FACT SHEET

EXHIBITION: MATISSE IN THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

DATES: The Museum of Modern Art, New York
October 27, 1978 - January 30, 1979

SPONSOR: This exhibition is made possible by a generous grant from the

DIRECTOR: John Elderfield, Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture

CONTENTS: MATISSE IN THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART will present the world's finest collection of one of the greatest masters of 20th century art. The exhibition will include all the Matisse paintings, drawings, sculptures, and cut-outs from the Museum Collection as well as many promised gifts and life-interest gifts. A generous selection of the design objects by Matisse will also be shown, plus many prints and illustrated books (installed by Riva Castleman, Director of the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books). Together, this body of work constitutes a collection rivalled only by the combined collections of the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad and the Pushkin Museum in Moscow. In addition to affording the public an opportunity to view a Matisse collection unrivalled in its depth and quality, MATISSE IN THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART will initiate the Museum's 50th Anniversary year with an appropriate demonstration of the vision and generosity of its founders and donors, and of the results of half a century of collecting.

The exhibition, containing 179 works, will display the breadth of Matisse's work in all media and will include major paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, preparatory studies and books, cut-outs, a stained glass window and a set of chasubles. The Museum's collection affords an overview of virtually every period in Matisse's long and varied career, but it highlights the years when Matisse is considered to have been at his zenith, from 1907 to 1917. During this period such highly colored works as Dance and The Red Studio were succeeded by the architectonic, structured style of
The Moroccans and The Piano Lesson. Among the sculptures in the
exhibition is Reclining Nude I, one of the artist's personal
favorites, a figure that appears in a dozen paintings from 1907
into the teens. Other notable sculptures included are the series
of four Back reliefs; The Serf; and the five Jeannette heads.
Drawings in the exhibition span fifty years of Matisse's art and
include a number of studies that complement works in other media
shown. An important representation of prints and illustrated
books from the largest Matisse print collection anywhere will
demonstrate the full range of Matisse's work in this field.

Large paper cut-out works from the early 1950s include Memory of
Oceania, the maquette for the Nuit de Noël stained glass window,
and the 54-foot-long environmental mural, The Swimming Pool.
Also on view will be the remarkable liturgical vestments designed
by Matisse for the Chapel of the Rosary of the Dominican Nuns
at Vence in southern France. (The Museum set is the only one of
its kind except for the one in use at the Chapel itself.)

In planning this exhibition, the Matisses in the Museum Collection
have been thoroughly researched and new knowledge brought to
light. The Museum's last major exhibition of Matisse's work in
different media was held in 1951-52; it was preceded by an import­
ant exhibition in 1931. These shows, however, were not limited
to the Museum's collection. More recently, an exhibition of 64
paintings was mounted in 1966, and in 1972 a show of Matisse's
sculpture included 93 works. In addition, there have been a
number of smaller Matisse exhibitions over the years.

PUBLICATION:
Matisse in the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art. By John
Elderfield, Curator of Painting and Sculpture, with commentaries
on the drawings by William S. Lieberman, Director of the Department
of Drawings, and commentaries on the prints by Riva Castleman,
Director of the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books. Every
period of the artist's long and varied creative life is repre­
sented in this important book. The works discussed extend from
turn-of-the-century and proto-Fauve paintings to the remarkable
cut-outs of Matisse's last years. All of the paintings, sculptures,
drawings, and cut-outs in the Museum's rich collection are repro­
duced, along with a generous selection of prints and design objects.
Commentaries in depth accompany each work. A full catalog of the
works follows, with notes and comparative illustrations. The
text contains much new information and some revisions of previously
accepted chronology, derived from documents and correspondence
recently made available. 8 3/8 x 9 1/4"; 240 pp.; 130 illustra­
tions, of which 34 are in color. 144 reference illustrations.

OPENINGS:
Press Preview: October 25
Public Opening: October 27
LECTURES AND SPECIAL EVENTS:

A series of four lectures by internationally distinguished scholars will provide an overview of the development of Matisse's art in all media with which he worked, from his earliest paintings before the turn of the century to his final works, the paper cut-outs of the 1950s. The lectures will be given on successive Tuesdays at 8:30 p.m.


December 5 - Lawrence Gowing, Director of the Slade School of Fine Art, London. "Matisse: The Method of a Colorist."

A program of films on Matisse will be shown on Thursdays and Fridays at noon for the length of the exhibition and on Mondays and Tuesdays at noon during November.

There will be gallery talks daily at 1:00 p.m. for the length of the exhibition.

For further information, please contact Luisa Kreisberg, Director of Public Information, (212) 956-2648 or Bruce Wolmer (212) 956-7298, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019. Photographs available on request.