



“When I realized that every morning I would see this light again, I couldn’t believe how lucky I was.”

Henri Matisse

Artists often leave their studios and travel to new places for inspiration. In the East Building’s ground floor gallery 31, find a colorful group of paintings made by French artists during painting holidays.

Henri Matisse, *Open Window, Collioure* (detail), 1905, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney

2 Matisse and Derain Side by Side

After settling with his family in a hotel, Matisse invited his friend, the young painter André Derain, to join him. Matisse and Derain worked every day, often painting side by side around Collioure. They sketched the boats in the harbor, the fish market, and the nearby Pyrenees. They even made pictures of each other. Using paints straight from the tube with little mixing, they applied vibrant—often unexpected—colors to their canvases. Their collaboration led to a new freedom in art-making: the use of color to express the feeling of a place.

1 Summer in the Sun

In summer 1905 Henri Matisse left Paris for the French village of Collioure. Then a quiet fishing town, Collioure nestles between the Mediterranean Sea and the Pyrenees mountains close to the Spanish border. The landscape and lifestyle there were very different from Paris. The brilliant light in the South of France, reflected from the sea, captivated Matisse.

**How do you spend your summer vacation?
Do you spend time outdoors enjoying the
warm weather?**



Summer in the Sun
The port of Collioure,
photographed by Matisse
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Paris/Artists Rights Society
(ARS), New York



**Matisse and Derain
Side by Side**
Henri Matisse, *Derain Painting*,
1905, pencil, © 2003 Succession
H. Matisse, Paris/Artists Rights
Society (ARS), New York

4 The Wild Beasts

In fall 1905, Matisse and Derain showed their paintings at an important exhibition in Paris called the Salon d'automne. People were shocked by the bold brush strokes and strange color combinations. Many laughed at the paintings. One art critic nicknamed the artists *fauves* (the French word for “wild beasts”) because of their wild and expressive brush strokes and loud colors. Still, Matisse and Derain inspired many artists to explore color in new ways.

Matisse's view of Collioure
Henri Matisse, *Open Window, Collioure*, 1905, oil on canvas,
National Gallery of Art,
Collection of Mr. and Mrs.
John Hay Whitney

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Two Views of Collioure

Matisse and Derain do not show us Collioure as it actually looked in real life. Instead, the artists captured the intensity and energy of Collioure's blazing sunshine by painting it alive with dazzling colors.

Look at *Open Window, Collioure*, Matisse's view of the town port. Through the window, small boats bob on pink waves under a sky banded with turquoise, pink, and periwinkle. Vibrant outdoor light pours through the window onto the flower pots on the sill, coloring the windows mauve, azure, and pink.

Can you imagine the warmth of the day? What might you hear or smell while looking out this window?

Turning from the sea, Derain painted the olive groves with the steep hills of the Pyrenees in the background in *Mountains at Collioure*. Examine the variety of brush strokes that Derain used to paint this rugged landscape. Do you see the twisting red lines that form the trunks of the olive trees? Derain's bold, separated stripes of blues, grays, and greens create a rhythmic pattern of leaves ready to wave in a breeze, the way olive trees do. Now look at the mountains and the sky. Derain used broad, sweeping strokes of color to form the mountains rising behind the trees.

If you could visit Collioure, would you prefer to take a hike in the mountains or a stroll by the sea?



Derain's view of Collioure
André Derain, *Mountains at Collioure*, 1905, oil on canvas,
National Gallery of Art,
John Hay Whitney Collection

To learn more about the fauve painters, visit our Web site for this online tour:
<http://www.nga.gov/feature/artnation/fauve/index.htm>

book nook

These books about color and creativity can be found in the Children's Shop on the Gallery's concourse level or at your local library or bookstore.

A Magical Day with Matisse

By Julie Merberg,
illustrated by Suzanne Bober
Baby to preschool

Playful rhyming texts accompany Matisse's paintings.

A Bird or Two

By Bijou Le Tord
Ages 4 and up

The colors of the Mediterranean Sea are captured in this story about Matisse in Nice.

Pete's Chicken

By Harriet Ziefert,
illustrated by Laura Rader
Ages 4 and up

In this story about artistic imagination, a young rabbit named Pete paints a chicken in his own special way.

The Yellow House

By Susan Goldman Rubin,
illustrated by Jos. A. Smith
Ages 6 and up

Learn about the artists Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin, who painted side by side in the South of France one fall.

try this!

activity

Colorful Cut-Outs

Matisse enjoyed going to warmer places and liked to watch sunlight shimmering on the sea. After his summer with Derain, he returned to Collioure for vacation, traveled to other seaports on the French Mediterranean, and visited Italy, North Africa, and Tahiti. *Beasts of the Sea* is a memory of his visit to the South Seas.

Many years after his fauve paintings, Matisse developed a new form of art-making: the paper cut-out. Still immersed in the power of color, he devoted himself to cutting colored papers and arranging them in designs. "Instead of drawing an outline and filling in the color...I am drawing directly in color," he said. Matisse was drawing with scissors!

What shapes do you recognize in *Beasts of the Sea*?
Can you find shapes that remind you of:

playful
fish

sinuous
eels

floating
seahorse

curvy
coral

spiral
shells

waving
seaweed



After cutting shapes that reminded him of a tropical sea, Matisse arranged the pieces vertically over rectangles of yellows, greens, and purples to suggest the watery depths of the undersea world.

Visit the East Building Tower Gallery to see examples of Matisse's large cut-outs, then create your own colorful collage. First, collect colored papers. Or, like Matisse, make your own colored paper by painting entire sheets of white paper in one color. Use heavy cardstock so the paper doesn't curl. Next, find a theme for your work. Like Matisse, you can choose a view from your window or a memory of a vacation as your inspiration. Using scissors, cut the paper into different shapes that remind you of that place. Then, arrange your cut-out shapes on a large piece of colored paper. Move the pieces around, rotate them, and experiment with layering. When you are satisfied with the design, glue your shapes in place.

While creating the cut-outs, Matisse hung them on the walls and ceiling of his apartment in Nice. "Thanks to my new art, I have a lush garden all around me. And I am never alone," he said. Where will you hang your cut-out?

Because light can harm colored paper, the Tower Gallery is open only a few hours each day in order to prevent Matisse's cut-outs from fading. Hours: Monday through Saturday 10:00 – 2:00 and Sunday 11:00 – 3:00.

left: Henri Matisse at work on a paper cut-out in his studio at the Hôtel Régina, Nice-Gimiez, early 1952, © 2003 Succession H. Matisse, Paris/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

above: Henri Matisse, *Beasts of the Sea*, 1950, paper collage on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund