

*Routine*



# LANDSCHAFT IN CAGNES 1923-24

## LANDSCAPE IN CAGNES

CHAIM SOUTINE

- oil on canvas  
1923-1924  
60 x 73 cm  
23 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 28 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.  
with signature lower right
- Tuchman/Dunow/Perls L 122
- Provenance  
Jacob Goldschmidt, New York (until 1951)  
Perls Galleries, New York (1951)  
Edward A Bragaline, New York (1951, by 1953)  
Jacques Lindon, New York (until June 15, 1961)  
Private collection, Paris (since June 15, 1961)  
Private collection, Geneva  
Private collection, USA
- Exhibited  
Perls Galleries, New York 1953. Soutine. No. 11. ill.  
La Pinacothèque de Paris, Paris 2007-2008. Soutine. No. 41, p. 118, ill.  
Museum Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid 2008. Modigliani and his time. No. 121, p. 173, ill.
- Literature  
Werner, Alfred. New York: Soutine: Affinity for an Alien World. Art Digest. New York 1953.  
Vol. 28. No. 4. p. 17-18.  
Courthion, P. Soutine, Peintre du déchirant. Lausanne 1972. P. 228a, ill.  
Tuchman, Maurice, Dunow, Esti, Perls, Klaus. Chaim Soutine, Catalogue Raisonné.  
Cologne 1993. Vol. 1, p. 249, No. 122, ill.



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### LANDSCAPE IN CAGNES

CHAIM SOUTINE

Chaim Soutine had a special relationship with the south of France, not only because he spent many years painting there, but also because his most artistically significant paintings were created during his stays in Céret and Cagnes.

In 1913, Soutine came from Lithuania to Paris as a 20-year old, impoverished artist, and was drawn to the artist colony 'La Ruche' in Montparnasse, where Chagall, Léger, Archipenko, Zadkine, Kisling and Laurens also had their studios. He soon became acquainted with Amedeo Modigliani, with whom a close friendship developed, which abruptly ended with Modigliani's early death in 1920.

Nevertheless, Modigliani had a great influence on Soutine; and it was he who ensured that the Polish art dealer Leopold Zborowski, who already had Modigliani under contract, also signed Soutine. Until that point, poverty had always been a constant companion of his life, which the artist also incorporated into his still lifes: documents of bleakness and deprivation. The contract with Zborowski, promising him a daily fee of 5 Francs in return for all of his works, made the situation at least a little better.

Soutine undertook a first short trip to the south of France with Zborowski and his friend Modigliani in 1918, which led them to Vence and Cagnes-sur-Mer. Already in the following year, Zborowski sent his protégé for a longer stay in the south to Céret, near the Spanish border. Zborowski hoped that here, where Picasso and Braque celebrated Cubism, Soutine

would find inspiration. Soutine later said: "I never touched Cubism myself, although I did feel its attraction. When I painted in Céret and Cagnes, I surrendered arbitrarily to its influence, and the results were not entirely banal. But ultimately, Céret in itself is anything but banal."

Soutine's residence in Céret lasted until 1922, these were three lonely and hard years for the painter. He created more than 100 works, mainly landscapes. Their composition and painting style respect no other painting tradition, they are expressive, eruptive, wild and abstract. Back in Paris, Soutine instantly gained recognition when the American collector Albert C. Barnes acquired a lot of more than 50 works, mainly from the Céret period. However, Soutine soon distanced himself from his Céret paintings and destroyed those still in his possession or any he could lay his hands on.

Already at the beginning of 1923, Zborowski encouraged Soutine to undertake a second stay in southern France, this time in Cagnes-sur-Mer, where Renoir had also lived from 1907 until his death in 1919 and created his late work.

