

[Matisse at The Tate](#)[Matisse at MoMA](#)**Artist Resources – Henri Matisse (French, 1869-1954)**

“My line drawing is the purest and most direct translation of my emotion,” Matisse reflected in [a 1939 essay](#) about the influence of art history on his drawing style and expressive use of color. “I have always considered drawing not as an exercise of particular dexterity, but above all as a means of expressing intimate feelings and descriptions of states of being, but as a means of deliberately simplified so as to give simplicity and spontaneity to the expression”

In 1946, Matisse was joined in his Paris apartment for an interview with a young American soldier. The interview was lost until 2018, when it was published in three parts, in which Matisse frankly discussed [subject matter](#), the [benefit of hardship](#), and his [relationship with color](#).

MoMA has been the home of a prolific series of exhibitions celebrating Matisse and his career. [Since 1951](#), the galleries have showcased [prints](#) and [drawings](#), as well as [sculptures](#) and [chandeliers](#), rare [late gouaches](#), and [career retrospectives](#). The museum is also the permanent home to Matisse’s 1952 masterpiece, [The Swimming Pool](#), which was [acquired in 1977](#) and continues to be displayed in special gallery as the artist intended.

[The Tate Modern](#) and [MoMA](#) teamed up in 2002-03 for a survey of [the personal and professional relationship](#) between Matisse and Picasso. At the Tate, [fourteen galleries](#) displayed groupings of painting and sculpture tracing the duo’s innovative careers from their first meeting in Paris in 1906 to the years after Matisse’s death, when Picasso paid tribute to his friend through his own work. [Curators discussed the exhibition](#) in an interview with Charlie Rose.

In 2013, [The Getty Research Center](#) published lost interviews conducted in 1941 by Swiss art critic Pierre Courthion, previously [banned from publishing](#). Art historian Serge Guilbaut [spoke in L.A.](#) about recovering the original manuscript, in the collection of the Getty, and the interview’s scholarly significance.



Matisse, 1913
Photo: Alvin Coburn



Matisse, ca. 1949
Photo: Getty

In the final phase of his career, as eyesight and physical health diminished, Matisse exchanged paintbrushes and canvas for scissors and colored paper, entering some of his most prolific and celebrated years with what would become known as *the cut-outs*. [MoMA](#) and the [Tate Modern](#) brought together over 100 works in 2015 for a stunning reevaluation of this period. View the Tate’s [room-by-room guide](#) of the fourteen vivid, paper-filled galleries.

In 2015, Matisse’s iconic work with illustrated books also received attention from exhibitions in [North Carolina](#), as well as [San Antonio](#) and [New York](#). Central to each show, was the artist’s [1947 masterpiece, Jazz](#), first showcased in full in [1983 at MoMA](#).

London’s [Royal Academy of the Arts](#) joined the [Boston Museum of Fine Arts](#) in 2017 to recreate Matisse’s Paris studio in the first exhibition dedicated to exploring the objects and art that catalyzed his ceaseless creativity. Close to 40 of Matisse’s works were paired with pieces from his studio collection, including chocolate pots, pitchers, vases, and textiles, to reveal webs of connection, inspiration, and influence.

For the 150th anniversary of Matisse’s birth, [Centre George Pompidou](#) in Paris showcased over 230 artworks and nearly 100 archival documents from the 1890s until his death in the most comprehensive look at the artist’s career to date. Also in 2020, his granddaughter, [Sophie Matisse, produced](#) a stirring [documentary for the BBC](#), with archival footage and interviews to bring the painter’s world and career to life.

Henri Matisse (French, 1869-1954)

