



# *Selections from the Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection*

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art

## Director's Note

A newsworthy and very welcome event for the Museum in 2002 was the gift of the personal collection of Pierre Matisse, a brilliant and prescient art dealer, who was the younger son of the French artist Henri Matisse. This major donation consists of several paintings and a few drawings, which Pierre Matisse enjoyed in his home in New York, as well as a selection of sculptures, prints, and additional drawings that he kept in storage.

Pierre Matisse opened his gallery in New York on East 57th Street in 1931. He first made a reputation showing artists such as Bonnard, Chagall, de Chirico, Derain, and Rouault. Later, and for the first time in the United States, he introduced younger painters such as Miró, Balthus, and Dubuffet, and he helped shape their careers. He also had close friendships with two other artists, Tanguy and Giacometti.

After Pierre's death in 1989 his widow, Maria-Gaetana Matisse, created a foundation in their name. She also established a second residence, an apartment in Paris, where she installed furniture by Diego and Alberto Giacometti, as well as paintings by Zao Wou-ki and younger artists working in France who were represented by Pierre Matisse after World War II. Works from Maria-Gaetana's Paris apartment are not included in the present selection reproduced in this *Bulletin*.

The Foundation's gifts strengthen and broaden our holdings of the School of Paris. Pierre Matisse was also a discerning collector

of tribal art, and the Foundation's donation includes an imposing African reliquary figure (p. 22). Since works on paper are vulnerable to light, the Matisse Collection will be exhibited in three consecutive showings beginning in May 2004. The second installation will offer a different selection of drawings and prints.

The Matisse Foundation's gift complements three other major donations of modern art received during the past decade: the collections of Florene M. Schoenborn (1995), of Mr. and Mrs. Klaus G. Perls (1996), and of Jacques and Natasha Gelman (1998). All four came through the good offices of William S. Lieberman, the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Chairman of the Department of Modern Art. Bill met Pierre Matisse in 1946, and they first worked together in 1957 on the organization of the Miró retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art. They became friends, and Bill remained close to Pierre's widow, Tana, until her death in 2001.

Sabine Rewald, curator in the Department of Modern Art, Magdalena Dabrowski, associate research curator, as well as Bill Lieberman, have contributed the texts to this publication.

Special thanks are due to Eugene Victor Thaw and the Trustees of the Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Foundation. The Museum is deeply grateful for their support, their generous collaboration, and their understanding of the intentions of Pierre and Tana.

*Philippe de Montebello*

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Photography by Bruce Schwarz of The Photograph Studio of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. On the cover: *Lilas*, 1914, by Henri Matisse (French, 1869–1954). Oil on canvas, 57½ x 38 in. (146.1 x 96.5 cm). The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002 (2002.458.4)

# The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Foundation's gift represents one of the largest additions to the Metropolitan's collection of modern art. It greatly strengthens the Museum's representation of Henri Matisse, and it enhances our holdings of Surrealist works with paintings by Leonora Carrington, Wifredo Lam, and René Magritte, three artists not previously represented in the Metropolitan Museum.

Pierre Matisse's personal collection was handsomely displayed in changing installations in his townhouse on East 64th Street. His favorite modern artists were Balthus, Derain, Dubuffet, Giacometti, Miró, and Tanguy, and with each he developed different and lasting friendships. In addition, by inheritance, he received works by his father. Nearly sixty of these have been given to the Metropolitan. They date from 1904, when Henri Matisse was thirty-five, to 1952, when he was eighty-three, and include five bronzes, four paintings, fourteen drawings, a painted plate, a large paper cutout, and twenty-nine prints.

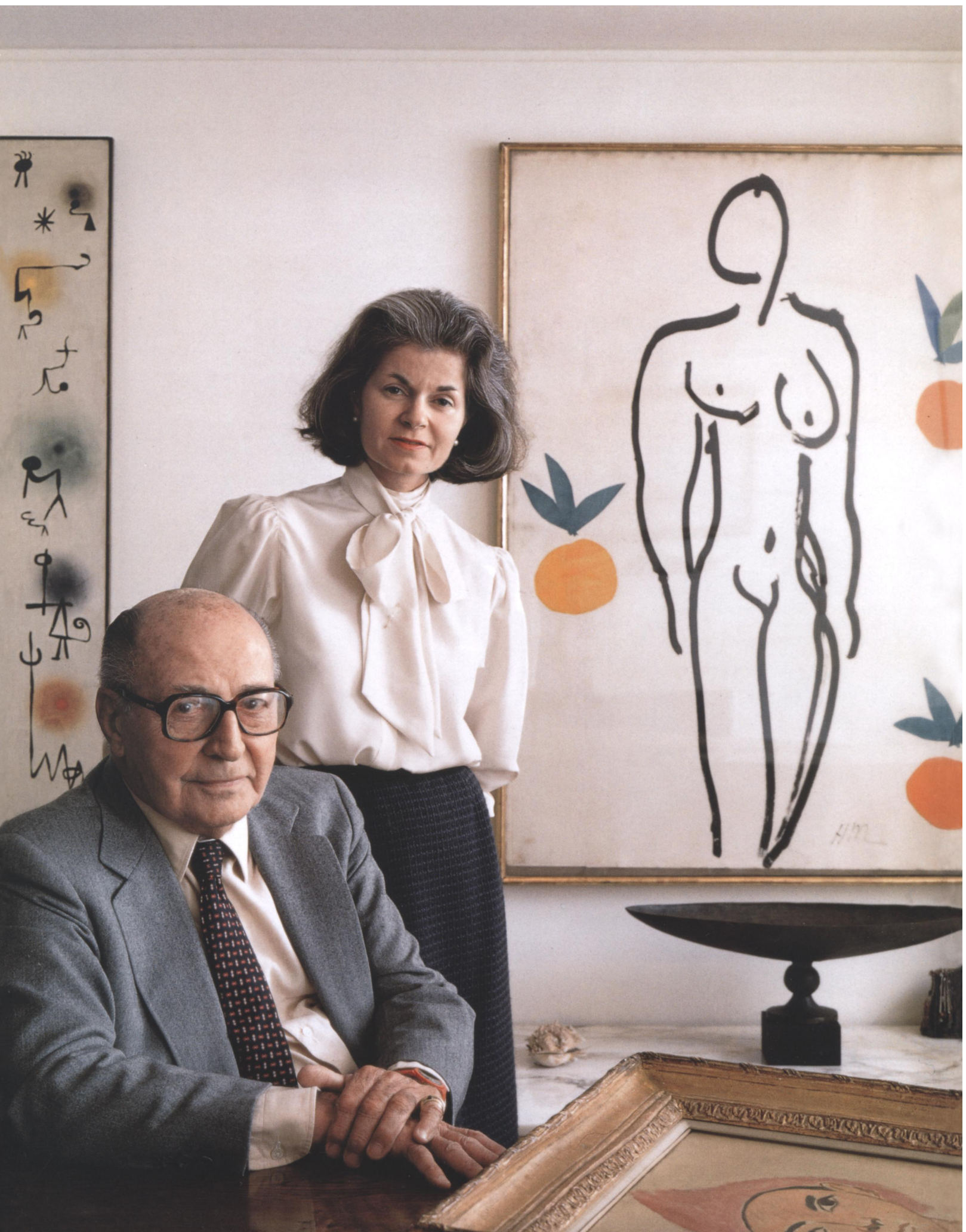
After World War II Pierre Matisse began to represent younger artists: the English sculptors Reg Butler and Raymond Mason; the Spanish artists Manolo Millares, Manuel Rivera, and Antonio Saura; the American painter Joan Mitchell, and her Canadian husband, Jean-Paul Riopelle; and in Paris and New York, Pierre continued to support the American painter Loren MacIver.

Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse started to make gifts to the Museum in 1984. These included a drawing by Matisse, a painting by Miró, and nine by MacIver. Only the painting by Miró and one by MacIver are reproduced here (pp. 15, 42).

The selections illustrated in this *Bulletin* are arranged in three sections: works done between 1911 and 1942; works by Henri Matisse; and paintings and sculpture after 1943. For much information about Pierre and Tana and their Foundation's gifts and for her valuable and gracious assistance, I would like to thank Alessandra Carnielli, executive director of the Foundation.

WSL







# Introduction

Eighty years ago, in 1924, an adventurous twenty-four-year-old young man arrived on these shores from France. Somewhat of an artist himself—and a former student of the violin and of painting—he had decided to become an art dealer. As Pierre Matisse was the second son of the artist Henri Matisse, he came with connections as well as his luggage. Indeed, it was Walter Pach, artist and critic, who took Pierre under his wing and introduced him to the handful of art galleries then in New York.

Although shy and reserved, Pierre was a quick study. The following year he mounted an exhibition of his father's prints and drawings at the bookshop cum gallery of Eberhard Weyhe on Lexington Avenue. Pierre then spent several years gaining experience by going into partnership with Valentine Dudensing, a dealer of modern European art. Finally, in October 1931, Pierre set up shop in two tiny rooms on the seventeenth floor of the Fuller Building on 57th Street. At first, as John Russell wrote in 1989, "Visitors were few, and initially he was often too shy even to speak to them." Gradually, his business grew, and in 1947 Pierre moved in the Fuller Building to quarters on the fourth floor, where he remained for the next forty-two years, until his death in 1989.

Pierre Matisse had two outstanding qualities, tenacity and steadfastness. Both served him well in the early years of the gallery, which coincided with the depth of the Depression. The study of recent art was then in its infancy in New York.

The Museum of Modern Art had just opened in 1929, and in this brave new world for modern art Pierre Matisse made his mark showing works by established European artists, such as Gromaire, Derain, Pascin, and Rouault. Pierre found his true vocation, however, when he began championing younger artists such as Miró and Balthus, in 1932 and 1938, respectively. He forged close relationships with both, as he also would do with Giacometti and Dubuffet later, in 1946 and in 1948. He was the first to show the works of these then-unknown, and now well-known, artists in this country. Over decades Pierre expanded his focus to represent painters from Latin America, the United States, and Canada, sculptors from England, and a still-younger generation of artists from France and Spain.

Pierre gave as much care to the installations of his exhibitions as he did to the layouts of his elegant, slim catalogues. He asked writers such as Sartre, Breton, and Camus to contribute forewords. From the beginning Pierre kept very precise books, recording in big accounting ledgers the movements of all the works that passed through his gallery. As meticulously kept were the individual files of his artists, holding such valuable materials as clippings of articles and reviews, letters, drawings, notes, and photographs. Among the treasures of this archive is the voluminous correspondence between Pierre and Henri Matisse from 1919 to 1954. John Russell cited these letters in his recent book (1999) on father and son. Thanks to these letters the myth that Henri Matisse did not want his son to be a dealer and would not support him—invented and upheld by Pierre throughout his life—was disproved. These files grew into a formidable archive during the nearly six decades of the gallery's life span.

With Pierre's death in 1989 the gallery ceased to exist, but

*Opposite:* Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse in New York, late 1986. Photograph by Hans Namuth for *Connaissance des Arts*, February 1987. All photographs in the Introduction except page 7 courtesy of the Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Foundation, New York

## INTRODUCTION



Pierre Matisse sitting for Alberto Giacometti in the artist's studio in Paris, ca. 1949. Photograph by Patricia Matisse



Pierre Matisse and Joan Miró in the artist's studio in Palma de Mallorca, ca. 1968. Photograph by Patricia Matisse (?)

its spirit remained alive in its archive. So that it would be accessible to scholars and students, his widow, Tana (born Countess Maria-Gaetana von Spreti), and his three children by his second wife, Alexina Sattler (she subsequently married Marcel Duchamp), established the Pierre Matisse Foundation, which gave the gallery archive to the Pierpont Morgan Library in 1997.

