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Matisse and America, 1905-1933

by

John H. Cauman

Volume I

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2000

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

4/4/2000 — Date

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Preface and Acknowledgments

Matisse had a reciprocal relationship with America: not only did he influence American modernism in its formative stages, but Americans played a decisive part in his career. This relationship can be charted according to three (overlapping) factors: collectors, critics, and other artists.

This study is in the form of a narrative, in which events are reconstructed with the aid of correspondence, reminiscences, newspaper accounts, and exhibition catalogues. The circumscribed dates constitute the time span from Leo and Gertrude Stein's purchase of The Woman with the Hat in 1905 to Matisse's installation of the Barnes mural in 1933. The chronology divides itself naturally into four chapters: 1905-1912, 1913-1919, the 1920s, and the early 1930s.

Before 1913, the Stein family, the Cone family, Albert Barnes, and John Quinn began to collect Matisse; Matisse and his American followers exhibited at Stieglitz and Steichen's 291 Gallery; and Matisse ran an art academy that included American students. Matisse stressed the role of tradition in his art and often dissociated himself from his followers; yet conservative critics denounced him as a misleader of youth.

In 1913 Matisse reached a broader public at the Armory Show, where his work was vigorously attacked in the press and sold poorly. Leo and Gertrude Stein parted company, dispersing their collection. Walter Pach who, with Walt Kuhn and Arthur B. Davies, organized the European section of the Armory

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Show, acted as Matisse's de facto representative in America. After a Matisse exhibition at the Montross Gallery, Walter Arensberg purchased the portrait Yvonne Landsberg. E. E. Cummings and William Carlos Williams responded to Matisse. Arthur Jerome Eddy and Willard Huntington Wright wrote about Matisse in their books on modern art, and Wright organized the Forum Exhibition of Modern American Painters, artists who could be considered heirs of Matisse.

The 1920s saw the growth of three great Matisse collections: those of John Quinn in New York, Claribel and Etta Cone in Baltimore, and Albert Barnes in Philadelphia. Quinn lent paintings to the Metropolitan Museum's Loan Exhibition of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings and participated in the furor that succeeded it. The artist's son Pierre came to America and inherited Pach's role of Matisse's stateside representative. This decade, which culminated in the founding of the Museum of Modern Art, coincided with a shift in Matisse's reputation from rebel to upholder of the grand tradition in French painting.

In the early thirties Matisse made 4 visits to America. Albert Barnes wrote a book on Matisse and commissioned him to paint a mural. Etta Cone purchased the maquette for Matisse's illustrated book of Mallarmé. Alfred Barr organized a Matisse retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art. Matisse was attacked from within modernist ranks, by a critic who considered the Nice-period paintings "decadent," and Matisse took a stand against "propaganda art."

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The first two chapters of the narrative focus on artists and collectors and on Matisse as teacher. The final two chapters, chronicling a period when Matisse's influence on American artists was more diffuse, focus on collectors, the early years of the Modern Museum, and Matisse's visits to America. I hope that this method contributes new insights into both Matisse and American modernism.

I thank my dissertation advisor Jack Flam for his patience, support, and encouragement on this project. I also thank Francis Naumann, who suggested the topic, commented on the manuscript in progress, and was enormously helpful in ways too numerous to mention.

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Dedicated to my father, Samuel Cauman (1910-1971)

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Table of Contents

Volume I

Preface and Acknowledgments.....iv

Chapter 1. Matisse and America, 1905-1912

1.1. Introduction.....1

1.2. The Steins and The Woman with the Hat, 1905.....5

1.3. Leo and Gertrude Stein and their Salon, 1905-1906.....14

1.4. The Four Steins, 1905-1907.....20

1.5. American Painters in Paris [Maurer, Weber, Bruce, Pach, Steichen, Prendergast], 1905-1907.....29

1.6. Matisse at the 291 Gallery, 1908.....49

1.7. The Matisse Academy, 1907-1911.....75

1.8. Exhibitions, 1909-1912.....101

Chapter 2. Matisse and America, 1913-1919

2.1. Introduction.....187

2.2. The Armory Show, 1913.....190

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2.3. Paris, 1913-1914.....235

2.4. The Montross Exhibition, 1914-1916.....252

2.5. In the Wake of the Armory Show, 1913-1916.....288

2.6. Matisse and the American Art Market, 1915-1919.....308

Chapter 3. Matisse and America, 1920-1929

3.1. Introduction.....336

3.2. The Quinn Collection, 1920-1927.....338

3.3. Pierre Matisse Arrives in America, 1924-1925.....397

3.4. The Cone Collection, 1922-1929.....409

3.5. The Barnes Collection, 1920-1929.....430

Volume II

Chapter 4. Matisse and America, 1930-1933

4.1. Introduction.....453

4.2. Matisse in America, 1930-1931.....456

4.3. Matisse at the Modern, 1930-1932.....480

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4.4. Matisse and America, 1932-1933.....504

Afterword.....530

Illustrations.....538

Bibliography.....665

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List of Illustrations

1.1. The Woman with the Hat (1905)

1.2. Bonheur de vivre (1905-6)

1.3. Port de Collioure, (1905)

1.4. Yellow Pottery from Provence (1906)

1.5. The Green Stripe (1905)

1.6. Madras rouge (smaller version) (1905)

1.7. Nude before a Screen (1905)

1.8. Nude in a Wood (1906)

1.9. Olive Trees at Collioure (1906)

1.10. View of the Sea, Collioure (1906)

1.11. Young Sailor I (1906)

1.12. Young Sailor II (1906)

1.13. Pink Onions (1906)

1.14. Self-Portrait (1906)

1.15. The Gypsy (1906)

1.16. Blue Still Life (1907)

1.17. Madras rouge (1907)

1.18. La Coiffure (1907

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1.19. Margot, (1907)

1.20. Blue Nude (1907)

1.21. Music (Sketch) (1907)

1.22. Le Luxe I (1907)

1.23. Maurice Prendergast, Sketch after Matisse's Le Luxe I (1907)

1.24. Head of a Woman with Eyes Closed (1906, lithograph)

1.25. Standing Nude with Downcast Eyes ("L'idole") (1906, lithograph)

1.26. At the Seaside: Bather (1907, watercolor)

1.27. Woman with an Umbrella at the Seashore (1907)

1.28. Nude, Semi-Abstract (1901-1903, drawing)

1.29. Standing Nude (1901-1903, drawing)

1.30. Nude Standing with Chair (n.d., drawing)

1.31. Vue de Collioure, l'église (1905)

1.32. Trees near Melun (1901)

1.33. Cézanne, Three Bathers (1879-82)

1.34. Max Weber, The Apollo in Matisse's Studio (1908)

1.35. Max Weber, Two Female Figures (1908)

1.36. Le Luxe II, (1907)

1.37. Harmony in Red (1908)

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1.38. Morgan Russell, Bathers (ca. 1908)

1.39. Morgan Russell, Copy of a kouros (ca. 1909-10, photograph)

1.40. Photograph of the Matisse Academy (1910)

1.41. Max Weber, Summer (1909)

1.42. Picasso, Demoiselles d'Avignon (1907)

1.43. Steichen, Matisse modeling La Serpentine (1909, photograph)

1.44. Nude (c. 1908, drawing)

1.45. Reclining Male Nude (c. 1909, drawing)

1.46. Standing Nude (rear view) (1910, drawing)

1.47. Sitting Nude (1910, drawing)

1.48. Standing Nude with Arms around Neck (c. 1908, drawing)

1.49. Studies of a Standing Nude (n.d., drawing)

1.50. Standing Nude (c. 1908-1909, drawing)

1.51. Seated Nude (rear view) (c. 1908-1909)

1.52. Seated Nude (profile) (c. 1908-1909, drawing)

1.53. Arthur Dove, The Lobster (1908)

1.54. Max Weber, Two Figures (1910)

1.55. The Girl with Green Eyes (1908)

1.56. Alfred Maurer, The Iron Table (ca. 1910-11)

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1.57. Music (1910)

1.58. Dance (1910)

1.59. Woman Leaning on Her Hands (1905, sculpture)

1.60. Small Torso with Head (La Vie) (1906, sculpture)

1.61. The Serf (1900-3, sculpture)

1.62. La Serpentine (1909, sculpture)

1.63. Jeannette I (1910, sculpture)

1.64. Jeannette II, (1910, sculpture)

1.65. Jeannette III (1911, sculpture)

1.66. Kneeling Nude (c. 1909, drawing)

1.67. Reclining Nude (c. 1912, drawing)

1.68. Standing Nude (c. 1912, drawing)

1.69. Terrace at St. Tropez (1904)

1.70. Nasturtiums with "Dance" II (1912)

1.71. Still Life with Greek Torso (1908)

1.72. Marguerite with a Black Cat (1910,)

1.73. The Red Studio (1911)

1.74. Goldfish and Sculpture (1912)

1.75. Still Life with a Statuette and Melon (1906)

2.1. Back I (1909, sculpture)

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2.2. Joaquina (1911)

2.3. Four Studies of a Nude (n.d., drawing)

2.4. Interior with Aubergines (1911)

2.4. Nude by the Sea (1909)

2.5. Morgan Russell, Synchromy in Deep Blue-Violet (1913)

2.6. Interior with a Goldfish Bowl (1914)

2.7. Woman on a High Stool (1914)

2.8. Branch of Lilacs (1914)

2.9. Mlle. Yvonne Landsberg (1914)

2.10. The Purple Cyclamen (1911-12)

2.11. The Hat with Roses (1914)

2.12. Studio under the Eaves (1902)

2.13. Reclining Nude I (sculpture, 1907)

2.14. Deux Négresses (sculpture, 1908)

2.15. Variation on a Still Life by de Heem (1915)

2.16. Michael Stein (1916)

2.17. Sarah Stein (1916)

2.18. The Italian Woman (1916)

2.19. Apples (1916)

2.20. Still Life with Fruit (1915)

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3.1. Large Cliff: The Eel (1920)

3.2. Seated Nude, Back Turned (1917)

3.3. The Music Lesson (1917)

3.4. Interior with Goldfish (1912)

3.5. The Green Pumpkin (1916)

3.6. The Window (1916)

3.7. The Painter and His Model (1919)

3.8. Odalisque in Red Culottes (1921)

3.9. Tea in the Garden (1919)

3.10. The White Slave (1921)

3.11. Reclining Nude on a Sofa (1923)

3.12. Goldfish and Palette (1914-1915)

3.13. Woman in a Turban (1917)

3.14. The Pewter Jug (1917)

3.15. Large Cliff: Fish (1920)

3.16. Maintenon Viaduct (1918)

3.17. Painter in the Olive Grove (1923-24)

3.18. Flowers and Parakeets (1924)

3.19. The Music Lesson (1921)

3.20. Festival of Flowers (1922)

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3.21. Reclining Nude III (1929)

3.22. Three Sisters with "Pink Marble Table" (1917)

3.23. Pink Marble Table (1916)

3.24. Seated Riffian (1912-1913)

3.25. Three Sisters with Negro Sculpture (1917)

3.26. Reclining Nude (1924)

3.27. Still Life with Sculpture Bust (1916)

3.28. Still Life with Lemon (1916)

4.1. The Yellow Dress (1929-1931)

4.2. The Yellow Hat (1929)

4.3. Dance Mural (1932-1933)

4.4. Patrick Henry Bruce, Still Life (Transverse Beams) (c. 1928)

4.5. White Plumes (1919)

4.6. Interior with a Violin Case (1918-1919)

4.7. Carmelina (1904)

4.8. Banquet for the Matisse Retrospective, Galeries Georges Petit (1932, photograph)

4.9. La Desserte (1897)

4.10. La Liseuse (Marguerite) (1906)

4.11. Bathers with a Turtle (1908)

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4.12. Nasturtiums with "Dance" I (1912)

4.13. White and Pink Head (1914-1915)

4.14. Les Coloquintes (1916)

4.15. The Moroccans (1916)

4.16. Studio, quai St. Michel (1916)

4.17. Dance Mural (1931-1933)

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Chapter 1. Matisse and America, 1905-1912

1.1. Introduction

In early 1913, as a consequence of the Armory Show and its attendant publicity, Matisse burst into the American national consciousness. But his emergence was not as sudden as it appeared: in the preceding eight years (1905-1912) a network of American Matisse admirers had developed, consisting of (in overlapping categories) collectors, artists, and critics. Matisse's network of American supporters had two loci: in Paris, the Steins and the Matisse Academy, and in New York, Alfred Stieglitz and the 291 Gallery.

By the end of 1912, Matisse's principal American patrons —the four Steins, the two Cones, John Quinn, and Albert Barnes—had bought works by the artist (the Steins, extensively); the 291 Gallery in New York had presented three Matisse exhibitions and "The Younger American Painters" (called "followers of Matisse" in the press); the Metropolitan Museum had acquired three Matisse drawings; and the Gardner Museum had acquired a Matisse painting. Discussions of Matisse had appeared in daily newspapers, in Alfred Stieglitz's periodical Camera Work, in a letter to the Nation magazine by Bernard Berenson, and in Gelett Burgess's article "The Wild Men of Paris" in Architectural Record. In Paris, the Matisse Academy, with three American charter members (and with other Americans who attended later), had convened, thrived and disbanded.

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Max Weber, a charter member of the Matisse Academy, later recalled that the salon of Leo and Gertrude Stein "might be considered an annex" to the school, adding that "another welcome rendezvous for the young artists was the charming residence of Mr. and Mrs. Mike Stein," and that "occasional visits to Matisse's studio" were "a counterpoint and enhancement of the workaday spirit of the class."[1]

The Steins, Matisse's first patrons, helped to launch his career in three capacities—as collectors, as promoters, and as facilitators. They were his principal patrons from late 1905 until 1908, when the Russian collector Sergei Shchukin eclipsed them. Although Leo and Gertrude Stein made no purchases of Matisse after 1908, Michael and Sarah Stein continued to buy before, during, and after the First World War.

(I use the terms "promoters" and "facilitators" to denote and differentiate tasks performed by the Steins that advanced Matisse's reputation and career. In their capacities as promoters, the Steins were advocates for Matisse among their friends and acquaintances. As facilitators, they introduced Matisse to people who would prove invaluable to him, and in general, fostered an environment where modernism flourished. In today's parlance, they provided both "networking" and a "scene.")

---

[1] "The Matisse Class," lecture delivered by Max Weber at a Museum of Modern Art symposium held November 19, 1951, in conjunction with the Matisse retrospective of 1951-1952. Weber Papers, Archives of American Art, reel NY 59 #6, frame 160.

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Among the social connections made through the Steins: Leo and Gertrude introduced Matisse to Walter Pach. Sarah introduced Matisse to Eduard Steichen, to Etta Cone, and to Bernard Berenson. Leo and Gertrude (and, perhaps, Michael) introduced Matisse to Picasso. Sarah brought works by Matisse to America and showed them to, among others, George F. Of, who soon thereafter bought Nude in a Wood. Sarah and Michael (and, to a lesser degree, Leo) helped found the Matisse Academy. Among those who frequented the Steins were the American artists Patrick Henry Bruce, Alfred Maurer, Walter Pach, Morgan Russell, Eduard Steichen, Maurice Sterne, and Max Weber.

Gertrude Stein wrote word-portraits of people in her circle, among them Matisse, Picasso and several young Americans. Her "portraits" of Matisse and Picasso appeared in a special number of Camera Work in 1912.[2]

The Stieglitz circle, a loose association of photographers, writers, and painters, was the New York counterpart of the Stein circle in Paris, and there were communications and interchanges. Headquarters in New York was the 291 Gallery (Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession), presided over by Stieglitz. While Stieglitz remained stateside as "anchor man," Steichen went abroad as "leg man."[3] Their collaboration resulted in the first exhibitions of Matisse and modernism in America.

---

[2] Camera Work Special Number (August 1912): 23ff and 29ff.

[3] Henry Geldzahler, "Edward Steichen: The Influence of a Camera," Art News 60 (May 1961): 52.

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When he first exhibited in New York in 1908, Matisse personified modernism. He was the leader of the Parisian avant-garde, and his work synthesized achievements of a previous generation of modernist artists. Whereas modernism evolved in Europe by stages, it arrived in America with a jolt: when Matisse first exhibited at 291, New York had yet to have an exhibition of Cézanne, Gauguin, or van Gogh.

Thus, when Matisse reached a broader American public at the Armory Show, his reputation had a solid foundation to build on. This chapter will explore that foundation.

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1.2. The Steins and The Woman with the Hat, 1905

On November 25, 1905, the last day of the third Salon d'Automne, Leo Stein bought The Woman with the Hat (fig. 1.1), and the first Matisse entered an American collection.

The issue of who among the Steins "discovered" Matisse became public controversy after the publication of The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas in 1933. Detractors objected that Gertrude's best-selling memoir amplified her own participation and diminished that of her brothers and sister-in-law. Leo, Sarah, and Matisse all published testimony that disputed, in varying degrees and particulars, her version of events.

In the Autobiography Gertrude presents her account: Gertrude and Leo together discovered The Woman with the Hat. Gertrude later persuaded a reluctant Leo to buy it.[1] There is no mention of Michael or Sarah as having played any role in the purchase.

---

[1] Gertrude Stein, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (New York: Vintage, 1933): 41-42: "It was the first year of the autumn salon, the first autumn salon that had ever existed in Paris [sic] and they [Gertrude Stein and her brother], very eager and excited, went to see it. There they found Matisse's picture afterwards known as La Femme au Chapeau.…

"Gertrude Stein liked that picture, it was a portrait of a woman with a long face and a fan. It was very strange in its colour and in its anatomy. She said she wanted to buy it.…

"The next day they… decided to go over to the salon and look at the picture again. They did. People were roaring with laughter at the picture and scratching it. Gertrude Stein could not understand why, the picture seemed to her perfectly natural.… Her brother was less attracted but all the same he agreed and they bought it." The exhibition was in fact the third Salon d'Automne, not the first.

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A balanced weighing of the evidence, however, reveals a contrary scenario: Leo saw The Woman with the Hat and brought it to the attention of the other three Steins. After a family conference, a decision was made that Leo would buy the painting. Sarah enthusiastically favored the purchase. Among the four, Gertrude participated the least; her role was to concur in a decision made by others. As she and Leo shared expenses, her assent was needed, and was readily given.

Accordingly, it was Leo who sparked the family's interest in Matisse. Leo had come to Matisse by way of Cézanne. In spring 1904, at Bernard Berenson's suggestion, he had gone to see the Cézannes at Vollard's gallery. His immersion in Quattrocento painting had made him "quite ready for Cézanne."[2] At Vollard's he purchased a landscape (now in the Barnes Foundation), and that summer, also at Berenson's suggestion, he studied Charles Loeser's Cézanne collection in Florence.

"When I got back to Paris after the Cézanne debauch," Leo later recalled, "I was ready to look further.... The Americans, as I first knew them, were not experimenting; they were not even going abroad. Beyond the official salons, they knew nothing and had heard of nothing. So now, when I went forth from Montparnasse, I was a Columbus setting sail for a world beyond the world."

---

[2] Leo Stein, Appreciation: Painting, Poetry and Prose (New York: Crown Publishers, 1947): 155. Stein cites Mantegna, Piero della Francesca and Domenico Veneziano as "excellent preparation" for Cézanne.

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Leo began with the second Salon d'Automne, held at the Grand Palais from October 15 to November 15, 1904: "I went again and again, until things began to take shape. I looked again and again at every single picture, just as a botanist might at the flora of an unknown land."[3] The Salon contained a room devoted to Cézanne,[4] as well as rooms devoted to Puvis de Chavannes, Redon, Renoir, and Toulouse-Lautrec. Matisse's fourteen paintings and two sculptures apparently made little impression on Leo.[5]

In November 1904, as a consequence of an unexpected windfall, Leo and Gertrude went to Vollard's, where they purchased seven pictures, among them two Cézannes (bather compositions) and two Gauguins (a Tahitian picture and a still life of sunflowers). It is an index of Leo's rapid evolution as a collector that he was now purchasing works by Matisse's forerunner Gauguin, an artist unknown to him when he returned from Florence at the end of the summer.[6]

In the same month Gertrude wrote to a family friend: "We is doin business too we are selling Jap prints to buy a

---

[3] Leo Stein 1947: 156-157.

[4] Included in the Cézanne section was Three Bathers (see fig. 1.33), owned by Matisse and lent by him to the exhibition.

[5] In his memoir written some forty years later (Leo Stein 1947: 157), Leo remembered incorrectly that Matisse was "trying pointillism" at the 1904 Salon d'Automne, conflating it and the 1905 Salon des Indépendants. See note 9 below.

[6] Leo Stein 1947: 157, 194-195. Irene Gordon, in "A World Beyond the World: The Discovery of Leo Stein," Four Americans in Paris (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970): 32, n. 45, ascribes these purchases to November 1904.

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Cezanne at least we are that is Leo is trying. He don't like it a bit and makes an awful fuss about asking enough money but I guess we'll get the Cezanne.... Its a bully picture alright."[7] The "bully picture," a portrait of the artist's wife with a fan which had just been shown at the Salon d'Automne, was purchased from Vollard, probably in early 1905.[8]

Matisse first came to Leo's attention at the 1905 Salon des Indépendants, to which the artist had submitted eight pictures, including Luxe, calme et volupté, painted under the influence of Signac. Stein must have had primarily this painting in mind when he recalled that "Matisse made perhaps the strongest impression, though not the most agreeable. He was at this moment trying pointillism, the ugliest technique—so to my thinking—ever invented. His pointillism was splotchy and messy, and though both his drawing and his color had a decisive quality of energy, the pictures were not satisfying."[9]

---

[7] Gertrude Stein to Mabel Foote Weeks, undated [November 1904], Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL. See John Rewald, Cézanne and America (Princeton University Press, 1989): 83, n. 7.

[8] See Rewald 1989: 53-55, and Irene Gordon in Four Americans in Paris 1970: 24-25.

[9] Leo remembered this encounter as having taken place at the 1904 Salon d'Automne (Leo Stein 1947: 157), but as there were no neo-impressionist pictures by Matisse at that exhibition, he must have remembered incorrectly. Sarah recalled that Leo had attended Matisse's one-man show at Vollard's the previous June (Fiske Kimball, "Matisse: Recognition, Patronage, Collecting," The Philadelphia Museum Bulletin 43, 217 [March 1948]: 37). It is likely that Leo had seen the artist's work at these exhibitions, without its having made a notable impression on him.

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At this salon Stein bought "Standing Nude" ("L'Atelier, le modele nu") by Henri Manguin, Matisse's colleague from the atelier Moreau. The painting was "really school of Matisse, but of a kind of Matisse that I had not yet seen; otherwise I should not have been so well pleased with this Matisse at second hand." (In 1911 John Quinn, in a similar pattern, would buy Alfred Maurer's The Iron Table ["Matisse at second hand"] before making his first purchase of Matisse in 1912.)[10]

Stein's purchase of the Gauguins and the Manguin, along with his deepening appreciation of Cézanne, prepared him for a revelation at the 1905 Salon d'Automne. Stein later recalled his reaction to The Woman with the Hat when he first saw it at the vernissage on October 18: "brilliant and powerful, but the nastiest smear of paint I had ever seen." His memorable phrase eloquently evokes the disquieting ambivalence that a sensitive viewer often experiences before a new and challenging work of art. "It was what I was unknowingly waiting for," he wrote, "and I would have snatched it at once if I had not needed a few days to get over the unpleasantness of the putting on of paint."[11]

Leo attended the vernissage with Gertrude, Michael and Sarah, and two sisters from Baltimore, Etta and Claribel Cone. Claribel Cone later recalled:

> It was in the Autumn of 1905; happening to be in Paris, my sister and I were invited to visit the vernissage of

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[10] See fig. 1.56.

[11] Leo Stein 1947: 157-158.

