

DAHLOV IPCAR


BLUE MOONS & MENAGERIES



Dahlov at Work, photo by Pat Jones, courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar.

It never occurred to me
that anyone might live a life
without art.

– Dahlov Ipcar



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DAHLOV IPCAR

BLUE MOONS & MENAGERIES

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INTRODUCTION

Blue Moons & Menageries presents a wide array of paintings, drawings, prints, and sculptures by one of Maine’s best-known artists, Dahlov Ipcar. Born in Windsor, Vermont on November 12, 1917 to Marguerite and William Zorach—themselves prominent Modern artists—Ipcar maintained a prolific career as an artist until her death, at the age of 99, on February 10, 2017. Throughout her long life, she produced thousands of paintings, drawings, woodcuts, lithographs, and textile sculptures, some of which are presented publicly for the first time in this exhibition. Ipcar showed her works regularly, with numerous solo and group exhibitions to her credit. She also produced eleven murals in public schools, post offices, hospitals, and libraries, and her works were featured in the Art in Embassies program of the US State Department. Among her many awards, Ipcar received honorary degrees from Bates College, Colby College, and University of Maine; the Kerlan Award for Children’s Literature from University of Minnesota; the Farnsworth Museum’s Maine in America Award; and, with her husband, Adolph, she received the Maine State Award from the Maine Arts Commission. *Blue Moons*

& *Menageries* is Ipcar’s fourth and largest solo exhibition at the Bates College Museum of Art, and it is the largest exhibition focused on a single artist the museum has organized.

As Sara Torres Vega discusses in her enlightening essay for this catalogue, Ipcar enjoyed an unorthodox—but excellent—art education that served her well throughout her life. Nurtured by supportive parents who were passionate about art and art pedagogy,

Ipcar quickly developed technical mastery. She was only 19 years old when she made the earliest picture included in *Blue Moons & Menageries*, and, only two years later, she would become the first woman and the youngest artist to date to be featured in a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Her work is collected by numerous prominent museums, just a few of which include the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Farnsworth Museum of Art, and the Bates College Museum of Art.

While her career as a painter is indisputably impressive, Ipcar might be most familiar to a world-wide audience as a children’s book author and illustrator. Starting in 1945, she wrote and illustrated more than 30 children’s books; created illustrations for books written by Margaret Wise Brown, Evelyn Beyer, and John G. McCullough; and wrote several stories and novels for adults and young adults. Her books have been translated into over a dozen languages. A selection of Ipcar’s illustrations is featured in *Blue Moons & Menageries*, and several of her books are included as realia in a family-oriented reading area for the edification and enjoyment of the exhibition’s visitors.

Many of Ipcar’s books, paintings, and sculptures were influenced by her life on the farm she ran with Adolph and their two sons, Robert and Charles, and where she spent almost her entire adult life. Horses, sheep, cows, chickens, pigs, cats, and dogs were familiar to her from her daily life and her distillations of them to iconic essences appear effortless. Ipcar rarely left her farm in small-town Maine, but she travelled extensively in her imagination to Africa, South America, and other far-off places, and her dreams took her to utterly fantastical worlds. Her paintings are passports so that we may travel there, too, to see her myriad menageries by the mysterious light of blue moons.

—Anthony Shostak, Education Curator



Opossum Family - 2, 1968

Dahlov Ipcar: An Experiment in Art and Life

by Sara Torres Vega

One might say that Dahlov Ipcar was her parents' greatest experiment.¹ Her parents were Modern artists, Marguerite and William Zorach, and their experiment consisted of approaching their daughter's art education through the dictates of Modern art.

Dahlov's parents were taking part in the forging of a new art world. In that world, a different kind of art education was needed. Modern art tenets became the basis for the pedagogy the Zorachs crafted for their daughter. In doing so, they granted her what every child deserves: recognition as a unique, creative individual.

William Zorach believed that "a Modern artist's whole idea was to free himself from the academic point of view, to see the world with a view as primitive and unsophisticated as a child and then go on from there to build his own art forms and see color with a new vision."² The Zorachs felt art schools were so loaded down with tradition that they had to fight to get air into their lungs³. They had to unlearn everything they had been taught during their formal art training so as to develop their own personal style.⁴ The Zorachs' daughter was to learn in a completely different way.

Dahlov Ipcar was the result of a Modern art pedagogy that included the exposure to creative

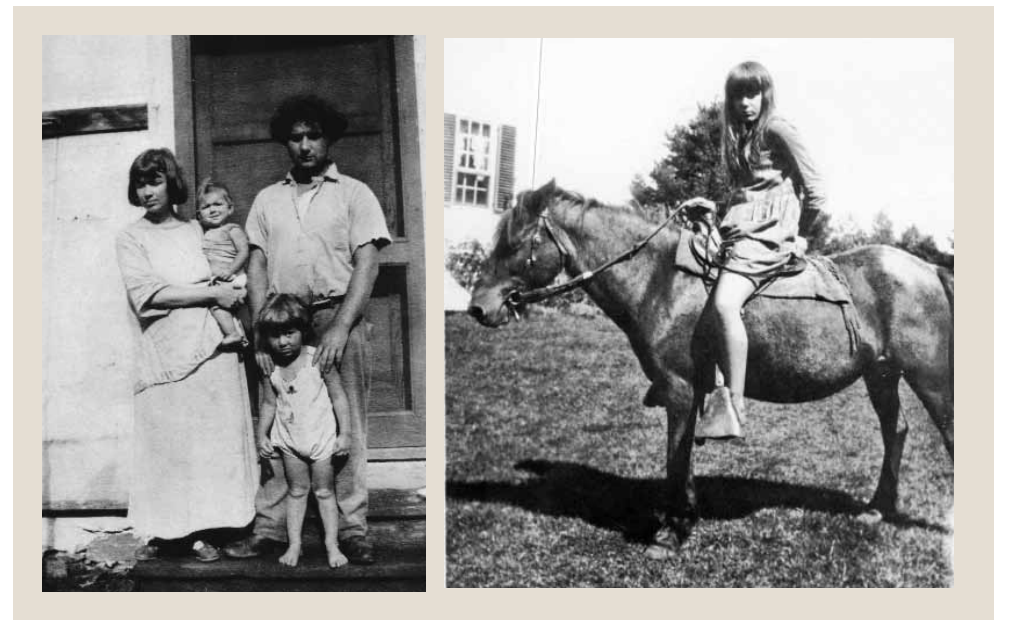
atmospheres, the development of the individual, and the cultivation of independent thinking that had as its ultimate aim the defense of art for the purpose of fuller living.