Tana joined the Pierre Matisse Gallery in 1972, the year Pierre became a widower after the sudden death of his third wife, Patricia O'Connell Kane. Tana soon became as indispensable as an office manager as she was to Pierre's



Maria-Gaetana Matisse in Beijing, October 1997. Photograph by Deborah Gage

private life. They married in 1974. Young, cultured, and refined, Tana brought into his life optimism and youth, both her own and that of her circle of international friends. Tana's diplomat father had been killed on his post in Guatemala in 1971, and Pierre became her anchor. He also offered her a stimulating life in New York and Europe, where she accompanied him on his regular rounds of visits to his artists each summer. She befriended Balthus, Chagall, and Miró, and also the younger generation of Pierre's artists, such as François Rouan, Zao Wou-ki, and Raymond Mason. It was her felicitous idea to ask Federico Fellini to write the foreword to the catalogue of the Balthus exhibition in 1977.

Each morning the Matisses would walk from the house on East 64th Street the few blocks to the Fuller Building on 57th Street. Pierre carried in a special bag Tana's little white dog that kept them company throughout the day. Tana not only watched over Pierre at home, particularly his diet, but also protected him at the gallery from the ubiquitous graduate students.

After Pierre's death Tana Matisse established her own philanthropic plans. Among them was the long project of organizing the vast gallery archive at the Pierre Matisse Foundation, which, in 1995, became the Pierre and Maria-

Gaetana Matisse Foundation. She supported art institutions and charities, and lent generously to exhibitions of former gallery artists' works from the collection at 64th Street. As before, she opened the house to artists, museum professionals, collectors, and friends. With her sudden death in April 2001, this haven of art and culture on 64th Street ceased to exist. It is somewhat of a consolation that the works of art from that haven have now found their way, thanks to the Trustees of the Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Foundation, into The Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they can be shared with scholars and students and appreciated by the public.

SR



# I 9 I I – I 9 4 2

In a draft of his very first letter to Balthus in early 1938, Pierre Matisse wrote that he did not practice the craft of an art dealer as it had been done in former days. He explained that he had a “horror of playing cat and mouse with artists” and continued: “Help me to make our exhibition.” His exquisite sense of collaboration and forthrightness marked Pierre Matisse’s relationships with all his artists.

Pierre had discovered Balthus’s work in 1934, after having missed the artist’s first one-man exhibition at the Galerie Pierre in Paris earlier that year. That exhibition, with its five large paintings characterized by a hard-edged eroticism, had caused what was for the period a “scandal.” Since nobody in France would touch these works, they were still languishing at the Galerie Pierre when Pierre Matisse saw them.

Over the following four years Pierre Matisse courted Balthus through letters, to which the latter responded with silence. Finally, in 1938, Matisse mounted the artist’s first one-man exhibition in this country without Balthus’s participation. It had taken Pierre more than a year to gather the fifteen works for the show; most of them were loans from two dealers in Paris and not for sale, and he sold only two. Notwithstanding these and future frustrations including the

artist’s slow output, Pierre continued for the next fifty years, until his death in 1989, to cultivate and support Balthus. Gallery records show that he often held on to the artist’s works for decades in order to place them strategically in museums in this country and in Europe.

During his annual summer visit to Paris in 1938, Pierre posed for this portrait in Balthus’s studio at cour de Rohan, behind place de L’Odéon. After his notorious exhibition at the Galerie Pierre, Balthus turned to portraits. In these works he mingled truthfulness, stylization, and often elements of the bizarre. He also reduced his palette to a narrow, almost monochromatic range of browns, grays, and blacks, enlivened by only the occasional patch of red, as here in Pierre’s left sock.

The French Pierre Matisse was known for his reticence and reserve. Balthus, however, depicted him in a relaxed pose as a jaunty American wearing a loud-patterned tie. Shortly after World War II the painting disappeared from the storehouse in which Matisse had placed it. During the late 1970s, when asked about the picture, he could not remember its whereabouts. When the portrait surfaced in 1991, exactly two years after Pierre’s death, it was acquired by his widow, Maria-Gaetana.

SR

Balthus, French, 1908–2001

*Pierre Matisse*

1938

Oil on canvas

51¼ x 35 in. (130.2 x 88.9 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.7









Marc Chagall, French, born Russia, 1887–1985

### *The Betrothed*

1911

Oil on canvas

18 x 15 in. (45.7 x 38.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.8

Like Giorgio de Chirico, who created his most elegiac Italian cityscapes when he was living in Paris from 1911 to 1915, Marc Chagall conjured up his native Russia in the works he painted from 1910 to 1914 while a resident of the French capital. Here, in *The Betrothed*, he evoked as a bride his faraway fiancée, Bella Rosenfeld, whom he married upon his return to Vitebsk in 1915. The picture's limited palette of blue and white is unusual within the artist's oeuvre, and the brighter colors showing through the white paint suggest that Chagall might have reused an old canvas.

Pierre Matisse had coveted Chagall's works since 1924, when he first met the artist in Paris. Chagall was loath to part with his pictures, but in 1941 Pierre was able to mount a one-man show that turned into a "blockbuster" and was followed by sixteen more exhibitions until 1982, three years before the artist's death.

De Chirico became known to the American public through a number of exhibitions held during the late 1920s and early 1930s at various galleries in New York. These were shows of his so-called late works, prancing Rococo stallions, classical ruins, and posing gladiators. Almost unknown in this country were his very early metaphysical paintings of 1910–18 that had been such an inspiration for the Surrealists. In 1935 Pierre Matisse mounted an exhibition of those little-known paintings at his gallery, and it created an enormous amount of attention in the press. He had admired de Chirico for a long time and had spent the entire summer of 1935 gathering the twenty-six paintings for the show, borrowing several from André Breton and Paul Éluard. The artist is shown at the right in a self-portrait painted when he was only twenty-three.

SR



Giorgio de Chirico, Italian, 1888–1978

### *Self-Portrait*

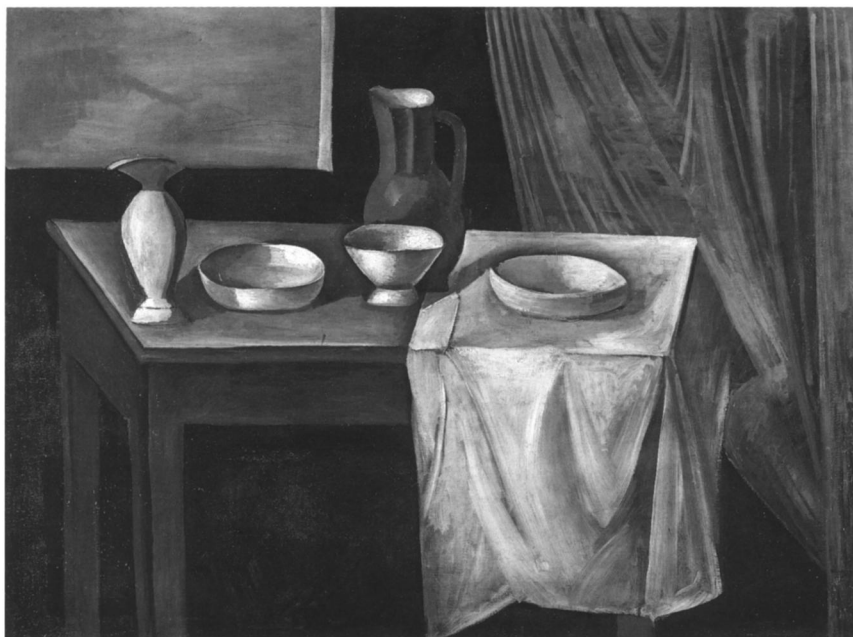
1911

Oil on canvas

34 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 27 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (87.3 x 69.9 cm)

Gift in memory of Carl Van Vechten and Fania Marinoff, 1970  
1970.166





André Derain, French, 1880–1954

*The Table*

1911

Oil on canvas

38 x 51⅞ in. (96.5 x 131.1 cm)

Purchase, Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund, 1954  
54.79

André Derain, French, 1880–1954

*The Black Feather Boa*

1935

Oil on canvas

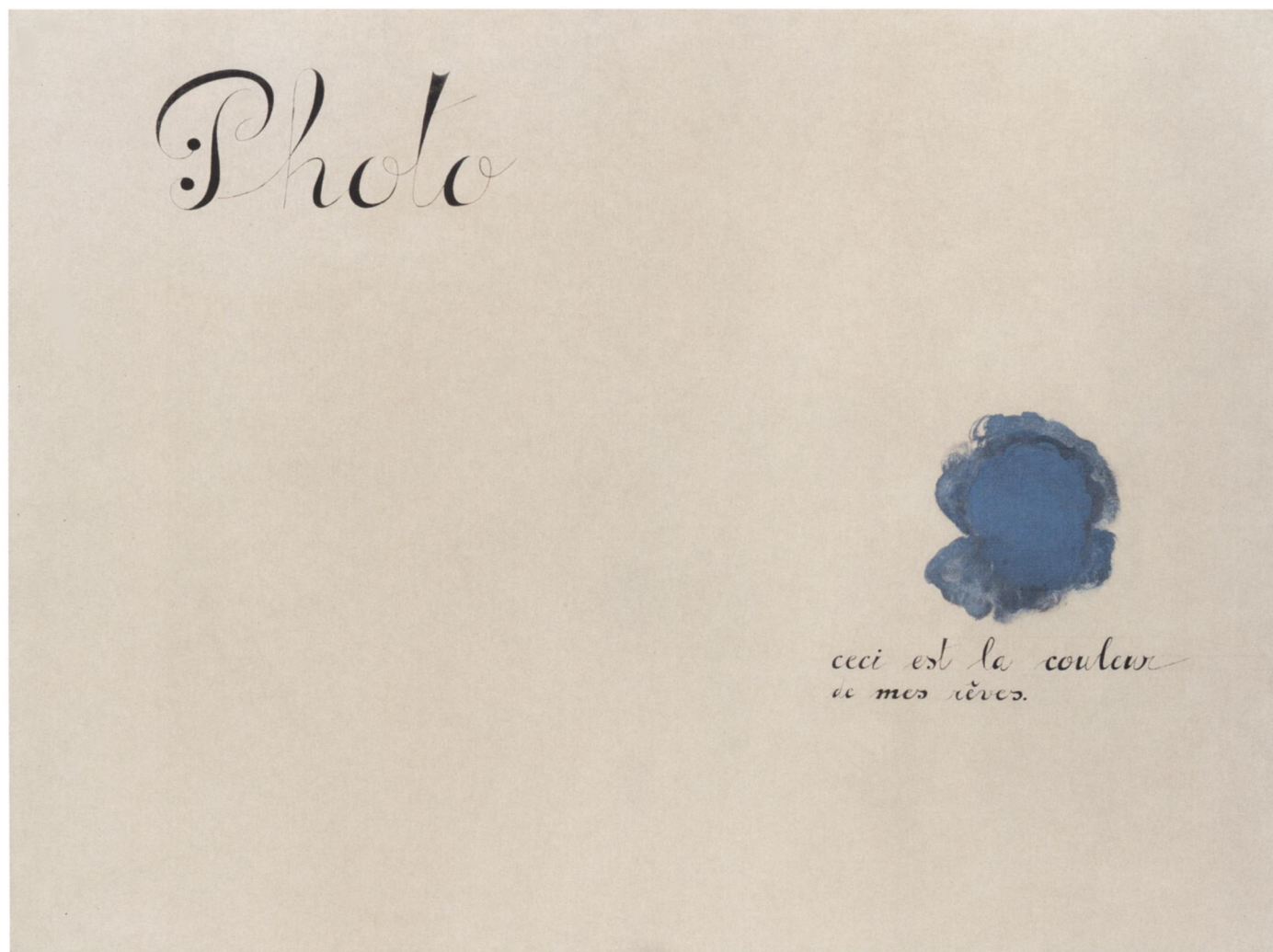
64 x 38½ in. (162.6 x 97.8 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002  
2002.456.10

André Derain has been acclaimed for the Fauve works that he painted with Henri Matisse in the south of France and with Maurice de Vlaminck in the north between 1905 and 1906. The austere still life, *The Table*, which Pierre Matisse sold to the Museum in 1954, demonstrates a few years later Derain's rejection of the brilliant Fauve palette for an emphasis on muted colors and structure. Derain's passion for learning led him to look for inspiration to the art of the past, to Cézanne and to the Dutch and French seventeenth-century still-life tradition.