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> the Salon d'Automne.... It was here that I first saw the Matisse paintings and I must admit I didn't like the paintings. Having passed through several of the larger halls we soon found ourselves in a small room which had been set apart for the independent group of which Matisse was chief. The walls were covered with canvases—presenting what seemed to me then a riot of color—sharp and startling, drawing crude and uneven, distortions and exaggerations—compositions primitive and simple as though done by a child. ...We asked ourselves, are those things to be taken seriously. As we looked across the room we found our friends [the Steins] earnestly contemplating a canvas—the canvas of a woman with a hat tilted jauntily at an angle on the top of her head—the drawing crude, the color bizarre.[12]

Family friend Therese Jelenko remembered the following scene in front of The Woman with the Hat: "The young painters were just laughing themselves sick about it. And there stood Leo, Mike and Sally [Sarah] Stein very impressed and very solemn about it. They discussed who should buy it... and it was decided that Leo would buy it."[13]

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[12] Claribel Cone, lecture notes. Papers owned by Ellen B. Hirschland. Cited in Barbara Pollack, The Collectors: Dr. Claribel and Miss Etta Cone (Indianapolis and New York, Bobbs-Merrill): 70; Irene Gordon in Four Americans in Paris 1970: 26; and Brenda Richardson, Dr Claribel and Miss Etta: The Cone Collection (Baltimore Museum of Art, 1985): 89.

[13] Therese Jelenko, [Reminiscences], (Typescript, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, ca. 1965): 4. Jelenko (née Ehrman), a music student, had traveled from San Francisco to Paris with the Michael Steins as their son Allan's piano teacher. She recalled that Michael and Sarah "didn't have the means to buy it. It was 400 dollars..." In fact, the painting cost either 450 francs (about 90 dollars, Leo's recollection) or 500 francs (about 100 dollars, Gertrude's recollection); see Leo Stein 1947: 159, and Gertrude Stein 1933: 42. Although Michael and Sarah undoubtedly had the "means" to make the purchase, they were more financially cautious, and burdened by more responsibilities, than were Leo and Gertrude. It could not have been difficult for Leo to have persuaded them to allow him to buy the painting, a decision they would later regret.

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Sarah later recalled that it was Leo who brought The Woman with the Hat to her attention.[14] Immediately sharing Leo's enthusiasm but not his ambivalence, she felt an emotional kinship with the painting: she "was not only moved by the unprecedented magnificence of its color, but also was deeply touched by the striking resemblance of the portrait to her mother. It was decided by Leo and Sarah that the picture should be acquired by the family."[15]

Both Leo and Sarah, in contrasting and complementary ways, would be valuable friends, allies, and patrons of Matisse (although Leo's patronage would end by 1907 or 1908). In their response to Matisse's work each corresponded to an aspect of the artist's personality: Leo was systematic and intellectual; Sarah was intuitive, emotional, and spiritual.

Matisse seemed to sense the ways that Leo and Sarah complemented each other when he claimed that she was the "really intelligently sensitive member of the family. Leo Stein thought very highly of her because she possessed a sensibility which awakened the same thing in himself."

Matisse believed that the decision to buy the painting had been made by Leo and Sarah together: "It was Madame Michel Stein and her brother [-in-law] who discussed the advisability

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[14] Kimball 1948: 37: "It was Leo who first called the artist's work to her attention, although Leo never did develop the degree of interest which Sarah felt from her first view of it, and always will feel." Sarah placed all four Steins in front of the painting: "...visiting the Salon d'Automne, the Stein group—Mr. and Mrs. Michael Stein, Gertrude and Leo —were carried away by the Femme au Chapeau."

[15] Kimball 1948: 37.

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of purchasing La Femme au Chapeau. When the purchase had been made, Leo said to Madame Michel Stein: 'I am going to ask you to leave it with me for I must know in detail the reasons for my preferences.'"[16]

The consensus of witnesses was that Gertrude played only a minor role in the decision to acquire the painting. Therese Jelenko observed: "Gertrude began with very little interest in pictures except vicariously in her brother's interest."[17]

The American painter Maurice Sterne made a similar observation: "Gertrude had no taste or judgment in the visual arts; at best she was a reflection of her brother Leo. Never in those early years of the century did she take the initiative herself in the purchase of a painting. It was always Leo. However, before the painting could be transferred to their walls, Leo had to get Gertrude's consent, because they had pooled their incomes. It was only when a considerable amount of money was at stake that she even bothered to see a painting before it was acquired."[18]

The American painter Morgan Russell concurred: "Leo Stein was the authentic initiator of the public careers of Matisse and Picasso. His sister Gertrude was more interested

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[16] Matisse in "Testimony against Gertrude Stein," Transition, supplement to no. 23 (February 1935): 3.

[17] Jelenko ca. 1965: 4.

[18] Maurice Sterne, Shadow and Light (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965): 48.

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in artists as persons than in art as the thing one is dedicated to."[19]

According to Leo: "Until Gertrude bought a cubist Picasso, she was never responsible for a single picture that was bought, and always said so. She was proud of her slow reaction time, and always said she couldn't tell whether she liked a picture until she had lived with it."[20]

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[19] Biographical statement by Russell, December 1947. Morgan Russell Archives, MoMA: 182.

[20] Leo Stein to Albert C. Barnes, October 20, 1934, cited in Leo Stein, Journey into the Self (New York: Crown Publishers, 1950): 148.

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1.3. Leo and Gertrude Stein and their Salon, 1905-1906

In late 1905, soon after Leo Stein purchased The Woman with the Hat, Henri Manguin brought him to meet the artist. Matisse had recently become a neighbor of the four Steins in Montparnasse, having rented a studio in the Couvent des Oiseaux on the rue de Sèvres (while retaining family living quarters and a smaller studio on the quai Saint-Michel). He was at work on Le Bonheur de vivre (fig. 1.2), a monumental figure-and-landscape composition that synthesized his current painterly ideas. Stein was pleasantly surprised to find in Matisse a kindred spirit, "different from the other painters whom I had met… really intelligent… also witty, and capable of saying exactly what he meant when talking about art."[1]

Stein bought a drawing on this first visit.[2] On a subsequent occasion he arrived with Michael and Sarah, who bought the drawing "Nu allongé" (which the couple would bring to America the following spring).[3] These financial and social connections were the genesis of two great Matisse collections (Leo/Gertrude's and Sarah/Michael's), and long-term friendships between the Stein and Matisse families. These

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[1] Leo Stein 1947: 159.

[2] Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Matisse: His Art and His Public (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951): 58. Presumably, Barr got this information in conversation with Leo Stein.

[3] Isabelle Monod-Fontaine and Claude Laugier, "Chronologie," in Dominique Fourcade and Isabelle Monod-Fontaine, Henri Matisse 1904-1917 (Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris): 70.

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connections, Gertrude later recalled, were instrumental in forming Leo and Gertrude's salon: "Little by little people began to come to the rue de Fleurus to see the Matisses and Cézannes, Matisse brought people, everybody brought somebody, and they came at any time and it began to be a nuisance, and it was in this way that Saturday evenings began."[4]

Within a few weeks of Leo Stein's introduction to Matisse he had acquired his first Picasso, The Acrobat's Family with a Monkey (1905, Konstmuseum, Göteberg, Sweden), purchased from the dealer Clovis Sagot. Soon thereafter he was brought by Henri-Pierre Roché to meet Picasso at the Bateau-Lavoir, the young artist's Montmartre studio.

In January 1906, thanks to their friendship with the Stein family, Etta and Claribel Cone got off to an early start as collectors of Matisse. (The two sisters from Baltimore had attended the vernissage of the Salon d'Automne and had been present when the four Steins first viewed The Woman with the Hat.) On January 15, Sarah brought Etta to the Couvent des Oiseaux to meet the artist. Etta bought two drawings (made before 1900), one of which she gave to Sarah. (Etta had been to Picasso's studio the previous November, and had purchased two works on paper.)[5]

On February 18, Etta Cone, having purchased a Cézanne lithograph at the outset of the month, made her third and

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[4] Gertrude Stein 1933: 41.

[5] Brenda Richardson 1985: 168.

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fourth Matisse purchases: a watercolor of 1905, Port de Collioure (fig. 1.3) (for 100 francs) and a drawing of a nude (for 50 francs). In March or April she purchased her first Matisse oil painting, a still life of 1906, Yellow Pottery from Provence (fig. 1.4).[6]

The Cone sisters made no further purchases of Matisse's work until 1922. Etta's five purchases of Matisse in 1906 show a propensity for the traditional rather than the experimental side of the artist's work. Brenda Richardson (in her catalogue of the Cone Collection) observes that the watercolor Port de Collioure, unlike his more radical works of 1905, "relies on soft color and an Impressionistic view" and that the 1906 oil Yellow Pottery from Provence seems "relatively tame" compared to Le Bonheur de vivre of 1905-6.[7]

March 20 was the opening day of the 1906 Salon des Indépendants. Matisse, a member of the hanging committee, had submitted as his sole entry Le Bonheur de vivre. As he had been with The Woman with the Hat, Leo Stein was both fascinated and disturbed by Matisse's latest sensation. He contemplated the picture for several weeks, unwilling to

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[6] Yellow Pottery from Provence did not immediately go back to Baltimore. Etta left Paris in spring 1906 for a worldwide tour with her family. A photograph, ca. 1907, shows the painting on a wall at the rue de Fleurus (MoMA 1970: 90). Brenda Richardson speculates that Etta lent it to Gertrude for safekeeping, to be retrieved at a later date (Richardson 1985: 96-98, 168, and 158, n. 35). See below, 1.4, p. 24, n. 10.

[7] Richardson 1985: 96.

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commit himself until he felt totally convinced by it. Maurice Sterne was a witness to Leo's decision-making process:

> In the spring of 1907 [sic, 1906] Leo and I attended an exhibition at which Matisse's "Joie de Vivre" was first seen. I was shocked by what I considered its poor drawing and crude color and I am afraid that I agreed with the judgment of the laughing crowd in front of the painting. I asked Leo what he thought and he replied, "I don't know yet. I must first study for a while before I can make up my mind."...
>
> A week later I asked Leo if he had made up his mind and he curtly replied, "Not yet." Still another week passed and then Leo informed me that he had come to the conclusion that "Joie de Vivre" was a superb painting, and had purchased it.[8]

Sarah Stein deeply regretted that it was Leo, and not she, who had ultimately made the purchase of The Woman with the Hat.[9] Perhaps to avoid another such disappointment, and as consolation for not having acquired the large version of Le Bonheur de vivre, she and Michael purchased an oil sketch for Bonheur from the Druet Gallery, where Matisse had a one-man

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[8] Sterne 1965: 52-53. Maurice Sterne (1878-1957), born in Latvia, emigrated to America in 1889. He worked in New York in an engraving firm and studied at Cooper Union and the National Academy of Design before going to Europe in 1904. For a discussion of the variations on the title "Bonheur de vivre" ("La Joie de vivre," "Bonheur de vie," "The Joy of Life," et al.), see Jack Flam, "Henri Matisse," in Richard J. Wattenmaker, ed., Great French Paintings from the Barnes Collection (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993): 306-307.

[9] On April 20, 1908, Inez Haynes Irwin, having visited Michael and Sarah Stein at the rue Madame, recorded in her diary: "Second picture—the hat. Her [Sarah's] brother-in-law, to her dying regret, persuaded her to let him buy that. (Good story in this.)" in Inez Haynes Irwin, "Diary" (Typescript, Schlesinger Library of the History of Women, Radcliffe College, Cambridge, 1908): 103-104.

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show (his second), concurrent with the opening weeks of the 1906 Salon des Indépendants (March 19-April 7).

Leo Stein introduced his sister to Picasso. "Attracted by the woman's physical personality, he had offered to do her portrait, before he really knew her," recalled Picasso's companion Fernande Olivier.[10] Picasso's biographer Pierre Daix wrote of the posing sessions: "They saw each other practically every day, Gertrude traveling across Paris from the rue de Fleurus on the Left Bank to Montmartre. Her conversation brought Picasso a sense of high international culture, as well as attitudes to art and painting with which he was unfamiliar—as heterodox as his own, and probably more revolutionary. She vehemently praised the work of Cézanne and Matisse. It was essential, she said, that Picasso meet Matisse."[11]

According to the recollections of both Picasso and Gertrude, Matisse and Picasso met while Le Bonheur de vivre was being shown at the Salon des Indépendants (March-April 1906).[12] At this time Picasso was working on Gertrude's portrait. The two artists may have met at the rue de Fleurus, as Fernande Olivier remembered.[13] But it seems equally likely

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[10] Fernande Olivier, Picasso and His Friends, trans. Jane Miller (New York: Appleton-Century, 1965): 83; originally published in French as Picasso et ses amis (Paris: Librairie Stock, Delamain et Boutelleau, 1933).

[11] Pierre Daix, Picasso: Life and Art, trans. Olivia Emmet (New York: Harper Collins, 1993): 53.

[12] See Daix 1993: 56 and Gertrude Stein 1933: 53.

[13] Olivier 1965: 83.

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that they met at the Bateau-Lavoir, after one of Gertrude's posing sessions. Matisse's daughter Marguerite Duthuit later recounted that as a child of eleven, she was present in Picasso's studio when Matisse and Picasso first met, along with Leo, Gertrude, and Michael Stein. After leaving Picasso, Marguerite recalled, the party of five, parading from Montmartre to the rue de Fleurus, made an odd spectacle, the Steins in sandals, "like the Nazarenes."[14]

In Gertrude's words (ca. 1933): "Matisse and Picasso then being introduced to each other by Gertrude Stein and her brother [Leo] became friends but they were enemies. Now they are neither friends nor enemies. At that time they were both."[15]

The frisson of this moment had a seismological counterpart in a roughly contemporaneous event, the San Francisco earthquake of April 18, 1906, a catastrophic event which would affect the livelihood of the Steins, and would in turn have consequences for Matisse's reputation in America.

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[14] "Et ils [les Stein] marchaient tous en sandales à lanières de cuir, pieds nus comme les Nazaréens…" (Marguerite Duthuit, in Brassai, Conversations avec Picasso [Paris: Gallimard, 1964]: 343-344). On Matisse and Picasso's first meeting, see also Hilary Spurling, The Unknown Matisse (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998): 352-353, and Yves-Alain Bois, Matisse and Picasso (Paris: Flammarion, 1998): 18.

[15] Gertrude Stein 1933: 64.

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1.4. The Four Steins, 1905-1907

The four adult Steins in Paris in 1905 fell into two camps, that of Leo and Gertrude, and of Michael and Sarah.

At the time of the purchase of The Woman with the Hat, Leo was thirty-three years old; Gertrude was thirty-one. The youngest of five siblings, they had been inseparable since childhood. (Their bond was so close that when they separated in 1914, the break would be total and irrevocable.)

Neither Leo nor Gertrude had to work for a living. They had been shielded from financial worry through the efforts of their oldest brother Michael. Upon the death of their widowed father in 1891, Michael became their legal guardian, put the family's business affairs in order, and arranged for them to receive shares of the family income.

Both Leo and Gertrude were keenly intelligent and intellectually curious. Leo was devoting his energies to esthetics and painting, Gertrude to psychology and writing. Leo was the acknowledged family expert on art. Gertrude deferred to him on most matters.

To Gertrude and Leo, Michael (who was seven years Leo's elder) was of another generation. Like them, he was cultured and intelligent; unlike them, he was modest and practical-minded. Michael's shrewdness in business matters made the family's collecting activities possible; but in the art purchases made by the Michael Steins, it was Michael's wife Sarah who was the driving force.

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In San Francisco Sarah (neé Samuels),[1] more gregarious than her self-effacing husband, had presided over a salon within their German-Jewish circle. There the couple had been tasteful but unadventurous collectors of Far Eastern art. In 1904 they had moved to Paris, following the lead of Leo and Gertrude, who had settled there permanently the previous year.

Irene Gordon compares Sarah to Gertrude: "In their exuberance and desire to shine, Sarah and Gertrude are similar.... Although in the end it is Gertrude who goes her own way and outlasts Sarah as a 'salon-lady,' at this point Sarah is the more independent of the two. Especially in regard to Leo."[2]

Sarah's friend Annette Rosenshine described Sarah as "a motherly woman. She was medium height with a rather flabby stoutness. Her features were undistinguished, but her expression was keenly alert.... Her appearance suggested comfort—a good San Francisco bourgeoise; in fact, not a vestige of modishness or Parisian chic."[3]

Although it was Leo who initiated the purchases of Matisse and Picasso and the friendships with the artists, stronger bonds than Leo's were formed by Gertrude with Picasso

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[1] Sarah (born July 26, 1870), was five years younger than Michael (and two years older than Leo). Of the four Steins, she was closest to Matisse in age.

[2] Four Americans in Paris 1970: 15.

[3] Annette Rosenshine, "Life's Not a Paragraph" (Typescript, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1964): 66.

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and by Sarah with Matisse. While both of these friendships were rooted in the patronage and advocacy of the Stein family, there were differences in the nature of the two friendships.

"Gertrude Stein and Pablo Picasso immediately understood each other," Gertrude wrote.[4] Picasso was "attracted by the woman's physical personality," Fernande Olivier pointedly observed.[5] Picasso seems to have found in Gertrude a muse; for a time her presence haunted his work, not only in the portrait of 1905-6, but also in contemporaneous renditions of stocky female nudes.[6] For her part Gertrude would justify her efforts as a writer by citing Picasso's experimentation as a visual artist.

For Matisse, Sarah was a source of comfort and encouragement. Her friend Annette Rosenshine recalled "seeing Matisse in the Steins' apartment when he was in the throes of struggling with a new creative expression. There he found solace in unburdening his latest problems and uncertainties to Sarah Stein, knowing he would receive sensitive, sympathetic understanding."[7]

Sarah had a messianic attitude to Matisse. According to her friend Harriet Levy: "Sarah had room for only one great enthusiasm at a time and this one lasted for all time. She

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[4] Gertrude Stein 1933: 46.

[5] Olivier 1965: 83.

[6] See, for example, Two Nudes (MoMA, 1906).

[7] Rosenshine 1964: 97.

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could not divide her enthusiasms. Having accepted Matisse, he became for her and remained for her the one great artist."[8]

These friendships were firmly established by spring 1906, when Matisse and Picasso met, under the auspices of the Steins.

The San Francisco earthquake of April 18 had reverberations in Paris. Inasmuch as their real-estate holdings in San Francisco were the source of the family income, Michael was obliged to return to America to survey the damage. For Sarah this visit was an opportunity to spread the word of Matisse in the New World.

Between winter 1906 and their departure from Paris that spring, they added to their collection several works by Matisse, among them The Green Stripe (fig. 1.5). No doubt Sarah's failure to acquire The Woman with the Hat was a motivating factor in the purchase of The Green Stripe. Though one-fourth the size of The Woman with the Hat, it is comparably daring. Like the larger picture, it is a portrait of Madame Matisse, with bold juxtapositions of exaggerated color. (The title refers to the vertical green shadow that bifurcates the head, mediating between complementary regions of yellow and violet.) By contrast with the larger portrait, it is bold and simple in composition, and it reveals, rather than conceals, its subject.

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[8] Harriet L. Levy, "Recollections" (Typescript, Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley, n.d.): 11.

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During this time Sarah and Michael also purchased two small canvases: Madras rouge (smaller version) (fig. 1.6), an oil sketch of Madame Matisse in a red headdress, seated at a table with a vase of flowers,[9] and the aggressively unacademic Nude before a Screen (fig. 1.7).

Sarah and Michael departed from Paris in early May for a visit that was to last seven months. They arrived in New York harbor on May 9th with several works by Matisse: The Green Stripe, Nude before a Screen, Madras rouge (smaller version), and the drawing "Nu allongé," which they had bought from Matisse the day they met him. These were the first works by Matisse on America soil.[10]

Walter Pach later wrote of "a burlesque scheme they evolved for avoiding the customs-tax on paintings that was then in force. Mr. Stein was to tell the customs man that Matisse was the greatest painter in the world and that his works were priceless. Mrs. Stein was to walk quietly around in back of her husband, point to his head and tap her own forehead."[11] It is not known whether or not the Steins carried out this scheme.

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[9] Madras rouge (smaller version), previously dated 1907, was painted in Collioure in summer 1905. Wanda de Guébriant of the Archives Matisse, Paris, has identified this work as the third painting brought by Sarah and Michael to America (Spurling 1998: 459, n. 44).

[10] Although Etta Cone had purchased five Matisses (including one oil) in early 1906, she remained abroad until spring 1907. The oil painting, Yellow Pottery from Provence, may have remained in Paris, in the care of Gertrude Stein, still longer. See above, 1.3, p. 16, note 6.

[11] Walter Pach, "Introducing the Paintings of George Of, 1876-1954," Art News (October 1956): 38.

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Among those to whom Sarah showed her Matisses were two younger San Francisco friends, Annette Rosenshine and Alice B. Toklas. Rosenshine recalled:

> Mrs. Stein received Alice and me graciously, and seemed pleased to introduce us to French art and to show the three paintings she had brought with her, the first by this French artist to be seen in America. Our initiation [The Green Stripe] was a portrait painted on a splotchy background. On the right side of the head was a green daub, and on the opposite side a splash of crimson and mauve. But the crowning affront was a green streak running from the center of the forehead down the nose, lips and chin. It was grotesque and to me, conditioned by my training at Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco, it seemed a demented caricature of a portrait. Another picture [Nude before a Screen] showed a fat distorted little nude who struck me as a gross unesthetic monster, a far cry from the nude paintings in our life class. The last horror [Madras rouge (smaller version)] was a small head painted with dots, with spotty bits of the canvas left uncovered by paint. Speechless and nonplussed, I believed that these paintings were the accepted French art of the day.[12]

Sarah enjoyed the social whirl and the attention she received as the dispenser of avant-garde Parisian culture, even when Matisse's work met with uncomprehending eyes. On

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[12] Rosenshine 1964: 62. When Michael and Sarah returned to Paris, they brought Rosenshine along, a valuable witness to subsequent events. Toklas, toeing the line for Gertrude, also recalled her first sight of Matisse's work: "The Michael Steins... had hurried out to San Francisco... They had brought with them the 'Portrait à la Raie Verte,' of Madame Matisse with a green line down her face. It and the other paintings they brought were the first by Matisse to cross the Atlantic. The portrait impressed me immensely, as 'La Femme au Chapeau' had impressed Gertrude Stein when she saw it at the vernissage of the Salon d'Automne of 1905 and bought it at once" (Alice B. Toklas, What Is Remembered [New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963]: 17-18).

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October 8 she wrote in a breathless tone to Gertrude from San Francisco:

> I have had a pretty hot time with some of the artists… You see, Mikey sprang the Matisses on one just for fun, & since the startling news that there was such stuff in town has been communicated, I have been a very popular lady; it has not always been what Albert Meyer used to call 'pleasant.'
>
> "Oh, Albert Bender [a San Francisco collector] has been our most faithful and devoted—as always… but his devotion hardly stood the test of the 'femme au nez vert.' … Anne Bremer (his cousin) insisted upon his seeing it. She had told him of it, & he had said, 'If Sarah Stein says it's great—it must be—& Anne said, 'But just wait until you see it— Upon his demand, I assured him that perhaps he'd better spare himself this test, as I knew his belief in my infallibility was something very dear to him. 'No,' he said, 'I shall never, never, never say, as others have, that you are crazy.' Well—he saw it—for two minutes he was speechless—then he meekly inquired—'But don't you think you're crazy? …
>
> "Have been called to the telephone six times during this effort—six more invitations, accepted 'em all—going morning. noon, afternoon, evening, night—it's rather amusing—and I do love to show my clothes; they always create such a sensation![13]

Unlike Sarah's friends in San Francisco, the painter and framer George F. Of, who framed pictures for Alfred Stieglitz's 291 Gallery, appreciated Matisse at once. In New York on the last leg of her trip, Sarah showed her Matisses to Of, whom she and Michael had known in Paris.[14] She was

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[13] Sarah to Gertrude, October 8, 1906 (Gertrude Stein Collection, Yale Collection of Art and Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library, New Haven.).

[14] According to Walter Pach, Sarah saw Of on the first, rather than the last leg of their trip (Pach 1956: 37). However, in a 1906 letter, Michael Stein reports that upon their arrival in New York, he and Sarah

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impressed with his response, later telling Walter Pach that she had never known anyone with such a sensitive eye for color.[15] When Of requested that she purchase a Matisse for him upon her return to Paris, she agreed, and on June 21, 1907, she and Michael bought on his behalf Nude in a Wood (fig. 1.8) from the Druet gallery.[16] From 1907 to late 1912 (when Dr. Barnes made his first Matisse purchases), this small landscape on wood and the Cone sisters' still life Yellow Pottery from Provence, also of 1906, were the only oil paintings by Matisse on American soil.

