon Mikhoels' trip to the United States in 1943.

Eynikeyt-Unity

1943

Magazine in Yiddish

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

Eynikeyt was the organ of the American Committee of Jewish Writers, Artists and Scientists, published in New York, in Yiddish [July 1943].

On the cover, a photograph of Itzik Feffer and Solomon Mikhoels.

Telegram from Solomon Mikhoels and Shajno Epstein to Marc and Bella Chagall

Moscow, April 25th 1944

Telegram in English

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

Solomon Mikhoels and Shajno Epstein thank Chagall for his message directed to the third meeting of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. In the words of Mikhoels, Chagall had become an “anti-fascist artist” involved in numerous Jewish organizations along with his wife, Bella, and had dressed his art in twilight in order to paint “works that [...] would grant peace and would be like tears hanging in the sky” .

Union of Russian Jews information request form

February 2nd 1943

Marc and Ida Chagall Archive, Paris

AMIC-2A-0171-007