



GALERIE THOMAS

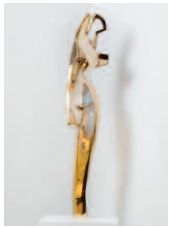
proudly presents

La Ruche

**ART BASEL
MIAMI BEACH 2011**



ALEXANDER
ARCHIPENKO



Silver Torso
1931



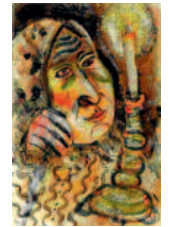
CONSTANTIN
BRANCUSI



Portrait de Femme
1918



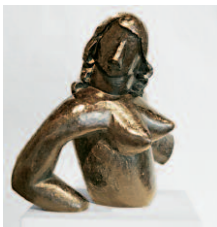
MARC
CHAGALL



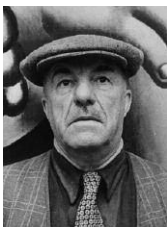
Femme a la bougie
1926



HENRI
LAURENS



Baigneuse
1931



FERNAND
LÉGER



Les deux femmes à l'oiseau
1942

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"Would you like to see the young geniuses in their beehive? It's a fine place, crowded of course, but the more the merrier. You'll meet some young men, whose names will be famous in all the galleries of the world in ten years. They're living from hand to mouth now and glory and love are only dreams to them, but they are passionate and sincere in the service of art, and they are indefatigable workers."¹

The beehive, aptly named for the round shape of the building and the buzzing of the place itself, was bursting with life in the beginning of the 20th Century. Formerly the wine pavilion for the World Exposition in Paris in 1900, the sculptor Alfred Boucher bought the building designed by Gustave Eiffel and had it rebuilt on the outskirts of then much smaller Paris, on the hill of Montparnasse. Divided in eight sectors for each of the three stories, La Ruche offered 24 artist studios. Luckily as an artist himself the landlord wasn't cross with his tenants about rent arrears.

In this artists' colony masters such as Constantin Brancusi, Marc Chagall, Fernand Léger, Alexander Archipenko, Jacques Lipchitz, Henri Laurens, Ossip Zadkine, Diego Rivera and Chaim Soutine lived in friendship and camaraderie, shared studios, wine, food and models. The tales of those days include masquerade balls given by the artists of the Académie des Beaux Arts, that got so out of hand, that debauchery is a mild term for what went on. About Soutine it is told, that he didn't even have a bed, but slept for years on a board propped up with two chairs, whose feet were standing in water filled cans to keep the cockroaches off. Rosalie, the owner of the restaurant Chez Rosalie, gladly and often frequented by all the artists – she wasn't too strict about payment – had a fresco by Modigliani painted over, the very day after he finished, because she did not like the look of it.

Not yet understood for their extraordinary talents and their important role in the evolution of art, most of them struggled terribly in those early years in Paris, traded their now valuable masterpieces for food, wine and a roof over their head, stole the wood from construction sites and the cobblestones from the pavement to have something to work with.

All that is left of this bygone era are these wonderful works of art, that are soaked in their spirit and leave us with a faint glimpse of their geniuses. Bulakovsky was right after all, they are nowadays known in all the galleries all over the world.

¹ Description of La Ruche by Russian sculptor Bulakovsky from Mavreva. Life with the Painters of La Ruche, Constable, 1972



Man with Guitar
1925



JACQUES
LIPCHITZ



Cariatide
1913



AMEDEO
MODIGLIANI



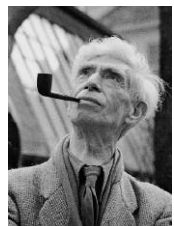
Portrait de Femme
1923



CHAIM
SOUTINE



Vieille femme
1948



OSSIP
ZADKINE

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