From May to October 1906, while the Michael Steins were in America, Matisse went to North Africa and to Collioure. In autumn, back at the Couvent des Oiseaux, he showed Leo the fruits of his summer's labor, including a series of Collioure landscapes, of which Leo bought two, Olive Trees at Collioure (fig. 1.9) and View of the Sea, Collioure (fig. 1.10), and two depictions of a Collioure fisherman, Young Sailor I (fig. 1.11) and Young Sailor II (fig. 1.12).

Leo later recalled that Matisse "brought back from the country a study of a young fisherman, and also a free copy of it with extreme deformations. At first he pretended that this

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were met at the dock by relatives who directly whisked them off to Baltimore (Michael to Leo and Gertrude, May 10, 1906, Leo Stein Collection, Yale Collection of Art and Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library, New Haven). There is no contemporaneous evidence suggesting that they returned to New York before heading for San Francisco.

[15] Pach 1956: 37.

[16] Fourcade 1993: cat. 30.

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had been made by the letter-carrier of Collioure, but finally admitted that it was an experiment of his own. It was the first thing he did with forced deformations. He also brought back some landscapes in bright colors, which at first attracted me so strongly that I wanted the whole lot; but I could only get two of them, as the others were already promised."[17]

Leo reported: "27 rue de Fleurus was filling with pictures."[18] The same could be said for 58 rue Madame. Leo and Gertrude were accumulating Matisses and Picassos; Sarah and Michael were accumulating Matisses. The two households were becoming two branches of a museum of modern art.

A sizable portion of Matisse's extraordinary output from 1906-1907 was acquired by Sarah and Michael, including Young Sailor I, mentioned above, as well as Pink Onions (fig. 1.13), Self-Portrait (fig. 1.14) and The Gypsy (fig. 1.15), all of 1906, and Blue Still Life (fig. 1.16), Madras rouge (fig. 1.17) and La Coiffure (fig. 1.18) of 1907.

Leo added to his collection major works of Picasso's Blue, Rose, and proto-cubist periods. He also bought three Matisses of 1907: a portrait of the artist's daughter, Margot (fig. 1.19), and two major works—the Cézannist-primitivist painting Blue Nude (fig. 1.20) and the decorative composition Music (Sketch) (fig. 1.21).

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[17] Leo Stein 1947: 192.

[18] Leo Stein 1947: 194.

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1.5. American Painters in Paris [Maurer, Weber, Bruce, Pach, Steichen, Prendergast], 1905-1907

In turn-of-the-century Paris the American art colony comprised the largest group of foreign artists in the city.[1] Many Americans studied at the Académie Julian, where they could learn according to the principles of the French academy without undergoing rigorous entrance requirements. Most were working in the conservative academic tradition and were, in John Rewald's words, "apparently not even aware that Cézanne ever existed."[2]

In the years 1905 to 1907 a number of Americans in Paris gravitated to the Stein circle and to the avant-garde.

When Alfred Maurer was befriended by Leo and Gertrude Stein around 1904, he was painting in the manner of Whistler, Sargent and Chase. By 1907, he had become a modernist painter.[3]

Since before the turn of the century, Maurer had been headquartered in Paris, where he remained until the outbreak of the First World War. His biographer Elizabeth McCausland characterizes him as "an American colony Beau Brummel and a great man of the Latin Quarter. With assurance and ease he

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[1] Billy Klüver and Julie Martin, Kiki's Paris: Artists and Lovers 1910-1930 (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989): 21.

[2] Rewald 1989: 31.

[3] Alfred Henry Maurer (1868-1932), born in New York City, was the son of a former Currier and Ives artist. He went into the family lithographic business, studied at the National Academy of Design, and left for Paris in 1897, where he studied briefly at the Academy Julian.

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could walk the great boulevards and frequent the Left Bank cafés."[4] Gertrude Stein described him as "a little dark dapper man... with hair, eyes, face, hands and feet all very much alive."[5]

An intimate friend of Leo and Gertrude, Maurer was, in Gertrude's words, "an old habitué of the house. He had been there before there were these pictures, when there were only japanese prints."[6] A letter of August 1905 from Maurer to Leo indicates that, with the sculptor Mahonri Young, he was giving tours of the rue de Fleurus to visitors while Leo and Gertrude were in Italy: "Young and I shocked some American the other day... The lady wanted to know if we were in earnest."[7]

Under the auspices of the Steins, Maurer became a convert to Cézanne and a proselytizer; Gertrude Stein recalled that Maurer

> used to light matches to light up a little piece of the Cézanne portrait. Of course you can tell it is a finished picture, he used to explain to the other american painters who came and looked dubiously, you can tell because it has a frame, now whoever heard of anybody framing a canvas if the picture isn't finished.[8]

In 1907 he produced a series of 8x10-inch oils on wood thumb-box panels, in the manner of the 1905 Collioure

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[4] Elizabeth McCausland, A. H. Maurer (New York: A. A. Wyn, 1951): 77.

[5] Gertrude Stein 1933: 11.

[6] Gertrude Stein 1933: 11.

[7] Alfred Maurer to Leo Stein: August 5, [1905], Leo Stein papers, YCAL.

[8] Gertrude Stein 1933: 11.

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paintings of Matisse and Derain. According to Mahonri Young, this new style was triggered by an abrupt change in Maurer's comportment, from that of a nineteenth-century dandy to a twentieth-century man of anxiety:

> One night Alfy came into the creamery on the rue Delambre near the Boulevard Raspail where we all used to go...
>
> He wore his cape and black felt hat and carried his cane.
>
> ... Alfy... began to dance a funny little jig he used to do. He would click his heels together and tap with his cane. Then he would jump up on one of the marble-topped tables and dance there.
>
> Suddenly he stopped. Before our very eyes he changed to a middle-aged man. All the gaiety went out of his face.
>
> His eyes glared. He was a frantic sight....
>
> From that day on, he painted like a wild man.[9]

Maurer's own recollection of the change that came over him is not so melodramatic. In April 1908 he told a Paris correspondent for the New York Times:

> The transition from the old school to the new is not an easy one, but it is exciting to a degree. When I decided to make the change I had to lay my brushes aside for almost a month and think of nothing but impressionism. Then I went at it slowly and timidly, feeling my way.[10]

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[9] McCausland 1951: 85-86. Young gives the date of this event as April 21, 1904, Maurer's thirty-sixth birthday. If Young meant to suggest that Maurer's style changed at this time, he was mistaken about the date, for Maurer's style did not change until 1906 or 1907.

[10] "Artist Maurer Now an Impressionist," The New York Times, Sunday, April 19, 1908, Part 3: 5.

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There was a generational difference between Maurer and the younger Americans Max Weber and Patrick Henry Bruce. Maurer, born in 1868, was nearly two years older than Matisse.[11] Weber and Bruce, who, unlike Maurer, were to become Matisse's pupils, were both born in 1881 (which was also the year of Picasso's birth).

Max Weber arrived in Paris on September 25, 1905[12] (contemporaneously, Matisse was painting The Woman with the Hat). The twenty-four-year-old had embarked from New York on the Red Line's Krumland, taking with him $2000 in savings and the encouragement of his former teacher Arthur Wesley Dow.[13]

Weber remained in Europe for three years and three months (through December 1908), mainly in Paris. During this time he would attend evenings at the rue de Fleurus and the rue Madame, visit Picasso at the rue Ravignan, befriend Henri Rousseau, exhibit in the Salon d'Automne, and help to found the Académie Matisse.

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[11] Maurer, born April 21, 1868, was twenty months older than Matisse, who was born December 31, 1869.

[12] Max Weber (1881-1961), born in Bialystok, Russia (now Poland), was the son of a tailor in an Orthodox Jewish family. The family emigrated to America when he was ten years old. After graduating from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, he worked as an art teacher in Virginia and in Minnesota.

[13] Sandra E. Leonard, Henri Rousseau and Max Weber (New York: Richard L. Feigen & Co, 1970): 12. Arthur Wesley Dow (1857-1922), Weber's teacher at the Pratt Institute, would in 1912 be a teacher of Georgia O'Keeffe. Alfred Barr wrote of Dow: "No one in America during the nineties emphasized so exclusively a formal attitude toward painting, and no one else combined such a stimulating knowledge of Far Eastern aesthetics with the not dissimilar principles which were then emerging in France" (Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Max Weber [New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1930b]: 7).

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On October 9 Weber registered at the Académie Julian, studying under Jean-Paul Laurens. Weber's fellow student Lucien Mainssieux soon introduced him to Mainssieux's cousin Jules Flandrin, who became Weber's mentor, guiding him to museums and informing him on recent developments in art.[14]

In February 1906, Weber left the Académie Julian, having bridled at the rigidity of its instruction. Hereafter he would work as an independent student at the Académies Colarossi and de la Grande Chaumière, where one could draw without receiving criticism. He participated in the 1906 Salon des Indépendants (at which Matisse exhibited Le Bonheur de vivre).

By autumn 1906 Weber was attending the Saturday evening gatherings at Leo and Gertrude Stein's.[15] He later recalled the scene at the rue de Fleurus:

> For hours they stood around the large table in the center of the spacious and well-lighted room, examining portfolios full of drawings by Matisse, Picasso and others, and folios well-stocked with superb Japanese prints. This salon was a sort of international clearing-house of ideas and matters of art for the young and aspiring artists from all over the world. Lengthy and involved discussions on the most recent developments and trends in art took place, with Leo Stein as moderator

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[14] Jules Flandrin (1871-1947), Matisse's colleague from the Atelier Moreau, exhibited with Matisse and Marquet at Berthe Weill's gallery in 1902.

[15] My conclusion that Weber visited the rue de Fleurus by autumn 1906 is based on Weber's recollections of (1) having seen his first Cézanne at Leo Stein's, and (2) having seen the Cézannes at the 1906 Salon d'Automne (October 6-November 15). Accordingly, Weber's first visit to the Steins could have been no later than November 1906. Max Weber tapes (Transcript of tape-recorded interviews conducted by Carol S. Gruber in 1958, Oral History Collection, Columbia University Library): 58, 118.

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and pontiff, and many cerebral explosions did take place.[16]

Weber's presence at the Steins is documented in a page of caricatures of Leo, now at the Yale University Art Gallery.[17] He was not, however, a favorite of Gertrude, and he never become a habitué of the rue de Fleurus.[18] It is not hard to see why his personality—earnest, irascible and egocentric —would have been distasteful to Gertrude. Unlike some other young Americans in Paris, he lived, not the vie de bohème, but "comme un prêtre [like a priest]," as his friend Dunoyer de Segonzac later recalled.[19] "Weber was firmly convinced," Sandra Leonard observes, "that life was an educational experience."[20]

Patrick Henry Bruce arrived in Paris in late 1903 or early 1904.[21] He had recently studied at the New York School of Art, under the tutelage of William Merritt Chase, Kenneth Hayes Miller and Robert Henri. Although he was working in a

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[16] Weber Papers, Archives of American Art, roll NY 59 #6, frame 159.

[17] This caricature page is dated 1906 in Phylis Burkley (Percy) North, "Max Weber: The Early Paintings (1905-1920)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 1975): 221, and redated 1908 in Percy North, Max Weber: American Modern (New York: The Jewish Museum, 1982): 16.

[18] North 1975: 18.

[19] North 1975: 20, and 35, n. 20.

[20] Leonard 1970: 19.

[21] Patrick Henry Bruce (1881-1936), a descendent of Patrick Henry, was the scion of a venerable Virginia family, then in reduced circumstances. Before leaving Virginia for New York in 1902, he studied at the Fine Art Club of Richmond, under the neoclassical sculptor Edward Valentine.

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tradition that was progressive by American standards, he was not initially receptive to avant-garde French art.

Soon after arriving in Paris, Bruce made contact with the Canadian painter James Wilson Morrice, who introduced him to Impressionism and encouraged him to submit his painting to the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, which accepted him for the salon of 1904.[22]

After a brief return to the states in 1905, to deal with matters concerning the death of his father and to marry Helen Kibbey, his classmate from the New York School of Art, Bruce returned to Paris. By early 1906, he and Helen moved to 65, boulevard Arago, in the 14th arrondissement. According to Guy Pène du Bois, the Bruces' residence, "a small studio house set in a garden," was a "rendezvous for Americans."[23] Maurice Sterne[24] was one of those Americans, as were Bruce's New York School of Art colleagues du Bois, Edward Hopper and Walter Pach. Du Bois recalled that Bruce "had not yet heard of the neo-impressionists, cubists, fauves... Here art was talked of seriously, frowningly, with no funny business."[25]

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[22] James Wilson Morrice (1865-1924), a friend of Bruce's teacher Robert Henri, was to spend two winters in Morocco with Matisse, in 1911-12 and 1912-13.

[23] Guy Pène du Bois, Artists Say the Silliest Things (New York: American Artists Group/Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1940): 110.

[24] Maurice Sterne (1878-1957), born in Latvia, emigrated to America in 1889. He worked in New York in an engraving firm and studied at Cooper Union and the National Academy of Design before going to Europe in 1904.

[25] Du Bois 1940: 110. The painter and critic Guy Pène du Bois (1884-1958) was born in Brooklyn. He went to Europe in 1905, returning in 1906.

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By late 1906, Bruce met Leo and Gertrude Stein, at whose home he became a regular visitor. At the Steins, he was introduced to modern art—that of Cézanne, whom he would regard as his master, of Picasso, whose influence he would reject, and of Matisse, who would become his mentor and friend.

Alice Toklas, who arrived in Paris in autumn 1907 (in the company of fellow San Franciscan—and future Matisse collector—Harriet Levy), later recalled that

> Pat Bruce used to come over to the rue de Fleurus after a short visit to the rue Madame on Saturday evenings. Bruce had a sharp eye and a sharper tongue. He thought Sarah Stein overdid the admiration of Matisse, as man not as painter, for Bruce was a sincere follower of the Matisse school of paintings. He said about this time that it is not the struggles of the great painters that were pitiable but of the minor painters. Was he not one?[26]

Louis Vauxcelles (coiner of "fauve") also considered Bruce a minor painter. Reviewing the 1907 Salon d'Automne, the critic dismissed his three paintings as "pseudo-Manguins, signed Bruce."[27]

Like Bruce, Walter Pach had been a student of Chase and Henri at the New York School of Art.[28] As manager of Chase's student tours, Pach made periodic trips to Europe. Early in

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[26] Toklas 1963: 38-39.

[27] "…des pseudo-Manguin signés Bruce" (Gil Blas, September 30, 1907: 3).

[28] Walter Pach (1883-1958) was born in New York, the son of a prosperous German American photographer. Before attending the New York School of Art, he attended City College (class of 1903).

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1907 he made his way to the rue de Fleurus and the rue Madame, becoming a frequent visitor to both residences. In autumn 1907 he settled in Paris.

Although he took his vocation as painter seriously, it was as a critic and facilitator that Pach made his mark. Before returning to New York in 1913, he would be a frequent visitor not only to the Steins, but to the Duchamp brothers, who met with artists and writers on Sunday afternoons in Puteaux. He would also write a pioneering article on Cézanne, and articles on Monet and Renoir, for Scribner's Magazine, which had a wide readership in the states.[29]

In summer 1907 Pach visited the Steins in Italy, at their villa in Fiesole, in the Tuscan hills overlooking Florence. It was there that he met Matisse. The young American was apparently unaware that strains were emerging in the relationship between the Matisses and their hosts Leo and Gertrude.

Matisse, Pach later recalled, displayed an infectious enthusiasm for Tuscan art: "He had been seeing the Giottos in Padua and was in awe of their simple grandeur. He ran down to Arezzo for a day and returned with enough admiration for the perfect art of Piero della Francesca to last a lifetime."[30]

By contrast, Gertrude remembered Matisse as having been less than enthusiastic about his Italian adventure:

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[29] Walter Pach, "At the Studio of Claude Monet," Scribner's Magazine (June 1908): 765-7; "Cézanne: An Introduction," Scribner's (December 1908): 765-8; and "Pierre-Auguste Renoir," Scribner's (May 1912): 606-15.

[30] Pach 1938: 116-7.

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> That summer the Matisses came to Italy. Matisse did not care about it very much, he preferred France and Morocco [sic] but Madame Matisse was deeply touched. It was a girlish dream fulfilled. She said, I say to myself all the time, I am in Italy. And I say it to Henri all the time and he is very sweet about it, but he says, what of it.[31]

On the evidence of Matisse's contemporaneous testimony, Pach's recollection was more accurate than Gertrude's. In August, Matisse reported to Félix Fénéon, director of the Bernheim-Jeune gallery, that he had returned to Collioure "enchanted by my trip, my head filled with the multitude of beautiful things that I saw in Italy."[32]

What appeared to Gertrude to be a lack of enthusiasm for Italy was in all likelihood Matisse's growing irritation with Leo Stein. The cerebral Leo had insisted on tagging along with Matisse during his museum visits—leaving him to his thoughts only in the presence of great works of art—and relentlessly importuning his frazzled guest to verbalize his reactions.

More than thirty years later, the experience still rankled. "I could not reply," Matisse ruefully recalled. "This manner of visiting museums paralyzed me completely; so much

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[31] Gertrude Stein 1933: 54. Gertrude did not mention Pach's presence in Fiesole that summer, although she recalled "a short visit from Alfy Maurer." She erred in stating that Matisse "preferred... Morocco": although Matisse had visited Algeria in 1906, he would not go to Morocco until 1912.

[32] Matisse to Fénéon, August 21, 1907, cited in Guy-Patrice and Michel Dauberville, Henri Matisse chez Bernheim-Jeune (Paris: Editions Bernheim-Jeune, 1995): 54-55: "Je suis de retour à Collioure depuis une semaine, enchanté de mon voyage et la tête farcie par la multitude de belles choses que j'ai vu[es] en Italie."

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that I couldn't see anything anymore, I looked at things with the one idea that I'd have to talk about them."[33]

The twenty-four-year-old Pach was seemingly oblivious to these matters. It was a heady experience being in the company of the four Steins and the Matisses.

"They were such stirring days," Pach recollected, "that I wrote about them to Guy du Bois," at the time the art critic for the New York American.[34] "He replied with an urgent request for an article on Matisse, and I set forth to renew the acquaintance formed during the preceding summer in Italy."

In autumn 1907, Pach visited the painter at the quai Saint-Michel, where Matisse gave him a studio tour, with explanations of his development as a painter. Pach, though respectful and attentive, was baffled by his most recent work:

> His own explanations of his evolution supplemented the works, first the ones of a naturalistic type, then the ones making a close analysis of color, that he had pursued according to Signac's method of breaking up the tone into its component hues; later on the new synthesis of them, which he had accomplished under the inspiration of van Gogh, principally. So far I could follow, but the stage he had reached at the time, that of Expressionism, as the Germans called it, was still baffling for quite awhile. It was one thing for me to feel the passion of Giotto (or some of it) before the frescoes in Florence,

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[33] Matisse, interview with Pierre Courthion, 1941, cited in Pierre Schneider, Matisse, trans. Michael Taylor and Bridget Strevens Romer (New York: Rizzoli, 1984): 135, n. 17.

[34] Guy Pène du Bois (1884-1958), painter and critic, was born in Brooklyn. He studied painting with William Merritt Chase, Robert Henri, and Kenneth Hayes Miller. In 1905 he went to Europe, returning in 1906.

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> it was an entirely different thing to recognize the emotion in this unfamiliar conception of the picture.[35]

Despite his esteem for the painter, Pach found it difficult to write about work that he only partially understood. After going back to the rue de Fleurus to study Matisse's work further, he wrote to his friend Alice Klauber, a fellow painter from Chase's class: "I've been to Mr. Leo Stein's and the Matisses haven't gained any. I've about given it up."

Pach informed Klauber that during a recent visit to Monet at Giverny, he had solicited from the Impressionist master his opinion of Matisse:

> Finally I came to the great question, giving him all freedom to decline answering it if he liked. I said what was the opinion of some people on Matisse, and then asked, "Do you see those qualities?" There was not an instant's hesitation in his reply of "Nullement." French has no stronger (polite) negation, & went on to say… that Matisse had remarkable intelligence, so he had studied the pictures attentively with a friend and distinguished critic. With all desire not to see another mistake added to the list of which his own misjudgment forms so prominent a part, he said he had made up his mind that there was nothing there.[36]

Despite Monet's reinforcement of Pach's doubts about Matisse, Pach drafted the article and submitted it to the New York American. In February 1908 he wrote to Klauber:

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[35] Walter Pach, Queer Thing, Painting: Forty Years in the World of Art (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938): 118.

[36] Pach to Klauber, November 16, 1907, Alice Klauber papers, roll 583, frames 556-557, Archives of American Art. The Monet interview was conducted for a forthcoming article in Scribner's; see n. 29, above.

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> Do you know I've not seen hide nor hair of that Matisse article yet—nor of the check for it which is even more annoying. Every mail is a likely one for it now. As you can imagine, the Steins' eagerness for it is only second to my own. I shall never have to reproach myself with having given the Matisse pictures an insufficient trial. I've gone to see them, thought over them, and the arguments intended to uphold them, studied the masters they're supposed to descend from (even copying a Fra Angelico—not too awfully) but my progress has been small. The drawings remain fine—I see a certain color and a certain possibility in some of the still lifes (principally) that I didn't at first but otherwise I've not changed much.[37]

Pach finally learned that his article had been rejected. Du Bois informed him that the editor considered the accompanying illustrations to be "insanities," too outrageous even for the sensation-loving readers of the Hearst newspaper.

"When I reported this to Matisse," Pach later recalled, "he merely smiled and shrugged his shoulders." Apparently unaware of Matisse's exasperation with his host of the previous summer, Pach added: "Perhaps the Flemish strain in him... gives him his almost phlegmatic patience with people... but in any case his good humor was undisturbed, and our relations continued most pleasant over the years during which I went at times to the Monday afternoons when he received at his

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[37] Pach to Klauber, February 8, 1908, Alice Klauber papers, roll 583, frame 563, Archives of American Art. By June, he had resolved many of his doubts: "I feel lots more at rest about Matisse—admitting some points, denying others, thinking him a man of great possibilities (did I tell you I saw an early landscape of his that was splendid in color?) and not by any means incapable of big mistakes. I imagine I shall have to go back and look up work" (Pach to Klauber, June 29, 1908, roll 583, frame 573, Alice Klauber papers, Archives of American Art).

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studio."[38] Thus began a friendship that would prove beneficial both to Matisse's career and to the development of American modernism.

In October 1906 Eduard Steichen arrived in Paris (his second visit), where he remained until 1914.[39] He had achieved renown as a photographer and was dividing his energies between photography and painting. He was also acting as scout for the Photo-Secession Galleries (also known as 291, for its address on Fifth Avenue), which he and Alfred Stieglitz had founded the previous year.[40]

Steichen and Stieglitz sought to elevate the status of photography by exhibiting modern art as well as photographs at the 291 Gallery. In seeking to legitimize photography as a fine art, the two men initiated an inquiry into the nature of art which would help to make New York an outpost of modernism in the years before the First World War. If photography is to

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[38] Pach 1938: 119.

[39] Eduard (later Edward) Jean Steichen (1879-1973) was born in Luxembourg. When he was two, his family moved to Hancock, Michigan, where his father worked in a copper mine and his mother ran a millinery shop. He spent his formative years in Milwaukee. After quitting school at fifteen, he became an apprentice in a lithographic firm and took up photography. He was a founder of the Milwaukee Art Students' League, where he studied painting. In 1900, in New York on his way to Paris, he met Alfred Stieglitz. He remained in Europe until 1902, studying briefly at the Académie Julian under Jean-Paul Laurens and dividing his attention between painting and photography, achieving renown in the latter medium. Returning to New York in 1902, he helped to found the Photo-Secession. Beginning in 1902 he had a successful career as a portrait photographer.

[40] Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946), son of prosperous German immigrants, was born in Hoboken, New Jersey. He attended City College, New York, and Berlin Polytechnic. In Berlin he made his first photographs. He returned to New York in 1890.

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be considered art, they implicitly reasoned, traditional notions of what is essential to art have to be reconsidered. Photography usurps, to some degree, the descriptive function of painting, compelling painters to reposition themselves in relation to nature.