*The Black Feather Boa* depicts Derain's favorite niece, Geneviève Thailand (b. 1919), the daughter of his wife Alice's sister. For the occasion Geneviève modeled a yellow-and-red checked dress and cape, the sophisticated cut of which adds years to the appearance of this sixteen-year-old. The black feather boa trails to the floor, and an orange straw hat dangles from her left arm. Pierre Matisse remained attached to Derain—his mentor during his own brief career as a student-painter—showing the artist's work in one-man exhibitions in 1940 and 1944 and acquiring this picture at auction in New York in May 1989. *The Black Feather Boa* and Magritte's *The Eternally Obvious* (p. 54) were the last paintings Matisse purchased before his death in August of that year. SR





Joan Miró, Spanish, 1893–1983

*This Is the Color of My Dreams*

1925

Oil on canvas

38 x 51 in. (96.5 x 129.5 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002  
2002.456.5

Joan Miró, Spanish, 1893–1983

*Painting*

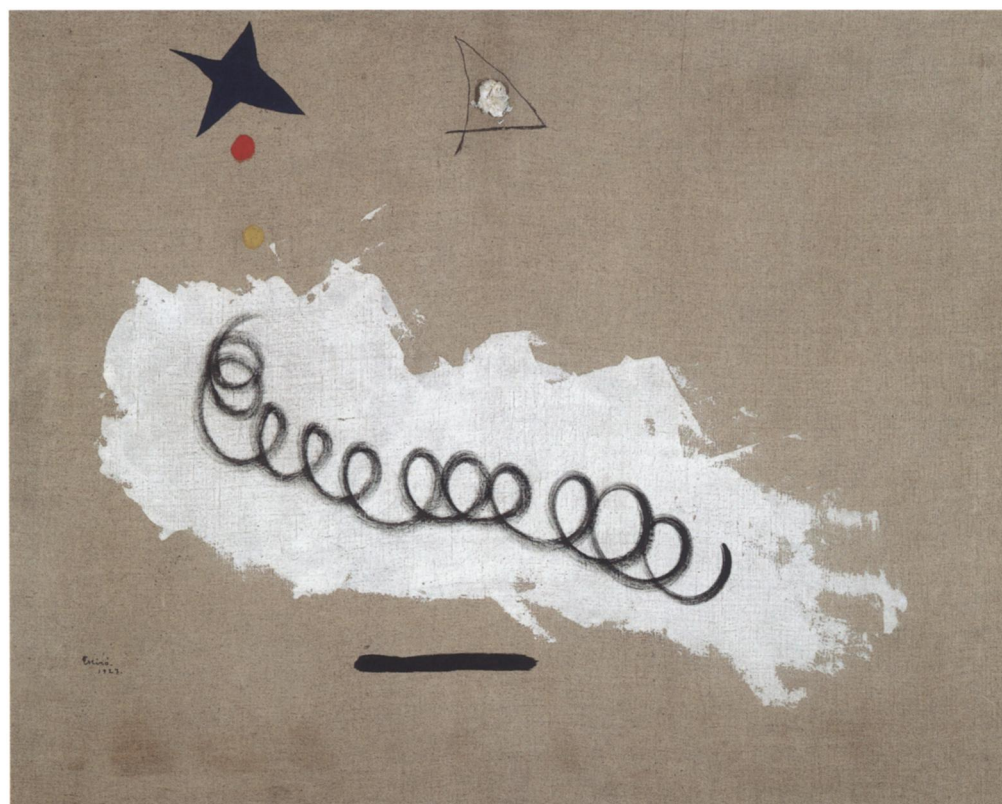
1927

Tempera and oil on canvas

28¾ x 36¼ in. (73 x 92.1 cm)

Gift of Pierre Matisse in memory of Pierre Loeb, 1984  
1984.207





In Paris during the mid-1920s and again in the mid-1930s, Miró combined words with painted images in two different series of paintings, each consisting of about ten works. *This Is the Color of My Dreams* belongs to the earlier series, which Miró called “painting poems.” As had become his habit, he wrote these phrases in French. Prominently scripted in elegant copperplate on a surface painted uniform white, the word “photo” suggests that what we see is simply a photograph. Its subject, Miró explains in the inscription, is his favorite color, the color of his dreams, identified by the bold burst of blue.

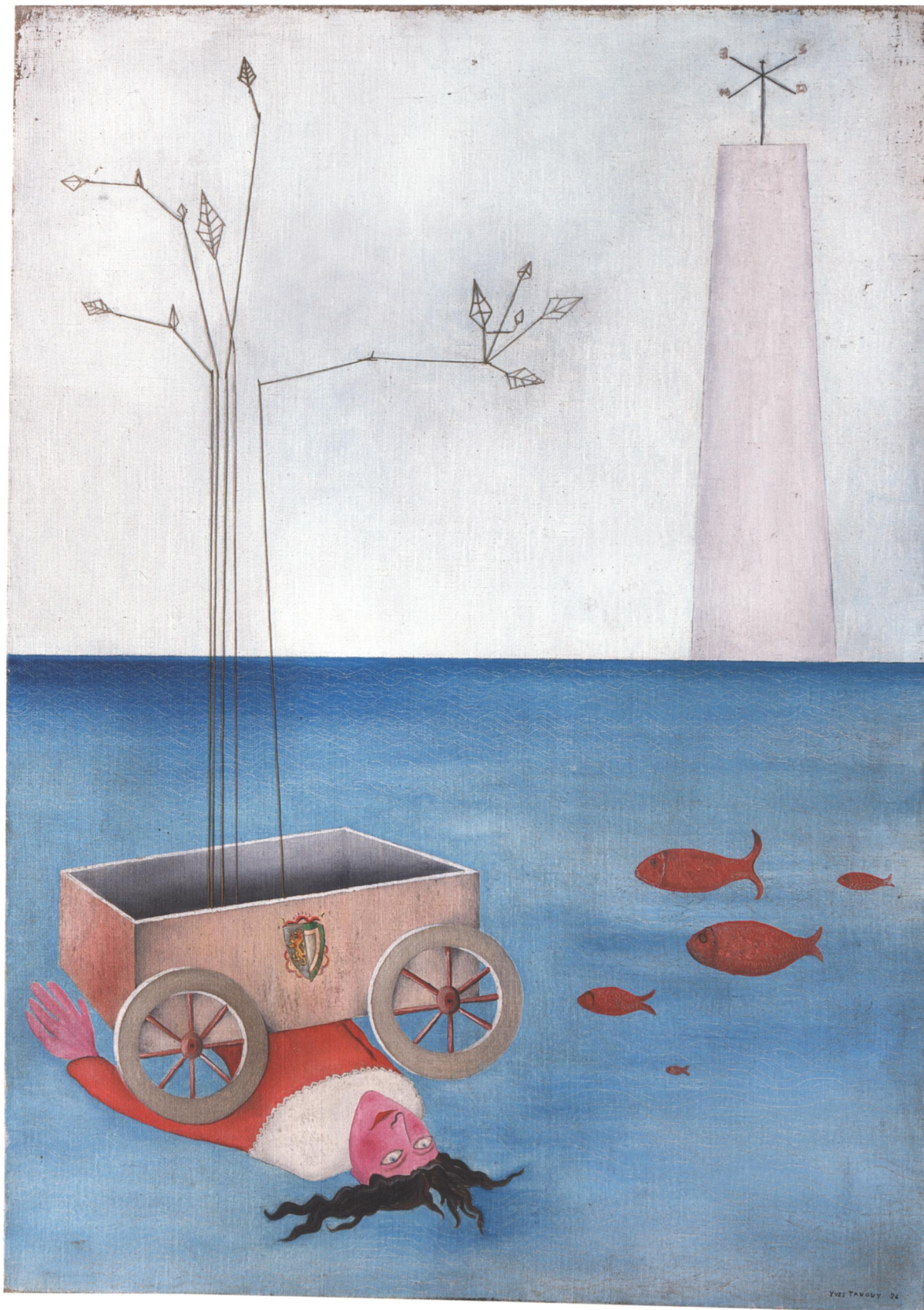
Although on occasion obliged to do so, Pierre Matisse disliked sharing representation of a living artist with other dealers. An exception was Pierre Loeb, at whose avant-garde Galerie Pierre in Paris he first saw paintings by Miró and

Balthus. Matisse’s rapport with the former, however, was not immediate. He later recalled to Rosamond Bernier: “In 1928 [Miró’s] dealer Pierre Loeb gave me a painting as a bait. There was a blue star and a red dot. I thanked him and put it away in a closet, I just didn’t get it. Then one day I went to the Salon des Indépendants in Paris. I suddenly became indifferent and suspicious. I thought that none of those paintings meant anything. I came home, terribly depressed. I took everything off the walls. In the closet I saw the Miró. It was a composition that had a precision all its own. Miró wanted to do the maximum with the minimum. I didn’t need to know what it was about. It was a revelation. Life was bursting out everywhere.”

Pierre Matisse kept the painting, untitled by Miró, for many years.

WSL





Yves Tanguy, American, born France, 1900–1955

## Title Unknown

1926

Oil with string on canvas

36¼ x 25⅞ in. (92 x 65.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.6

A child sporting a red dress and a wild mane of hair and floating in a blue sea is flattened by a cart from which sprouts a tree made of strings. A “family” of fish approaches from the right. Despite its pronounced naïveté, this painting shows a remarkable assuredness, considering that the self-taught Tanguy had begun to paint in oil only a year earlier, in 1925. In that year he met André Breton, the leader of the Surrealist group, which he joined. His ensuing friendship with the older poet, who served him as both influence and advocate, proved decisive for the artist. Breton regarded Tanguy as one of the purest painters among the Surrealists.