In the creative ambiance provided in the Zorach family's daily life, Dahlov was meant to develop her individual creative personality with proper stimulation and encouragement. The result of this experiment is one that no one could have anticipated. In Dahlov's freshness of imagination and the freedom and spontaneity in her handling of form and color, there is an invitation to everybody to think about the role that art plays in our lives.



Above: *Jaguar Family*, 1973
Opposite: *Marguerite Zorach, William Zorach, Tessim and Dahlov, Plainfield, NH, 1918*, photographer unknown, courtesy of the Zorach Collection, LLC.

Dahlov Riding her new pony at the Zorach House, ME, 1926, photographer unknown, courtesy of the Zorach Collection, LLC.



Creative Atmospheres: Home, School, and Nature

“It never occurred to me that anyone might live a life without art.”⁵

– *Dahlov Ipcar*



In their home, Dahlov and her elder brother, Tessim, experienced a consuming drive to live through art. The Zorachs lived at 123 West 10th Street in Greenwich Village, New York City. The “atmosphere of absolute unconventionality and freedom”⁶ that Marguerite valued in Modern art ruled in the everyday activities of the Zorach family.

Marguerite was always busy making batiks, embroidering bedspreads and clothes, hooking rugs, and painting pictures. Although William might be busy carving, he could take time out to make “a costume for Hallowe’en, all covered with moons and stars and blazing suns of genuine gold leaf.”⁷ In this environment, Zorach

pursued his life-long study that he described as the embodiment and expression of the love of a father for his family.⁸ Tessim realized very early that behind the joy of creative production, the family was constantly struggling economically.

Despite having pinched finances, the Zorachs came up with ways of transforming their humble apartment into “a house of wonders.”⁹ Marguerite explained that they “didn’t have any money to buy furniture in those days” so they “picked up little odds and ends—a chair on the street, or something here and there, for a few cents.”¹⁰ Later they would paint them with bright colors. The kitchen wall got dirty, so they “decided the only thing to do was to paint murals over it and then nobody would know it was dirty.”¹¹ The house’s floors were lead red and the walls lemon yellow. They made their little hall into a *Garden of Eden* mural, with a life-sized Adam and Eve and a red-and-white snake draped around the trunk of a decorative tree, with tropical foliage surrounding it all. William considered that there was nothing like their house in the country at the time. *The Garden of Eden* murals eventually disappeared but looking at Dahlov’s treatment of the same subject affords an opportunity to imagine how it might have been.

In their economic hardship, the Zorachs enjoyed the things that didn’t require money. They took ferries over to the Palisades (a line of steep



Above: *William Zorach with Tessim and Dahlov at 123 West 10th Street in Greenwich Village, NYC, 1924*, photographer unknown, courtesy of the Zorach Collection, LLC.
Right: *Cow and Farm*, 1923-1929, embroidery, 11.5 x 16 inches, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

The Garden of Eden
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– Sara Torres Vega

cliffs along the west side of the lower Hudson River), sketched and had picnics among the rocks and trees. They took walks in Central Park, along Riverside Drive, and on the waterfronts. Everywhere they sketched. They didn't sit around or play games. Instead, they drew each other and their friends. "Hold that pose" was a constant cry. "We evolved visions into forms,"¹² as William said. They experimented with techniques for the fun of it and enjoyed the unexpected results. They discussed life and ideas, philosophy, people, art, and money. "Life was a constant struggle, but it was also gay and rewarding."¹³

Even if the difficulties lasted for many years, Marguerite indicated with assurance that "we had



Right: *Garden of Eden*, 1961
Opposite: *Dahlov and her Dalmatian standing next to her mural for the La Follete, TN Post Office, leaned against the front steps of the Apple Shed at Robinhood Farm, ME, 1939*, photographer unknown, courtesy of the Zorach Collection, LLC.

Upper far right: *Milk Cap from Robinhood Farm- Jersey Milk, Tested Herd, Natural Milk, Georgetown, ME, 2017*, photographed by Rachel Walls, courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

Lower far right: *Horse in Autumn Landscape*, 1940, watercolor, 14 x 20.5 inches, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

a lot of confidence in ourselves as artists and a lot of faith in our way of life."¹⁴ This life, Dahlov felt, was "like a complete work of art in itself, the whole house and everything they did."¹⁵

Life, however, was not all art for Dahlov when she was in school. She attended the City and Country School, the Walden School, and Lincoln School. These followed progressive pedagogies which fostered her innate curiosity. She was the child child for whom progressive education was made. She was "endlessly creative,"¹⁶ and as a result she was completely absorbed in the school projects. As an adult, Dahlov would say that "progressive education brings out the best in a creative person."¹⁷ Her father, who pioneered in children's education, observed that the lovely, free creativity of spirit lasts for children until adolescence. Then, the outside world moves in. William lamented that only very few children "remain uncontaminated, because the inner creative force is so powerful or their sense of real values is supported by knowledge and sensitivity."¹⁸ When Dahlov was thirteen, she realized her father was right and she witnessed how her classmates stopped painting. She pleaded with them with tears in her eyes to continue to paint, and instead of letting herself be dragged into a life without art, she started producing even more prolifically than before. The outside world moved into her art and social realism became part of her creative practice.



At the age of 16 she spent one year at Oberlin College on a full-tuition scholarship, but it was a disappointment after her stimulating earlier education. She dropped out and never regretted it.¹⁹ This decision marked the end of her formal education.

Although they lived in New York City, the Zorach family would spend each summer in the country. When Dahlov was five years old, her parents bought a working farm in Robinhood, Maine. From the beginning, the two children helped weed gardens, care for animals, cut the firewood, and make hay.²⁰ It was hard work, but as far as Dahlov could remember, she had always been interested in farming and animals.

Home, school, and nature thus constituted the creative atmospheres in which Dahlov was brought up, and she absorbed and translated them into the works she produced. As William put it:

The most important element in a work of art is the registering of the impact nature and life makes upon the sensitive mechanism of our emotions and our brain, and the compounding of this impress with the particular alignment of each individual's sensitivity and development and inheritance.²¹



The development of Dahlov's individual creative self was the purpose of her Modern art education. However, people exposed to the same atmospheres would have developed completely different art practices, as the element of distinction in each person is the individual sensitivity we all possess.



In Search of the Expression of the Individual

“I have always felt that the most important element in art is the expression of the individual.”²²

– *William Zorach*

Individuality was not only William’s aim, but a shared goal in the Modern art movement. Dahlov’s mother, Marguerite, observed that “one can at least expect a nation’s art to have some individuality, or at least to express something of the atmosphere and character of the country.”²³ Dahlov was set onto this personal quest for her own genuine individual artistic expression from the day she was born.