Gertrude Stein, writing of Steichen's arrival in Paris, revealed an intuitive grasp of one effect of photography on modern painting:

> In those early days a photographer came to Paris and knew us all. He was Steichen. He had been one of Stieglitz' men and came over very excited about photography. Pretty soon he decided that ordinary painting did not interest him, one could do all that with photography, that is to say that the photographs of pictures looked just like the photographs of real landscapes or of still lives if they were good pictures, and so there must be something else and so he became very interested in modern painting and was one of those who told Stieglitz and the rest of them all about it.[41]

Soon after his arrival in Paris, Steichen was making arrangements for the 291 Gallery's exhibition schedule. "One of the first things I did," he reported, "was to visit Rodin and tell him about the new gallery we had in New York. I told him that we hoped to open our new program with an exhibition of his drawings. He was immensely pleased and promised to let me select whatever I wanted."[42]

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[41] Gertrude Stein, "And Now," Vanity Fair 43:1 (September 1934): 65.

[42] Edward Steichen, A Life in Photography (Garden City: Doubleday, 1963): Chapter 4 (unpaginated).

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Rodin, an influential figure for young avant-garde artists, was an inspired choice for the gallery's premiere venture beyond photography.[43] Steichen had known the great sculptor since 1901, and had made celebrated photographs both of him and of his work.[44] In late 1907 he and Rodin selected fifty-eight wash drawings of nudes for exhibition at 291.[45]

Steichen became a regular at the open-house gatherings of the two branches of the Stein family. Under their auspices he received both a first-rate education in modern art and introductions to artists who could be recruited for the New York gallery. With Sarah Stein as intermediary, he met Matisse.

> From the very beginning of my second sojourn in France [Steichen recalled] I had started to make plans for continuing the exhibitions of modern artists at 291. Like most young Americans in Paris, I had made the acquaintance of the Steins, Gertrude and Leo, as well as

---

[43] Amadée Ozenfant noted of Rodin: "His liberating influence was tremendous. His fame was universal just when the Fauves of the new painting were banding together. Indubitably he was the first of them all. He was the model revolutionary" (Amadée Ozenfant, Foundations of Modern Art, trans. John Rodker [New York: Dover, 1952]: 53). Matisse's admiration for Rodin was not reciprocated. Around 1914 Rodin told Maurice Sterne about their meeting in 1900: "'…When Matisse first showed me his things I asked him how old he was, and when he told me, I said it was time he grew up and took a look at nature.' Rodin added that Matisse had no talent, only 'unmitigated cheek.'" Sterne 1965: 107.

[44] A Steichen portrait of Rodin appeared in Camera Work 2 (April 1903), and his composite photograph Rodin—Le Penseur, appeared in Camera Work 11 (July 1905) and again in a Special Steichen Supplement (April 1906). Steichen's immersion in Rodin's work undoubtedly made him more receptive to Matisse's; see Albert Elsen, "Rodin's Drawings and the Art of Matisse," Arts Magazine 61: 7 (March 1987): 32-9.

[45] Despite the original intentions of Steichen and Stieglitz, Rodin was not the first nonphotographer to exhibit at 291; he was preceded by the minor and now largely forgotten American Symbolist Pamela Colman Smith, whose drawings and watercolors were shown January 5-24, 1907. The Rodin exhibition was held January 2-21, 1908.

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> the Michael Stein family. At Leo and Gertrude Stein's we could see all types of modern paintings, from Cézanne and Renoir to Matisse and Picasso.
>
> Mrs. Michael Stein, a painter herself, bought nothing but Matisses, and her whole apartment was filled with them. It was to her that I first broached the possibility of getting an exhibition of water color paintings by Matisse for the Photo-Secession Galleries. She began working on Matisse, and after I met him he promised full cooperation.[46]

In late May 1907 Maurice Prendergast arrived in Paris; he remained in France through October.[47] For the beginning and end of his trip he was in Paris; July and August he spent in Saint Malo, Britanny.

This was a productive time for Prendergast, one in which he produced more than a hundred oils, watercolors and sketches (mostly small works).[48] It was also a time in which he was exposed to some of the latest, most advanced tendencies in French painting.

Just prior to Prendergast's departure for Paris, the New York Sun of May 15th reported that "a group of eight painters who have been referred to often as… 'the apostles of ugliness'… have formed themselves into a body, it was

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[46] Steichen 1963: Chapter 4 (unpaginated).

[47] Maurice Prendergast (1859-1924) was born in Canada, the son of an impoverished grocer. When he was two, the family moved to Boston. He left school at fourteen to apprentice to a card painter. From 1891 to 1894 he was in Paris, where he studied at the Académies Julian and Colorassi, and where he assimilated Impressionism and Neo-Impressionism, often in the company of James Wilson Morrice. Returning to Boston, he worked as a painter with his brother Charles, a painter-framer.

[48] Richard J. Wattenmaker, Maurice Prendergast (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994): 86.

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announced last evening, without leader, president or formal organization of any kind... The eight will give their first exhibition next winter, perhaps in February, at the galleries of William Macbeth."[49] At the invitation of Arthur B. Davies, Prendergast had agreed to exhibit with the others; he had already shown with five of them three years before.[50]

Prendergast, the oldest of The Eight, was a mature artist in 1907: a contemporary of fellow Bostonian Childe Hassam, he was Matisse's senior by eleven years. He had cast his lot with artistic rebels, and he suffered from understimulation in Boston. Accordingly, the Paris experience was an eye-opener.

In October Prendergast saw Matisse's five entries at the Salon d'Automne—among them Music (Sketch) (fig. 1.21), Madras rouge (fig. 1.17), Brook with Aloes (Menil Collection, Houston), and Le Luxe I (fig. 1.22). This last painting so intrigued him that he made a pencil sketch of it, noting the colors "orange," "green," and "purple," of the ground, water, and sky (fig. 1.23).

Writing home on October 10, his forty-ninth birthday, Prendergast took stock of his spring and autumn in Paris. He was "delighted with the younger Bohemian crowd, they outrage. Even the Byzantine and our North American Indians with their

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[49] The New York Sun, May 15, 1907: 5.

[50] In January 1904 Prendergast had exhibited with Davies, Robert Henri, William Glackens, George Luks and John Sloan at the National Arts Club, New York.

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brilliant colors would not be in the same class with them." He described a painting whose coloristic freedom he admired:

> Can you imagine a picture which is called Maternity, the Mother surrounded by her children, an interior. The mother has a brick red face and arms with a prussian blue dress, the baby has a vermilion face with a green dress and the other children in ratio. The furniture is indian red, the whole backed with a cadmium yellow wall. The faces are outlined in black black [sic] eyebrows, black shadows, etc.[51] The effect is startling, but there is something I like about them. I wish we had some of it in Boston or New York. Our exhibitions are so monotonous.

At times, he confessed, the art was so dazzling that he was overstimulated: "All those exhibitions worked me up so much that I had to run up and down the boulevards to work off steam."

If the Paris trip awakened Prendergast to Matisse and "the younger Bohemian crowd," it also rekindled his enthusiasm for Cézanne (whose work he had first encountered at Vollard's gallery on a brief visit to Paris in 1898 or 1899).[52] The Aix master's reputation had grown since his death the previous autumn. Artists in Paris (among them Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Derain, and Weber) were deeply affected by two memorial exhibitions, both of which had a lasting impact on Prendergast: a June watercolor show at Bernheim-Jeune and a retrospective at the Salon d'Automne.

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[51] Prendergast seems to be describing a Vuillard; I thank Jack Flam for this suggestion. From June 3 to 15, Vuillard appeared in a group show at Bernheim-Jeune (with Maillol, Roussel, Vallotton, and Sérusier), which Prendergast is likely to have seen (Donald E. Gordon, Modern Art Exhibitions 1900-1916 [Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1974]: vol. 2: 218).

[52] Rewald 1989: 32

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"I have not done anything important," Prendergast wrote, "that is, anything large—mostly all sketches. But I got what I came over for, a new impulse. I was somewhat bewildered when I first got over here, but I think Cézanne will influence me more than the others. I think so now."[53]

The oils and watercolors that Prendergast painted during his five months in France were not radical departures from those of his recent past: they were rather a confirmation of the direction in which his work was already moving, and they would be an inkling for the New York critics and public of Matisse's more radical modernism. Prendergast's early return to America in October 1907 meant that he got a jump on his younger compatriots. As Nancy Mowll Mathews observes, "Of all the American painters working or studying in Paris in 1907, Prendergast was the first to bring the new ideas back to the American art scene."[54]

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[53] Maurice Prendergast to his patron Esther Williams, October 10, 1907, Williams Papers, Archives of American Art, cited in Wattenmaker 1994: 87.

[54] Nancy Mowll Mathews, Maurice Prendergast (Williamstown: Williams College Museum of Art, Prestel, 1990): 24.

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1.6. Matisse at the 291 Gallery, 1908-1909

In early 1908 three New York exhibitions introduced modern art to America. In January, drawings by Auguste Rodin were presented at the 291 Gallery. In February the Macbeth Galleries presented the group show The Eight, which included recent paintings by Maurice Prendergast. In April the 291 Gallery presented Matisse's American debut, an exhibition of drawings, watercolors, prints, and one painting.

The Rodin exhibition was presented from January 2 to 21. It opened with little fanfare. Rodin's reputation was sufficiently secure that critics greeted his work with respect, despite the unacademic poses and erotic candor of the nudes.

Stieglitz's ally J. R. Laurvik, writing in the Times, was enthusiastic: "The exhibition... is of unusual artistic and human interest. It is also a challenge to the prurient prudery of our puritanism." Charles de Kay of the Evening Post expressed reservations: while conceding that "anything that comes from his [Rodin's] hand is worth seeing," he maintained that "the Secessionists of photography can scarcely expect the wider circle of amateurs to feel more than a gentle sense of curiosity satisfied." W. B. McCormick of the Press, on the other hand, found the drawings "not for public exhibition" and lamented: "Strange are the things that are done in a great man's name and under the beclouding influence of 'art.'"[1]

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[1] These reviews are reprinted in Camera Work 22 (April 1908): 35-40.

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In Paris, a friendship was blossoming between Steichen and Matisse, to the benefit of both men. For Matisse, the friendship was an opportunity to expand his network of contacts with American artists and collectors; as the enfant terrible of the Parisian art world, he was a welcome addition to the 291 stable.

In January, while the Rodin exhibition was in progress in New York, Steichen wrote excitedly to Stieglitz from Paris:

> I have another crackerjack exhibition for you that is going to be as fine in its way as the Rodins are.
>
> Drawings by Henri Matisse the most modern of the moderns—his drawings are the same to him & his painting as Rodin's are to his sculpture. Ask young Of about him.[2]
>
> I don't know if you will remember any of his paintings at Bernheim's.[3] Well they are to the figure what the Cézannes are to the landscape.—Simply great.—Some are more finished than Rodin's, more of a study of form than movement—abstract to the limit.—I'll bring them with me, and we can show them right after mine, if you can so arrange it. They were just shown in Berlin at Cassirer's.
>
> Unless I get a cable from you not to come, count on me the first week in March as I think I will sail the 29th on the Provence.[4]

Steichen was eager to return to New York, not only to show Stieglitz the Matisse drawings but also to attend his own photography exhibition, which was to open March 12. In his

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[2] See below, 1.4: pp. 26-27.

[3] Stieglitz had been in Paris in summer 1907.

[4] Undated [January 1908], Steichen to Stieglitz, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, Yale Collection of Art and Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library, New Haven. A photostat of the first page and a transcription of the letter appear in Barr 1951: 112-113. Stieglitz had been in Paris in summer 1907.

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enthusiasm he decided to advance his departure by a week, cabling Stieglitz on February 4: "COMING END FEBRUARY ALSO BRINGING EXHIBITION MATISSE DRAWINGS."[5]

In New York, on the previous day, February 3, the exhibition The Eight opened at the Macbeth Galleries, at 450 Fifth Avenue. The group—led by Robert Henri and including Prendergast, Arthur B. Davies, William Glackens, Ernest Lawson, George Luks, Everett Shinn, and John Sloan—had broken with the National Academy of Design over its restrictive selection and hanging policies.

In contrast to the Rodin show at 291, which attracted little notice outside of the insular New York art public, The Eight opened to an avalanche of publicity. On February 2, the cover story of the New York World Magazine had this headline:

> NEW YORK'S ART WAR and the EIGHT 'REBELS'
> Who Have Dared to Paint Pictures of New York Life
> (Instead of Europe) and Who Are Holding Their Rebellious
> Exhibition All by Themselves.

Press coverage in this vein continued throughout the two-week run.

The public attended in large numbers. The New York Press reported: "There has been a line—just as if it was the Metropolitan Opera House—before the door when the gallery employees have arrived in the morning. And Mr. Macbeth himself has looked dazed—not at the pictures but at the jam in his

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[5] Steichen to Stieglitz, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL. Reprinted in Barr 1951: 113.

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beautiful rooms and at the manner in which the supply of catalogues has been consumed by the spectators."[6] The run was extended an extra day. The show attracted 7,000 visitors, according to one estimate.[7] A national tour followed.

Gallery director William Macbeth, a crusader for American art who, unlike Stieglitz, ran a commercial enterprise, was delighted with the results. Although just eight paintings, for a total of $4,000, were sold, the attendant publicity was good for business.[8]

It would not be accurate to classify the exhibition as a succès de scandale. The "art war" being waged was not between an avant-garde and a startled public, but between progressive and conservative wings of the academy. The artists in question had been exhibiting since the turn of the century. Apart from their reaction to Prendergast, critics were neither surprised nor shocked, but responded predictably: conservatives, such as Royal Cortissoz of the Tribune, were hostile, while progressives, such as Charles de Kay of the Post, were sympathetic. As James Huneker of the Sun observed: "Any young painter recently returned from Paris or Munich—the Munich of the

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[6] William B McCormick, "Art Notes of the Week," New York Press, February 9, 1908.

[7] William Innes Homer, Robert Henri and His Circle (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969): 138.

[8] Ira Glackens, William Glackens and the Eight (New York: Horizon Press, 1957): 91.

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Secessionists—would call the exhibition of the eight painters very interesting but far from revolutionary."[9]

Realism, the style associated with The Eight, was practiced by the core group of five from Philadelphia who had begun as newspaper illustrators and who painted scenes of American life under the influence of Courbet, Manet, Renoir and Hals. Three of The Eight, however, cannot be so categorized: Davies, a Symbolist; Lawson, an Impressionist; and Prendergast, whose paintings stood apart from those of his colleagues.

Prendergast's seventeen entries, most of which had been painted the previous summer in Saint Malo, were singled out for derision by critics. Joseph E. Chamberlin of the New York Evening Mail labeled them "artistic tommy-rot."[10] James B. Townsend of American Art News dismissed them as "the result of too much cider drunk at St. Malo."[11] Arthur Hoeber of the Globe wrote, with mock incomprehension:

> Prendergast sends nearly a score of modest sized canvases, full of spots of color, with many people mainly on the beach at the French St. Malo, obviously a place where the sun shines in a curious manner, where color is wonderfully made manifest, where the people are careless about their drawing and construction, and where everything is a jumble of riotous pigment, such as one does not see elsewhere. Hung in a group, these canvases

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[9] James Huneker, "Eight Painters," New York Sun, February 9, 1908: 8.

[10] Joseph E. Chamberlin, "Two Significant Exhibitions," New York Evening Mail, February 4, 1908: 6.

[11] James B. Townsend, "The Eight," American Art News 6: 17 (February 9, 1908): 6.

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> of Maurice Prendergast look for all the world like an explosion in a color factory.[12]

Huneker of the Sun more perceptively observed: "Prendergast, with the delicate art of the Celt and a nimble touch, is really a neo-impressionist. He employs the taches according to the new men of the Independent Salons."[13]

Prendergast was one of three members of The Eight whose works failed to sell. "His paintings were not popular with those who buy pictures," Ira Glackens writes. "They were far too modern."[14]

In Paris, rebellion was brewing in the ranks of American artists. On February 26 the New York Times reported:

> American art circles in Paris have now given birth to a full fledged secessionist movement, which promises to equal in importance similar movements which have been in existence in Munich, Berlin, and Vienna.
>
> The local secession took form tonight, when a group of prominent young painters assembled in the studio of Edouardo [sic] Steichen of New York and organized "The New Society of American Artists in Paris." The new organization has frankly declared war on the old society of the same name...
>
> The governors of the new society comprise Messrs. Steichen, Maurer, Weber, [Daniel Putnam] Brinley, [Donald Shaw] MacLaughlan, all of whom are artists of strong individuality. Other members of the organization

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[12] Unsigned [Arthur Hoeber], "Art and Artists," New York Globe, February 9, 1908: 6. Hoeber's last remark prefigures that of Julian Street, who, in a humorous piece published in the wake of the Armory Show, characterized Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase as "the explosion of a shingle factory"; see Julian Street, "How I Became a Cubist," Everybody's Magazine, June 1913, reprinted in AAPS 1972.

[13] James Huneker, "Eight Painters" New York Sun, February 9, 1908: 9.

[14] Glackens 1957: 120; see also 91. The other two who did not sell were John Sloan and William Glackens.

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> are Messrs. [Jo] Davidson, [Richard] Duffy, [Jacob] Kunz, [John] Marin, Bruce, [E.] Sparks and [Maximilian] Fischer.
>
> The first battle of the new movement will be fought to obtain official representation at the international exhibition which will shortly open in Vienna....[15]

After this promising début, the New Society of American Artists in Paris seems to have fizzled. No sooner had the secessionists declared war on the established organization, than their general, Eduard Steichen, departed for New York to hang Matisse's 291 exhibition. Although Maurer, Davidson and Bruce were ensconced in Paris, most of the artists named were transient, and ill-suited to provide the momentum needed for a campaign. Accordingly, the battle of Vienna would not be fought; the war would be waged on American soil.

On April 1 Stieglitz sent out the following invitation:

> An Exhibition of Drawings, Lithographs, Watercolors, and Etchings by M. Henri Matisse, of Paris, will be held at the Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession... opening on April sixth and closing April twenty-fifth....
>
> Matisse is the leading spirit of a modern group of French artists dubbed "Les Fauves." The work of this group has been the center of discussion in the art-world of Paris during the past two to three years. It is the good fortune of the Photo-Secession to have the honor of thus introducing Matisse to the American public and to the American art-critics.[16]

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[15] [Unsigned], "American Artists in Paris Divided," New York Times, February 26, 1908: 4. See also D. Scott Atkinson, "The First American Secession" in Atkinson, The New Society of American Artists in Paris: 1908-1912 (New York: Queens Museum, 1986): [unpaginated].

[16] [Unsigned], "Henri Matisse at the Little Galleries," Camera Work 23 (July 1908): 10. The invitation is reprinted in Barr 1951: 113.

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Stieglitz seems to have heeded Steichen's directive to "ask young Of" about Matisse, for the painter-framer lent Nude in a Wood (see fig. 1.8) to the exhibition. As the picture was added while the show was in progress, it was mentioned neither in Stieglitz's announcement nor in any of the reviews.[17]

Apart from Nude in a Wood, the exhibition was a compendium of Matisse's works on paper, both monochrome and in color, over the previous several years. Such works had been included in Matisse's 1906 one-man show at the Galerie Druet in Paris, where they had made a powerful impression on Picasso, among others.[18]

Most of the works shown were of female nudes. Some of the 12 lithographs produced in 1906 were included, as well as drawings and etchings of 1900-1907 and watercolors painted in Collioure in 1905-1907. Among the lithographs were Head of a Woman with Eyes Closed (fig. 1.24) and Standing Nude with Downcast Eyes ("L'idole") (fig. 1.25).[19] Among the watercolors

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[17] Unsigned [Stieglitz?], "Photo-Secession Notes," Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 47: "The readers of CAMERA WORK will remember that two years ago the Photo-Secession originally introduced Matisse to the American public. The exhibition included drawings, etchings, water-colors, lithographs, and one painting." See also Stieglitz to Edith Halpert, December 20, 1930, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL, reprinted in Percy North, "Turmoil at 291," Archives of American Art Journal 24, 1 (1984): 16: "…an oil of Matisse loaned by George F. Of was added to the exhibition."

[18] See Daix 1993: 57. According to Pierre Daix, Picasso found Matisse's "savage, gestural" and "deliberately anticlassic" style of drawing "a challenge as great as that of the Bonheur de vivre," on view concurrently at the Salon des Indépendants.

[19] A list in the Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL, identifies these lithographs as having been in the exhibition.

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were At the Seaside: Bather (fig. 1.26) and Woman with an Umbrella at the Seashore (fig. 1.27).[20] Among the drawings were Nude, Semi-Abstract (fig. 1.28), Standing Nude (fig. 1.29), and Nude Standing with Chair (fig. 1.30).[21]

"Matisse was the first Modernist who confronted the New York art public," recalled Stieglitz's associate Marius de Zayas. "Matisse was unknown in New York.... He was soon declared the source of evil from which came all crimes against the sacred canons of academism. There was not yet any other artist to blame for the contagious bacilli of modernism."[22]

"The public, the critics, and the artists came and saw," Stieglitz reported.

> As there were no catalogues of any kind and there was no tradition or history about Matisse's work, every one was left to his own resources. Here was the work of a new man, with new ideas—a very anarchist, it seemed, in art. The exhibition led to many heated controversies; it proved stimulating. The New York "art-world" was sorely

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[20] Stieglitz associate J. B. Kerfoot, writing in Camera Work, described Woman with an Umbrella at the Seashore as "a lady composed entirely of lake-madder spots standing on a beach made opalescent by pale mauve squiggles"; see J. B. Kerfoot, "Henri Matisse; A Retrospect," Camera Work 25 (January 1909): 45.

[21] John Elderfield, in The Drawings of Henri Matisse (Arts Council of Great Britain and Museum of Modern Art, London: Thames and Hudson, 1984): 253, places the ink drawing Nude, Semi-Abstract in the exhibition. A note on file in the Department of Drawings, MoMA, states: "According to the information provided by Captain Steichen, the Matisse drawing [Standing Nude] was brought by him to this country in 1908 for the Stieglitz show at '291.'"; I thank Charles Brock of the National Gallery, Washington, for bringing this note to my attention. I also thank Charles Brock for the information that the pencil drawing Nude Standing with Chair was in the exhibition.

[22] Marius de Zayas, How, When, and Why Modern Art Came to New York, ed. Francis Naumann (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996): 7. De Zayas's memoir was written in the late 1940s.

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> in need of an irritant and Matisse certainly proved a timely one.[23]

Alfred Barr finds "a great deal to be proud of" in the critical reaction to Matisse's first American show. "The Paris press in 1905 had in general been blinder and more violently hostile," he writes.[24] Yet one could argue that the Paris press had more cause for hostility: Matisse's paintings at the 1905 Salon d'Automne were far bolder than the works on view at 291. On the New York critics' side, it should be noted that the Matisse show was virtually without precedent in America.

In an unsigned review, the critic for American Art News responded to the exhibition with a mixture of caution and bafflement:

> It is impossible to form or pass even fair judgment upon the remarkable productions now displayed, and the visitor can only hopefully await the result of future and frequent calls for some light as to what can be the fundamental laws of this—from all accepted canons—bizarre artist or artisan.... That the man has a message may not be doubted, but his alphabet is not understandable at first view and study.

The critic was particularly perplexed by Matisse's water-colors. The precedent cited for such arbitrary and bold application of color was Prendergast:

> His color work, like that of Maurice Prendergast's, in the recent display of "The Eight," would seem to be

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[23] "Henri Matisse at the Little Galleries," Camera Work 23: 10.

[24] Barr 1951: 114.

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> simply spots of paint daubed on here and there, perhaps with some idea of form or composition, not at first recognizable.[25]

As The Eight were the current rage of the New York art world, it is not surprising that Prendergast came to mind. Joseph E. Chamberlin of the Evening Mail went so far as to draw an analogy between the fauves in Paris and The Eight in New York:

> In France they call Henri Matisse "le roi des fauves." A "fauve" is not exactly a wild beast in our sense—it may even mean a gentle fallow deer—but when the French students apply the term to an artist they certainly mean a wild one. The "fauves" are the French equivalent of the out-eighters of our "eight," and Matisse is their limit.