This childlike poetic work already contains the seeds of Tanguy’s future paintings. By the following year, after having gained further technical skill, he had found his unique personal style. From then until his death in 1955, Tanguy focused on the same dreamlike subject: a plain, stretching toward infinity and rendered in a precise and illusionistic technique, which is deserted except for various fantastic biomorphic objects, or rocks and bone forms as seen in *The Mirage of Time*—acquired from Pierre Matisse Gallery in 1955.

Yves Tanguy was a former classmate of Pierre Matisse’s at the Lycée Montaigne in Paris. Matisse began showing Tanguy’s work in 1939, the year the painter moved to the United States.

SR



Yves Tanguy, American, born France, 1900–1955

## *The Mirage of Time*

1954

Oil on canvas

39 x 32 in. (99.1 x 81.3 cm)

George A. Hearn Fund, 1955

55.95





Alberto Giacometti, Swiss, 1901–1966

*Still Life with an Apple*

1937

Oil on canvas

28¼ x 29½ in. (71.8 x 74.9 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.3

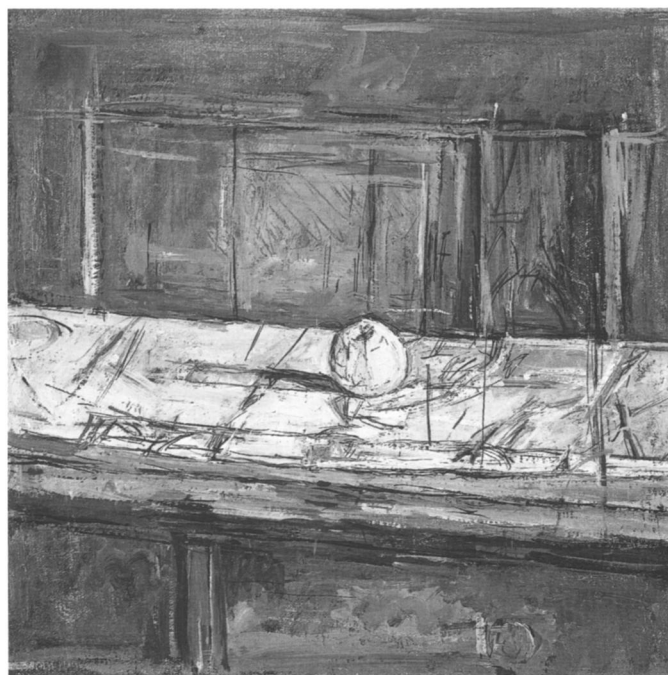
Although until 1946 he devoted himself mostly to sculpture, Alberto Giacometti was both a sculptor and painter. Since he created only about a dozen canvases during the preceding decades, it is remarkable that he turned out in a single year, 1937, two still lifes of a small yellow apple. One, a close-up view, is now in a private New York collection.

The previous year France had celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of Cézanne's death with a large retrospective and numerous books and articles. Giacometti honored Cézanne with these two still lifes.

The artist began the composition with several apples. According to his brother Diego, however, he then decided that one sufficed. The fruit he chose is not much larger than the knob of the sideboard's right drawer. Giacometti heightened the drama between the tiny apple and the large rustic sideboard by placing them both at a distance from the viewer. The paintings depict the interior of the family's summer house at Maloja, Switzerland. The reddish wood of the sideboard and the wainscoting form a warm monochrome background for the apple, the yellow hue of which is echoed in the strip of the wall above.

Although Pierre Matisse had known Giacometti since 1936, it took him twelve years to mount his first exhibition for the artist in 1948. The still life at left was in that exhibition, and Matisse never parted with it, keeping it for his own collection.

SR



Alberto Giacometti, Swiss, 1901–1966

*The Apple*

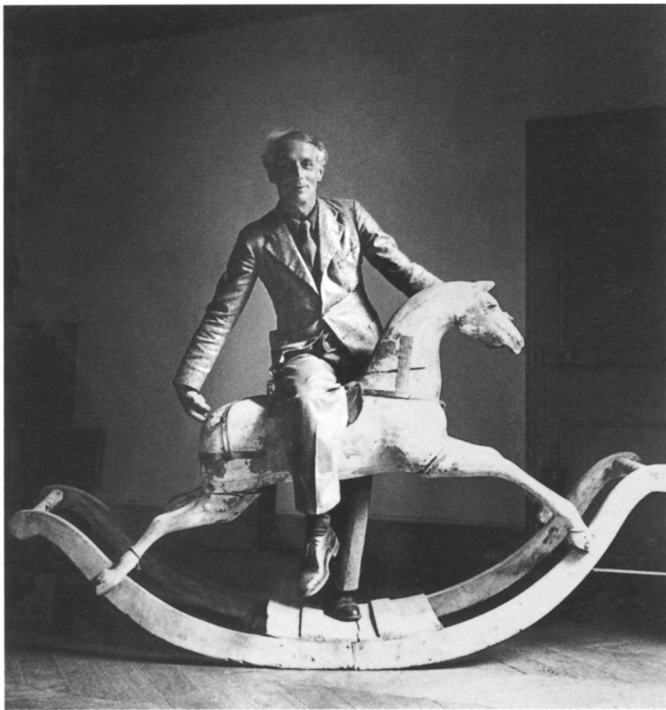
1937

Oil on canvas

10½ x 10½ in. (26.6 x 26.6 cm)

Private Collection, New York





*Max Ernst Astride a Rocking Horse*

1938

Photograph by Leonora Carrington

7⅞ x 7⅞ in. (19.4 x 19.4 cm)

Courtesy of Max-Ernst-Kabinett, Brühl, Germany

Leonora Carrington, the daughter of an English industrialist, spent her childhood on a country estate, surrounded by animals and immersed in fairy tales and Celtic legends. She studied painting at the art school founded by Amédée Ozenfant in London. At a dinner in London in 1937 she met the German-born Surrealist painter Max Ernst and followed him to Paris. That year, they moved to St. Martin d'Ardèche in the south of France. They lived in a group of ruined buildings that they renovated and decorated with mythical animals and birds. The idyll was destroyed when the Germans occupied France in 1940 and Ernst was interned.

In this self-portrait, also called *The Inn of the Dawn Horse*, the twenty-one-year-old Carrington sports tight white jodhpurs, Victorian buttoned boots, a seaweed green jacket, and a wild mane of dark hair. The only furniture in this unfathomable room, with its disturbingly industrial-looking shiny tile floor, is the blue armchair. Marooned in this strange setting, Carrington has as her only companion a prancing hyena with three pendulous breasts. The large white rocking horse and its shadow may be painted on the wall. It resembles the one on which her companion, Ernst, is shown in the photograph at left. In the self-portrait a landscape painting festooned with yellow curtains displays another smaller horse. The strange cast of characters might have tumbled out of one of the bizarre stories that Carrington wrote in 1937–38, in which the image of the white horse often looms.

Recent X-rays and reflectograms show that Carrington originally wore a tight black décolleté top, that a small side table with objects on top stood next to the armchair, and that a doll, now obliterated by a cloudlike stain, was lying on the far left.

Max Ernst gave the painting to Pierre Matisse for safe-keeping in the early 1940s. The work was virtually unknown until it was shown at Carrington's retrospective in New York in 1976.

SR



Leonora Carrington, Mexican, born England, 1917

*Self-Portrait*

1938

Oil on canvas

25 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 32 in. (65 x 81.3 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.1







Gabon or Republic of Congo (Ambete)

*Reliquary Figure*

19th century

Wood, pigment, metal, cowrie shells

H. 32½ in. (82.6 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.17

Wifredo Lam, Cuban, 1902–1982

*Goddess with Foliage*

1942

Gouache on paper

41½ x 33½ in. (105.4 x 85.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.32



In the autumn of 1934 Pierre Matisse mounted an exhibition of Oceanic art, which was still relatively unknown in this country. Then, in the spring of 1935, he showed, to critical acclaim, African sculpture from the collection of Charles Ratton, the famed Parisian dealer of tribal art. Probably among the works in that exhibition was this male reliquary figure that Pierre kept throughout his life. The sculpture's hollow interior is a receptacle for ancestral relics.

Elements of African, Cubist, and Surrealist art seem to be blended in the hybrid creature portrayed by the Cuban artist Wifredo Lam. The pointed ears, horse's muzzle, two fruit-shaped breasts, and expressive hands combine animal, vegetal, and human elements.

Lam returned to his native Cuba in 1941, after having spent eighteen years in Europe, first in Spain and then in Paris. Picasso had become a friend and supporter, as had André Breton, the French poet and leader of the Surrealists. Breton persuaded Pierre Matisse to give Lam his first exhibition in this country in 1942. The poet also wrote the introduction to the catalogue and invented the French titles of all fourteen gouaches included in the show. This figure's regal bearing and surrounding foliage inspired Breton to give it the title *Déesse avec feuillage*. Matisse kept this work for his own collection and continued to support Lam with five more exhibitions until 1982, the year the artist died.

SR





# HENRI MATISSE

In spring 1925, shortly after his arrival in the United States, Pierre Matisse organized an exhibition of drawings, lithographs, and etchings by his father, Henri Matisse. Two years later, in January, Pierre, a partner at the Valentine Dudensing Gallery, put together an important retrospective of his father's paintings from 1890 to 1926, and in January 1934 he presented at his own gallery a selection of Henri's works from 1918 to 1929. After this exhibition and until the closing of the Pierre Matisse Gallery in 1989, Henri Matisse was always (although not exclusively) represented in this country by his son.

By the time Pierre Matisse exhibited his father's canvases for the first time, Henri Matisse was recognized as an important modern master and was widely collected and shown in Europe and the United States. The American public had been introduced to his work at the 1913 Armory Show in New York, which was followed in January 1915 by a large one-man exhibition in the city at the Montross Gallery. By the 1920s several American museums and major private collectors—such as Walter and Louise Arensberg, Albert C. Barnes, the Cone sisters, and John Quinn—owned significant holdings of Henri Matisse's oils, works on paper, and sculptures.

In autumn 1938 Matisse was commissioned to design an overmantel decoration for Nelson A. Rockefeller's apartment in New York. The final composition portrayed four female figures, interacting in pairs and grouped on two levels.

The present sheet, a study for the top section of the final composition, depicts two seated female figures listening to a song performed by a standing woman, faintly drawn at lower right leaning on the top of the mantel; the mantel's form is sketched only cursorily to provide support for the scheme above. The figures are defined by an arabesque-like line, curving gracefully against the geometric lattice of the chair and the strongly emphasized rhododendron leaves.

The drawing was executed during the early stages of the decorative scheme, before Matisse began the canvas. The whole is expertly rendered in the charcoal-and-stump technique favored by Matisse at the time. The blotted-out charcoal, smudged carefully across the surface of the paper, creates soft gray shadows and brings out the black, several-times-reworked contours. It also adds three-dimensionality to the composition, in contrast to the flatness of the finished oil.

MD

Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

## *Study for Song*

1938

Charcoal on paper

26 x 20 in. (65.7 x 50.2 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.45





*Photograph of the Chapel of Saint Joseph*

2003

Route Sainte-Anne, Saint-Tropez

Courtesy of Jean-Paul Monery

The sunlight of France's Mediterranean coast nurtured much of Matisse's art. In 1904 he first journeyed south at the invitation of Paul Signac, who lived and worked in Saint-Tropez. In his paintings Signac continued a Pointillist technique that had been perfected by Georges Seurat in the 1890s. For a short time Matisse developed a similar style and produced at least one masterwork. However, the paintings of Paul Gauguin and the drawings of Vincent van Gogh were a greater influence on his Fauve style, which began in 1905, when he met André Derain.