We could say that this quest began with the name she was given. It is a “made up” name²⁴ that was clearly a declaration of intentions, a unique name which considered her a unique creative individual. She grew up believing that “the greatest contribution an artist can make is the projection of his personal feelings toward life through his medium of expression.”²⁵

Marguerite and William decided to deliberately leave her unschooled in art. They wanted to see what would happen if she was left alone to develop her own way.²⁶ In this learning process, William thought of himself as an observer, following a method of “subtle and intelligent guidance.”

To William it was a question of observing and watching talent emerge. William’s careful observations of his daughter at work led him to comment that her practice had a resemblance to the process of writing:

I call it calligraphy. She can draw the way you or I write. You can ask her to draw an animal or a bird or a figure in any possible position, doing anything, and she sits down and draws it. She has that kind of talent. ... She does it right out of her head. I remember seeing a painting of hers—it was an empty canvas with a very finely executed piece of detail in one part of the canvas, with the rest of the canvas empty. And I said ‘What are you doing?



Right: *Unicorn Wood*, 1970,
photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

Opposite: *Calico Pair*, 2013,
photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.



Do you know what you are doing?’ And she pointed her finger to her forehead. She said, ‘It’s in my head.’ And that is perhaps the most natural way of painting.²⁷

She was encouraged to express herself and develop freely, without having grown-up ideas imposed upon her. Indeed William considered that he never taught Dahlov in the strict sense of the word, but always gave her encouragement. As a teenager, Dahlov painted alongside Marguerite, who was able to share herself with her daughter as she would have done with a fellow artist.²⁸

And encouragement was, for William, one of the most important elements in Dahlov’s development. It cultivated a belief in herself. William held that the belief of others in his daughter’s work would strengthen her as an individual. Talent and natural ability were secondary for William, because “unless there is a singleness of purpose and a belief in his art powers welded into a consuming drive to live through art, all the talent and sensitivity he may possess will never find more than a tentative expression.”²⁹ Dahlov remembered her father keeping everything she created during her childhood, and this was the greatest encouragement for her to keep creating.

Despite the freedom she enjoyed and her parents’ encouragement, not having a formal art training proved to be tough. She expressed that “the danger in being ‘self-taught’ is that, in a sense, you

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– *William Zorach*

have to ‘reinvent the wheel.’”³⁰ The wheel Dahlov had to invent for herself was geared by integrity and powered with vision and love. Through notions of integrity, she learnt that “an artist must never create art to sell. If he does, it won’t be art.”³¹ She learnt that as an artist she had to work because she had a tremendous urge to create.

Despite these difficulties, William never regretted leaving Dahlov unschooled in art. He believed that “Art, like all creative effort, stems from vision and from love - love of the revelation of the beauty that surrounds us in life. No one can teach us this. It is an innate and rare quality. It cannot be arrived at by imitation.”³² Real drawing, according to Marguerite, was above mere copying: “The drawing that

expresses the character of a face, the spirit and soul of a people more truly and more sincerely than all the correct drawing in the world could do.”³³ These ideas left an indelible mark on Dahlov throughout her life.

The exceptional way in which Dahlov had developed creatively didn’t go unnoticed. Alfred H. Barr, the first director of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), viewed self-taught and educated artists as equally essential to 20th-century modernism. He considered the museum as a laboratory.³⁴ Victor D’Amico, the director of MoMA’s Educational Project, had created a studio gallery, called the Young People’s Gallery, for all kinds of people to exhibit their experiments in Modern Art. Dahlov’s self-taught art practice, together with her understanding of life and art as fully intertwined, resonated with D’Amico.

D’Amico believed that art was a right for all for the purpose of living a fuller life. His research included searching for ways to enhance adolescents’ creative growth. He wanted to show art made by children and high school students at the Young People’s Gallery to provide evidence of the importance of art as a humanizing force.

What D’Amico found at the Lincoln School exceeded his expectations: a marvelous collection of Dahlov’s spontaneous and untrammelled work from her school years. It seemed that William



drawings, lithographs, etchings, ceramics, woodcarvings, and embroidery by Dahlov Ipcar. It was a celebration of her individual growth, and, as a result, Ipcar became the first woman and the youngest person to have a solo exhibition at the museum.

The exhibition was quite a sensation. Some newspapers described it as the work of a prodigy, an opinion Dahlov resented very much. Dahlov wanted to be seen not as a genius but as an example of how anybody can develop creatively if encouraged from childhood. It was certainly an important presentation of the values

that the Educational Project at MoMA was to expand in the following years: freedom of expression, conducive atmospheres, personal growth, art as a human necessity, and art and life as the same thing. However, Dahlov never actually saw her exhibition at MoMA. Three years before the exhibition opened, she had started her very own experiment, which, by 1939, included a husband, a farm to take care of, and a new-born child to nurture. Her life and art had abandoned New York City (although she kept exhibiting there) and had moved to the place she had longed to live: a farm in Maine.

had saved all Dahlov had done at home, too, and together it formed a complete collection of her work from the period from when she was 3 years old to when she was 21. The great experiment that was Dahlov turned out to be the perfect statement for D’Amico’s art education laboratory: “the uninhibited progress a child can make with proper stimulation and encouragement from intelligent teachers and parents.”³⁵

Opposite: *Warthog*, 2016
Above: *The Guardian*, 1937

On November 1, 1939 the exhibition *Creative Growth: Childhood to Maturity* opened at MoMA’s Young People’s Gallery, showing oils, watercolors, drawings, lithographs, etchings, ceramics, woodcarvings and embroidery by Dahlov Ipcar.

– Sara Torres Vega





I see so many marvelous pictures when I close my eyes. They arise without any conscious effort, a multitude of completely new and beautiful designs and things I have never seen or imagined...

Everything is very elusive: patterns and color change swiftly as in a kaleidoscope.

– Dahlov Ipcar

An Experiment of Her Own. An Experiment for All.

Marguerite and William Zorach's educational experiment had paid off: Dahlov was a mature artist who had provided herself with the creative atmosphere she needed. At the age of eighteen she married "a nice young struggling accountant,"³⁶ Adolph Ipcar, and persuaded him to try farm life.

She loved life on the farm because of its unparalleled beauty. She adored the plowed fields with the shine of light along the furrows, and the plow teams in yellow blankets with red stripes. She was inspired by the browns and grays of the cows in the whitewashed barn. She found beauty in the clothes that the men wore that were "as bright reds and greens as you would find in any medieval miniature..."³⁷ However, as marveled as she was at the nature that surrounded her, she hardly ever painted what she saw. The farm was her creative atmosphere but not a model to imitate.