Soutine didn't feel at ease here either; the Mediterranean countryside offered him no feeling of home. His creative urge was nonetheless undiminished, and the result were expressive, almost rhythmic works demonstrating characteristics entirely different from those of the Céret paintings. He painted the small town of Cagnes, which is located on a hill, in





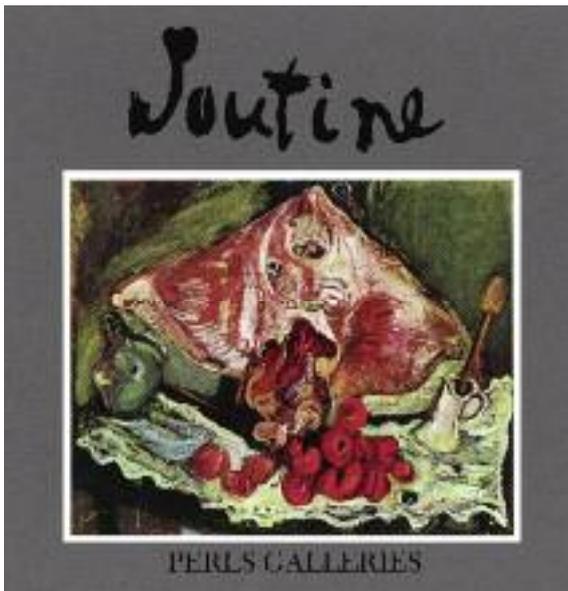
View of Cagnes, c. 1900

Pierre-August Renoir  
Terrace à Cagnes  
1905  
Private collection

many variations. One of these is the present work, *Landscape in Cagnes* from 1923: The powerful stroke of the brush immediately draws the viewer into the town on the hill. However, the pull also seems to encompass the surrounding landscape and the houses, which adapt themselves to the curves of the street in an amorphous vortex. The palette is Mediterranean and changes between powerful ochre tones, the raw green of the southern vegetation and brilliant red, which in places describes the roofs of the houses and in complementary contrast loosens up the green parts of the composition, framed by the shimmering cobalt of the sky. The differences to the Céret paintings are obvious: the previously bristled, jagged characteristic style, the

dark colours and the almost hectic sensibility of this period have made way for brighter colours and an amorphous characteristic style that nonetheless maintains the movement of the composition and the colours. However, the movement does not disturb the painting composition, Soutine contains it and generates a defining poignancy in the process that no viewer is immune to. While the composition in the Céret paintings appears to burst out of the confining edges of the painting and is often difficult to read, the motifs in the Cagnes paintings are once again recognisable. Soutine's painting style becomes more descriptive and calm, and allows the eye to dwell in the composition of the painting.

## PROVENANCE KLAUS PERLS



Born in Berlin in 1912, Klaus Perls first moved to Paris in 1933, where his mother opened a gallery, then he moved on to New York. He opened his own gallery in 1935, relocating it to a town house in Madison Avenue in 1954, where he and his wife lived above the gallery. Early on, he considered Soutine one of the greatest masters of the twentieth century, and almost every painting by Soutine sold in the USA passed through his hands.

Perls' magnanimous gifts of masterpieces by Soutine and other masters of modern art, as well as his collection of African sculptures, are all proudly on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Perls Galleries closed in 1997, and Klaus Perls died in the summer of 2008.

Esti Dunow and Maurice Tuchman recall: "We were privileged to work with Klaus Perls as co-authors on the Chaim Soutine catalogue raisonné published in 1993. After an intense work session, he always enjoyed raising his glass and toasting Soutine 'to Chaim, l'chaim' (to life)."

## CHAIM SOUTINE

SMILOVICH / MINSK 1893 – 1943 PARIS



### THE YEARS 1923-24

The first article about Soutine, written by the gallerist and patron of the artist, Paul Guillaume, appeared in the magazine 'Les Arts à Paris' in January of 1923. Paul Guillaume organised a major exhibition for the collection of Albert C. Barnes in the same year in his gallery. The exhibition was received positively in Paris, and Barnes felt encouraged to also present his collection to an American public, but limited to contemporary art, including 19 works by Soutine. The presentation at the Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia was unpopular with the public; a major disappointment for the collector.

As a result of Barnes and his sensational major purchase of works from Zborowski, Soutine not only became famous overnight; his market price soared. Sales at auctions increased, and Zborowski soon paid his artist 25 francs, instead of the original 5 francs per day. The days of poverty were finally numbered for Soutine.

He returned to the south of France to paint at the beginning of the year, but was unable to find a new home here, and interrupted his stay in Cagnes-sur-Mer several times to return to Paris. Here he searched flea markets for old canvasses from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which he painted over and used for his own works. Numerous visits to the old masters in the Louvre inspired his works. The encounter with Siméon Chardin's still life *La raie*, for example, led to the series of still lifes featuring a ray.

Amedeo Modigliani  
Chaim Soutine  
1916  
Private collection