In the early 1900s Saint-Tropez was a quiet fishing village. Today it is greatly changed, but still standing are two

small chapels. The larger is dedicated to Saint Anne, the other to Saint Joseph. Until recently the two chapels have frequently been confused, because the Chapel of Saint Joseph is situated along the route Sainte-Anne. Matisse painted the chapel during the summer of 1904. The bright colors of the sunlit scene anticipate those of his Fauve paintings. Here, however, his rendition is still classic and conveys a sense of meditative quiet. During the next summer, when Derain joined Matisse on the Mediterranean coast, both painters exploited color in new ways that were daring, arbitrary, and expressive.

WSL



Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Chapel of Saint Joseph, Saint-Tropez*

1904

Oil on canvas

23½ x 28⅞ in. (59.7 x 72.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.13





Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

# *Young Girl*

1906

Bronze

H. 19 in. (48.3 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.116

For Henri Matisse sculpture was an expressive means complementary to painting and the medium he frequently turned to between intense periods of painting and when he was trying to solve certain pictorial problems. More than half of Matisse's sculptures were executed between 1900 and 1910, when he made his major discoveries in painting, completing his famous Fauve works, three of his "Symphonic" interiors, and decorative commissions such as *Dance* and *Music*. His early examples conflate the influences of classical sculpture, of Auguste Rodin and Antoine Bourdelle, and after 1906 of African sculpture.

During the summer of 1906, at Collioure, Matisse's interest in the medium increased. *Young Girl* (*Fille debout*), executed at that time, explores one of Matisse's favorite subjects, the standing frontal nude. The model is his daughter Marguerite, depicted in an unusual position, with both feet planted firmly side by side rather than in the usual contrapposto. The figure forms a delicate, elongated S-curve. There is no visible articulation of muscles, and the surface of the sculpture (made in the lost-wax technique) shows only slight modeling. This allows the reflected light to glide along the bronze skin.

A variation on this figure, defined with fluid linearity and presented in contrapposto, is included in the decorative scheme of the ceramic plate *Three Bathers*. MD



Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

# *Three Bathers*

1906–7

Painted ceramic plate

Diam. 13¼ in. (34.9 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.117





Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Sergei Ivanovich Shchukin*

1912

Charcoal on paper

19½ x 12 in. (49.5 x 30.5 cm)

The Pierre and Maria Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.38

This remarkable charcoal drawing depicts one of Matisse's foremost patrons, an early connoisseur of modern art, the Russian Sergei Ivanovich Shchukin (1854–1936), an importer of Eastern textiles. The two met in the fall of 1906, when Shchukin visited the artist in his Paris studio. Between 1906 and 1914 Shchukin acquired some forty important paintings by Matisse. Among them was his commission of two decorative panels executed in 1909 to 1910, *Dance* and *Music*.

In this study for Shchukin's portrait in oil, which was never realized, Matisse captured his personality with quick, decisive strokes, emphasizing the "exotic" aspect of Shchukin's appearance. The austerity of the presentation and the positioning of the head, high and off-center, heighten the dramatic effect. The sketch was most likely done in July 1912, during one of Shchukin's frequent visits to Paris.

On October 8, 1912, Henri Matisse arrived in Tangier and remained there until mid-February 1913. During that period he executed a number of charcoal and pen-and-ink drawings. As he noted in his introduction to *Portraits by Henri Matisse* (1954), he had always been interested in faces. In Tangier he had ample opportunity to observe native Moroccan people and other African nationalities.



Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*A Sudanese*

(1913)

Charcoal on paper

10½ x 8½ in. (26.7 x 20.6 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.40

The charcoal above, frequently considered to be of a man, was reproduced in *Portraits by Henri Matisse* as *Sudanese Woman* and appears to represent a type rather than a specific person. The strongly defined face is modeled in an almost sculptural manner. The work seems to attest to African sources that fascinated Matisse, namely Benin bronzes and the carved tribal heads he saw at the Musée de l'Homme, Paris.

MD





Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Marguerite Wearing a Toque*

1918

Oil on canvas

31½ x 25¼ in. (80 x 64.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.15

Matisse's numerous paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints portraying his daughter Marguerite (1894–1983) illustrate his stylistic development from 1897 to 1923. During these years she served as his most frequent model. Her likeness, not always intended to be exact, of course changed as she grew from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. Marguerite is here easily identified, however, by a black velvet ribbon that conceals post-operative scars around her neck. Marguerite was also the model for the bronze *Young Girl* (*Fillette debout*), reproduced on page 28, which was not intended as a portrait.

In 1923 Marguerite married Georges Duthuit, a Byzantine scholar. She remained close to her father and acted for him when he was not in Paris. She also initiated definitive catalogues of his prints, sculptures, and paintings, which were augmented and completed by her son Claude Duthuit. After their father's death her half brother Pierre relied on her judgments concerning the authenticity and dates of Henri Matisse's works.

Exact likenesses of Marguerite are included among the Foundation's gifts. The largest is a painting of 1918 (opposite), which shows her seated and wearing a blue toque. A plain background silhouettes figure and chair. Marguerite seems alert, poised, indeed elegant. Matisse often painted more than one version of the same subject. Similarly posed, Marguerite appears in a smaller painting of the same year (left). Her features are rendered differently, and to her brimless toque Matisse added the then-fashionable plumes of a gaura (crowned pigeon).

WSL

Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Woman with a Plumed Hat*

1918

Oil on canvas

18½ x 15 in. (46 x 38 cm)

Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection







Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Seated Nude Wearing a Tulle Shirt*

1925

Lithograph

21 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 14 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (54.9 x 37.5 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.93

Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Nude Seated in an Armchair*

1924

Bronze

H. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (23.5 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.120

The female figure—seated, standing, or reclining, either fully or partly dressed or nude—was one of the central themes in Matisse's work during his early Nice period (1917–30). His favorite model was a sensuous nineteen-year-old dancer, Henriette Darricarrère, who became the subject of numerous paintings, drawings, sculptures, and lithographs between 1920 and 1928.

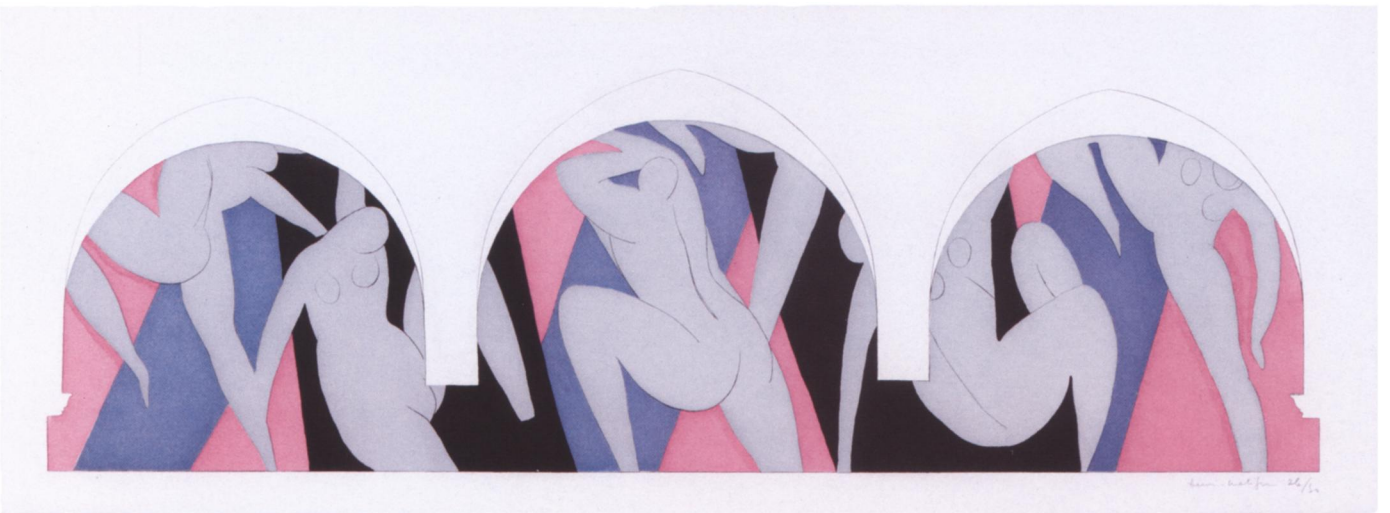
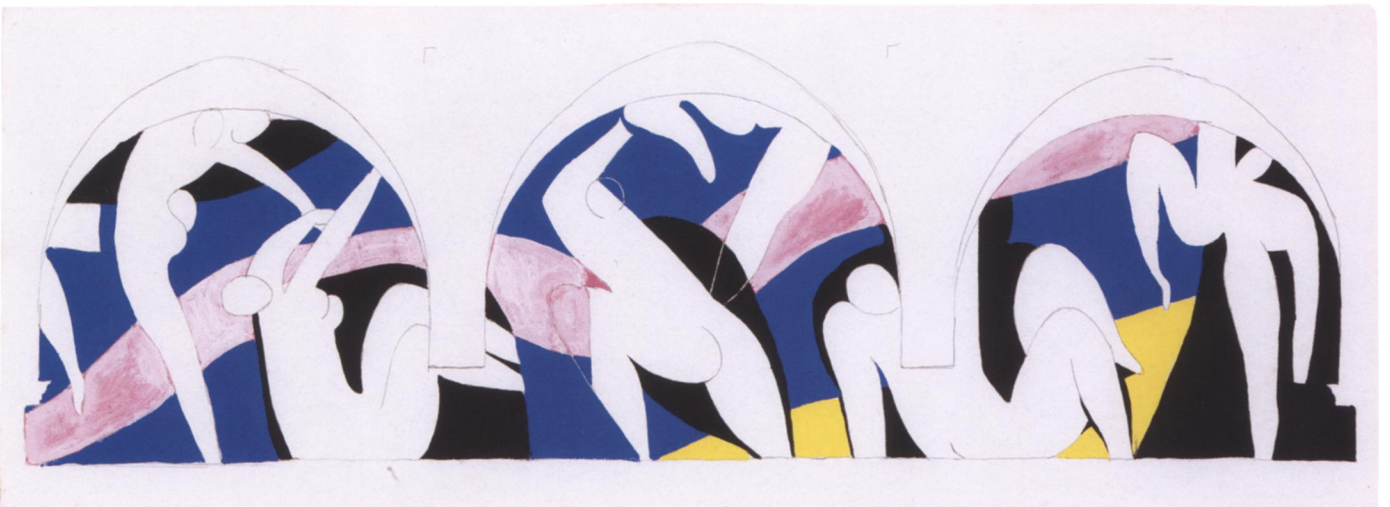
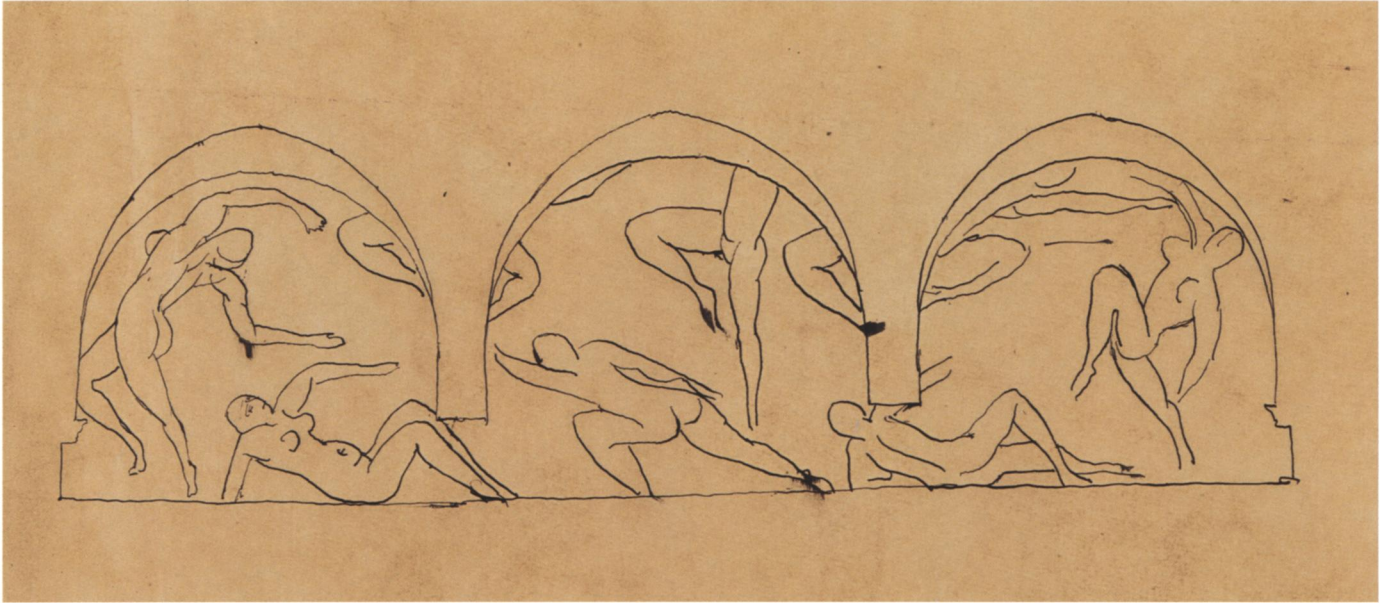
The small bronze depicting Henriette reclining in an armchair resulted from a series of drawings in charcoal or in pen and ink. This informal sculpture also might have been an early study for Matisse's largest freestanding sculpture *Large Seated Nude* (1925–29). The elongated torso of this figure highlights the S-curve of the body, with the lower part turned to the side and the upper toward the front. The surface, probably executed with a palette knife, shows the delicate marks of the modeling; light reflecting on the surface adds expressiveness to the body and the schematic features of the masklike face.