My art is fairly close to nature, but not dependent on nature. I am free to do anything I choose. If I paint the things around me it is only because I find them more strange and exciting than fanciful things. But I am never earth-bound; if I want to do



fantastic things I can, because even the real, everyday things I paint are all done from my imagination.³⁸

Dahlov would get inspired by color and pattern she saw in her daily life at the farm in haycocks and windrows that formed designs in the fields. Patterns and color became on occasions tridimensional shapes. It was as if her father's sculpture and her mother's textile art had naturally agreed on Dahlov's imagination to create the perfect blend: the soft sculptures. Created at first as gifts and objects of daily use, the soft sculptures were

elevated to the category of art by the public. These sculptures embody the integration of art and life in Dahlov's insight. Whether depicting animals or other creatures, Dahlov arranged her designs and patterns in her "mind's eye."



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– Sara Torres Vega

Opposite: *Blue Moon Voyage*, 2006, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

Above: *Adolph, Dahlov and her Dalmatians at Robinhood Farm, ME with a flat tire*, 1935, photographer unknown, courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar.

Below: *Mythological Seahorse*, 1974, soft sculpture, 10.5 x 20 x 5 inches, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

I see so many marvelous pictures when I close my eyes. They arise without any conscious effort, a multitude of completely new and beautiful designs and things I have never seen or imagined. I have seen Mexican fiestas in my mind's eye, complete with gorgeous and fantastic costumes in astounding colors. Everything is very elusive: patterns and color change swiftly as in a kaleidoscope.³⁹

In this intersection between reality and imagination Dahlov started writing and illustrating stories.



Together with Adolph, she wrote a chronicle of the farm called "Robinhood Snooper", a sharp and witty view of daily life on the farm. She also illustrated a book to teach children French through the story of a horse in Brittany, although it was never published. Her career as a writer, however, didn't have an easy beginning. It was like the song "The Cat Came Back" that Dahlov would later illustrate, in which a cat is rejected in the wildest ways but always manages to return. But when she had nearly given up thoughts of writing and illustrating books, the opportunity arrived.

In 1945, a book illustrated by her was finally published. It was done at the request of a former teacher who asked her to illustrate Margaret Wise Brown's *The Little Fisherman*. Ipcar illustrated other children's books by other authors, then she managed to have her own self-illustrated stories published.

...Fortunately, I have never had to compromise. No one has told me how to do pictures. I have done children's books because I loved doing them. I have enjoyed all the work involved. And I don't have to sell them: the publisher does that. The only thing I have to sell is the idea, or the text, for by some strange and, to my mind, backward process, it is the story that is bought, not the pictures. I write the stories too, but only as a sort of excuse for doing the pictures. I'm afraid I think like an artist, not as a writer. I think in terms of pictures.



I think of something I would like to paint, and I write a story to go with it.⁴⁰

Dahlov felt that even if her creative process started with the pictures in her mind as a point of departure, the stories needed to "reveal some truth about the world or awaken some new interest in the things around us."⁴¹

A very important truth in Dahlov's stories is that loving something doesn't mean that all that

surrounds it will be easy and enjoyable. While she loved life at the farm, it was also very hard work. When she and Adolph moved there, the farm had no running water, so they cut ice and stored it in an ice house for refrigeration through the summer months. There was no electricity but they did have an oil-burning stove in the living room. They cooked with wood, and later with coal. They had outdoor plumbing, but no pipes indoors. They learnt to farm, to cut wood to the proper length, trim it, and split it for firewood. Besides assisting in the operation of their small dairy farm, Dahlov raised her two sons and continued to paint. Their children joined in all the farm activities. About those early years of marriage, she remarked, "Our farm has always been, and still is, a *one horse farm*."⁴² Just as in her story, *One Horse Farm*, a tractor was eventually acquired for the Ipcar family farm.



In *Ten Big Farms* we learn that if there is something in our life we don't like, it is our responsibility to change it. In this story we meet Mr. Jordan, who doesn't like the city and decides to live on a farm, just like Dahlov and Adolph did.

– Sara Torres Vega

Opposite: *Blue Moon Circle*, 2011, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

Above: *Workhorse Big Betty*, being held by Dahlov Ipcar with her sons, *Robinhood Farm, ME*, 1944, photographed by Jason Schoener, courtesy of the Zorach Collection, LLC.

Bottom: *Ice-Cutting*, 1950, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.



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– Sara Torres Vega

Above: *Cat in Rocket*, 1971, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

Top right: *Home Scene*, 1975, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

Bottom: *Circle of Hens*, 1966, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

Opposite top: *Night Hunt*, 1963, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

Opposite bottom: *Night Highway*, 1969, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

p. 29 *Circle of Hens*, 1966, detail.

There are many other truths about the world in Dahlov's stories. In *Ten Big Farms* we learn that if there is something in our life we don't like, it is our responsibility to change it. In this story we meet Mr. Jordan, who doesn't like the city and decides to live on a farm, just like Dahlov and Adolph did. In *The Wild Whirlwind* there is a call for adapting oneself to adversity and seeing changes as opportunities. *The Cat at Night* resonated with how William Zorach described that "all day the country was serene and silent, but at night when we were securely in our beds, it was rampant with wildlife."⁴³ Through Dahlov's story the reader is invited to face the mysteries of life with endless curiosity and imagination.

In *Bug City* Dahlov shows that in the smallest hidden places, we can find alternative ways of living. It is inevitable to imagine in Dahlov's *Home Scene* a similarity to the 123 West 10th Street childhood house: colorful and buzzing with all kinds of activity.

In the *Bright Barnyard* we learn about self-control and seeing our actions and their consequences in the greater perspective of coexistence. In *Calico Jungle* Dahlov illustrates the message she conveyed in much of her writing: "the world of reality and the world of dreams and the imagination are two sides of the same experience and neither should be rejected."



There is a final truth in Dahlov's life and work, which is that as a Modern Art experiment, Dahlov proved that the ultimate purpose of art is to live life fully. Her art gives artists and art historians opportunity to reflect on the importance of Modern Art as pedagogy. However, Dahlov's art can be transformative for people from all walks of life. Her work reminds us all that to be fully awake in the world, we first need to give ourselves and the people who surround us what her parents granted her: recognition as being unique creative individuals.

Dahlov shared her unique creative self and her development through her artworks. Through her illustrated books she brought her creative imagination to the largest number of children possible. Through her chapter books she reached out to young adults. Throughout all her art production she showed us all that art is inherent to life. I dare to say that Dahlov's generosity demands something beyond just admiration for her work. Her work invites us all to face the challenge of exploring our own creative self. In doing so, we will develop our own unique way of looking at the beauty and excitement of simple everyday life.

