

News Release

Press Office

T 212.423.3271

F 212.423.3232

Exhibition Focuses on Chaim Soutine's Intense Paintings of Slaughtered Animals

Chaim Soutine: Flesh
May 4–September 16, 2018

New York, NY, February 20, 2018 – The Jewish Museum will present an exhibition of 32 paintings by the artist Chaim Soutine (1893–1943), the Expressionist known for his gestural and densely painted canvases. ***Chaim Soutine: Flesh*** highlights the unique visual conceptions and painterly energy that the artist brought to the tradition of still-life. Soutine's remarkable paintings depicting hanging fowl, beef carcasses, and rayfish are now considered among his greatest artistic achievements. These works epitomize his fusion of Old Master influences with the tenets of painterly modernism. Virtuoso technique, expressive color, and disorienting and unexpected compositions endow Soutine's depictions of slaughtered animals with a striking visual power and emotional impact.

The exhibition, on view from May 4 through September 16, 2018, will include works selected from major public and private collections in the U.S. and abroad. Lenders include the Barnes Foundation; Albright-Knox Art Gallery; Art Institute of Chicago; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Musée de l'Orangerie; and Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, among others.

In 1913, at the age of 20, Soutine moved to Paris. He painted landscapes at various locations in France and created an important body of work in portraiture. *Chaim Soutine: Flesh* will present his work in still-life, from the artist's early years in Paris and Céret, through the early 1930s, showing his development from more traditional conceptions to the impressive achievement of the paintings of the mid-1920s. Pushing the limits of the tradition, in tableaux evocative of violent dislocations, these paintings offer a tour de force of visual expression and visceral effect.

Soutine's highly personal approach to the subject of still-life and the depictions of hanging fowl and beef carcasses were influenced by his childhood memories of the *shtetl* of Smilovitchi in the Russian empire (present-day Belarus). The strict Jewish observance of dietary laws, requiring the ritual slaughter of fowl and meat, provides a context for these emotionally charged images. Soutine's study of Old Master paintings in the Louvre also impacted his dramatic and novel compositions of a single object isolated in space. Rembrandt's famous painting, *The Flayed Ox* (1655), and the still-lives of Goya, Chardin, and Courbet were of particular importance to Soutine.

Soutine painted directly from life; he needed to have the motif in front of him. He would bring dead fowl and rabbits, and carcasses of beef, into his studio to use as subjects for his paintings. The motif began to occupy the entire canvas, allowing the artist to engage with the images as a painted surface. Soutine's haunting imagery, energized brushstrokes, and rich paint have served as touchstones for subsequent generations of artists, from Francis Bacon, Willem de Kooning, and Jackson Pollock, to contemporary artists such as Frank Auerbach, Cecily Brown, and Damien Hirst.

The Jewish Museum
1109 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10128
TheJewishMuseum.org

Under the auspices of
The Jewish Theological Seminary

Jewish
Museum

The exhibition is organized by Stephen Brown, Neubauer Family Foundation Associate Curator, The Jewish Museum, with consulting curators Esti Dunow and Maurice Tuchman, authors of *Chaim Soutine (1893–1943) catalogue raisonné* (1993). The exhibition is designed by Galia Solomonoff and Adriana Barcenas of SAS/Solomonoff Architecture Studio.

Support

Chaim Soutine: Flesh is made possible through support from Barbara and Ira A. Lipman, Linda and Ilan Kaufthal, Jeanine Parisier Plottel and Roland Plottel, Dr. Claude Ghez, the Neubauer Family Foundation, and the Family and Friends of Sally Lindenbaum.

About the Jewish Museum

Located on New York City's famed Museum Mile, the Jewish Museum is a distinctive hub for art and Jewish culture for people of all backgrounds. Founded in 1904, the Museum was the first institution of its kind in the United States and is one of the oldest Jewish museums in the world. Devoted to exploring art and Jewish culture from ancient to contemporary, the Museum offers diverse exhibitions and programs, and maintains a unique collection of nearly 30,000 works of art, ceremonial objects, and media reflecting the global Jewish experience over more than 4,000 years.

Location: 1109 Fifth Avenue at 92nd Street, New York City
Hours: Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 11am to 5:45pm; Thursday, 11am to 8pm; and Friday, 11am to 4pm.
Admission: \$18.00 for adults; \$12.00 for senior citizens; and \$8.00 for students. Free for visitors 18 and under and Jewish Museum members. Pay What You Wish on Thursdays from 5pm to 8pm. Free on Saturdays and select Jewish holidays
Information: The public may call 212.423.3200 or visit TheJewishMuseum.org

#

Press contacts:

Anne Scher
212.423.3271 or ascher@thejm.org

Daniela Stigh
212.423.3330 or dstigh@thejm.org

General Press Inquiries:
pressoffice@thejm.org