Prompted by Stieglitz, several critics noted Matisse's role as leader of the fauves. Chamberlin was moved to infer a relationship between Matisse's abstraction and the art of photography. Matisse's "idea," he wrote, "is that you should in painting get as far away from nature as possible. If nature is to be followed, why, let the camera do that. The artist should paint only abstractions, gigantic symbols, ideas in broad lines, splotches of color that suggest the thoughts that broke through language and escaped..."[26]

Charles de Kay of the Evening Post, intuiting the primitiveness of Matisse's work, made comparisons with children's

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[25] "Exhibitions Now On: Work by Henri Matisse," American Art News 6:26 (April 11, 1908): 6.

[26] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 10.

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art: "The artist has striven to revert to childhood's sunny hour when a pad and a box of watercolors, in conjunction with an artistic temperament in embryo, produced astonishing results."[27]

Many critics had difficulty finding precedents for Matisse. Although the New York public had been familiar with Impressionism for two decades, it had yet to view Cézanne, Gauguin, or van Gogh.[28]

Of the critics who sought to place Matisse in the continuum of French art, not one mentioned Cézanne. Rodin was cited by two, de Kay of the Post and Huneker of the Sun. De Kay mentioned Rodin in the deprecatory context of "Rodinesque swirls in outline and mashy-dashy pen-and-ink nudes."[29]

Huneker, expressing mingled attraction and revulsion,[30] compared Matisse to Rodin: "Compared to these memoranda of the gutter and brothel the sketches of Rodin (once exhibited in this gallery) are academic, are meticulous."

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[27] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 12.

[28] "The Impressionists of Paris," an exhibition organized by Durand-Ruel and comprising some three hundred paintings, appeared in New York in 1886; see Frances Weitzenhoffer, The Havemeyers: Impressionism Comes to America (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1986): 40-42.

[29] Reprinted in "Henri Matisse at the Little Galleries," Camera Work 23 (July 1908): 11.

[30] See Marcia Brennan, "Corporeal Disenchantment or Aesthetic Allure? Henri Matisse's Early Critical Reception in New York," Analecta Husserliana: A Yearbook of Phenomenological Research, Boston and Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers (forthcoming 2000), on Huneker's "deliberately ambivalent account of the exhibition… Readers familiar with Huneker's rhetorical style would have recognized that the critic was parodying conservative American values regarding morality in order to emphasize the piquant aspects of Matisse's artworks."

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Huneker cited the influence on Matisse of Impressionism, Neo-impressionism, Gauguin, and Japanese prints:

> Lured by the neo-impressionists, by Gauguin's South Sea sketches, he has outdone them all by his extravagances. His line, its zigzag simplifications evidently derived from the Japanese, is swirling and strong.... The water-colors are Japanese in suggestion, though not in spirit. They are impressionism run to blotches...[31]

Elisabeth Luther Cary of the Times noted the influence of Impressionist and Neo-Impressionist theory (while refraining from using those terms):

> The watercolors... are examples of the theory of the decomposition of light pushed to its extreme limits and expressed with a kind of sophisticated naiveté. Although the uninitiated eye will be confused by the application of the color in streaks and dots of pure pigment, the idea is, of course, far from a new one...[32]

The most frequent observation of reviewers—one made by Chamberlin, Cary, and the anonymous critic of the Craftsman—was that the works were ugly. Chamberlin concluded his review by noting disdainfully:

> And there are some female figures that are of an ugliness that is most appalling and haunting, and that seems to condemn this man's brain to the limbo of artistic degeneration. On the strength of these things of subterhuman hideousness, I shall try to put Henri Matisse out of my mind for the present.[33]

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[31] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 10.

[32] Unsigned [Elisabeth Luther Cary], "Gallery Notes," New York Times, April 14, 1908: 8, reprinted in Camera Work 23: 12.

[33] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 11.

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The critic for the Craftsman was shocked by Matisse's departures from classical norms yet impressed by his skill:

> Matisse, like nearly all the other very modern Frenchmen, feels that pull toward physical distortion, that sickening malevolent desire to present the nude (especially women) so vulgarized, so hideously at odds with nature, as to suggest in spite of the technical mastery of his art, first of all the loathsome and the abnormal, and both with a marvel of execution and a bewildering cleverness that somehow fills one with a distaste for art and life.[34]

Huneker, with mock indignation, admired Matisse's virtuosity, while professing shock at the erotic aggressiveness of the subject matter:

> With three furious scratches he can give you a female animal in all her shame and horror. … There is one nude which the fantasy of the artist has turned into a hideous mask. The back of a reclining figure is on the wall opposite, and it is difficult not to applaud, so virile and masterly are its strokes. Then a creature from God knows what Parisian shambles leers at you—the economy of means employed and the results are alike significant—and you flee into another room.[35]

Cary, to our knowledge the only woman who reviewed the show, noted the ugliness of the nudes, without sharing her colleagues' indignation: "The drawings in the inner room are in the nature of academics, showing a trained insight into the problems of form and movement with a Gothic fancy for the ugly

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[34] "Notes and Reviews," The Craftsman 14: 3 (June 1908): 342. Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 12.

[35] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 11-12.

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and distorted, many of them amounting to caricatures without significance."[36]

Two reviewers joined the American Art News critic in finding Matisse's works inaccessible. Chamberlin, who considered them "quite likely to go over the head of the ordinary observer," disdained Matisse as a crackpot. "No doubt this sort of thing should be treated with respect," he sneered, "just as adventism, Eddyism, spiritualism, Doukhobor outbreaks, and other forms of religious fanaticism, should be."[37] The critic for the Craftsman allowed that although Matisse's "consummate skill" would be apparent to an artist, "the mere observer, who is bound to take a little emotion to an interesting picture gallery, is pretty certain to find that emotion unpleasantly stirred… Paris adores Matisse, and young France imitates him, and the purely normal person wonders a great deal about it all."

Some disparaged Matisse as pretentious. To the critic of the Craftsman, he was a poseur, "the leading spirit of a group of ultra-modern Frenchmen, many of whom have great gift with tragically decadent souls."[38] De Kay mocked the unfinished state of the drawings: "Each scrap of design appears to remark

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[36] Unsigned, "Gallery Notes," New York Times, April 14, 1908: 8, reprinted in Camera Work 23: 12.

[37] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 10.

[38] "Notes and Reviews," The Craftsman 14: 3 (June 1908): 342. Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 12.

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that it is all by itself, and so full of genius, 'twere cruel to use it for a larger sketch."

Another objection was that the works were cold. Huneker concluded his piece with the verdict that Matisse was emotionally detached: "His sketches are those of a brilliant, cruel temperament. Nor has he the saving cynicism of a Toulouse-Lautrec. To be cynical argues some interest; your pessimist is often a man of inverted sentiment. But Matisse is only cold, the coldness of the moral vivisector."[39]

Despite their reservations about Matisse, critics conceded that he was a skilled technician, even a gifted artist. The critic for American Art News found the drawings to have "strength and purpose."[40] Chamberlin considered some of them to be "strangely beautiful."[41] Huneker praised Matisse's "agility of line" and singled out one drawing, a reclining nude, for its "virile and masterly... strokes."[42] Cary found "one or two" of the watercolors to "have a charm like that of broken snatches of song in the open air," and observed that the drawings, despite their shortcomings, showed "a trained insight into problems of form and movement."[43] The critic for

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[39] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 12.

[40] Unsigned, "Exhibitions Now On: Work by Henri Matisse," American Art News 6:26 (April 11, 1908): 6.

[41] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 10. Chamberlin qualified his praise by adding, "perhaps," and concluding, "Yet they are not beyond the power of any other trained artist."

[42] Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 11.

[43] Unsigned, "Gallery Notes," New York Times, April 14, 1908: 8, reprinted in Camera Work 23: 12.

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the Craftsman declared that Matisse was "a great master of technique—and a great artist, if estimated from the brilliant stroke, the subtle elimination and the interesting composition revealed."[44]

Despite this smattering of praise, Matisse found no champion in the New York press. For artists, however, the show was a revelation. One young artist attended out of curiosity and left profoundly changed. William Zorach, having heard a lecturer at the Art Students League complain of "weird drawings such as any child could do, and groups of long-haired individuals who stood around and raved about them," visited 291:

> I rode up in the tiny elevator and entered the little gallery. The quiet light was full of a soothing mystic feeling and around the room, and on the square under glass in the middle of the room, I looked at what I now know were Matisse drawings. I was all alone and I stood and absorbed the atmosphere of the place and of the drawings. They had no meaning to me as Art as I then knew Art, but the feeling I got from them still clings to me and always will. It was the feeling of a bigger, deeper, more simple and archaic world... I left feeling I had seen something living, something that would live with me, and that has lived with me.[45]

On April 19 the New York Times reported more news of rebellious American artists in Paris. "Artist Maurer Now an

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[44] "Notes and Reviews," The Craftsman 14:3 (June 1908): 342. Reprinted in Camera Work 23: 12.

[45] William Zorach, "291," Camera Work 47 (July 1914; published January 1915): 38. Zorach (1887-1966) was born in Lithuania and raised in Cleveland, where he was apprenticed to a lithographer. In 1908 he was an art student in New York.

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Impressionist" was the headline; a subhead added, "New York Painter a Recruit to the School Which Is Coming to the Fore in Paris." Maurer was reported to have "gone over to impressionism of the most advanced kind." The artist was quoted, speaking of his uncertainties:

> "I admit," said Maurer, "that for the moment I am all in doubt. I believe that I saw right before, but I am equally sure that I see right now. I can't explain the difference. Such pictures as I am painting now I would not dare to exhibit in the United States...."

Maurer, readers were informed, was one of a number of young Americans in Paris who belonged to the "new school":

> Maurer's case is but one of many in Paris at present, for impressionism is making strides as yet unimagined in America. It has wooed many of most promising young painters from the old school. There is not an exhibition held in Paris to-day but what one or two disciples of the new school are strongly in evidence.[46]

In May Steichen wrote to Stieglitz from Paris: "Spent Sunday at Rodins—and had a fine time diving into his new acquisitions—He is tickled by his success and tells everybody just like a kid.—It is a record as far as his drawings go.—Matisse and his gang are just as jubilant of course it means more to them than it really is—but thats [sic] the beauty of

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[46] "Artist Maurer Now an Impressionist," New York Times, Sunday, April 19, 1908, Part 3: 5. The dispatch was written April 10. Its author was probably the same Paris correspondent who had written of the conclave of artists in Steichen's apartment; see above, n. 15. This correspondent was apparently in the secessionists' camp.

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it. Matisse is doing some stunning stuff he really is a whopper—"[47]

On May 27 Steichen's second child Kate Rodina Steichen was born (her middle name was a tribute to her godfather, Auguste Rodin).[48] In honor of Kate's birth, and in gratitude for Steichen's efforts on his behalf, Matisse gave his friend the painting Vue de Collioure, l'église (fig. 1.31), painted in summer 1905.[49]

Stieglitz helped keep alive the controversy of the exhibition by reprinting five of the press reviews in the July issue of Camera Work.[50] But he did not let the reviewers have the last word.

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[47] Steichen to Stieglitz, undated [early May 1908], Alfred Stieglitz Collection. Matisse's "stunning stuff," recently completed or in progress, included Bathers with a Turtle (St. Louis), The Game of Bowls (St. Petersburg), and Harmony in Red (St. Petersburg). The likely cause of his jubilance was the patronage of Russian collector Sergei Shchukin.

[48] Her full name was in fact Charlotte Kate Rodina Steichen, although she was known as Kate. See David Margolick, "Family of Steichen Fighting the Modern over a Matisse Work," New York Times, April 22, 1990, section 1: 1, 32.

[49] Kate Rodina Steichen to (French Minister of Cultural Affairs) M. H. Landais, September 21, 1969, Edward Steichen archive, MoMA: "The date of 1908, the year of my birth, is when Matisse gave it to Steichen after he was instrumental... in bringing his friend's work to America for the first time." In 1973 she bequeathed the painting to the Museum of Modern Art, but, according to the Steichen family, she later changed her mind, and after her death in 1988, the family sued for its return. In an out-of-court settlement, it was returned to the family in 1990. See David Margolick, "Family of Steichen Fighting the Modern over a Matisse Work," New York Times, Sunday, April 22, 1990, section 1: 1, 32; and [Unsigned], "My Little Matisse," Art News 89 (October 1990): 76.

[50] Camera Work 23 (July 1908): 10-12.

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In autumn 1908 Camera Work's correspondent Charles H. Caffin interviewed the artist, now ensconced at the Couvent du Sacré-Coeur.[51] The resulting article, published in the January 1909 issue, was a pioneering effort to explain Matisse to the American public. Caffin sought to convey an accurate sense of Matisse as man and artist, although he was not wholeheartedly convinced of the quality of the work and was somewhat confused about Matisse's ideas. His description of Matisse belied the caricature proffered by some members of the New York press:

> When I entered the big building—a disused convent—in which he works, the first sight I encountered was that symbol of domestic conformity, a baby carriage, and the next the father himself, a stocky simple person, in appearance a sane and healthy bourgeois. No suggestion of the decadent esthete; still less of the poseur or charlatan.

Caffin's critical method, he declared, was to try "to understand each man in the light of the man's own intentions." Matisse's "motive," as Caffin understood it, was "to get way from objectivity and to make his pictures interpret an abstract idea." Here Caffin appears to misinterpret the artist's words, which he dutifully reports in indirect quotation: "What is his motive? As he himself explains it, it

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[51] Charles H. Caffin (1854-1918), a critic of art and photography, was a member of the Stieglitz circle. The "Chronology," compiled by John Elderfield with Judith Cousins in Elderfield, Henri Matisse: A Retrospective (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1992): 181, places the interview "around April" 1908. Internal evidence, however, suggests a date later in the year. Caffin reported that Matisse was "modeling a figure in clay" of "a woman, seated cross-legged" (Camera Work 25 [January 1909]: 17). This figure, probably Small Crouching Nude with Arms, was done after a photograph made in summer 1908 (Albert E. Elsen, The Sculpture of Henri Matisse [New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1972]: 99-100).

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is the effort to interpret the feeling which the sight of an object stirs in him."

Matisse considered his pictures to be extrapolations from nature, rather than interpretations of abstract ideas. In "Notes of a Painter," published contemporaneously with Caffin's article, Matisse presented his beliefs in systematic fashion. Borrowing from Cézanne, he explained that his paintings were impressions of nature, organized by his imagination:

> I think that one can judge the vitality and power of an artist who, having received impressions directly from the spectacle of nature, is able to organize his sensations to continue his work in the same frame of mind on different days, and to develop these sensations; this power proves he is sufficiently master of himself to subject himself to discipline.[52]

In what could be seen as a coda to the exhibition at 291, he demonstrated to Caffin the process of "organization" by means of his drawings: "He shows me a series of drawings from the nude. In the first, he explains that he has drawn 'what exists'; and the drawing shows the knowledge and skill, characteristic of French academic art. Then others follow in which he has sought for further and further 'simplification,' until finally the figure, as he expressed it, was organisé."

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[52] Jack Flam, ed., Matisse on Art (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995): 42. Published originally in La Grande Revue, December 25, 1908.

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Caffin's article is noteworthy for containing the first discussion in an American publication of the impact of primitivism on modern art:

> He sees me looking at some wooden figures carved by African natives. These with some fragments of Egyptian sculpture are almost the only objects, besides pictures, in the studio. As he passes his hands over the wooden figures, he utters one word, "Simplification." Meanwhile, it does not escape me that the incised lines and the treatment of the planes in these figures, bear a close analogy to his own method of drawing and modeling; and I note that his figures have a feeling of quiet self-contained bulk, corresponding to the old African carver's expression in wood.[53]

By year's end 1908 Matisse would find a champion among American critics, in the person of Bernard Berenson, the widely respected art historian and connoisseur of Renaissance painting. (It should be remembered that in 1904 Berenson had been the catalyst for the Steins' collecting enterprise, having recommended Cézanne to Leo Stein.) In early October Berenson visited the Salon d'Automne and was impressed by Matisse's entries, comprising 11 oils, 13 sculptures, and 6 drawings.[54]

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[53] Charles Caffin, "Henri Matisse and Isadora Duncan," Camera Work 25 (January 1909): 17-20.

[54] Among Matisse's entries were Harmony in Red (see fig. 1.36), perhaps in an earlier, blue version, Olive Trees at Collioure (see fig. 1.9), Young Sailor I (see fig. 1.11), Portrait of Greta Moll (1908, London), Pink Onions (see fig. 1.13), Blue Still Life (see fig. 1.16), Sculpture and Persian Vase (1908, Oslo), and Statuette and Vase on an Oriental Carpet (1908, Moscow). With the four still lifes, Matisse was presenting himself as heir to Cézanne.

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Berenson, who resided at the villa I Tatti in Settignano near Florence, had not met the Matisses when the artist and his wife had visited the Steins in Fiesole the summer of the previous year.[55] The opportunity soon arose for a meeting. When Berenson, dining with the Michael Steins at the rue Madame, spoke of his enthusiasm for Matisse, Sarah sent for the artist. Berenson and Matisse talked for two hours.[56]

Berenson, as Leo had been three years earlier, was greatly impressed by Matisse's intelligence. Perhaps their conversation touched on their common admiration for Giotto and Piero della Francesca. Berenson was convinced that Matisse was continuing the legacy of the great traditions of art.

"He talked as if he had never done anything but look and reflect," Berenson wrote to his wife. "I cannot tell you how like to mine all his feelings and principles are, with the great advantage to his work of an infinitely more experienced and detailed feeling for design. One felt in contact with a brain of astonishing vigour, entirely—alas, as I am not—absorbed by art."[57]

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[55] That Berenson and Matisse did not meet in 1907 is confirmed in two letters from Berenson to Alfred Barr (Alfred Barr papers, Archives of American Art, cited in Mary Ann Calo, Bernard Berenson and the Twentieth Century [Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994]: 214, n. 7). Why they did not meet is unclear; Leo and Gertrude were guests at I Tatti before and after. Perhaps Berenson was out of town at the time..

[56] Ernest Samuels, Bernard Berenson: The Making of a Legend (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987): 65-68.

[57] Bernard Berenson to Mary Berenson, October 9, 1908, cited in Samuels 1987: 66.

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Shortly thereafter, Berenson left for a five-month stay in America. When he arrived in New York, he was distressed to read an attack on Matisse in the October 29 issue of the Nation, the progressive American journal to which he had often contributed. The anonymous reviewer had written:

> The Autumn Salon in Paris, begun a few years ago as an experiment, seems to have been accepted as an accomplished fact.... Some of the younger artists have surprisingly good and new work, along with direct insults to eyes and understanding. Such is Henri Matisse, who forgets that beholders are not all fools, and that it is not necessary to do differently from all other artists.[58]

Berenson leapt to Matisse's defense. In a letter to the Nation, published in the November 12 issue, he responded:

> Will you allow one of the fools whom Matisse has thoroughly taken in to protest against these phrases? They are more hackneyed than the oldest mumblings in the most archaic extant rituals.... Of what great painter or sculptor or musician of the last century has it not been said in the cant phrase of the Boulevards—"C'est un fumiste. Il cherche à épater le monde [He's a joker. He tries to shock people]"?
>
> Henri Matisse seems to me to think of everything in the world rather than the need of "doing differently from all other artists." On the contrary, I have the conviction that he has, after twenty years of very honest searching, at last found the great highroad traveled by all the best masters of the visual arts for the last sixty centuries at least. Indeed, he is singularly like them in every essential respect. He is a magnificent draughtsman and a great designer. Of his color I do not venture to speak. Not that it displeases me—far from it. But I can better understand its failing to charm at first; for color is something we Europeans are still slightly uncertain of—we are easily frightened by the slightest divergence from the habitual.

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[58] [Unsigned], "Art," The Nation 87: 2261 (October 29, 1908): 421-422.

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> Fifty years ago, Mr. Quincy Shaw and other countrymen of ours were the first to appreciate and patronize Corot, Rousseau, and the stupendous Millet. Quantum mutatus ab illo [what a change from that]! It is now the Russians, and to a less extent, the Germans, who are buying the work of the worthiest successors of these mighty ones.[59]

In linking Matisse to the "highroad traveled by all the best masters of the visual arts for the last sixty centuries," Berenson did the artist a valuable service. Berenson's imprimatur would make Matisse a more formidable figure, especially in America.[60]

The conclusion of Berenson's argument—left unstated—was that American collectors should buy Matisse.[61] There was no acknowledgement of the Steins, once Matisse's only patrons and then second to the Russians in patronage.[62] Berenson may have

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[59] Berenson, Bernard, "De Gustibus," The Nation 87, 2263 (November 12, 1908): 461. The letter was dated November 3. It is reprinted in Barr 1951: 114.

[60] Berenson later recalled: "Owing to the fact that I was known to be such a passionate lover of great Classical art, these few words of mine had a startling effect and Gertrude Stein tried to convince me that it was my duty to devote all my energies to making propaganda for Matisse" (Berenson 1958: 130).

[61] On September 27, 1909, Berenson would write to Isabella Stewart Gardner: "I have seen Matisse only for the second time a few days ago, and thus far I have got nobody to buy any pictures of his" (Rollin Van N. Hadley, ed., The Letters of Bernard Berenson and Isabella Stewart Gardner [Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987]: 456). It was probably in late 1909 or in 1910 that he purchased the 1901 landscape Trees near Melun (fig. 1.32). At Matisse's studio, Berenson later recalled, "I espied a rather rough painting of a forest clearing and asked what he wanted for it. Five hundred francs… was all he asked and I gave it gladly and carried away the canvas" (Bernard Berenson, Essays in Appreciation [London: Chapman & Hall, 1958]: 131). In late 1910 he would lend the picture to the first Post-Impressionist exhibition.

[62] See Barr 1951: 114.

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feared that mentioning those expatriate eccentrics would weaken his case among upper-class collectors whom he hoped to rally behind Matisse.

Berenson's defense of Matisse was a selfless act, apparently done without calculating the consequences to his own situation; he had little to gain by his support. (Two years hence, in London, Roger Fry's reputation would suffer as a result of Fry's support for Matisse and other "Post-Impressionists.")

Unfortunately, Berenson's support of Matisse was not a sustained effort. In years following both he and Leo Stein would turn against modernism.

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1.7. The Matisse Academy, 1907-1911

Matisse valued Sarah Stein's criticism. Therese Jelenko remembered that he "always wanted to show what he had done during the week to Mrs. Michael Stein.... He'd come with bundles of pictures under each arm, and Sarah would tell him what she thought of things, sometimes rather bluntly. He'd seem to always listen and always argue about it."[1]

Matisse, in turn, would advise Sarah on her own painting. Sarah found him to be a gifted teacher, and she and Michael both encouraged him to take on more students. One prospect was Hans Purrmann, a young German painter. Purrmann later recounted how he had been brought into the Stein circle by Maurice Sterne:

> I met in a café an American painter, Sterne. Our views on painting were similar, with the result that he took me to the collection of a friend of his [Leo Stein]. Embarrassed and curious, I went with him to a studio where the walls were hung with pictures... It was a blow to me; how could a man collect such pictures! And pay out good money for them! For the first time, I awoke. I spent so much time on the one picture [The Woman with the Hat] that it attracted attention; as a result I was introduced to the painter; he was Matisse. He made a great impression on me, and there began a friendship of long standing.

As a result of Michael's intervention, Purrmann recalled, Matisse began to critique Purrmann's work:

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[1] Jelenko ca. 1965: 5. Jelenko remembered that the visits took place both at the Steins' residence and in Issy, where the Matisses moved in autumn 1909; but it is likely that they occurred before 1909 as well.

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> Michael Stein's gifted wife was herself a painter, and in her Matisse found a really remarkable relief from the trials and humours [cares and woes] of his art. I was frequently present at these conversations, visited Matisse at his studio, solicited admirers for his work, but had never had the courage to appear with any of my own things. Consequently they tried a little coup d'état. Early one morning Michael Stein knocked at the door of my studio... and without wasting many words he took my drawings from the wall and showed them later to his wife and to Matisse. Matisse, I later learned, examined them for a long while without being able to note a single element of beauty, but he did find a certain strength in them and numbered them in order of his preference. He asked that I be told of his interest and observed that he found my work somewhat cramped, that he believed he could help me to a greater freedom and laisser-faire [to a greater freedom, to a loosening up]. Then Mrs. Stein invited me to work with her. This was the beginning of a plan to bring together several artists who had already taken their work to Matisse and open a studio.[2]

Patrick Henry Bruce was one such artist. "Hans Purrmann and Bruce having asked me through Madame Michael Stein to give them advice," Matisse later recalled, "I suggested that they work together so I need only pay one visit.... That is how my academy came about."[3]

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[2] Hans Purrmann, "From the Workshop of Henri Matisse," trans. Kenneth Burke, The Dial (July 1922b): 32-33. I have followed Burke's translation of Purrmann's text, except for the two places indicated in brackets above, where I have placed my own translation in preference to Burke's; cf. Purrmann, "Aus der Wekstatt Henri Matisses," Kunst und Künstler 20, 5 (February 1922a): 168-169. I have translated "Sorgen und Stimmungen" as "cares and woes" in preference to Burke's "trials and humours"; and "zu einem Sichgehen-lassen" as "to a loosening up," in preference to Burke's "and laisser-faire."