– by Sara Torres Vega



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-Dahlov Ipcar

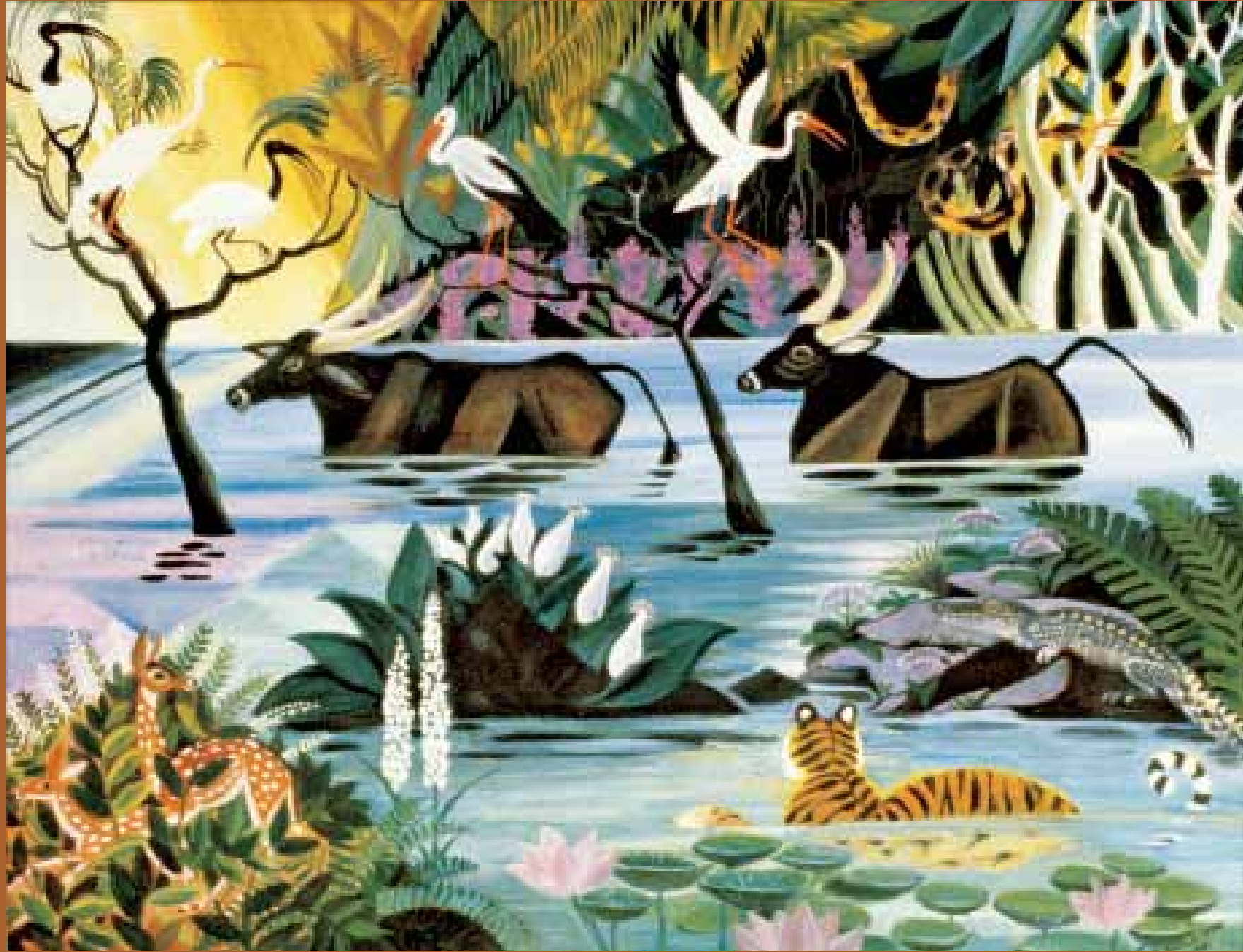


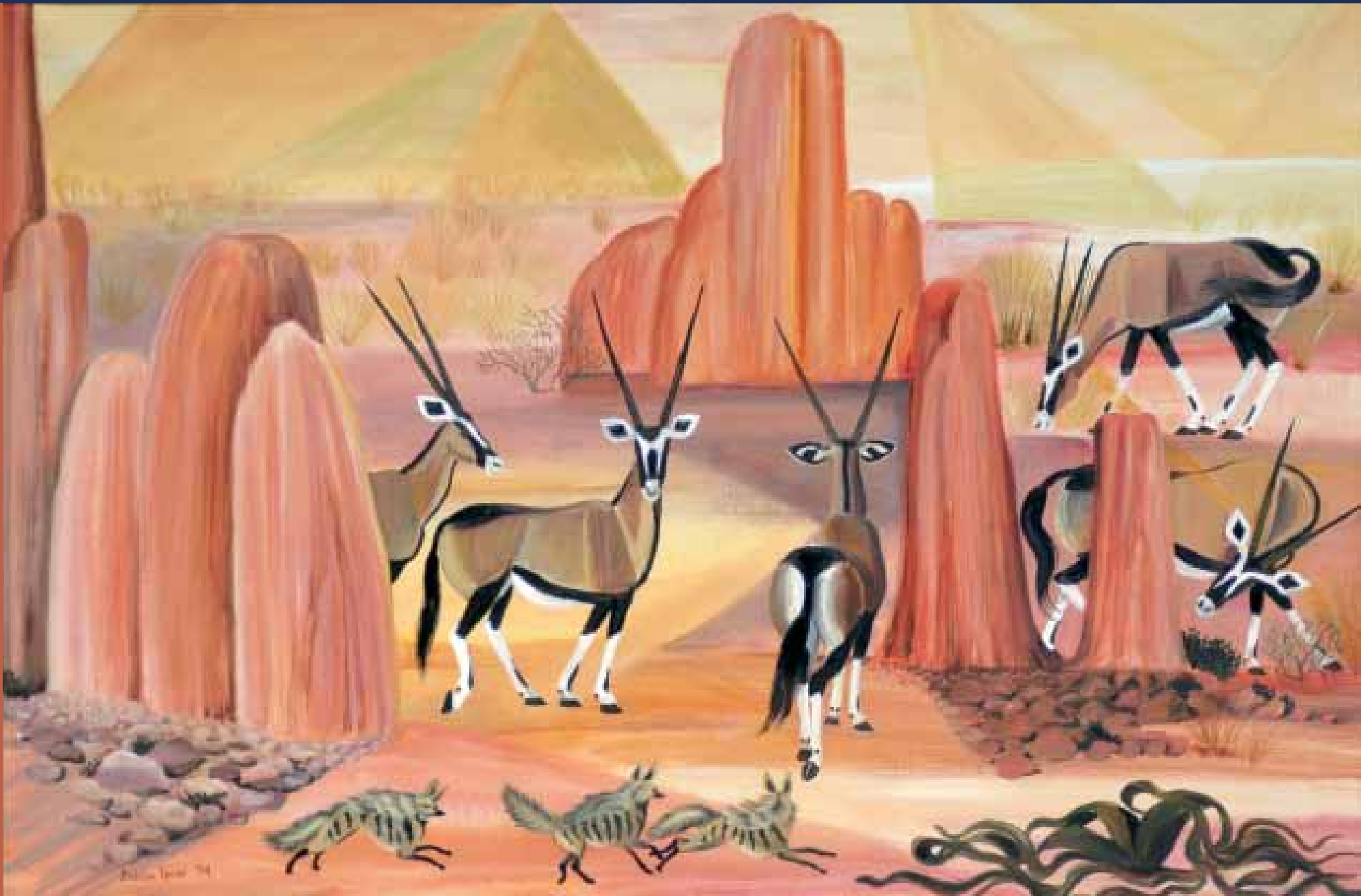
BLUE MOONS
& MENAGERIES





Opposite: *Blue Moon Games*, 2006, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Above: *Blue Moon Square*, 2007, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Following left: *Bengal River*, 1981, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Right: *Hill Forest of Kumaon*, 1978. Far Right: *Kenya Heights*, 1976.





