

They say Courbet could give in his nudes all the character of Paris. I want to show all that is Paris in the carcass of an ox.
—Chaim Soutine

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#ChaimSoutine

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Still Life with Rayfish (detail), c. 1924. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Mr. and Mrs. Klaus G. Peris Collection, 1997 (1997.149.1). Artwork © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; image provided by The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, New York



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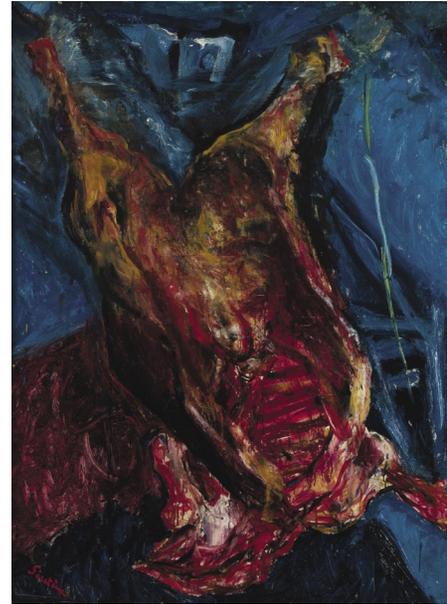
JEWISH MUSEUM

Gallery Guide

Chaim Soutine: Flesh

May 4 – September 16, 2018





Chaim Soutine (1893–1943) is one of the twentieth century’s great painters of still life. In the Paris of the 1920s, Soutine was a double outsider—an immigrant Jew and a modernist. Guided by his expressive artistic instincts, he both embraced the traditional genre of still life and exploded it.

Still-life painting offers an opportunity for an artist to display technical skill and to explore aspects of color, composition, and brushwork. At the Louvre, Soutine studied the canvases of the Old Masters: careful and elaborate arrangements of flowers, fruit, and other food, including hunters’ trophies of game. He transformed

such precedents into contorted and turbulent paintings of dead animals, imbued with suffering and anxiety.

Soutine was born in a Jewish village in the Lithuanian part of western Russia (now Belarus). The region was plagued with anti-Semitic violence—thousands of Jews were killed in pogroms during his childhood. At age twenty, after studying art at the academy in Vilnius for three years, he moved to Paris, the artistic and intellectual center of Europe in the twenties. There, he lived and worked alongside other Jewish emigré artists, including Moïse Kisling, Ossip Zadkine, Jacques Lipchitz, and Amedeo Modigliani, who became a close friend.

Soutine’s harsh and wrenching portrayals—of beef carcasses, plucked fowl, fish, and game—create a parallel between the animal and human, between beauty and pain. His still-life paintings, produced over a period of thirty years, express with visceral power his painterly mastery and personal passion.

Stephen Brown
Neubauer Family Foundation
Associate Curator

Esti Dunow and Maurice Tuchman
Consulting Curators

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

The Artist’s Studio, Cité Falguière, c. 1916. Oil on canvas, 25 ¾ × 19 ¾ in. (65.1 × 50 cm). Collection of Barbara K. and Ira A. Lipman. Image provided by Bridgeman Images

Fish, Peppers, Onions, c. 1919. Oil on canvas, 23 ¾ × 29 in. (60 × 73.5 cm). Barnes Foundation, Merion and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Carcass of Beef, c. 1925. Oil on canvas, 55 ¼ × 42 ¾ in. (140.3 × 107.6 cm). Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, Room of Contemporary Art Fund, 1939. Artwork © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Hanging Turkey, c. 1925. Oil on millboard, 37 ¾ × 28 ¾ in. (95.9 × 72.1 cm). The Henry and Rose Pearlman Foundation, on long term loan to the Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey. Artwork © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; image provided by the Henry and Rose Pearlman Collection / Art Resource, New York