The lithograph presents Henriette in a pensive mood, casually posed on a decorative rug against a striped backdrop. The curving line describing her body and the angular patterning behind her create the tension so characteristic of Matisse's images at this time. The figure becomes an exquisite ornament against an ornamental background.

MD







Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Dance: Study for the Barnes Mural (Paris version)*

1931

Pen and ink on paper

12¼ x 19½ in. (32.4 x 49.5 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002  
2002.456.42

Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Dance: Study for the Barnes Mural (Paris version)*

1932

Gouache and pencil on paper

11 x 29⅞ in. (27.9 x 75.9 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002  
2002.456.43

Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Dance: Study after the Barnes Mural*

1935

Aquatint and etching

11⅞ x 21⅞ in. (30.2 x 80.3 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002  
2002.456.86

In September 1930 Matisse visited his two most important American patrons: Etta Cone of Baltimore and Dr. Albert C. Barnes of Merion, Pennsylvania. Barnes asked Matisse to decorate three lunettes in the galleried entrance hall to the mansion that housed his art collection. Matisse chose the theme of dance, a subject that had preoccupied him since his seminal Fauve painting *Joy of Life* (*Bonheur de vivre*, 1905–6; Barnes Collection). His fascination with the dance—the nude female forms, color, and movement—continued, and in 1909 an exuberant round of dancers became the central motif in his first large decorative panel, *Dance*, commissioned by Sergei Shchukin (see p. 31).

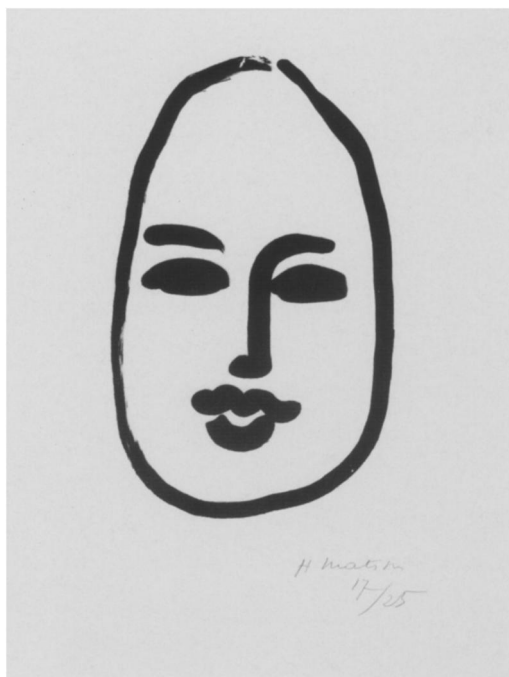
The original scheme for the Barnes *Dance* was a single composition, despite the hall's three arches. Matisse took as a point of departure a ring motif based on dances such as the sardana and the farandole. After three years of work and a delay owing to an error in the dimensions, Matisse abandoned the so-called first version (there were actually two variants; the unfinished earlier one was discovered recently). He then produced a monumental second version, *Dance II* (1932–33), which was installed at the Barnes Foundation in 1933.

In preparation for the mural Matisse executed sketches in pencil, pen and ink, gouache, and cut-out papers (a new technique for him). The gouache (opposite, middle), which follows another study in pen and ink (top), represents one of the later stages of the first version, painted between 1931 and 1933 and now at the Musée de la Ville de Paris.

The design shows a remarkable simplicity of conception, characterized by the rhythmic structure of the figures and fluidity in the treatment of the background. The spatial compartmentalization recalls the organization of Matisse's mural-sized *Bathers by the River* (1916–17; Art Institute of Chicago). On the other hand, the flat, cursorily outlined figures, developed through the use of colored cut-paper shapes, foreshadow the cutouts of his final years. Applying the technique for the first time in the studies for the Barnes *Dance*, Matisse achieved a new balance between color and line and evolved a new language of personal “signs” for the dance.

MD





Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Mask*

1948

Aquatint

21 x 14 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (53.3 x 37.8 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.73

Between 1946 and 1952 Matisse once more discovered a new medium—the aquatint. He executed some fifty works, exploring the relationship between internal and external space, that is, between figure and ground. The heavy black contour lines describing the simple shapes of schematically rendered faces or of common objects placed against a white sheet of paper created a positive-negative effect. The forms themselves are defined by a thick contour and sometimes a few additional descriptive lines. Most of the aquatints are portraits, and their masklike appearance is reflected in the titles. In some the positive-negative spaces are reversed, and a white face projects from a dark background, giving the effect of a Japanese theatrical mask.

MD



Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Study for an Altar Cloth*

1949

Aquatint

22 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 15 in. (56.5 x 38.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.76

Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*White Mask*

1949

Aquatint

21 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 15 in. (55.2 x 38.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Foundation, 2002

2002.456.75







Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*La Vie*

1906

Bronze

H. 9⅞ in. (23.3 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949

49.70.222

Henri Matisse, French, 1869–1954

*Standing Blue Nude with Arms Raised*

1952

Cut and pasted previously painted papers

44½ x 29⅞ in. (113 x 74 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

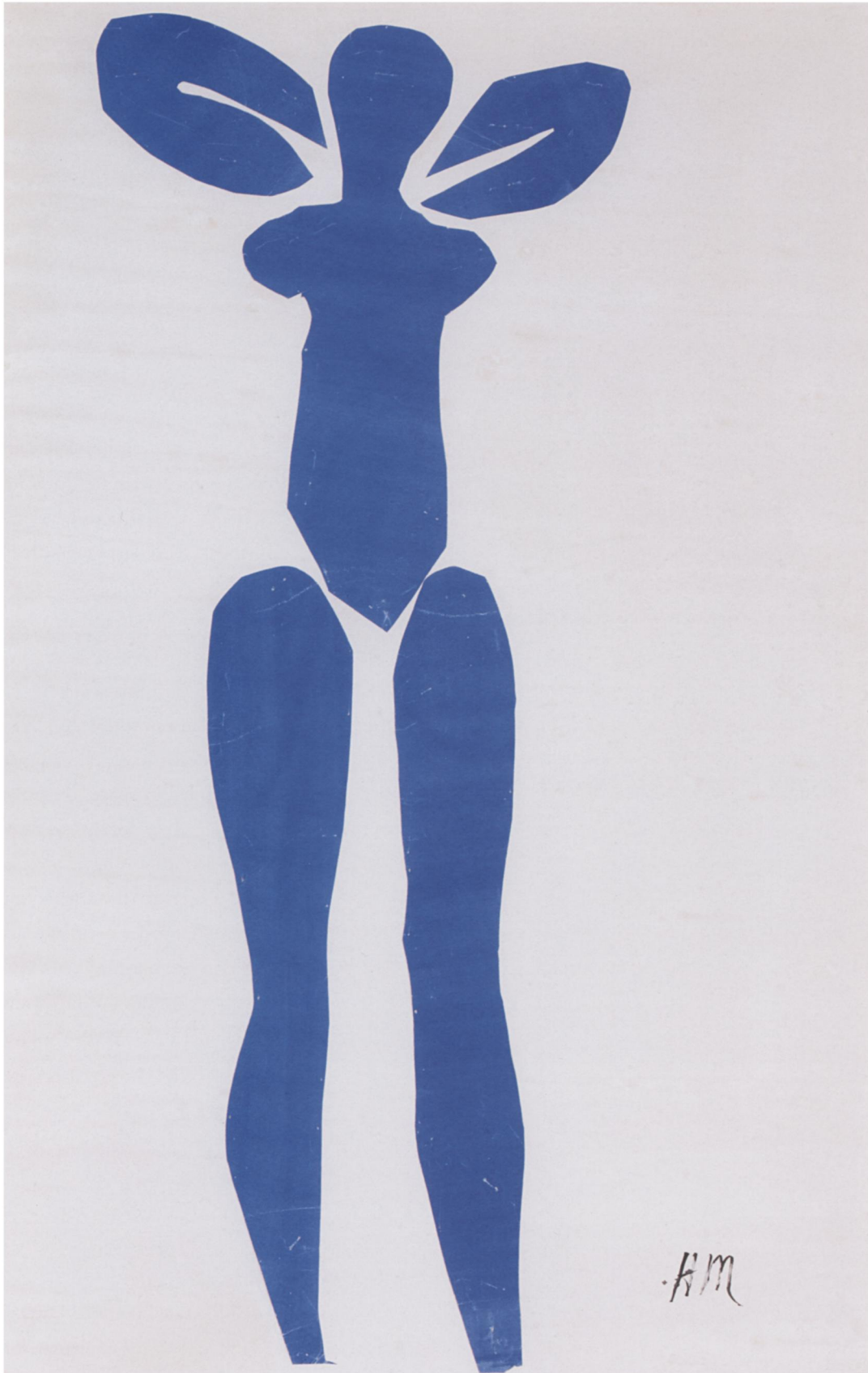
2002.456.58

During 1952, one of his most prolific late years, Matisse created many ambitious paper cutouts, among them this standing blue nude. The frontal figure, with arms raised and breasts projecting sideways, reflects various standing odisques of the 1920s Nice period (see pp. 34–35). It also seems to relate to an earlier figure of a bather in a large composition of 1916–17, *Bathers at the River* (Art Institute of Chicago), as well as to a 1906 bronze (left), *La Vie*. The solidity of the latter contrasts to *Standing Blue Nude with Arms Raised*, which is built up of six separate segments of colored paper and seems suspended in space.