[3] Raymond Escholier, Matisse: A Portrait of the Artist and the Man, trans. Geraldine and H. M. Colville (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960): 72.

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Purrmann recruited earnest, eager Max Weber, who knew the Steins, though he was not an intimate of their circle.

> From time to time, during 1907, [Weber recalled] I painted from the model in a life class of the Colarossi Academy, but I did not take criticism from the visiting professor. In that atelier there was another young painter from Berlin who did likewise. In the course of conversation with Hans Purrmann, who was a very close friend of Matisse, he suggested that we might be able to organize a class of our own, under the tutelage of Matisse.[4]

Leo Stein, who also took part in the planning of the class, brought in the Swedish painter Carl Palme. According to Palme, between Christmas 1907 and New Year's Day 1908, Palme, Weber, Bruce and Purrmann met constantly with Sarah and Leo Stein at the Café du Dôme on the boulevard du Montparnasse, making plans for the Matisse academy.[5] The group planned to make the academy a cooperative venture: "We would get together and share the costs of a studio, models, heating, etc. and then present Matisse with our appeal that he come in once a week to discuss our sketches."[6]

To Matisse, the prospect of opening his own academy was an interesting experiment, and he willingly agreed, under the condition that the students would see to the practical

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[4] "The Matisse Class," 1951, Weber papers, reel 59 #6, frame 153, Archives of American Art.

[5] Billy Klüver and Judith Martin, "Carrefour Vavin," in Kenneth E. Silver and Romy Golan, The Circle of Montparnasse: Jewish Artists in Paris 1905-1945 (New York: Jewish Museum, Universe Books, 1985): 73.

[6] Carl Palme, quoted in Folke Lalander, "Sweden and Modernism—The Art of the 1910s," in Serge Fauchereau, Scandinavian Modernism, The Hermitage and Tretyakov Gallery, New York: Rizzoli, 1989): 63.

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details. He planned to take no compensation for his teaching. "I refused any fee for my corrections," he later explained, "not wishing to be tied by such considerations when I might have reason to give it up."[7] (However, as the academy grew larger, he changed the policy, charging fees comparable to those of other academies in order to discourage frivolous applicants.)[8]

Weber recalled:

> Our dreams were realized. Matisse graciously agreed to give us and a few other serious students criticism... Although he lived in modest circumstances, he would not accept any remuneration for the precious time and energy he gave us—a spirit now almost extinct.
>
> Fortunate as we were, we had two more difficult problems yet to solve—finding an appropriate atelier, and a few more sympathetic and serious students to help pay the rent, hire models, purchase easels, a stove and studio accessories. I went to the American Art Club on rue Vavin... in the hope of finding American art students to join the class, but my mission was in vain. They would not hear of it, and I was even ridiculed for making such efforts. However, we were not discouraged.[9]

Two more students joined the group: Oskar and Greta Moll, a German couple newly arrived in Paris, who were invited into the class by Matisse. Michael Stein provided financial support, and Sarah Stein and Patrick Bruce found, at very low rent, space for the school at the Couvent des Oiseaux, the

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[7] Escholier 1960: 72.

[8] Jack Flam, Matisse: The Man and His Art, 1869-1918 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1986): 221, and 492, n. 6.

[9] "The Matisse Class," 1951, Weber papers, reel 59 #6, frames 153-154, Archives of American Art.

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abandoned monastery where Matisse already had a studio.[10] Hans Purrmann assumed the post of massier, the student in charge of collecting and disbursing the expenses of the studio.

The class began as an intimate group of about ten students. The atelier, Weber recalled, was a "large, well-lit room, flooded with light from three large French windows. We also had the use of the beautiful and spacious gardens of this vacated monastery, where we painted from the draped model as soon as spring came."[11]

Annette Rosenshine, who, at Sarah Stein's suggestion, attended the class, recalled: "The windows looked out upon a charming court; the enclosed garden had been carefully cultivated in its day. One could easily imagine the nuns in their medieval dress as they floated about for their daily exercises."[12]

Weber recalled that "the atmosphere of the first three days before Matisse's first visit was tense with anticipation and fear, but with deep inner joy and pride as well."[13] He was brimming with idealism and optimism when, on the eve of the school's January 6th opening day, he wrote to his friend the painter Abraham Walkowitz:

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[10] Toklas 1963: 38. Matisse told Pierre Courthion that the school's rental was 100 francs per year, the same as that of his own, smaller studio; conversation cited in Schneider 1984: 731, and 734, n. 5.

[11] "The Matisse Class," 1951, Weber papers, reel 59 #6, frame 155, Archives of American Art.

[12] Rosenshine 1964: 101.

[13] "The Matisse Class," 1951, Weber papers, reel 59 #6, frame 155, Archives of American Art.

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> We have organized a little class—including Mr. Stein and his sister-in-law who paints—myself—& two Germans—who know something—We begin to work tomorrow—mornings only—from the model—nude—. That will be in a part of Matisse's large-new studio. Isn't that fine? To work with such intelligent people. All who search and stand for something. At least they know what is good in art, and speaking for myself, even if I can not do anything yet.[14]

Matisse arrived in the company of Maurice Sterne, who later wrote that Matisse "was disturbed that the students insisted on caricaturing their master's work."[15] Sterne told an interviewer that

> Matisse entered the room to find that his students had painted large canvases with distorted shapes and colors that smote the eye. Without a word he went out to return in a few minutes with a cast of a Greek head which he put in the center of the room, suggesting that his too ardent imitators turn their extravagant efforts to the wall and start work on the cast.[16]

It had never been Matisse's intention that his students copy his style. Indeed, years later Matisse noted, regretfully: "The saddest part was that they could not conceive that I was depressed to see them "doing Matisse.'"[17] One of the reasons he had founded the school was his concern that his

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[14] Weber to Walkowitz, January 5, 1908, Weber Papers, reel 59 #8, frame 379, Archives of American Art.

[15] Sterne 1965: 53.

[16] Paraphrase by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., of Maurice Sterne's 1931 conversation with Margaret Scolari, cited in Barr, Henri-Matisse: Retrospective Exhibition (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1931): 15. See also Barr, Matisse: His Art and His Public (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951): 118, and 536, n. 1.

[17] Matisse, "Interview with Jacques Guenne, 1925," in Flam 1995: 81.

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followers were imitating his manner in a superficial way. He wanted his students to have a thorough grounding in the fundamentals of art practice. "You must first subject yourself to nature, recapture it, then motivate it and perhaps even heighten its beauty," he advised his students. "But you must be able to walk well on the ground before you get on the tightrope."[18]

Matisse's curriculum was based on the beaux-arts instruction he had received from Gustave Moreau, supplemented by the examples of Cézanne's paintings and African tribal carvings. At this time Matisse was formulating a treatise on the practice of art, which he would publish at year's end as "Notes of a Painter." Teaching at the academy was an opportunity to refine his ideas and apply them beyond the scope of his own work.

At Matisse's suggestion, the students pooled their money and purchased an over-life-size cast of a fifth-century Greek sculpture. "For a whole week," Greta Moll later recalled, "we would sit in front of this ancient warrior, the drawing paper in front of us—seven days in front of the same drawing, three to four hours a day. Once a week Matisse would come to see what we had done, and he would speak to us about art in the most extraordinary, beautiful, and instructive manner. The atmosphere was always like that of the most demanding university."[19]

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[18] Purrmann 1922b: 34.

[19] "Nous étions... assis devant ce guerrier ancien pendant toute une

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With the Greek statue as his prototype, Matisse lectured on anatomy with a repertoire of original metaphors:

> The head is a ball upon which the features are delineated. These eyebrows are like the wings of a butterfly preparing for flight.
>
> ...A foot is a bridge. ...This straight leg goes through the torso and meets the shoulder as it were at a right angle. The other leg... curves out and down like the flying buttress of a cathedral.
>
> This pelvis fits into the thighs and suggests an amphora. Fit your parts into one another and build up your figure as a carpenter does a house. Everything must be constructed—built up of parts that make a unit: a tree like a human body, a human body like a cathedral....
>
> You must not see the parts so prosaically that the resemblance of this calf to a beautiful vase-form... does not impress you. Nor should the fullness and olive-like quality of this extended upper arm escape you.[20]

He instructed the students to bear in mind overall composition, warning them not to get carried away, as academicians tended to do, by minute detail:

> No lines can go wild; every line must have its function. This one carries the torso up to the arm; note how it does it. All the lines must close around a center; otherwise your drawing cannot exist as a unit, for these fleeing lines carry the attention away...
>
> It is important to include the whole of the model in your drawing, to decide upon the place for the top of the head and base of the feet, and make your work remain

---

semaine, le papier à dessin devant nous—sept jours face au même dessin, trois à quatre heures par jour. Une fois par jour Matisse venait voir ce que nous avions fait, et il nous parlait de l'art de la manière la plus surprenante, la plus belle et instructive; l'ambiance ressemblait toujours au plus exigeant collège d'université" (S. and D. Salzmann, Oskar Moll: Leben und Werk, Munich, Bruckmann: 1975, cited in Fourcade 1993: 82).

[20] "Sarah Stein's Notes" in Flam 1995: 46-47.

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> within these limits. The value of this experience in the further study of composition is quite evident.[21]

He presented his ideas on color aphoristically, stressing its relational aspects: "Painting is nothing but the observance of the relation which one color bears to another; you must see things as an ensemble."[22] He reminded the students: "One tone is just a color; two tones are a harmony, which is life. A color exists only in relation to its neighbor."[23]

Culling a lesson from Cézanne, Matisse taught the students to use color in a disciplined, structural manner:

> Construct by relations of color, close and distant—equivalents of the relations that you see upon the model.
>
> You are representing the model, or any other subject, not copying it; and there can be no color relations between it and your picture; it is the relation between the colors in your picture which are the equivalent of the relation between the colors in your model that must be considered.[24]

Matisse also brought the students to his own studio and spoke to them about the evolution of his art.

> As a counterpoint and enhancement of the workaday spirit of the class [Weber recalled] were the occasional visits

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[21] "Sarah Stein's Notes" in Flam 1995: 48.

[22] Purrmann 1922a: 174; Purrmann 1922b: 38.

[23] Pierre Dubreuil to Gaston Diehl, June 23, 1952, cited in Diehl, Henri Matisse (Paris: Editions Pierre Tisné, 1954): 42-43: "Un ton seul n'est qu'une couleur; deux tons, c'est un accord, c'est la vie… Une couleur n'est valable que par son accord avec la voisine"; see also Escholier 1960: 74.

[24] "Sarah Stein's Notes" in Flam 1995: 50.

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> to Matisse's studio in another part of the Couvent des Oiseaux. During those veritably festive afternoon hours, he showed us many of his early drawings and paintings, and spoke freely and intimately about them, explaining the various directions and tendencies.

Weber recalled the occasions when Matisse would show the students his own Cézanne, Three Bathers (fig. 1.33), which Matisse had treasured since he bought it from Vollard in 1899:

> With great modesty and deep inner pride, he showed us his painting of "Bathers" by Cézanne. His silence before it was more evocative and eloquent than words. A spirit of elation and awe pervaded the studio at such times.[25]

Weber's interior The Apollo in Matisse's Studio (fig. 1.34), commemorates the early days of the Matisse Academy. Weber depicts a corner of the classroom, awash in light from a French window on the left wall and a half-length window on the rear right wall. The two windows divide the picture vertically into three sections, like the wings and center panel of a triptych. The dominant figure is the "Apollo," placed off center and viewed from behind and below; a bright square of yellow wall, highlighted by green and orange, seems to emanate from the statue. The presence of two students behind easels in the center background is suggested by a leg and a shadowy form. A third student, the only one fully visible, is seated at right, beneath the window; that this dark-haired male

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[25] "The Matisse Class," 1951, Weber papers, reel 59 #6, frame 160, Archives of American Art.

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figure is a self-portrait is suggested by his placement directly above the artist's signature.

Cézanne's influence is evident in the painting's facture, suppression of detail, and use of color both to register and to suppress depth. Matisse's influence is evident in the painting's chromatic intensity. The highlights and shadows of yellow, green, and violet on the statue bring to mind the color combination used on Mme. Matisse's face in The Green Stripe of 1905 (see fig. 1.5).

Contemporaneous with The Apollo in Matisse's Studio is Weber's Two Female Figures (fig. 1.35), which is closely related to Matisse's style of 1907-8. With its simplified, flattened forms, brilliant, unmodeled color, and arcadian subject matter, it resembles Matisse pictures such as Music (Sketch) and Le Luxe I and II (see figs. 1.21, 1.22, and 1.36). From the Luxe paintings, Weber has adopted the motif of standing and crouching nudes; he has reversed the composition and reduced the number of figures to two. In contrast to Matisse's graceful nymphs, Weber's giantesses, compressed into a space close to the picture plane, are ungainly. Their flat, primitivizing quality suggests the influence on Weber of his friend Henri Rousseau.

Belying the often reverential tone of the reminiscences of Matisse's former students were the inevitable tensions and rivalries at the school. Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas, who of course never attended the school, related anecdotes about

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the Matisse Academy highlighting these tensions and rivalries.[26] The tone of Schadenfreude that emerges in these reminiscences is indicative of tensions between Matisse and the Leo/Gertrude contingent of the Steins. These tensions did not interfere with Matisse's warm and close relationship with Sarah and Michael Stein.

In spring the French government sold the Couvent des Oiseaux, soon to be demolished. Purrmann and Bruce found larger quarters for the school at the Couvent du Sacré-Coeur, another abandoned convent in Montparnasse. The Couvent du Sacré-Coeur was located in a neglected seventeen-acre park in a rich and fashionable part of the old city. Within the park a building complex comprised: the Hôtel Biron, an eighteenth-century mansion which formerly housed a convent school (where the "best" families of France once educated their daughters);

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[26] Gertrude wrote: "One of the hungarians wanted to earn his living posing for the class and in the intervals when some one else posed go on with his painting. There were a number of young women who protested… A hungarian was found eating the bread for rubbing out crayon drawings… and this evidence of extreme poverty and lack of hygiene had an awful effect upon the sensibilities of the americans.… One [american]… under the plea of poverty was receiving his tuition for nothing and then was found to have purchased for himself a tiny Matisse and a tiny Picasso and a tiny Seurat. This was not only unfair… but, since he also bought a Picasso, it was treason. And then every once in a while someone said something to Matisse in such bad french that it sounded like something very different from what it was and Matisse grew very angry… All the students were working under such a state of tension that explosions were frequent. One would accuse another of undue influence with the master and then there were long and complicated scenes in which usually some one had to apologize" (Gertrude Stein 1933: 66-67). Alice Toklas was more explicit: "There was a great deal of disagreement amongst the students, and a good deal of jealousy of Sarah Stein's intimacy with Matisse as the result of the purchases of his pictures by the Mike Steins" (Toklas 1963: 38).

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the convent itself; a chapel; a day school; a visitors' building; and a refectory.

Like the Couvent des Oiseaux, the Couvent du Sacré-Coeur had been seized by the French government in 1904. Until its final fate was determined, it was administered by a receiver who rented out its rooms, in many cases to artists and writers who appreciated its low rent and bucolic setting and could tolerate a precarious tenure.

Matisse moved his school, family, and studio to the complex. The refectory housed the Academy and Matisse's sculpture studio; on the ground floor of the visitors' building were the Matisse family quarters and Matisse's painting studio. Purrmann and the Bruces lived above the Matisses. (As close friends of Matisse, they were in a privileged position among the students; Bruce replaced Purrmann as massier.) Several other Academy students would also live in the complex.[27]

Between 1908 and 1911 the former Couvent du Sacré-Coeur was in effect an artists' colony. When Matisse and his students arrived, Auguste Rodin already had his studio in the Hôtel Biron (now the Musée Rodin). Among the other tenants were poets Rainer Maria Rilke and Jean Cocteau, sculptors Clara Westhoff (Rilke's wife) and José Maria Sert, actor

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[27] The other students of Matisse who lived at the Couvent du Sacré-Coeur were the Norwegian Jean Heiberg and the Russians Olga Merson and Marie Vassilieff (Klüver and Martin 1989: 215, n. 1).

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Edouard de Max, café-singer Jeanne Bloch, and modern dancer Isadora Duncan.

Cocteau, recording his first impressions of the Hôtel Biron and its environs, evoked the tranquillity of the setting:

> Passing a day playing hooky from school on the Rue de Varenne, I entered the huge courtyard of the building on the corner of that street and the Boulevard des Invalides, and asked the concierge if I might look around. I learned that the building was called the Hôtel Biron … and that if I should be good enough to follow him, the concierge would show me around the empty spaces. If one of them should suit me, I need only make an offer to M. Ménage, the liquidator. That very night I was in possession of the room I had specified (the nuns' old dance and music room). My yearly rent was the price of a month's rent in a seedy hotel. A door, to which I held the gigantic key, opened onto an archway, and the archway onto the garden. Garden, park, vegetable patch, Eden … one needed the blasé eye of an adolescent not to be overwhelmed by it. Could it be that Paris was alive, kicking, bustling, working, driving, just beyond such a silence? For even if it only existed by contrast, the silence was no less imposing, smothering the ear to the eye's benefit, rising from the lawn and trees, extinguishing the city's uproar by force of that habit that makes silence the prerogative of a neglected park. It was … a spectacle of silence … the visual sensation of being a thousand miles from Paris, in the depths of the countryside, transported you instantaneously into the depths of silence.
>
> …A fabulous pile of ruins and fragrant wild roses was heaped up in the middle of a sort of circle of sand and weeds. It was the only place that the brambles and patches had not invaded. The rest formed a little virgin forest, an impenetrable vegetable chaos.[28]

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[28] Jean Cocteau, Souvenir Portraits: Paris in the Belle Epoque, trans. Jesse Browner (New York: Paragon House, 1990): 124-126; originally published in French under the title Portraits-souvenir (Paris: Editions Bernard Grasset, 1935).

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The vista that Matisse now saw from his studio window—like the view of the Seine and the cathedral from the studio on quai Saint-Michel—immediately affected his painting. Established at his new quarters, he undertook Harmony in Red (1.37), an interior juxtaposed with a picture window of blooming foliage and a blossoming lawn.[29]

Matisse was already ensconced at his new address on April 20, when the American writer Gelett Burgess paid a call, in the company of Leo Stein, Gertrude Stein, and Gertrude's Radcliffe classmate Inez Haynes Irwin. Burgess was preparing an article on the avant-garde painters of Paris, and Matisse was first on his itinerary. Matisse conveyed his seriousness of purpose and his concern that some of his followers were mindlessly imitating his style. Haynes Irwin recorded in her diary: "Matisse has greenish-grey eyes, a brownish-red beard

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[29] On April 20, 1908, Inez Haynes Irwin visited Matisse at his new studio and recorded the visit in her diary. Her diary entry would later play a part in a minor debate among scholars on the question of whether or not the blooming trees in Harmony in Red are snow covered—Alfred Barr and John Elderfield taking the affirmative position, Jack Flam, the negative (cf. Barr 1951: 124-126, and 536, n. 2; Elderfield 1992: 25, and 72, n. 87; and Flam 1986: 230, and 493, n. 33). The diary entry reads in part: "Go directly into the studio; a beautiful long room overlooking a really wonderful garden—green and fresh as paint—the prunes and apricots thick with white blossoms. It snows for a few minutes. And suddenly the air is a swirl of flying, white atoms that seem to be blossom-petals, or snow-flakes—one cannot differentiate them, because of the grey sky. I wondered if anyone else in the studio found that melange of petals and snow-flakes beautiful. No one mentioned it" (Haynes Irwin 1908: 105-106). Elderfield contends that Haynes Irwin's diary provides a "simple solution" to the debate. Flam, however, disagrees: "Irwin's diary… does not of course tell us what we actually see in the painting, in which the trees are rendered in pastel pinks and blues that clearly depict petals rather than snow" (Jack Flam, "Passions of Matisse," New York Review of Books 39, 18 (November 5, 1992): 30, n. 9).

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—not noticeable-looking, an undynamic personality. Talks with Gelett a lot."[30]

Burgess would later report: "Matisse himself, serious, plaintive, a conscientious experimenter... denies all responsibility for the excesses of his unwelcome disciples.... He hears his own speculative words distorted, misinterpreted..."[31]

Matisse furnished Burgess with the names of seven colleagues to interview for the forthcoming article—Picasso, Braque, Derain, Metzinger, Friesz, Herbin, and (Matisse's pupil) Czóbel. His generosity should be noted: Picasso was a rival, and Braque and Derain had shifted from his camp to Picasso's.

American pupils at the Academy were eager to learn about the reaction to Matisse in New York, where his exhibition at 291 was held in April. Max Weber recalled that Sarah Stein read aloud the New York Times' review to the class.[32]

Few of Matisse's original students continued at the new site. Bruce, in a letter to Leo and Gertrude, then vacationing in Italy, reported that "the studio is in working order—and painting is going on all over the place, indoors and out—models—still life and paysage—but many of the artists have

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[30] Haynes Irwin 1908: 106.

[31] Gelett Burgess, "The Wild Men of Paris," The Architectural Record 27 (May 1910): 403.

[32] Weber tapes: 77, Columbia University Library. As the New York Times review of Matisse's exhibition at 291 appeared on April 14, 1908, Sarah's reading of it to the class is likely to have occurred in the latter part of April.

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left." Of the original group, only a few, including Weber and Purrmann, were left to "fight it out."[33] (By year's end, Weber would return permanently to New York.)

That spring another American joined the class, twenty-two-year-old Morgan Russell, who was dividing his attention between painting and sculpture.[34] He had recently arrived in Paris—his second tour—and had visited the rue de Fleurus, where he began a long friendship with Leo Stein. It was probably there that he met Matisse.

Russell later recalled that Matisse "graciously instructed me and, as he frequently invited me to reunions in his house, the opportunity was mine of listening to prominent men of art and literature. Thus I became familiar with the critical faculties and other mental habits which characterize the elite of France."[35]

Russell's Bathers (fig. 1.38) is evidence of the diverse influences at work on the young artist—among them Michelangelo, Monet, Cézanne, and Matisse. Russell would later recall that his encounter with Michelangelo in Rome in spring 1906

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[33] Bruce to Leo and Gertrude, undated [spring 1908], Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL; cited in Agee and Rose 1979: 47.

[34] Morgan Russell (1886-1953) was born in New York. He initially studied architecture (the profession of his late father), which he abandoned for sculpture and painting, after visiting Rome and Paris in 1906. Returning to New York, he enrolled at the Art Students League and studied sculpture with James Earle Fraser and anatomy and drawing with George Bridgman. In 1907 he studied painting with Robert Henri at the New York School of Art.

[35] Biographical statement by Russell, December 1947, Morgan Russell Archive, Museum of Modern Art. As Russell spent most of his adult life in France, his statements in his native tongue often seem stilted.

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was "the key stone" in his "mental structure."[36] The raised arms and languorous poses of the bathers suggest those of Michelangelo's Dying Slave, which Russell saw at the Louvre.

Another of Russell's enthusiasms was Monet. In summer 1908 he reported to his friend, the painter Andrew Dasburg, that he had been "dazzled" by the Monets at the Durand-Ruel gallery.[37] The dappled water and the luminous sky of Bathers suggest that Russell had applied lessons from Monet to his own painting.

The bathers themselves bear some resemblance to the figures in Matisse's Music (Sketch) and the two Luxe paintings (see figs. 1.21, 1.22, and 1.36) .[38] They bear greater resemblance, however, to those in the Cézanne Three Bathers (see fig. 1.32) that Matisse showed to his students—in their rhythmic poses, in their lack of individuation, and even in the hair cascading down the back of the rightmost figure in each painting.