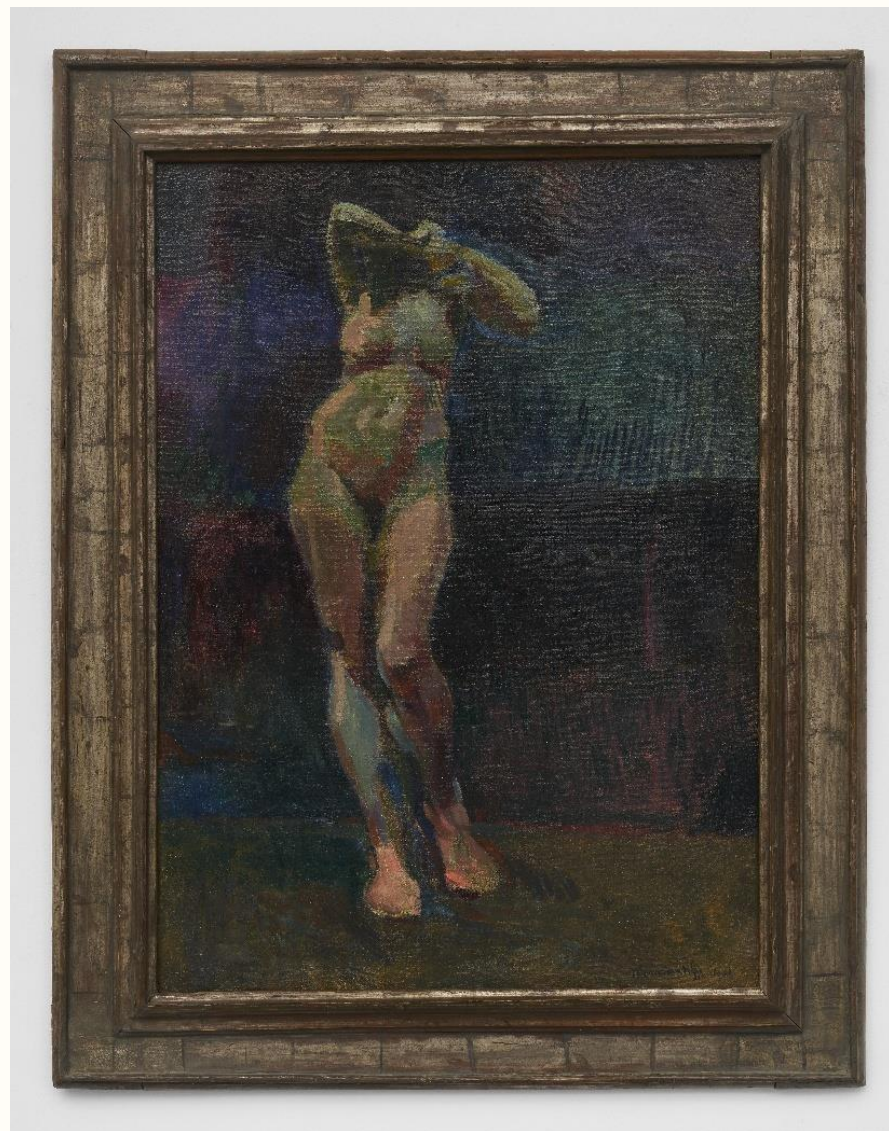
Nu debout, academie bleue (Standing Nude, Study in Blue), 1901

Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2025:45.2

Born and raised in Northern France, Henri Matisse began painting in 1889 when he was recovering from appendicitis. He studied at the Académie Julian in Paris, where he was inspired by both historical and modern artists of the time. **Nu debout, academie bleue (Standing Nude, Study in Blue)** was produced at the turn of the 20th century, when the artist was beginning to transition away from Impressionism and towards the bright, contrasting colors of Fauvism. Matisse later said: “It is only after years of preparation that the young artist should touch color – not color used descriptively, that is, but as a means of personal expression.”

On view May 28 – September 28, 2025





Henri Matisse (French, 1869-1954)
Femme nue assise, 1925-1928
Pencil on paper

Private Collection; L2022:139.5

On view May 17 – August 20, 2023

Henri Matisse (French, 1869-1954)

Woman on a Sofa, Yellow and Blue, 1936

Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2021:61.1

Henri Matisse is widely regarded as a foundational modernist of the early twentieth century. As a leader of the Fauvist movement, Matisse embraced bright, contrasting, and often unnatural color palettes to express emotion. The artist once said: "I do not literally paint the table, but the emotion it produces upon me." Unlike the work of his contemporary, Pablo Picasso, Matisse often situated portraits in domestic settings. In *Woman on a Sofa, Yellow and Blue*, the figure comfortably lounges on a black and teal striped sofa, framed by a deep blue checkered floor and bright yellow wall. In contrast to the woman's translucent gray robe and pale skin, the color and pattern of her surroundings set the figure apart. It is her accessories – bright blue heels, ring, and necklace – that draw attention to the woman's reclining body.

On view June 9 – September 12, 2021