This blue nude is one of a dozen or so variations that Matisse created over several months, while pursuing the study of his favorite subject of the female figure in the paper cutout. The simple images of medium size were followed by complex, dynamic multigure compositions, culminating in his dining room decoration *The Swimming Pool* (1952; Museum of Modern Art, New York).

In the paper cutout the artist evolved a new medium. This working method enabled him, in his own words, to draw “with scissors on sheets of paper colored in advance, one movement linking line with color, contour with surface.” Using moveable paper cutouts for the dancing figures gave Matisse a chance to experiment with the placement of forms in different spatial and linear relationships. The technique, employed for his illustrated book *Jazz* (1946–47), became Matisse’s primary means of expression during his final years.

MD







Loren MacIver, American, 1909–1998

*Quincaillerie*

1954

Oil on canvas

36 x 28 in. (91.4 x 71.1 cm)

Maria-Gaetana Matisse Gift, 1993

1993.278

## I 9 4 3 – I 9 6 4

With the entry of the United States into World War II in 1941, contact between Pierre Matisse and his artists in Europe became difficult. Letters, then the main means of communication—with telegrams in urgent cases—took a long time to cross the ocean. The shipment of works of art came to a near halt. Not so the movements of the artists themselves, many of whom sought refuge in this country. In 1942 Matisse mounted a group show, “Artists in Exile.” Fourteen very different artists, including Mondrian, Léger, Ernst, Matta, Tanguy, Chagall, Breton, Masson, Ozenfant, and Lipchitz, among others, were exhibited together in what is now considered an historic event.

During the war Matisse made do, as did many other gallery owners in New York, by mounting group exhibitions from existing stock. In March 1943, for example, he organized “War and the Artist,” featuring works by Chagall, Ernst, Masson, Matta, Miró, Picasso, Rouault, Siqueiros, and Tamayo.

Pierre Matisse, in 1934, explained in a letter to the American sculptor Alexander Calder that it was “often with regret” that he refrained from showing the works of American artists. Calder was one exception; another was the painter Loren MacIver. She was among the few woman artists he supported, and he exhibited her paintings nine times from 1940 until 1987. MacIver had a poet’s sensibility. She saw beauty in banal everyday objects and made them the subjects of her art. In a conversation about ten years ago, MacIver said that for her, the sound of the French word *quincaillerie* (hardware)—the present painting’s title—evoked the hard noise of clanging metal. Indeed, the picture is a collage-like jumble of brooms, pot scrubbers, a frying pan, and a large

blue pitcher, along with assorted samples of linoleum and wallpaper, nails, pliers, and screwdrivers, topped by the brand name of a French bleach, JAVEL.

After the limitations imposed by the war ended, Matisse organized exhibitions of the two artists whose careers would be forever linked to his gallery. In 1947 he introduced to this country the work of Jean Dubuffet, the most important painter to emerge in France at the end of the war. Dubuffet’s subjects were ordinary—Paris streets of no particular distinction and casual portraits of his friends. His style, seemingly untutored, was bold and direct, and to some his creations appeared as raw as the unorthodox materials with which he painted them. Matisse showed Dubuffet’s works in ten one-man exhibitions until 1959.

In 1948 Matisse mounted his first exhibition of Alberto Giacometti’s work, after having been in contact with the artist now and then since 1936, when he first considered signing him on. Giacometti was then virtually unknown in this country. The show, featuring bronzes, original plasters, drawings, and paintings, was an overview of his oeuvre from 1925 until 1947. The catalogue was exceptional. Jean-Paul Sartre, philosopher and friend of the artist, wrote the introduction. Giacometti contributed an autobiographical letter with drawings of his works and also composed the *Tentative Catalogue of Early Works*, accompanied by drawings of them. The catalogue also contained dramatic photographs by Patricia O’Connell Kane, who became Matisse’s wife in 1949, of bronzes and plasters standing in the corners of Giacometti’s forbiddingly desolate studio that evoked images from a Samuel Beckett play.

SR





Joan Miró, Spanish, 1893–1983

*Woman*

1949

Bronze

H. 10 $\frac{5}{8}$  in. (27 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.122

During a series of conversations in 1975, Miró was asked how one might go about interpreting the subjects of his late non-figurative works. Miró replied disarmingly: “It might be a dog, a woman, or whatever. I don’t really care. Of course, while I am painting, I see a woman or bird in my mind, indeed, very tangibly a woman or a bird. Afterward, it’s up to you.”

Joan Miró, Spanish, 1893–1983

*Moonbird*

1944

Bronze

H. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (18.4 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.121

Birds and women have always loomed large in Miró’s work: in his celebrated series of twenty-three gouaches, *Constellations*, of 1941; the hundreds of drawings, pastels, and gouaches of 1942–43; and the hundreds of small paintings of 1944–45. When Miró began working in clay and making sculptures in the round in 1944, women and birds



continued to dominate his work. The first examples that he completed in 1944 were the seven-inch tall *Moonbird*, or *Lunar Bird*, and its pendant, *Solar Bird*. Twenty-two years later *Moonbird* was the model for Miró's seven-foot bronze version, which stood, until the present restructuring, in the garden of the Museum of Modern Art.

With its pneumatic earthbound feet, short sprouting arms, and small head, *Woman* (bearing little resemblance to its title) also served as a model for larger variants of the subject.

SR





Alberto Giacometti, Swiss, 1901–1966

*Tall Figure*

1947

Bronze

H. 79½ in. (201.9 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.111

In 1945 Giacometti abandoned one-or-two-inch-tall figures in favor of larger ones. By 1947 he had adopted what was to become his characteristic style, creating extremely attenuated sculptures that, as he wrote in 1948, “achieved a resemblance only when long and slender.” There were three main themes: the walking man, the bust or head, and the standing nude woman—or sometimes all three combined. The nude woman in *Tall Figure* stands nearly seven feet. Without volume or mass, she appears weightless and remote, her eerie otherworldliness accentuated by the matte beige paint that Giacometti applied over the bronze patina. The sculpture looks as if it has withstood centuries of rough weather that has left its surface crusty and eroded. The work was shown at the artist’s first exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in 1948, the year Matisse acquired it.

Giacometti said of Diego, his younger brother (by one year), who is shown here: “Diego sat for me 10,000 times. . . . He’s posed for me over a longer period of time and more often than anyone else. From 1935 to 1940 he posed for me every day, and again after the war for years. So when I draw or sculpt or paint a head from memory it always turns out to be more or less Diego’s head, because Diego’s head I’ve done more often from life.” Diego was a known artisan in his own right. His elegant metal furniture and objects, decorated with classical details or naïve animal or plant forms, have become coveted collector’s items today. SR



Alberto Giacometti, Swiss, 1901–1966

*Diego*

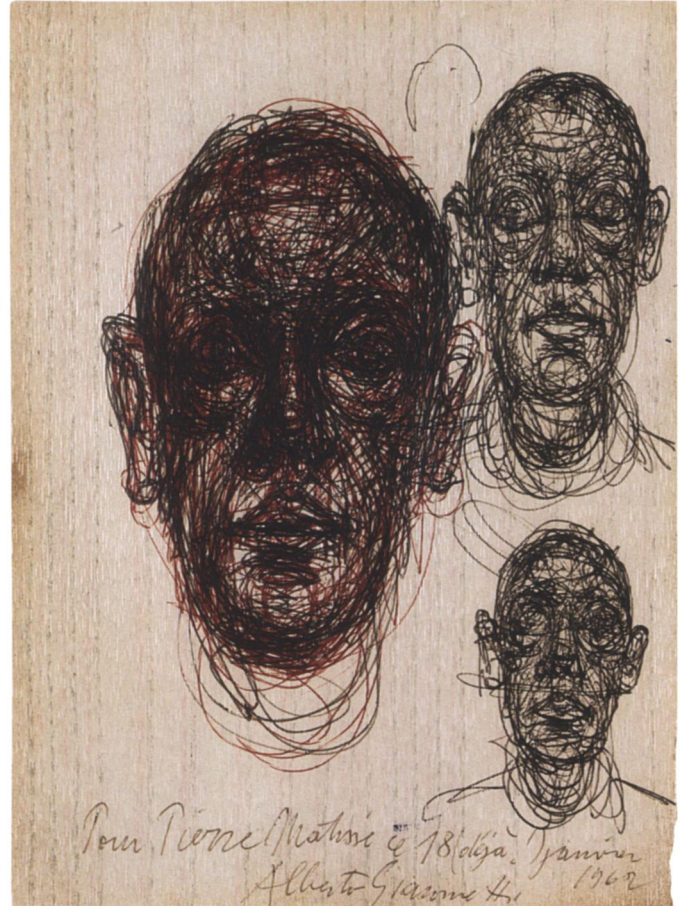
1950

Painted bronze

H. 11 in. (28 cm)

Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection, 1998

1999.363.23



Alberto Giacometti, Swiss, 1901–1966

*Studies of Diego*

1962

Ballpoint pen and ink on paper

8¼ x 6⅞ in. (21 x 15.5 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.30





Jean Dubuffet, French, 1901–1985

*A Widow*

1943

Oil on canvas

36 x 28¾ in. (91.4 x 73 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.2

Dubuffet was a highly cultured man who counted poets and writers among his friends. He studied art history, philosophy, literature, and music, and worked in various careers, including that of wine merchant. He collected pictures by untrained outsiders, calling them *art brut* (“raw art”). His admiration for this form of “antiart”—which he regarded as more authentic and imaginative—led him to reject traditional art with its conventional methods and values of “beautiful” and “ugly.” Because he wanted his own works to be accessible to ordinary people and to relate to





Jean Dubuffet, French, 1901–1985

*Telephone Torment*

1944

Lithograph on paper

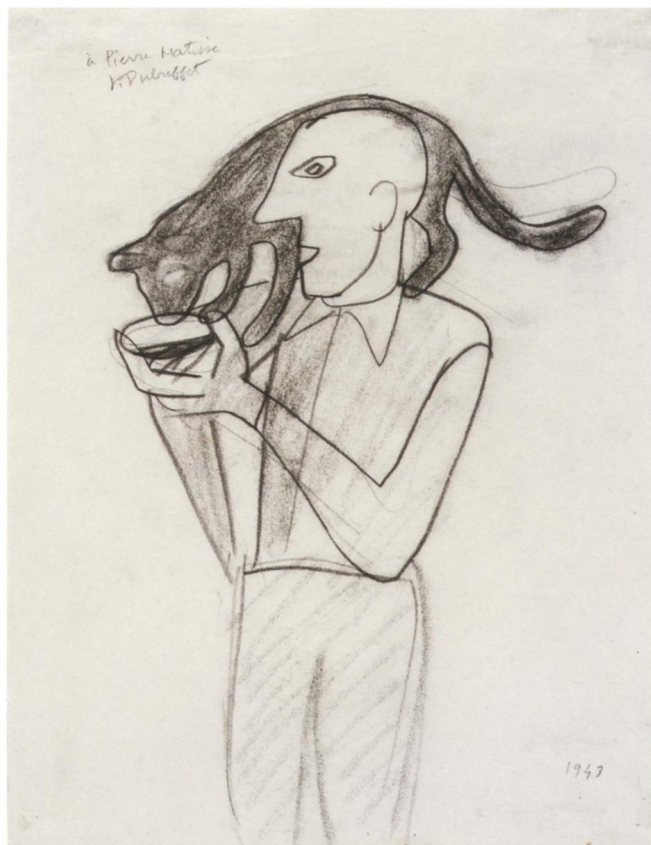
12 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 9 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (32.7 x 25.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.65

their daily lives, he adopted mundane subjects. However, his treatment of them seemed shocking, ungraceful, and rude.

