

The Museum of Modern Art

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An exhibition of 64 paintings by Henri Matisse, including many never shown in New York, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from July 19 through September 25.

The exhibition has been selected by Monroe Wheeler, Director of Exhibitions and Publications, who says it has a twofold purpose: "First, to bring to a younger generation the work of one of the supreme masters of our century, who pioneered in so many areas and laid the foundations for various modern movements; and second, to show for the first time in New York a number of significant examples from the artist's estate, which epitomize his development at different periods throughout his life."

Alicia Legg, Associate Curator of Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions, has installed the exhibition which is presented under the sponsorship of His Excellency, the French Ambassador to the United States, Charles Lucet.

The paintings range in date from Dinner Table, a 1897 oil from the collection of Stavros S. Niarchos, painted when the artist was 28, to Souvenir of Oceania, a gouache and crayon on cut and pasted paper done in 1953, the year before Matisse's death at the age of 85. Among those not seen here previously are two 1914 oils: Open Window, Collioure, from a private collection in Paris, and View of Notre Dame, from a private collection in New York; and Interior with Black Fern, 1948, lent by Mr. and Mrs. Otto Preminger, New York. The celebrated Fauve picture, The Blue Nude, 1907, has been lent from the Cone Collection in the Baltimore Museum of Art.

For the first time at the Museum, a pre-recorded tour of a painting exhibition will be available to visitors. Written by A. L. Chanin, staff lecturer, the guided tour can be rented at the entrance to the exhibition for 50 cents.

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The catalog being published by the Museum for the exhibition, contains an essay by Lawrence Gowing, Keeper of British Paintings at the Tate Gallery, London, illustrations of all the works in the show, a biographical note and a selective bibliography.

"The supremacy that color attained in these pictures was quite new and unparalleled," Mr. Gowing says. "It was no longer put to any particular descriptive or expressive purpose; it was simply itself -- the homogeneous, primary substance. Can anyone forget when he became aware of The Blue Window? In a moment one knew the simplest and most radiant idea in the whole of art -- the idea that the shapes of things are immaterial except as fantastic vessels -- a dish, a vase, a chalice, a bunch of balloons -- to contain a bright substance of the world....

"Both his analysis and his example affected the whole subsequent climate of painting. The dependence of painters like Kandinsky on the visual richness of fauvism is clear enough, but Matisse's compulsive purism was of even greater significance in the years that followed....

"Indeed, his view was extraordinarily acute and it yielded new information about the nature of an artistic process. Matisse discerned a method, which has now become the method of virtually all painting. Deliberately basing painting on reactions to painting, he was setting in motion the modern feed-back -- the closed circuit within which the painter's intuition operates, continually intensifying qualities that are inherent."

This is the fourth exhibition of the paintings of Henri Matisse held at The Museum of Modern Art. The first was directed by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., in 1931, the Museum's second year. In 1951, upon the occasion of the large retrospective also directed by Mr. Barr, the Museum published his monumental volume, "Matisse: His Art and His Public," recently re-issued. The great cut gouaches of Matisse's last phase were shown separately in 1961 in an exhibition directed by Mr. Wheeler.

 Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director,
 Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street,
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