Opposite: *Kalahari Desert*, 1974, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Above: *Riverside Brazil*, 2010.



Above: *Ibex & Ounce*, 1965, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Opposite top: *Sable Nyika*, 1988, photo by Melville McLean.
Bottom: *Jungle Interchange*, 2007, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.



Above top: *Dark of the Sun*, 1965. Bottom: *Calico Horses in Blue Jungle*, 2003, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Right: *Hunters of the Moon*, 1966, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.



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 She does it right out of
 her head.
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Opposite: *Pastures of Memory*, 1962. Above: *Moonscape*, 1980.



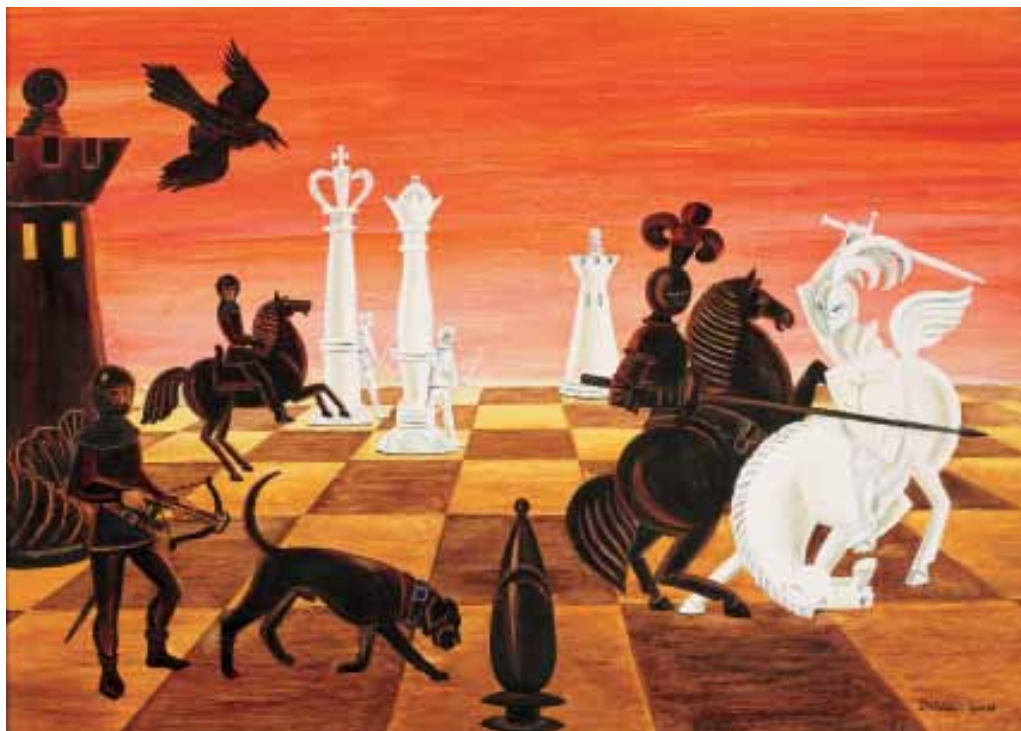
Far left: *Three Danes*, 2008. Left: *Jungle Within*, 2006, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Above: *Cats & Cards*, 1954.



Fox Run, 2002, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.



Right: *The Dragon and St. George*, 2011. Above: *Centaurs*, 1952, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.
 Following top left : *Ancient Battleground*, 1976. Bottom left and center detail: *Chess-scape (Warlock of Night Cover)*, 1969
 Opposite: *Revelation of the Lamb*, 1972.



In Dalí's freshness
of imagination and the
freedom and spontaneity
in her handling of form
and color, there is an
invitation to everybody to
think about the role that
art plays in our lives.

– Sara Torres Vega









Previous: *Horse Farm*, 1958, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Opposite top left: *Bug City at Night*, 1975, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Top right: *Family Dinner*, 1975, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Bottom: *Bug City, Daytime - original cover*, 1975, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Above: *Calico Jungle Endpapers - Left*, 1965, *Calico Jungle Endpapers - Right*, 1965, photos courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.



Maple Sap Gathering, 1950, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.



Dahlov felt that even if her creative process started with the pictures in her mind as a point of departure, the stories needed to “reveal some truth about the world or awaken some new interest in the things around us.”

— *Sara Torres Vega*





My art is fairly close to nature, but not dependent on nature. I am free to do anything I choose. If I paint the things around me it is only because I find them more strange and exciting than fanciful things. But I am never earthbound ...

– Dahlov Ipcar



Left and above details: *The Woods Are Full of Animals*, 1947. Top right: *Two Salamanders*, 1947.





Preceding page: *Okapi* - 6, 1990. Above: *Anteater*, ca. 1960. Opposite: *Pterodactyl*, ca. 1960.



Above top: *St. George and the Dragon*, 1970. Bottom: *Painted Eggs*, ca. 1940-1970. Opposite: *Steeplechase Spill*, 1974.





Above: *Golden Jungle*, 1982, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art. Opposite: *Antelope & Bird*, 1960.