*The Widow* belongs to a group of paintings showing activities of ordinary people: couples kissing or enjoying their honeymoon, a naked woman trying on a hat, a man milking a cow. The hourglass shape of the widow is nearly encircled by the thin rail of the chair. Only her curved arms protrude. Her only concession to mourning is the veil reaching down to her waist. As the chair's wood and the widow's flesh seem made of the same matter, fire-engine red with



Jean Dubuffet, French, 1901–1985

*A Man with a Cat*

1943

Charcoal on paper

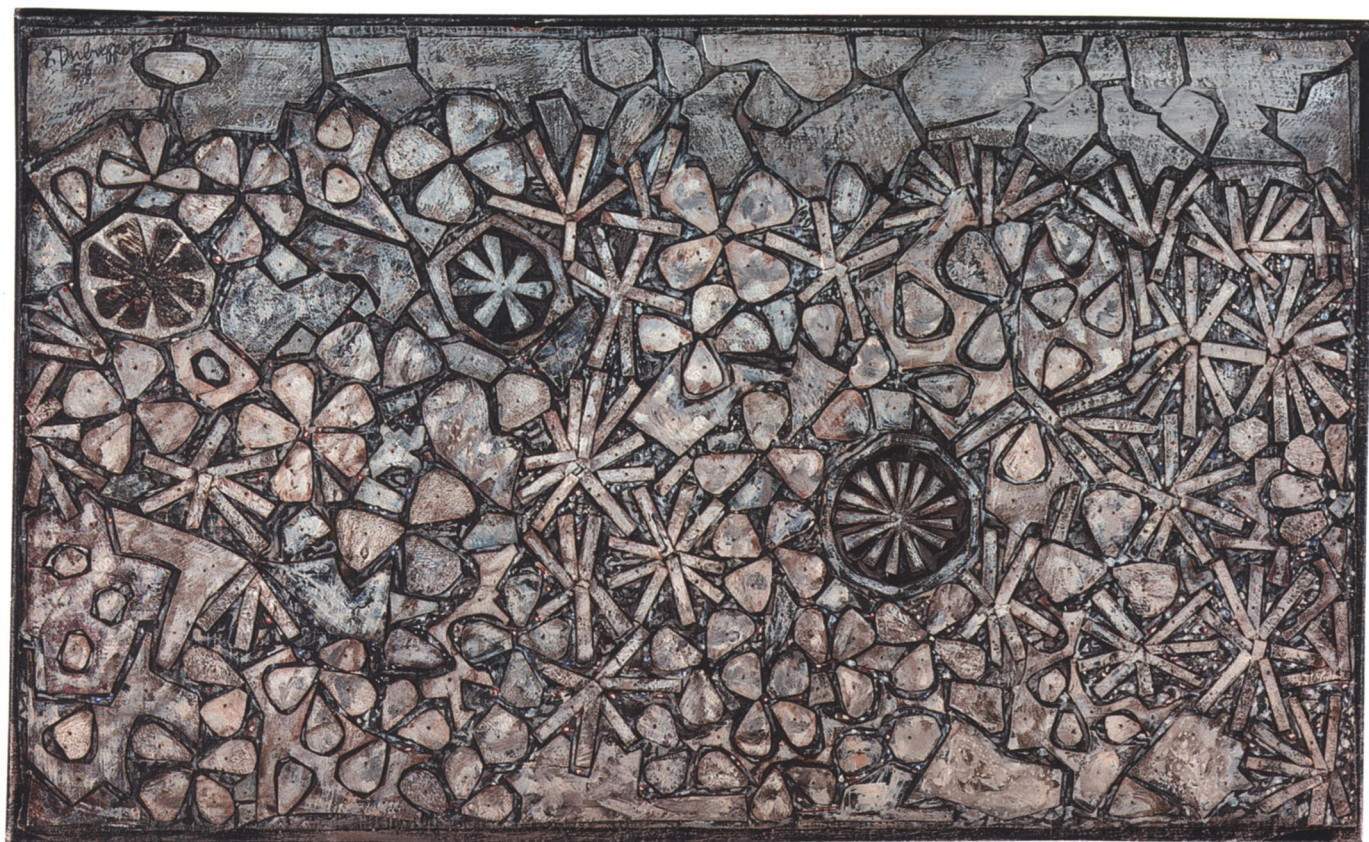
13 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (33.7 x 26 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.26

blue and green tints, it is unclear if she is wearing any garments.

The artist conjured up two different moods in the lithograph and the drawing. The man on the left is literally “wired” between the receiver stuck to his left ear and what looks like an amplifier plugged into his right, with both pieces of equipment connected to the same telephone. On the right Monsieur Ribaud, Dubuffet’s framer, feeds a cat. The artist inscribed the drawing to Pierre Matisse. SR



Jean Dubuffet, French, 1901–1985

*Mother-of-Pearl Garden*

1956

Cut pieces of previously painted oils on canvas pasted on  
canvas

15 x 24½ in. (38.1 x 62.2 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.11



Dubuffet's contempt for the traditions of art extended to its media. His use of unorthodox materials—pebbles, leaves, bark, or butterfly wings—in portraits, figures, landscapes, or garden compositions transformed these ordinary subjects. In 1955 he created a garden series using butterfly wings. Instead of finishing the series with nature's ready-mades, he produced his own materials in a very time-consuming process. From a painted canvas he cut small pieces in various shapes and then glued them, side by side, to another canvas. The all-over “inlaid” pattern suggestive of pebbles, leaves, rosettes, and blossoms inspired him to call the work at left *Jardin aux nacre* (*Mother-of-Pearl Garden*).

*Beard Garden* belongs to a series of more than one-hundred works in various media depicting, depending on one's point of view, busts as beards or beards as busts. Perhaps echoing the visual “pun” he created, Dubuffet gave these works titles such as *Beard Castle* or *The Beard of Lost Opportunities*, playing on the French word *barbe* in almost endless variations. He began the Beard series in May 1959 in response to an article by the writer Georges Limbourg, a childhood friend. In his text Limbourg compared Dubuffet to a Greek Stoic or an Oriental sage. Surprised and amused, the artist sent a letter to Limbourg with a drawing of a bearded Marcus Aurelius. Two more drawings of heavily bearded busts followed, and the series of beards had begun.

SR



Jean Dubuffet, French, 1901–1985

*Beard Garden*

1959

Torn printed papers pasted on paper

20 x 13½ in. (50.8 x 34.3 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.29





Raymond Mason, British, born 1922

*Carrefour de l'Odéon*

1958

Bronze

40 x 62¼ in. (101.6 x 158.1 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.112

The studio of English sculptor Raymond Mason is just a few blocks from the carrefour de l'Odéon, the intersection shown in this relief. The artist managed to fit at least forty figures into this work, which evokes prototypes as different as Roman funeral or Early Renaissance reliefs. The matte beige paint that Mason applied suggests the limestone facades lining the streets of this historic quarter. Interestingly, the

Reg Butler, British, 1913–1981

*Girl on a Round Base*

1964

Bronze

H. 18 in. (45.8 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.110

figures of the walking pedestrians appear motionless, whereas those of the patrons sitting in the café seem in motion.

Reg Butler's *Girl on a Round Base* is a study for a canceled commission for the Recreational Centre at the Crystal Palace in London. Apparently, the large female nude was felt to be out of keeping with her intended surroundings. SR







René Magritte, Belgian, 1898–1967

*The Eternally Obvious*

1948

Oil on canvas mounted on board

Head: 8⅞ x 6¼ in. (21.9 x 17.1 cm)

Breasts: 6⅞ x 11½ in. (17 x 29.2 cm)

Pubes: 9½ x 7 in. (24.1 x 17.8 cm)

Knees: 6⅞ x 9¼ in. (17.5 x 23.5 cm)

Feet: 9 x 6 in. (22.9 x 15.2 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.12a–f

Magritte painted the body of a naked blonde model, cut from the canvas the body's five choice bits, surrounded them in gold frames, and originally assembled them on a sheet of glass. This work is a variant of the artist's famous 1930 prototype of the same title, for which his wife, Georgette, posed. In the earlier picture Georgette's face is seen in a three-quarter view; she stands in a contrapposto pose, and her body is not as rigidly frontal as it is here. The notoriety achieved by the earlier version coincided with its role in the cult of the Surrealist object in the 1930s. Magritte plays tricks with our perception in these "picture-objects." Although the body is in sections, we automatically fill in the missing areas and see a "complete" nude woman.

The artist's New York dealer, Alexander Iolas, wanted to show this work in an exhibition at his gallery in 1948. Fearful of U.S. Customs' interference at its entry into this country, Iolas ordered Magritte to omit the pubic hair. Another artist from the gallery, Bernard Pfriem, completed the delicate task of repainting it.

Pierre Matisse acquired this "portrait" and Derain's portrait of his well-dressed niece (see p. 13), at a Sotheby's auction in New York in May 1989.

SR



Paul Delvaux, Belgian, 1897–1994

*Small Train Station at Night*

1959

Oil on canvas

55¼ x 67 in. (140.3 x 170.2 cm)

The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Collection, 2002

2002.456.9

Trains fascinated Delvaux from his childhood. His first railway station depictions were populated by languid female nudes. By the late 1950s his trademark nudes disappeared in favor of young girls looking pensively at departing trains. With the absence of those figures, this work seems remarkably sober. Nothing seems out of the ordinary except the enormous moon.

The artist shipped this painting to New York for a one-man show in 1959; Pierre Matisse acquired it that year.

SR



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## Note

Unless otherwise cited, all quotations from letters are from those in the Matisse Gallery Archives. In the introduction John Russell is quoted from his obituary of Pierre Matisse in *The New York Times*, August 11, 1989. On page 15 the quotation is from Joan Miró and Georges Raillard, *Ceci est la couleur de mes rêves*, Paris, 1977, p. 128. On page 46 Giacometti is quoted in James Lord, *A Giacometti Portrait*, the Museum of Modern Art, 1965, pp. 24–25.

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