In autumn 1908 Russell returned to New York, but by March 1909 he was back in Paris, thanks to a stipend from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. He returned to the Matisse Academy, where he studied sculpture as well as painting.

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[36] Russell to Chalfante Head, October 7, 1927, cited by William C. Agee in Marilyn S. Kushner, Morgan Russell, Montclair Art Museum (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1990): 17, and 175, n. 1.

[37] Russell to Dasburg, August 1908, Andrew Dasburg papers, Washburn Gallery, New York, cited in Kushner 1990: 34, and 176, n. 29.

[38] The similarity of Russell's and Matisse's figures is noted by Marilyn Kushner in Kushner 1990: 34-36, and 176, n. 31.

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Evidence of his efforts in sculpture under Matisse's tutelage can be found in a photograph of Russell's copy of an archaic kouros, with ink corrections by Matisse (fig. 1.39).

From 1908 to 1912 Gertrude Stein composed word "portraits" of people in her circle, among them Matisse and Picasso, as well as the young Americans Arthur B. Frost, Walter Pach, and Morgan Russell.[39] Like modernist paintings, these verbal snapshots evoke, rather than describe, their subjects.

Gertrude presents Russell as a contradictory figure.[40] Though young, he does not seem youthful. He is depicted playing checkers, and is said to be competitive and impatient. Learning is important to him. He is "feeling something," but he has not yet found a way of expressing it in an original manner. Whether he will succeed "in living" is an open question.

> He was a young one and he was already loving some one. He was certain that he would not be going on loving that one if he would not come to be winning when he and that one played checkers together in the evening. He was a young one but not a very young one. He was one needing to be succeeding in living and not waiting very long to be doing that thing.... He certainly would be coming to be winning in playing checkers and this came very soon to be

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[39] Frost and Russell both attended the Academy, and Pach would receive informal critiques from Matisse at Issy.

[40] That Russell had a contradictory nature is confirmed by details of his biography. Though heterosexual, he had a lifelong penchant for transvestism. Though a friend and protégé of Leo Stein, he was in 1909-10 competing with him for the affections of Leo's future wife Nina Auzias. Gertrude could not have known, ca. 1909-10, the key paradox of Russell's life: that after being a modernist innovator (ca. 1912-13), he would spend most of his life in near obscurity.

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> happening. He was one certainly wanting to be learning very much in being one being living.... He was one certainly persevering and sometimes for some years in coming to be a strong one stronger than any could be expecting he would become.
>
> He was one who was feeling something and then he would tell very well what it was he was feeling and he was then not succeeding in originating a way of telling this thing..
>
> Some were quite certain that he would be one succeeding in living. ... Some were not certain whether he would or whether he would not be succeeding in living. Some were almost certain that he would not be succeeding in living.[41]

By spring 1908, new students had joined the group from outside the Stein circle: the Norwegian Jean Heiberg (who had entered the class in February), the Russian Olga Merson, the Hungarians Joseph Brummer (later an art dealer in New York) and Bornemisza, the German Rudolf Levy, and the Frenchman Jean Biette.

In autumn 1908 the school began to expand rapidly, mostly due to an influx of Scandinavians, but with additions from eastern and central Europe as well. Word spread to an artists' colony in Lillehammer, Norway, and to an art academy in Sweden; so many students left the Swedish academy for Paris that it was depleted in three years. By 1909, Swedes and Norwegians made up about half of the approximately forty students.

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[41] Gertrude Stein, Two: Gertrude Stein and Her Brother and Other Early Portraits, 1908-1912 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951): 336-337. Gertrude's portrayal of Russell as "already loving some one" is probably an allusion to his affair with Leo's future wife Nina (see above, n. 40).

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In July 1909 Matisse leased a house in the suburb Issy-les-Moulineaux. In its garden he built a studio, a prefabricated demountable building suggested by Steichen. A visitor described the studio as a "good-size square structure... painted white, within and without," which "had immense windows, (both in the roof and at the side,) thus giving a sense of out-of-doors."[42] In autumn he moved his family to Issy and thereafter devoted less attention to the daily workings of the school.

In Paris the school was growing. By winter 1910-1911, more than 50 students were in attendance. Matisse's daughter recalled that on Saturdays, having spent an entire day correcting students' work, he would complain, "I can't see clearly anymore."[43] After gradually decreasing his visits, he ceased visiting the school entirely in spring 1911. Until 1912 the academy continued under the supervision of Rudolf Levy, who had replaced Purrmann and Bruce as massier.

In Issy Matisse continued to critique students' work informally on Monday afternoons. One young American who took advantage of these critiques was Walter Pach, who had primly refused to join the Academy, finding the students to be "(with exceptions) a bad lot, the wild-eyed type—largely non-

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[42] Clara T. MacChesney, "A Talk with Matisse. Leader of Post-Impressionists," The New York Times Magazine, Sunday, March 9, 1913, cited in Flam 1995: 66.

[43] Marguerite Duthuit, in conversation with Marit Werenskiold, January 16, 1968, cited in Klüver and Martin 1989: 39, and 216, n. 4.

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Frenchmen—who apparently looked on Matisse as crazy, and who wanted to be the same way."[44]

From 1908 until the departure of Matisse in 1911, a total of more than 80 students attended the school. Nearly all of the students were foreigners (i.e., non-French). Of the 83 students listed by Marit Werenskiold, 42 were Scandinavian, 3 were French, and 7 were American.[45]

(Werenskiold's figures are useful more for relative, than for absolute, numbers. The difficulty in establishing a definitive roster of Americans—or of any nationality of student—lies in what Billy Klüvier has called the "revolving door" nature of the Matisse academy, and of other academies in Paris such as the Academy Colarossi.[46] There was no official registration and no clear boundary between "student" and "visitor." Facilities were available to any student who paid a fee; in return the student could work in a heated space, before a model, with occasional criticism from an instructor. Students might come to Paris for a month or two, then return to their native lands.)

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[44] Pach 1938: 119.

[45] Marit Werenskiold, De Norske Matisse-Elevene: Laeretid og Gjennombrudd, 1908-1914 (Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1972): 197-198. The 7 Americans listed by Werenskiold were Patrick Bruce, Arthur B. Frost, Walter Pach, Maurice Sterne, Max Weber, Sarah Stein, and Augustus Koopman. The last mentioned is listed as being from North Carolina and as having joined the class in 1910. In addition, Leo Stein is listed in parentheses as having been present at the start. Although Werenskiold's list of Americans is subject to challenge, both as to inclusions and omissions, it presents a rough idea of the relative numbers of Americans versus other nationalities in the makeup of the class.

[46] Billy Klüver, in conversation with me, December 10. 1997.

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The most prominent nationalities at the Matisse Academy, in order of their representation, were: Swedes (26), Norwegians (16), Germans (13), Russians and Americans (tied, with 7), and Hungarians (5).[47] Compared with the distribution of foreign artists at the 1912 Salon des Indépendants, Scandinavians were vastly overrepresented at the school, while Americans were represented in similar proportions (about 8%) at both (as were women, at 20%).[48]

At least six of the students were Jews: the Americans Sarah Stein, Annette Rosenshine, and Max Weber, the Swede Isaac Grünewald, the German Rudolf Levy, and the Hungarian Béla Czóbel.[49] The Academy was perceived to be populated with Jews and Americans in proportions greater than their actual presence in the student body, in part because of the prominent role played by the Steins.

With a populace still nursing wounds from the Franco-Prussian War, and with the Dreyfus Affair still fresh in the national consciousness, xenophobia and anti-Semitism were in the air. These prejudices affected perceptions of the school, and found their way into conservative attacks on Matisse.

In a review of the 1907 Salon d'Automne, two months before the school opened, Louis Rouart wrote in L'Occident that Matisse "is taken seriously only by two or three Jews

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[47] Werenskiold 1972: 197-198.

[48] Klüver and Martin 1989: 216, n. 3.

[49] See Kenneth Silver, "Jewish Artists in Paris," in Silver and Golan 1985: 13-17.

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from San Francisco and by a few dealers who think that works of art… need have no more real value than stocks do."[50]

Gertrude recalled an article that "made fun of the school in one of the french weeklies. This hurt Matisse's feelings frightfully. The article said, and where did these people come from, and it was answered, from Massachusetts."[51]

In a review of Matisse's 1910 retrospective at Bernheim-Jeune, J. F. Schnerb, critic for La Chronique des Arts, wrote: "We are happy to note that his disciples and active admirers include no one but Russians, Poles and Americans."[52]

In another review of the Bernheim-Jeune exhibition, Gabriel Mourey, critic for L'Opinion, wrote disdainfully of credulous foreign students and their mercenary Svengali:

> Contributing to the gloomy atmosphere of this exhibition is the presence of M. Matisse's supporters and disciples. At all hours they fill the gallery on the rue Richepanse; true, it is not large. They come there as if to a religious ceremony. One sees them enter gravely, devotedly; they speak in hushed tones, remaining immobile for long moments in front of each canvas; their eyes fill with rapture; they are pale with constrained emotion; they seem to be near fainting. They are, for the most part, Americans, Germans, Russians, and Balkans (of both sexes), sent by their families to Paris to complete their artistic educations with the refinements of French art. Would not M. Matisse be the proper man to

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[50] Louis Rouart, "Reflexions sur le Salon d'Automne," L'Occident, November 1907, excerpted in Flam 1988: 68-69.

[51] Gertrude Stein 1933: 66. I have been unable to locate the article from a French weekly cited by Gertrude Stein.

[52] J. F. Schnerb, "Exposition Henri Matisse à la Galerie Bernheim," La Chronique des Arts, 1910: 59, cited in Barr 1951: 107. The mention of Russians is probably an allusion to collectors Shchukin and Morosov, as well as to Russian pupils at the school.

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teach them?

At first, one would be tempted to pity them for having fallen into the hands of such a master. But did anyone force them? They chose him, knowing full well what he could teach them: as soon as they returned to their native lands, they would know how to épater le bourgeois, pass for little geniuses, and win the approval of snobs everywhere who possess, whether in New York, Moscow, Berlin, or Bucharest, the same mentality, the same instinct for going to extremes in everything they do, in order to show off, and who, because they now have a stamp of approval—French taste, French art, etc.—can place their merchandise advantageously.

I have heard that a young foreigner, urged by his comrades to take lessons from M. Matisse, would have been told by M. Matisse: "My boy, I don't know your natural inclinations or whether or not you have talent; but I guarantee that in two or three years at most, you will be able to earn ten thousand francs a year." You can see that M. Matisse lacks none of the qualities expected today of a professor of painting, for it is not enough to make paintings; one must sell them.[53]

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[53] "Ce qui contribue à assombrir l'atmosphère de cette exposition, c'est la présence des fidèles de M. Matisse et de ses disciples. Ils emplissent à toute heure la galerie de la rue Richepanse; il est vrai de dire qu'elle n'est pas grande. Ils y viennent comme à une cérémonie religieuse. On les voit entrer gravement, dévotement; ils parlent à voix basse, restent de longs moments immobiles devant chaque cadre; une extase noie leurs regards, ils sont tout pâles d'émotion contenue, on les sent près de défaillir. Ce sont, pour la plupart, de Américains, des Allemands, des Russes et des Balkaniques (des deux sexes, en vérité) que leurs familles ont envoyés à Paris pour compléter leur éducation artistique en s'initiant aux raffinements de l'art français. M. Matisse n'est-il pas tout désigné pour les leur apprendre?

"D'abord, on serait tenté de les plaindre d'être tombés dans les mains d'un tel maître. Mais qui donc le leur a imposé? Ils l'ont choisi, sachant fort bien ce qu'il est capable de leur enseigner: la manière, sitôt rentrés chez eux, d'épater le bourgeois, de se faire passer pour de petits génies, de conquérir le suffrage des snobs qui ont, partout, à New-York ou à Moscou, à Berlin ou à Bucarest, la même mentalité, le même instinct d'aller, en quoi que ce soit, pour se singulariser, aux extrêmes, et, grâce à l'estampille: goût français, art français, etc., de placer avantageusement leur marchandise.

"A un jeune étranger que ses camarades poussaient à suivre les leçons de M. Matisse, M. Matisse aurait tenu un jour, m'a-t-on raconté, ce langage: 'J'ignore, mon garçon, quelles sont vos dispositions naturelles et si vous êtes doué ou non; mais ce que je sais, c'est que je

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In a group photograph (fig. 1.40), students at the Academy do not appear to be the "wild-eyed type" evoked by Pach or the pious zealots described by Mourey.[54] Far from appearing to be bohemian rebels, they are the image of bourgeois respectability, the women sedately attired in dresses with long sleeves and skirts, the men in proper cravats and suits.

Nonetheless, in some circles the Academy's avant-garde reputation seems to have given it an air of chic. In late 1908 Michael Stein, in a postcard to Annette Rosenshine, reported: "One newspaper said young ladies from l'étranger [foreign parts] come to Paris now to get dresses and to take lessons from Henri Matisse."[55]

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me fais fort de vous mettre à même, en deux ans, trois au plus, de gagner dix mille francs par an.' Il ne manque à M. Matisse, on le voit, aucune des qualités que l'on est en droit d'exiger, aujourd'hui, d'un professeur de peinture; car il ne suffit pas de faire des tableaux, il faut les vendre" (Gabriel Mourey, "Lettres à un Campagnard: Exposition Henri-Matisse," L'Opinion, February 1910: 282).

[54] See also Klüver and Martin 1989: 38-39.

[55] Michael Stein to Annette Rosenshine, received December 1908; cited in Rosenshine 1964: 120.

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1.8. Exhibitions, 1909-1912

On January 9, 1909, Max Weber returned in New York. "I found the north pole in modern art. Just bleak, nothing," was his assessment.[1]

Weber's first encounter with Stieglitz was inauspicious. In early spring[2] Weber brought a portfolio of his Paris work to the 291 Gallery. "A short, stocky, smooth shaven, pallid young man with a large portfolio in his arm appeared at the door," Stieglitz recalled.

> He informed me that he had come from Paris and that his friend, Mr. Steichen, had told him to look me up when he came to New York.... I told him that... I was much too tired to look at any pictures or think of giving any further exhibitions. That undoubtedly he was under the impression that 291 was a place of business, that it was an art gallery and I an art dealer; and as he nodded consent, I told him he was mistaken.
>
> I then told him he would undoubtedly find somebody in New York who would give him an exhibition. And with that Mr. Weber left. At the time I did not even know his name nor did I ask for it.[3]

Abraham Walkowitz, with whom the destitute Weber was then living, helped to arrange an exhibition for Weber at the Haas

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[1] Weber tapes, Columbia University Library: 77.

[2] Stieglitz recalled that this encounter occurred a few weeks before Weber's exhibition at the Haas Gallery, placing it in March or April 1909 (North 1984: 16).

[3] Stieglitz to Edith Halpert, December 30, 1930, cited in North 1984: 16. Weber's recollection was that he first met Stieglitz about six months later, under different circumstances. It is understandable that Weber would choose not to recall this humiliating episode, in which he was rebuffed before he could properly introduce himself. See Weber tapes: 81-82 and North 1984: 16-17.

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Gallery, 648 Madison Avenue, a framing shop where Walkowitz had recently shown work. The exhibition would open April 22.

Meanwhile, the 291 gallery held its first exhibition of American modernist painters. Steichen[4] had sent over to Stieglitz the work of two of his (and Weber's) colleagues from the New Society of American Artists in Paris—John Marin[5] and Alfred Maurer.

Stieglitz later recalled opening the box from Paris and viewing Maurer's oil sketches, "a series of mosaic-like paintings, about ten inches square, each in little gold frames, in high-keyed, lively colors." He hung "the small, uniformly-sized Maurers... three high, close together. What brilliant walls! The Marins were presented in a single line."[6]

The exhibition, consisting of 24 watercolors by Marin and 15 oil sketches by Maurer, ran from March 30 to April 19. Charles Caffin wrote the catalogue essay, a flyer that was distributed to gallery visitors. Caffin presented Maurer as a convert to Matisse and modernism:

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[4] Steichen had written: "Just packed and shipped for Secession Gallery 27 watercolors John Marin—15 small oil sketches A. Maurer. Marin has a trace of Whistler—Maurer a trace of Matisse" (Steichen to Stieglitz, undated [December 1908], Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL).

[5] John Marin (1870-1953), like Maurer, was of Matisse's generation rather than Picasso's. In Paris since 1905, he worked in a traditional vein, producing mostly architectural etchings, and was not part of the Stein circle. In 1908, however, he joined Steichen's New Society of American Artists in Paris. His watercolors, suggesting the influence of Impressionism and Neo-Impressionism, were more traditional than Maurer's oil sketches. In the two-man exhibition at 291, it was Maurer who commanded most of the attention.

[6] Norman 1960: 97.

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> Maurer had left the sure path and was consorting with the prophets, the crazy seers—those who see. The quondam pupil of Mr. Chase had had his eyes opened by Matisse. He had been led to discover other colors in his paint box than blacks and drabs and white; also to look for color beyond the walls of an artificially darkened studio. He had been drawn out-of-doors into the sunshine. There, under the indirect persuasion of Matisse, he has found himself seeing, not only local color, but visions of color, evoked from the actual facts, by the play of his imagination under the spell of some particular mood.

Putting Maurer's oil sketches in a critical context, Caffin proposed that their form was more significant than their content:

> They are primarily to be judged as little creations of color beauty, with the same detachment from notions of subject matter, that you approach the appreciation of a piece of antique pottery.

In terms that might also apply to Cézanne and Matisse, Caffin discussed the unfinished quality of Maurer's paintings:

> You may even observe in some of them—I don't know how intentionally on Maurer's part—a dripping application of the color, and the leaving of portions of the ground apparent between the masses of color, that recall the antique potter's method of applying colors and leaving parts of the biscuit of the vase in reserve.

Applying symbolist theory with its notions of abstraction, Caffin wrote that Maurer "has ranged himself… with the other men of Paris" who seek "an abstract expression through color harmonies, somewhat as does the musical composer." Finally, Caffin claimed that Maurer, like Whistler,

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achieves "a reinforcement of our own art by infusing into it some of the principles of the antique art of the orient."[7]

Critics followed Caffin's lead in linking Maurer to Matisse. The reviewer in American Art News wrote that Maurer's paintings "show the direct influence of Matisse. These paintings, or studies, are brilliant in color, impressions of what the artist sees or thinks he sees. Red and yellow trees abound, and in many of the pictures the canvas is discernible between the splashes of color."[8]

The daily reviewers followed Caffin in characterizing Maurer as a convert to Matisse and modernism. James Huneker of the Sun, whose reaction to Matisse a year before had been decidedly mixed, was the most sympathetic, writing that Maurer, who "went abroad in full possession apparently of his color sense, [has] suddenly become a chromatic fantasy." Huneker compared Maurer to Gauguin and to Prendergast, as well as to Matisse:

> The catalogue notes that the influence of Henri Matisse shows itself in these extraordinary efforts. Matisse, yes, and also Gauguin, whose strained symbolism has evidently affected the ambitions of the American.... We know that Prendergast of Boston can succeed in making clear his vision while working in the same bloodshot optical region. Perhaps Maurer will some day. It is a cruel Eastern garden of writhing arabesques that he puts

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[7] Charles H. Caffin, "Alfred Maurer," reprinted in Camera Work 27 (July 1909): 41.

[8] [Unsigned], "Marin's and Maurer's Works," American Art News 7:26 (April 10, 1909): 6.

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> before us. And yet—but let us wait; such attacks pass. Besides, this chap has talent as well as boldness.[9]

Other critics were negative, in varying degrees. Joseph E. Chamberlin of the Evening Mail, who had been disdainful of both Matisse and Prendergast the previous year, wrote: "Mr. Stieglitz, the mighty hunter of the Photo-Secession, has captured another 'wild man.'... Maurer sees Matisse, and goes him several better." Chamberlin reacted to Maurer with baffled condescension:

> He has been painting more or less conventionally, and successfully—that is to say, he has been selling his pictures. and now he has turned away from everything and gone into something that he thinks is more real, more vital—and he is painting pictures that are so extreme, so phenomenal, so miraculous, that they could not be given away.
>
> This proves, apparently, that Mr. Maurer is sincere, and not engaged in an attempt to scare the world into noticing him. At any rate, he is endeavoring to express something that is in him, and therefore is entitled to respect.
>
> But his pictures! There is no understanding them. Two or three, indeed, possess strong indications of an intense feeling for the beauty of dazzling light, and for big, splendid forms in nature. But here is one which has in the foreground a great gob of color; what is it? A bursted tomato? A fireman's hat? A red rock? A couple of people under an umbrella? Nobody can make out.[10]

Arthur Hoeber of the Globe, the most hostile of the critics, had been dismissive of Prendergast the year before.

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[9] James Huneker, New York Sun, April 7, 1909, reprinted in Camera Work 27 (July 1909): 42.

[10] Joseph E. Chamberlain, New York Evening Mail, April 3, 1909, reprinted in Camera Work 27 (July 1909): 43.

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Hoeber, who had just been named a National Academician, condemned Maurer with the righteous zeal of the orthodox toward an apostate: "The erstwhile promising, even performing, Alfred Maurer, onetime pupil of Chase, is now in Paris, where the bacillus of the Matisse craze has entered into his soul and, what is much worse, into his canvases.... Frankly, of all the pure forms of imbecility that have overtaken youth time out of mind, these are the limit." Hoeber wrote that Maurer

> blazes away with a whole battery of pure pigment, painting tree trunks bright vermilion, and other things with equally inappropriate tones, such as never were on land or sea, and with an idiotic jumbling of forms would make us believe the new vision causes him thus to see, or feel, or appreciate, or whatever terms he chooses to apply, nature. In the name of the prophet—figs! To take this seriously is to write oneself down an ass. There is no health, sanity, intelligence, beauty or harmony in the performances, and they are not worth the space we have already given them. It is to laugh! But the mirth is mingled with pity, regret, disappointment, at the blind subjugation of an ordinarily intelligent mind to so foolish and transient a fad. Imitation at best is always to be deplored; but when one so entirely barters one's individuality, the gods themselves weep at the act.[11]

A. Harrington of the New York Herald wrote of Maurer's conversion from Whistlerism to Matissism without mentioning names:

> Those who wish to have a shock from colors will find it in the galleries of the Photo-Secession... Mr. Maurer once painted in delicate tonal way and had a soul of mauve

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[11] Arthur Hoeber, New York Globe, April 6, 1909, reprinted in Camera Work 27 (July 1909): 43-44.

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> and gray. Now he screams in primary colors. The sketches seem to buzz, and one of them suggests a yellow hornet escaping from purple flypaper. All form seems to be lost in straining for light that almost blinds and for color that cries aloud....

Harrington suggested that this new style was winning converts:

> Power and a sincerity are suggested in the high pitched color schemes, and one of these days there may be many to worship at a new shrine. Artists are already going in groups to the little top floor gallery to take a look at these effects...[12]

"The exhibition was overrun with people," Stieglitz later recalled.[13] One visitor was Arthur B. Davies, who had exhibited as one of The Eight at the Macbeth gallery the previous year. Davies bought three Maurers for $90.[14]

Stieglitz reported in the July issue of Camera Work: "No exhibition ever held under the auspices of the Photo-Secession aroused more interest or discussion amongst the art-lovers and artists of New York."[15] In later years he recalled: "It

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[12] A. Harrington, New York Herald, April 5, 1909, reprinted in Camera Work 27 (July 1909): 44.

[13] Dorothy Norman, Alfred Stieglitz: An American Seer (Millerton: Aperture, 1960): 97.

[14] Norman 1960: 97. Other members of The Eight were not so receptive to Marin and Maurer, according to Stieglitz: "Henri, Glackens, Sloan, Prendergast, Lawson, Luks... came and nudged one another. They could not make out what they saw."

[15] Unsigned [Stieglitz], "The Maurers and Marins at the Photo-Secession Gallery, Camera Work 27 (July 1909): 41. The issue included reprints of newspaper reviews of the exhibition.

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was Alfie Maurer's having turned Matissite from having been a notorious Whistlerian that set all art New York agog."[16]

On April 22, just after the closing of Maurer-Marin at 291, Weber's exhibition at the Haas gallery opened. The exhibition, which ran through May 8, was comprehensive, consisting of 36 paintings and 10 etchings. Most of the pictures had been painted in Paris, the remainder having been done upon Weber's return to New York.

