

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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## ADVANCE NOTICE OF HENRI MATISSE EXHIBITION

AND BOOK BY ALFRED H. BARR, JR.

The Museum's next large exhibition, to open November 14, will be composed of selected works of Henri Matisse, the dean of French painters. The exhibition will be accompanied by the Museum publication of Alfred H. Barr, Jr.'s Matisse, His Art and His Public, the most comprehensive volume ever written about the work of a living artist.

The exhibition, undertaken with the assistance of the French Government, will consist of more than 70 paintings and 31 sculptures, as well as numerous drawings, prints and illustrated books, all carefully selected by Mr. Barr for their high quality. Many of the works to be shown have never before been seen in this country. After its close at the Museum on January 13, the exhibition will travel to the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the San Francisco Museum of Art.

Monroe Wheeler, Director of the Museum's Departments of Exhibitions and Publications, has recently returned from seeing Matisse in France where he obtained 32 loans from Matisse himself as well as works from government and private collections. He says of the exhibition:

"The Museum is fortunate in having received the personal interest and co-operation of Henri Matisse who has actively participated in obtaining loans to make so fine an exhibition possible, and also has lent generously from his own collection. Although unable to accept the Museum's invitation to come to this country for the exhibition, he has designed a six-color cover for the catalog, and a special jacket for Mr. Barr's book. Major works produced during sixty-one years of his still phenomenal working life will be shown, including some executed only a few months ago. Special emphasis will be placed upon his sculpture which the public has heretofore had little opportunity to see. A separate section of the exhibition will be devoted to the artist's newly completed Chapel at Vence which Matisse considers his masterpiece."

Matisse, His Art and His Public, by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum Collections, will be the most complete account ever written not only of the artist's life and achievement but of how the world has received his art. Now at the age of 82, Matisse is accepted as a master, but for years he was the most controversial living painter. The book's many quotations record how he was attacked, slyly or with blundering fury, and of how he was supported with hammer-and-tongs enthusiasm by English critics, German painters, Scandinavian pupils, a Russian businessman who was the world's greatest collector of 20th-century painting, and above all by Americans -- Leo and Sarah Stein, Bernard Berenson, Edward Steichen, Alfred Stieglitz, Walter Pach -- who, four decades ago, fought for his art in Paris and New York.

Far greater than the warfare around Matisse's art was the struggle within the artist; no painter has suffered more creative anxiety than Matisse or been more articulate about his artistic problems. Here are his honest and lucid statements along with the eminent author's own analyses and evaluations of hundreds of individual works.

The 500 illustrations as well as the text cover for the first time in one volume the extraordinary range of Matisse's art, his paintings, drawings, sculpture (so long neglected); his prints, decorative arts, theatre designs and superb illustrated books. Many documentary photographs show his pictures in the Steins' living rooms in 1907, in a Moscow palace in 1912, or record how the artist looked teaching a sculpture class in 1909, rowing a two-oared scull in 1920, signing a ballet curtain in 1939 or modeling a crucifix in 1950.

Notes taken in Matisse's school forty years ago, contracts with his dealer, lists of his paintings in public galleries and an extended bibliography supplement the text and illustrations, which include 23 full page color plates.

Alfred H. Barr, Jr. is Director of the Collections at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and through the fame of his previous books, Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art and What is Modern Painting? - to

mention only two - is widely known as a lucid and authoritative writer on modern art. He has written of Matisse:

"Joy of Life and The Dance are two of Matisse's most famous works; the third is his just completed Chapel at Vence in which light and color sing with a radiance unsurpassed since gothic stained glass. In a world grown dark with fear and muddy with lies Matisse has sought truth and serenity by transforming his delight in the visible world into works vigorous in form, joyous in color."