Exhibition Checklist

All These I Hear, 1967
watercolor illustration from
Whisperings and Other Things
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Ancient Battleground, 1976
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Anteater, ca. 1960
soft sculpture
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Antelope & Bird, 1960
fabric collage
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Antelope Panic, 2015
felt tip pen with ink-wash on paper
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Bengal River, 1981
oil on canvas
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Bird, ca. 1960
soft sculpture
courtesy of Mark Jorgensen

Block for *Fox and Geese*, 1981
carved wood
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Block for *Unicorn Wood*, 1964
carved wood
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Block for *Zebra and Foal*, 1969
carved wood
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Blue Moon Circle, 2011
oil on linen
courtesy of a Private Collection

Blue Moon Dance, 2014
oil on linen
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Blue Moon Games, 2006
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Blue Moon Jungle, 2006
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Blue Moon Night, 1990
oil on linen
courtesy of David Katz and Andrea Parness

Blue Moon Square, 2007
oil on linen
courtesy of Ann Wescott Dodd

Blue Moon Voyage, 2006
oil on linen
courtesy of A. L. Freeman

Blue Wildebeest - 2, 1980
soft sculpture
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Brontosaurus, 1958
watercolor illustration from *The Wonderful Egg*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Bug City at Night, 1975
watercolor illustration from *Bug City*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Bug City, Daytime - original cover, 1975
watercolor illustration from *Bug City*
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Bull Fighter, 1936
oil on beaver board
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Calico Horses in Blue Jungle, 2003
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Calico Jungle Endpapers - Left, 1965
watercolor illustration from *The Calico Jungle*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Calico Jungle Endpapers - Right, 1965
watercolor illustration from *The Calico Jungle*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Calico Pair, 2013
oil on canvas
courtesy of the Private Collection of Rosemary A. Reid

Cats & Cards, 1954
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Cats Entwined, 1964
oil on linen
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Cat in Rocket, 1971
watercolor illustration from *The Cat Came Back*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Cat Playing Guitar, 1971
watercolor illustration from *The Cat Came Back*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

*Centaur*s, 1952
oil on linen
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Chess-scape (Warlock of Night Cover), 1969
oil on linen
courtesy of Katie Ipcar

Circle of Hens, 1966
watercolor illustration from *Bright Barnyard*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Crossing the African Plains, 1971
watercolor illustration from *Sir Addlepate and the Unicorn*
courtesy of the Private Collection of
Tate A. Walls

Dark of the Sun, 1965
oil on linen
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

The Dragon and St. George, 2011
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Dragon Rider, 1980
pencil on paper
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Endpapers, 1967
watercolor illustration from
Song of the Day Birds & Night Birds
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Family Dinner, 1975
watercolor illustration from *Bug City*
courtesy of Jenna Ipcar

Farm Scene, 1948
watercolor illustration from *Good Work*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Flame Flamingoes, 1967
watercolor illustration from
Song of the Day Birds & Night Bird
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Flycatcher Hunting Dragonflies, 1967
watercolor illustration from *Song of the Day Birds & Night Birds*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Forest Scene, 2012
watercolor illustration from *Maine Alphabet*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Fox Run, 2002
oil on linen
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

The Frog Went a-Courting, 1938
oil on board
courtesy of the Private Collection of
the Saslow Family

Garden of Eden, 1961
cloth collage
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Golden Jungle, 1982
needlepoint
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art



Cats Entwined, 1964, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

The Guardian, 1937
oil on linen
courtesy of a Private Collection

Hill Forest of Kumaon, 1976
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Home Scene, 1975
color illustration from *Bug City*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Horse Farm, 1958
watercolor illustration from *Ten Big Farms*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Hunters of the Moon, 1966
oil on canvas
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Ibex & Ounce, 1965
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Ice-Cutting, 1950
watercolor illustration from *One Horse Farm*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Jaguar Family, 1973
oil on canvas
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Jungle Interchange, 2007
oil on linen
courtesy of a Private Collection

Jungle Within, 2006
oil on linen
courtesy of A. L. Freeman

Kalahari Desert, 1974
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Kenya Heights, 1978
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Lady Allura's Tapestry, 1971
watercolor illustration from *Sir Addlepate and the Unicorn*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Lady & Crocodile, 1936
oil on beaver board
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Lady & Tiger, 1936
oil on beaver board
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Lobstering Leopard, 1964
watercolor illustration from
I Love My Anteater With An A
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Lonesome Loon, 1967
watercolor illustration from *Song of the Day Birds & Night Birds*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Maple Sap Gathering, 1950
watercolor illustration from *One Horse Farm*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Moonscape, 1980
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Moths and Falling Leaves - Endpaper, 1967
watercolor illustration from
Whisperings and Other Things
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Night Highway, 1969
watercolor illustration from *The Cat at Night*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Night Hunt, 1963
watercolor illustration from *Black and White*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Nightmare & Foal, 1990
ink on scratchboard
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Okapi - 6, 1990
soft sculpture
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Opossum Family – 2, 1968
soft sculpture
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Otto, 1945
pencil on paper
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Painted Eggs, ca. 1940-1970
hollow eggs with pigment
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Pastures of Memory, 1962
oil on linen
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar Family

Pigeons, 1966
watercolor illustration from *Bright Barnyard*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Pterodactyl, ca. 1960
soft sculpture
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Push-Me-Pull-You, ca. 1960
soft sculpture
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Rabbit, ca. 1960
soft sculpture
courtesy of Mark Jorgensen

Revelation of the Lamb, 1972
oil on linen
Bates College Museum of Art
gift of Edith K. DeShazo,1979.4.1

Riverside Brazil, 2010
oil on canvas
courtesy of the Private Collection of
Rosemary A. Reid

Rodeo Rooster, 1964
watercolor illustration from
I Love My Anteater With An A
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

The Royal Game, 2007
oil on linen
courtesy of the Private Collection of Tate A. Walls

Sable Nyika, 1988
oil on linen
Bates College Museum of Art
gift of the Artist
1991.8.1

The Sea Serpent, 1971
watercolor illustration from
Sir Addlepate and the Unicorn
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Squirrel, ca. 1960
soft sculpture
courtesy of Mark Jorgensen

Squirrel, ca. 1960
soft sculpture
courtesy of Julie Ipcar

Steeplechase Spill, 1974
soft sculpture
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Stegosaurus, 1958
watercolor illustration from *The Wonderful Egg*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

St. George and the Dragon, 2008
oil on linen
courtesy of Katie Ipcar

St. George and the Dragon, 1970
soft sculpture
courtesy of the Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows

Sun, Moon and Birds, 1967
watercolor illustration from *Song of the*
Day Birds & Night Birds
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Three Danes, 2008
oil on linen
courtesy from a Private Collection

Tiger & Leopard, 1977
oil on canvas
courtesy of David Katz and Andrea Parness

Tiger Godiva, 1980
pencil on paper
courtesy of the Private Collection of Tate A. Walls

Tino Catches an Enormous Fish, 1972
watercolor illustration from
The Biggest Fish in the Sea
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Tino Catches Fish IV, 1972
watercolor illustration from
The Biggest Fish in the Sea
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Two Salamanders, 1947
watercolor illustration from
Animal Hide and Seek
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

Unicorn Wood, 1970
woodcut on Japanese paper
Bates College Museum of Art
Gift of the Artist, 1991.12.8

