

Morris Hirshfield

by Bruno Bischoberger



I started my first gallery in 1963 when I was 23 years old. But the avant-garde art I was showing was not widely known in Switzerland, so I had no clients. I was also interested in *outsider art* - that is to say art outside the normal trends of art history - as well as folk art and so-called *naïve art*. I dealt on the side with these works and in 1966

I opened a second gallery. I especially liked the real primitives among the naïve painters, the ones who had an unspoilt relationship to creativity - like children when they are two or

three years old or the cave paintings I knew from visits to France. One of the artists I liked most was

Morris Hirshfield from New York - a tailor who started to paint very late in his life and whose work I had seen in the Museum of Modern Art. Sidney Janis was the owner of a famous art gallery. He used to show **Hirshfield** and I asked him to lend me a group for an exhibition in my gallery.

It was a beautiful show with around 20 works. But I couldn't sell a single one. I finally sold one some months later - a sheep, a girl and a boy carrying an American flag - to a collection where the work still remains. With the money I made, I organised a number of historically important exhibitions. And so **Morris Hirshfield** always remained one of my big favourites among the *outsiders*.

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