

[Guitar, Vodka, Balalaika](#) , (circa 1985) by [Marcel Mouly](#)  
Original Oil on Canvas - Main Subject: Abstract



**Item Number**  
4183734379

**Retail Value**  
\$50,000

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**Dimensions (As Shown)**  
28W x 36H x 0.75D Inches  
71.12W x 91.44H x 1.9D cm

**Medium**  
Original Oil on Canvas

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### About Marcel Mouly

Marcel Mouly was born in Paris, France on February 6, 1918. His interest in art developed in grade school. A precocious, mischievous child, Mouly was first sent to a drawing class as a form of punishment. However, Mouly loved learning to draw and exhibited a natural artistic talent, though his path to a career as an artist proved not to be a linear one.

In 1935, while still employed by a wine merchant, Mouly began taking night classes in the arts at the Cours Montparnasse 80, where he remained until his military duty began in 1938. After France fell to Germany in June 1940, Mouly became a civilian again and eked out a living during these difficult economic times working odd jobs. Mouly befriended a fellow artist named Bernard la Fourcade and the two of them established a studio in Auteuil. During a trip to Normandy in 1942, the pair was stopped by German officials and they were questioned for their lack of travel documentation. Mouly and la Fourcade were arrested shortly after their return to Paris and imprisoned as spies. During his solitary confinement, Mouly constantly thought about art and formed the belief that when he became free, he would become a famous artist.

Shortly after being released from prison, Mouly, along with fellow artist Édouard Pignon, rented the Boulogne studio of famed modernist sculptor Jacques Lipchitz (1891-1973). Mouly learned a great deal from Lipchitz, particularly about the style of Cubism. In 1935, after studying painting at the French Academies, he began to show his work publicly. In 1945 he participated at the Salon d'Automne, took part in the open art forums of the Ecole de Boulogne, and studied with Leger, Pignon, and Bertin. The following year, he exhibited at the Salon du Mai. By the mid-1940s, Mouly's art began to gain notoriety from his peers and collectors and his first one-man exhibition was held in 1949 at the Librairie Bergamesque.

Mouly continued to develop his technique, expertly incorporating his formal art education and the influences of such masters as Picasso and Matisse to create his own unique, trademark style. While one may note his use of the deep, bold colors typically used in Matisse's Fauvist works, or the Cubism of Picasso, Mouly's style is uniquely and unmistakably his own. By the 1950s Mouly was already looked upon as an emerging brilliant and skilled young painter. In the mid 1950s, he began to work in the printmaking medium of lithography and he was soon recognized as a master printmaker, as well.

Marcel Mouly's work has been exhibited throughout the world and is included in the permanent collections of more than twenty museums, such as the Museum of Modern Art in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in Japan, the Museum of Geneva, the Museum of Modern Art in Helsinki, and Paris Bibliothèque Nationale. He has also been the subject of numerous books and has been recognized by such honors as the Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et Lettres (1957) and the Premier Prix de Lithographie (1973).

Though Marcel Mouly died on January 7, 2008, weeks shy of his 90th birthday, his art and his legacy live on. His art is pure and direct in its message, art historian and writer Joseph Jacobs said. It is an art about beauty and life, an art about the more familiar and comfortable world we live in and know. In this respect, Mouly is quintessentially French, his roots firmly planted in the School of Paris. Picasso, Braque, Matisse, Rouault, Vlaminck, Chagall, Vuillard, and Dufy are his patrimony, and he has carried their mantle with unflagging dedication.

## Original Oil on Canvas

Oil painting is the process of painting with pigments that are bound with a medium of drying oil—especially in early modern Europe, linseed oil. Often an oil such as linseed was boiled with a resin such as pine resin or even frankincense; these were called 'varnishes' and were prized for their body and gloss. Other oils occasionally used include poppyseed oil, walnut oil, and safflower oil. These oils confer various properties to the oil paint, such as less yellowing or different drying times. Certain differences are also visible in the sheen of the paints depending on the oil. Painters often use different oils in the same painting depending on specific pigments and effects desired. The paints themselves also develop a particular feel depending on the medium.

Oil paint was first used, as current knowledge shows, in western Afghanistan sometime between the 5th and 9th Centuries. From there its practice likely migrated westward until, when in the Middle Ages, (Theophilus mentions oil media in the 12th Century) it came into use, although not widespread, in Europe. It later became the principal medium used for creating artworks; the transition beginning during the 15th century with Early Netherlandish painting in northern Europe. By the height of the Renaissance oil painting techniques had almost completely replaced tempera paints in the majority of Europe. Oil painting dates in the West to at least ancient Roman times.

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