Valley of Tishnar, 1966
oil on canvas
courtesy of the Collection of Robert Ipcar
and Jane Landis

The Walloping Window Blind, 1938
oil on board
courtesy the Private Collection
of the Saslow Family

Warthog, 2016
ink and pencil on paper
courtesy of Esther Pappas

The Woods Are Full of Animals -
original cover, 1947
watercolor illustration from *Animal Hide and Seek*
courtesy of the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar,
on loan from Rachel Walls Fine Art

Zebra and Foal, ca. 1970
woodcut on Japanese paper
courtesy of Mark Jorgensen

Endnotes

1 Ipcar, D. (2017). *Dahlov Ipcar’s Century*, exhibition catalogue, July–December 2017, Rachel Walls Fine Art. Portland, Maine, United States of America. P. 52

2 Zorach, W. (1967). *Art is my Life* (p. 74). United States of America: The World Publishing Company. P.73

3 Íbid. P.74

4 Ipcar, D. (2001) Dahlov Ipcar: Seven decades of creativity, exhibition catalogue, 6 October 2001–27 January 2002, Portland Museum of Art. Maine, United States of America. P. 19

5 Ipcar, D. (n. d.). Something about the author. Autobiography Series. Volume 8. Gale Research Company. Book Tower. Detroit, Michigan 48226. P. 136

6 Zorach, M., & Burk, E. (2009). *Clever Fresno girl*. Newark, Del.: University of Delaware Press. P. 26

7 Ipcar, Something about, P. 136

8 Zorach, W., & Zorach, M. (1979). Reminiscences of William and Marguerite Zorach: oral history. New York City: Columbia University oral history collection, part IV, published by Meckler Publishing, Westport, CT. P. 161

9 Ipcar, Something about, P. 136

10 Zorach, W., & Zorach, M. Reminiscences. P. 262

11 Íbid.

12 Zorach, W. (1967). *Art is my Life*. United States of America: The World Publishing Company. P.5

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15 Ipcar, D. (1979). *Oral History Interview with Dahlov Ipcar*. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

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17 Bennett, L. (1969) “Dahlov Ipcar”, *Books Are By People*, Citation Press.

18 Zorach, *Art is*, P.73

19 Bennett, L. (1969) “Dahlov Ipcar”, *Books Are By People*, Citation Press.

20 Ipcar, D. (1951) “We like Being Farmers,” Young Wings, March, 1951

21 Zorach, W. (1940) 4 Paintings by Dahlov Ipcar, exhibition brochure, 16 December–4 January 1940, Bignou Gallery. New York City, United States of America

22 Zorach, W., & Zorach, M., Reminiscences, P. 332



Forest Scene, 2012, photo courtesy of Rachel Walls Fine Art.

23 Zorach, M., & Burk, E., *Clever Fresno girl*, P. 26

24 Little, C., & Ipcar, D. (2010). *The art of Dahlov Ipcar*. [Camden, Me.]: Down East Books.

25 Zorach, W., & Zorach, M., Reminiscences, P. 332

26 Íbid.

27 Íbid, P. 289

28 Ipcar, D. (2001) Dahlov Ipcar: Seven decades of creativity, exhibition catalogue, 6 October 2001–27 January 2002, Portland Museum of Art. Maine, United States of America P. 19

29 Zorach, W., & Zorach, M., Reminiscences, P. 327

30 Ipcar, D. Seven decades, P. 19

31 Ipcar, D. (1978) “Making Pictures on the farm”. The Illustrators Notebook. Edited by Lee Kingman, Horn Book

32 Zorach, W., *Art is*, P.74

33 Zorach, M., & Burk, E., *Clever Fresno girl*, P. 200

34 Barr. A. (1939) *Art in our time; an exhibition to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art and the opening of its new building, held at the time of the New York World's Fair*, 10 May–30 September 1939, The Museum of Modern Art. New York, United States of America

35 The Museum of Modern Art. (1939). *Young People’s Gallery at Museum of Modern Art opens with unusual exhibition*. Retrieved from https://www.moma.org/documents/moma_press-release_325144.pdf

36 Ipcar, D. (n. d.). Ipcar, Something about.

37 Íbid.

38 Íbid.

39 Íbid.

40 Íbid.

41 Íbid.

42 Íbid.

43 Zorach, *Art is*, P.49



Antelope Panic, 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Originally, Dahlov Ipcar and the museum planned to develop an expansive exhibition of her art with Bates alumna, Rachel Walls, Principal of Rachel Walls Fine Art, then celebrate Dahlov's 100th birthday while it was on view. With her passing at 99 in early 2017, we now celebrate her life with *Blue Moons & Menageries* on the centennial of her birth. This is a fitting way to mark her remarkable legacy, with an exhibition that represents many themes, media, and decades of her long and productive career. Dahlov's work has a way of bringing joy to viewers, something the staff has witnessed repeatedly. We have observed this in faces of children participating in Lewiston and Auburn Public Libraries' reading area programs. And after viewing her kaleidoscopic paintings, fanciful illustrations, and whimsical soft sculptures, to a person visitors—from families with small children to octogenarians—leave the museum in better spirits than they arrived.

The museum is grateful to the many lenders for sharing their beloved artworks; without their generosity, this exhibition would not have been possible. Part of what distinguishes *Blue Moons & Menageries* is that it includes many works that have not been exhibited previously. Many of these are in the private collections of members of Dahlov's family. Sincere and heartfelt thanks to Robert Ipcar and Jane Landis, Charles Ipcar and Judy Barrows, Julie Ipcar, Matthew Ipcar and Michelle Goldberg, Katie Ipcar, Jenna Ipcar, and the Saslow family.

A special thank you to Rachel Walls, for sharing her deep understanding of Dahlov's work and life, and for her many contributions to this extensive exhibition. Lead curator Anthony Shostak, Education Curator, deserves recognition for planning and implementing a complex exhibition, and for its fine and dynamic installation.

We gratefully acknowledge the anonymous donors who generously supported this catalogue. We are appreciative of Anthony Shostak for careful editing, Victoria Blaine Design Associates for the handsome design, Penmor Lithographers for the fine printing, and Custom Museum Publishing, for distributing this important publication.

We are grateful to the Zorach Collection, LLC, and the Estate of Dahlov Ipcar for their kind permission to include in this catalogue reproductions of archival photographs from their collections.

Many thanks to the museum staff who lent their efforts to the exhibition, Abby Abbott, Museum Education Fellow; Corie Audette, Assistant Collections Manager/Registrar; Bill Low, Curator; Anne Odom, Academic Administrative Assistant; and our Museum Attendants, Pauline Ayotte, Anita Farnum, Megan Gaudreault, Louise Ouellette, Carol St. Pierre, Kathryn Salvano, and John Wiley.

—Dan Mills, Director



