

# The Museum of Modern Art

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ADVANCE FACT SHEET

For immediate release

EXHIBITION: THE DRAWINGS OF HENRI MATISSE

DATES: February 28 - May 14, 1985

DIRECTOR: The exhibition was directed, for the Arts Council of Great Britain, by the art historian John Golding with the assistance of Catherine Lampert of the Arts Council, in collaboration with John Elderfield, Director of The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Drawings, with the assistance of Magdalena Dabrowski, Assistant Curator in the same department.

TOUR: The exhibition was first shown at the Hayward Gallery, London.

CONTENTS: This is the first comprehensive survey of the drawings of Henri Matisse ever to be presented in New York. Approximately 150 works on paper are featured, nearly a third of which have never been on public view before. The exhibition's many masterpieces, shown in combination with works only recently discovered or in collections inaccessible until now, confirm that the drawings of Henri Matisse are among the greatest in modern art.

Conceived historically, the exhibition traces the development of Matisse's drawings, from his early academic studies to the audacious large-scale compositions of his last years. Within the chronological arrangement of the exhibition, groups of thematically related works illustrate how the artist explored particular motifs, such as the Plumed Hat series of 1919 and the decorative still lifes of 1947-48.

Major examples of the artist's rare Fauve drawings of 1905-06 are included in the exhibition. Also on view are Matisse's so-called Cubist works from the period of World War I, which are among his most daring compositions. As Matisse began to conceive of drawing as a way of creating abstracted signs for objects, the sensuous charcoal odalisques he drew in the 1920s gave way to the more simplified line drawings and portraits of the 1930s. The exhibition presents a number of remarkable works produced from the 1940s until Matisse's death in 1954 that are characterized by an increasing boldness of draftsmanship. One of the artist's finest paper cut-out compositions from this period, a combination of charcoal drawing and drawing with scissors, completes this rare view of the work of a master draftsman.

SPONSOR: Meredith Corporation has made possible the New York showing of this exhibition. Additional support has been awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts. An indemnity for the exhibition has been provided by the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities.

PUBLICATION: The Drawings of Henri Matisse is the first definitive publication on this important aspect of the artist's work. British art historian and painter John Golding provided the introduction; John Elderfield is the author of the text of the book. Magdalena Dabrowski documented the works reproduced.

PRESS PREVIEW: Wednesday, February 27, 11 am - 2 pm .