Among the paintings in the exhibition was The Apollo in Matisse's Studio.[17] Another was Summer (fig. 1.41), painted in New York after Weber's return from Paris.[18] Summer, a composition of three female nudes in a forest, is evidence that Weber had absorbed a compendium of influences—among them Cézanne's architectonic bather compositions, Rousseau's forest foliage, and Matisse's Blue Nude (see fig. 1.20). In addition, there was a new influence, which eclipsed that of Matisse—Picasso. The raised-arm poses of two of the figures resemble those in Demoiselles d'Avignon (fig. 1.42), while the figures themselves are similar to Picasso's volumetric nudes of 1908.[19]

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[16] North 1984: 18.

[17] Listed as no. 5, Interior with Cast, in the catalogue. See Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art.

[18] I have assumed that this is the same picture listed as Summer, no. 27 in the catalogue of the Haas gallery exhibition. See Haas Gallery, Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Max Weber (New York, 1909).

[19] Weber had met Picasso at Leo and Gertrude Stein's in October 1908. Shortly thereafter, he visited Picasso at the Bateau-Lavoir, where he probably saw Demoiselles d'Avignon and related works, and Three Women

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Weber chose to present himself as a disciple only of Cézanne. The catalogue text consisted of Weber's translation of excerpts of two letters from Cézanne to Emile Bernard, which had been published in the original French in 1907.[20]

Naturally, reviewers linked Weber to Cézanne. The critic for the New York Morning Sun wrote, "He has studied Paul Cézanne, as his fruit, flower and other still life testifies; also the nudes, which shock the eyes at first glance."[21]

Elisabeth Luther Cary of the New York Times wrote that Weber "follows in the footsteps of Paul Cézanne." She turned Cézanne's words against Weber: "No doubt in time the exuberance of temperament shown in many of the studies will be turned into deeper channels and produce a more balanced

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(1908, St. Petersburg), then in progress, and related works (such as the watercolor Bathers in the Forest [1908, MoMA]).

[20] Weber's translation reads as follows:

"If the official salons remain so inferior, it is because they embody in their work nothing but mannerisms more or less commonplace.

"It were better to bring out more personal emotion, observation and character.

"The Louvre is the book where we learn to read. We must not, however, be content with only holding the formulas of our illustrious predecessors. We must go out to study beautiful nature, endeavor to extricate the mind, l'esprit, search to explain by following our own temperament. [Cézanne to Bernard, 1905]

"One is neither too scrupulous, nor too sincere, nor too obedient to nature; but one is more or less master of his model, and above all of his means of expression.

"Time and reflection modify little by little the vision, and finally we are led to greater comprehension." [Cézanne to Bernard, May 26, 1904]

The letters were originally published in French in Emile Bernard, "Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne et lettres inédites," Mercure de France (October 1 and 15, 1907). They appear in English translation in John Rewald, Paul Cézanne Letters, trans. Marguerite Kay (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1976): 303-304 and 315.

[21] [Unsigned], New York Morning Sun, April 30, 1909, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6.

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impression. One of Cézanne's best reflections upon life and art is among those printed on the back of the little catalogue. 'Time and reflection,' he says, 'modify little by little the vision, and finally we are led to greater comprehension.'"[22]

The reviewer for the New York Morning Sun mentioned Matisse's influence on Weber and associated this influence with "ugliness":

> Henri Matisse has been his model, perhaps idol. Ugliness and beauty in art are relative terms. Certainly Mr. Weber must think so.... Weber's nudes... waddle and wallow, they yawn and stretch. Their backs are monstrous—and very like Cézanne's laundry girls. Possibly this young man may forget Paris, and then he will get into the Academy (Some day!)[23]

Cary wrote that Weber's "figures have ugliness of line and are not psychologically interesting, but psychology is hardly to be expected while a painter is in the experimental stages of his art."[24]

Critics took note of Weber's color. The critic for the Morning Sun referred to his "multicolored work" and observed that "Max Weber is evidently a young painter who believes in

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[22] Unsigned [Elisabeth Luther Cary], New York Times, May 2, 1909, Section 6: 6, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art.

[23] Unsigned, New York Morning Sun, April 30, 1909, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6. What the reviewer meant by "Cézanne's laundry girls" is not clear; perhaps the reviewer had Degas in mind.

[24] Unsigned [Elisabeth Luther Cary], New York Times, May 2, 1909, Section 6: 6, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art.

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audacity."[25] The reviewer for American Art News wrote that Weber "has put aside academic traditions and is seeking to express himself on new lines. Among the paintings are several nude studies and studies of still life, the latter being rich and pleasing in color."[26]

Cary seemed to get to the heart of the matter when she observed that Weber "gets into his work a certain plastic quality, as well as a vigorous treatment of color which promises well for his future.... The color harmonies are not only bold, but truly brilliant, and a tone is achieved with a variety of strongly contrasted hues, which, of course, is infinitely more difficult than to achieve tone by eliminations of color."[27]

Among the supporters of Weber were Arthur B. Davies and Walter Pach. Davies, who had just bought three Maurers from the 291 show, purchased two Weber oil paintings, for which the artist received $175.[28] Pach was a source of moral support.[29] In a note to Weber, he praised the exhibition, but (character-

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[25] Unsigned, New York Morning Sun, April 30, 1909, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art.

[26] Unsigned, American Art News, May 3, 1909, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art.

[27] Unsigned [Elisabeth Luther Cary], New York Times, May 2, 1909, Section 6: 6, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art.

[28] Weber papers, Archives of American Art.

[29] Pach and Weber knew each other either from Paris days or through their mutual friend George Of in New York.

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istically) confessed difficulty in understanding some of the work:

> Just a few lines to congratulate you on your idea of having an exhibition…
>
> Well, it certainly does make a big difference in a bunch of work—the way it's seen. Yours appears to enormously better advantage on those walls and I was glad to see that Davies had led off with a substantial appreciation. I was going to send around some circulars and will yet, but I find that many of my people have been there already. In fact, Mr. Miller whose things you saw at Chapman's, had sent one (or perhaps more) of my friends. Others I have told myself. I went to [Guy] Du Bois and not finding him, left a note and shall go again.
>
> Your plan has certainly justified itself. The things look well and I liked them better than before—especially certain still-lifes. I don't get the "Adam and Eve."[30]

That summer Stieglitz went to Paris. Steichen accompanied him one day to Sarah and Michael Stein's and the next day to Leo and Gertrude's. It was the second visit that was the more memorable.

> Leo Stein began to talk [Stieglitz recalled]. I quickly realized I had never heard more beautiful English nor anything clearer. He held forth on art. He must have spoken for at least an hour and a half. He described … Matisse… as second-class—a better sculptor than painter, even better than Rodin. He relegated Rodin, like Whistler, to the second or third class. Steichen blanched, two of his idols[31] having been thrown

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[30] Pach to Weber, May 2, 1909, Weber papers: N 69-84. The catalog lists a painting, no. 9 Adam and Eve (sketch), and a drawing, no. 5. Adam and Eve. The reviewer for American Art News wrote that the drawing of Adam and Eve "is somewhat primitive in conception and execution" (May 3, 1909, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art).

[31] Steichen's two "idols," referred to by Stieglitz, were Rodin and Whistler (not Matisse).

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> on the garbage heap by Stein, who backed up his statements with what appeared to me—I really a great innocent—profound logic.
>
> While Stein ran through the gamut of art, old and new, I listened, spellbound. I then said, "Mr. Stein, why not write down all you have said? It is the most wonderful thing, in a way, I have ever heard about art....I am willing to publish anything and everything you might send in Camera Work."
>
> But Mr. Stieglitz," Stein replied, "you see I am trying to evolve a philosophy of art, and I have not entirely succeeded in closing the circle. Until I have done so, I shall not write."[32]

Though impressed by the cogency of Leo's arguments, Stieglitz was apparently unconvinced by Leo's conclusions and would go on to give Matisse two more exhibitions.

He recalled that one day in Paris Steichen asked him:

> "Did a young man named Mr. Weber come to see you?" I told him what had happened. He informed me that Weber was one of the most gifted of the young American artists in Paris, a thorough modern, but rather unfortunate as far as temperament was concerned. I told Steichen that I was sorry that I had given Weber possibly a wrong impression not only of myself but of 291, but nobody could know how tired I was..."[33]

Stieglitz and Weber met again in New York, in December 1909.[34] This time Stieglitz received the young painter more cordially and invited him to bring over some of his paintings.

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[32] Norman 1960: 111.

[33] Stieglitz to Edith Halpert, December 30, 1930, cited in North 1984: 16.

[34] Stieglitz recalled that this second encounter with Weber occurred during the Toulouse-Lautrec exhibition at 291, which opened in December 1909 (North 1984: 16-17).

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When Stieglitz saw Weber's work, he was ambivalent. On the one hand, "his work rather fascinated me. There was strength, a sense of color and something thoroughly alive."[35] Yet Stieglitz was concerned that it was derivative:

> I... told him that as I was familiar with Matisse, and Cézanne, and Picasso, and Negro art, having been in Paris, I felt first of all in looking at his work that he had been a close student of all these forces but that I felt there was something more there and it was that more which interested me. I furthermore told him that if there was anything in the world that I hated it was imitation."[36]

In early 1910[37] Weber, without funds or a place to stay, sought Stieglitz's help. Stieglitz found him shelter in the temporarily vacated quarters of a neighbor in the 291 building, interior decorator Stephen Lawrence. With other members of the 291 group, Weber would often be Stieglitz's luncheon guest at the Holland House in the Prince George Hotel. He would also be a frequent dinner guest at Stieglitz's home. For his part Weber, as the most knowledgeable person in America about developments in the Parisian avant-garde, was a fount of information and guidance for the gallery.

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[35] "The Story of Weber": 3, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL, cited in William Innes Homer, Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-Garde (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1977): 130, and 281, n. 18.

[36] North 1984: 16. According to Stieglitz, other members of the 291 circle were more scathing about Weber's purported lack of originality; Marius de Zayas and Paul Haviland "both exclaimed: 'Why this is all nothing but clever copying.'"

[37] North 1984: 16-17.

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Yet there was tension between the two men from the start. William Zorach observed that Stieglitz "considered Weber his protégé. Stieglitz and Weber were both too egocentric and Weber couldn't be a protégé. Stieglitz was an impresario who took up artists as much for his own glory as he did to promote art or an individual artist. Weber sensed this and resented it. He could not become a worshipper, even when it was to his advantage."[38] The wary friendship between these two egoists was headed for an explosion.

In autumn 1909 Steichen visited Matisse at Issy, where he photographed Matisse modeling La Serpentine (fig. 1.43).[39] It was probably at this time that he arranged for Matisse's second exhibition at 291. He was also planning an exhibition of American modernist painters, to appear immediately afterward.

By January 1910 Steichen and Maurer, in addition to Weber, were in New York. A Paris correspondent for the New York Times reported:

> The younger members of the American art colony in Paris are wondering whether the disciples of the Matisse movement now in New York in considerable numbers are going to make any sort of a sensation there.
>
> Those who proudly regard themselves as revolutionaries and exhibited as strenuously as possible in

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[38] William Zorach, Art is My Life (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1967): 134.

[39] The photograph would appear in Camera Work 42/43: 29 (April-July 1913), published in November 1913.

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> the Autumn Salon are loath to think that America can be indifferent to what seems to them personally of such huge importance.
>
> Jo Davidson, the sculptor; John Marin, Alfred Maurer; Edward Steichen, and several others have gone to New York to show their works, some of which have made even Paris gasp. Hope was strong a few weeks ago among the junior artists that a lively controversy over the ideas originally attributed to Matisse might be stirred up on the other side of the water, and ears are still strained in that direction for the first sounds of that expected tumult. There will be a sad disappointment if there is none.[40]

The Times article set the stage for a showdown between pro- and anti-Matisse forces. In doing so, it may have exaggerated Matisse's role as leader of avant-garde American artists. It was an early instance of the press's tendency to characterize American modernists as disciples of Matisse, whether or not such a characterization was true in a particular instance. Of those cited, only Maurer truly qualifies as a Matisse disciple.

In early February Marin had his first one-man show at 291, an exhibition of watercolors, pastels, and etchings.[41] Despite the fact that the works were relatively traditional, Elisabeth Luther Cary of the Times commented that they were "too much influenced by the theories of Matisse to please a

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[40] Unsigned, "To Stir Art Circles Here: Disciples of the Matisse Movement Expect to Cause Sensation," New York Times, Sunday, January 16, 1910, part 3: 2.

[41] Homer 1977: 296. Homer gives the dates of the Marin exhibition as February 7-19.

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public or critics not yet advanced to that stage of 'up-to-dateness.'"[42]

From February 27 through April 15 the gallery presented, in succession, two exhibitions: Matisse drawings, and "The Younger American Painters," nine artists considered to be followers of Matisse.[43]

The Matisse exhibition comprised more than twenty-four drawings.[44] They were accompanied by black-and-white photographs of paintings by Matisse, among them Le Bonheur de vivre and the Blue Nude[45]

Among the drawings shown were Nude (fig. 1.44), Reclining Male Nude (fig. 1.45),[46] Standing Nude (rear view) (fig.

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[42] Reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 45.

[43] According to Camera Work, the Matisse drawings exhibition ran from February 27 to March 20, and "Younger American Painters" ran from March 21 to April 15 (Camera Work 30 [April 1910]: 47 and 54). These dates correspond to the dates of the newspaper reviews. In error, probably based on announcements preceding the shows, Homer gives different dates: February 23 to March 8, and March 9 to March 21, respectively (Homer 1977: 296).

[44] Huneker refers to "the two dozen or more sketches on the walls of Mr. Stieglitz's gallery"; Huneker, The Sun, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 48.

[45] See Homer 1977: 61, for a tentative list of Matisse paintings shown in reproduction. Harrington of the Herald indicated that reproductions by artists other than Matisse were also shown: "That the... artist is... a product of evolution is shown... by a series of photographs of paintings by predecessors of the present leader of the movement beginning with Cézanne" (reprinted in Camera Work 30 [April 1910]: 51-52). This puzzling observation is confirmed neither by statements in Camera Work nor by any of the other reviews. A likely explanation is that the reproductions of Cézanne, et al., were shown by Stieglitz to visitors, but were not displayed on the walls. I thank Charles Brock for this suggestion.

[46] These two pencil drawings were reproduced in Camera Work with the caption, "From the drawings exhibited at the Matisse exhibition, Photo-Secession Gallery, March, 1910" (Camera Work 32 [October 1910]: 27-31).

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1.46), Sitting Nude (fig. 1.47), Standing Nude with Arms around Neck (fig. 1.48),[47] Studies of a Standing Nude (fig. 1.49), Standing Nude (fig. 1.50), Seated Nude (rear view) (fig. 1.51), and Seated Nude (profile) (fig. 1.52). In addition, Nude, Semi-abstract (see fig. 1.28), which had been shown at 291 at the 1908 Matisse exhibition, was shown a second time.[48]

The response to the show indicates a sea change in the critical climate from that of two years before. James Huneker of the Sun, who in 1908 had professed to be scandalized by Matisse's "memoranda of the gutter and brothel," but who had been favorable to Maurer in 1909, was now a full-fledged promoter of Matisse. Huneker praised Matisse for his virtuoso draftsmanship and for a simplicity and decorativeness that derive from "the patterns of the east":

> This second batch of Matisse is fascinating; where his followers plod panting miles behind, he leaps the stiffest barriers by reason of his sheer virtuosity.... Here is a chap whose talent is distinguished. He can make his pencil or brush sing at the bidding of his brain; better still, that brain is fed by eyes which refuse to see humanity in the conventional terms of the school. He wishes not only to astonish worthy folk but to charm their check books. Paris is always a prey of the dernier cri, and Matisse, unless he has been ousted during the last month, is not only the latest cry, but, we hope, the ultimate scream. At his worst he shocks; at his best his art is as attractive as an art can be that reveals while it dazzles, makes captive when it consoles....

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[47] The pencil drawing Standing Nude with Arms around Neck is a study for Bathers with a Turtle (see fig. 4-11).

[48] See Elderfield 1984: 253.

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> [The drawings] are of a range and intensity that must set tingling the pulse of any honest craftsman. It is not alone the elliptical route pursued by Matisse in his desire to escape the obvious and suppress the inutile, but the creative force of his sinuous emotional line.... Its power of evoking tactile sensations is as vigorous, rhythmic and subtle as the orchestration of Richard Strauss....
>
> ... With the exceptions of Whistler and Cézanne no one has studied the patterns of the east as Matisse. He always sees the decoration and makes you see it... There is no monopoly in the conventional, and because thousands of painters have envisaged the nude in a certain—and usually the same—monotonous fashion that should not attenuate our vision of Matisse. His knowledge is great, his simplicity greater.... This exhibition is more instructive and moving than a century of academy shows.[49]

Could Berenson's endorsement of Matisse have influenced Huneker in his turnaround? One might infer this from the Berensonian ring of Huneker's phrase, the "power of evoking tactile sensations."

Another favorable reviewer was Frank Jewett Mather, in an article for the New York Evening Post which then appeared, slightly revised, in The Nation. Mather followed Berenson's lead in linking Matisse to the great traditions of art:

> Matisse conceives the body as a powerful machine working within certain limits of balance.... So much for the vision. It differs in no essential respect from that of great draughtsmen of all ages. A Matisse drawing, looked at without prejudice, is no more bizarre than a study of action by Hokusai or Michelangelo. It belongs in the great tradition of all art that has envisaged the human

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[49] Huneker, the Sun, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 48-49.

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> form in terms of energy and counterpoise.... The Frenchman is a kind of modern Pollaiuolo.

For Mather, what was original about Matisse was his simplicity, which Mather associated with the primitive.

> His originality lies less in vision than in a strenuous economy of workmanship. He will have the fewest contours and the most expressive, will not shirk any syncopation or exaggeration where he seeks an effect.... A calculated roughness, which occasionally disguises itself as the queer linear slackness with which Rodin has familiarized us, brings Matisse's manner very close to that of the aboriginal designers who scratched animal forms on bones in time prehistoric, or only yesterday adorned with admirable animal paintings the caves of the South African veldt. These savage masterpieces show the same keen sense for balance and significant action.[50]

Another critic who reversed himself was the haughty J. E. Chamberlin of the Evening Mail, who two years before had disdained the "ugliness... that seems to condemn this man's brain to the limbo of artistic degeneration." Now he rationalized that Matisse "is not after beauty, but sometimes gets it in a large and startling measure because he gets truth, and truth is frequently—but not always—beauty."

Chamberlin complained that his task was complicated by the fact that Matisse was a polarizing figure: "You must either worship Matisse, or hate and despise him." Wishing to

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[50] Frank Jewett Mather, in the New York Evening Post, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 50-51, and The Nation 90: 2333 (March 17, 1910): 272-273; excerpts appear as "Appendix E" in Barr 1951: 556. Alfred Barr was Mather's friend beginning in 1921, when Mather taught Barr at Princeton (see Roob 1987: 3-4). Barr wrote that Mather's essay "may well surpass any previous critical article on Matisse for its objective analysis and sense of history" (Barr 1951: 115).

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take a "judicial, middle course," Chamberlin expressed admiration without worship: "He is simply a strong man and a gifted artist who has been inspired to seize upon and hold great handfuls of the essential and foundation facts of the things he looks at… These Matisse drawings are in any case amazing instances of rapid, clear-seeing, revealing draughtsmanship, and are richly worth seeing."[51] An uncharitable observer might have concluded that with the wind blowing in Matisse's direction, Chamberlin—once a detractor, now an admirer—had not even the courage of his own reactionary convictions.

The academician Arthur Hoeber, however, writing in the Globe, held his ground, finding the work

> without reference to the human form, to proportion, to sanity, to taste, to any essentials of beauty, as mankind in general sees it. The women are deformed and wear their features in any curious manner in which Matisse's brush happens to diverge. Whereas most painters insist on a foolish similarity as to size of eyes, this entertaining Gaul makes a departure and sets a fashion of his own, though it cannot be admitted that he has improved on the original design of the Creator. It is likely men will still prefer their womenkind built along conventional lines of beauty than are those of Matisse. We are informed by Mr. Stieglitz, however, and his enthusiastic band that there is a mysterious something Matisse was after which is not immediately apparent to the observer and that time will open our eyes. Such things have happened before, it is true, and they may happen again, but at the present moment of writing these photographs of paintings seem to be as insolent as they are foolish, as graceless as they are

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[51] J. E. Chamberlain, New York Mail, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 51.

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> unbeautiful, with which we leave them as worth little of our serious consideration.[52]

Except for Hoeber, critics were favorable, or at least open-minded, and granted Matisse the deference due to the leader of a school. James Townsend of American Art News reported that Matisse was at the center of a controversy:

> Around Matisse now wages the war of the suffragists and anti-suffragists—the vivisectionists and anti-vivisectionists of the art world—and he calmly pursues his path, and is getting an enormous amount of advertising out of it all. He has seduced Alfred Maurer among American painters, and James Huneker among American art writers, and who knows what is to come?

Townsend, while not yet convinced by Matisse's work, was gradually coming around. At the 1908 Salon d'Automne his "very soul had been sickened by the performances of Matisse and his followers," but now he was beginning "to note in them something of worth." The critic confessed to having "faith in Stieglitz and Huneker, if not yet in Matisse."[53]

B. P. Stephenson of the New York Evening Post also found Stieglitz's defense of Matisse compelling, if not entirely convincing:

> How strongly Stieglitz believes in the new movement is shown by his offer to an Academician to give one wall in the Photo-Secession Gallery to be hung with the best drawings that the Academy can produce, while he will hang

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[52] Arthur Hoeber, New York Globe, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 52.

[53] Unsigned [James Townsend], "Drawings by Matisse," American Art News 8: 21 (March 5, 1910): 5, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 52.

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> on an opposite wall a selection of his own. He will then leave it to a jury, composed wholly of Academicians, to decide which wall exhibits the greatest vitality. We hold no brief for this new movement; we doubt whether we shall ever be convinced by it, but we cannot help seeing there is vitality in it, and we advise any one who is interested in what is going on among the men who are trying to get rid of what they consider deadwood in art to visit the galleries and get Alfred Stieglitz's views.[54]

Elisabeth Luther Cary of the New York Times expressed the reservation that Matisse's drawings were "studio affairs," out of place in a public gallery. Nevertheless she maintained that Matisse's color theories were an "original contribution to modern art" and that Matisse was "one of the masters of human form, and in his least experimental essays a lover of that geometry on which classic art is founded." Cary believed, however, that Matisse's influence would not be widespread because of the mediocrity of his followers.

> Matisse is heralded here by a certain group of devotees as the master of a school whose influence shall spread. It may be so, but we doubt it. To us he seems to be the final word of that gorgeous hymn to abstract color raised by Cézanne... If there is anything to be done with the theory beyond his expression of it we cannot forecast it. We seem to see, instead, a crowd of feebler minds turning it into a more or less incoherent babbling and finally permitting it to die out altogether.[55]

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[54] B. P. Stephenson, New York Evening Post, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 49-50.

[55] Elisabeth Luther Cary, New York Times, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 53.

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A. Harrington of the New York Herald, while finding "much that is vital and convincing" in the exhibition, suspected that the extent of Matisse's influence was exaggerated: "As it was the fashion several years ago to call almost everything which was different from the academic 'impressionistic,' so now the tendency is to apply the name Matisse to anything which is not understood."[56]

Stieglitz reprinted a number of these reviews for the readers of Camera Work and included his own verdict on Matisse. Two years earlier Stieglitz had presented Matisse as "the leading spirit of a modern group of French artists dubbed 'Les Fauves."[57] He now characterized Matisse as a classic: "The recent exhibition exemplified positively the power and sanity of the man, his scientific and almost mathematical attitude toward form, his almost oriental sense of decorative spotting…"[58]

One visitor to the exhibition was Florence Blumenthal, whose husband George, head of Lazard Frères in New York, was a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum and a distinguished collector of medieval and Renaissance art.[59] Mrs. Blumenthal

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[56] Harrington, New York Herald, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 51-52.

[57] Camera Work 23 (July 1908): 10.

[58] Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 47.

[59] Calvin Tomkins, Merchants and Masterpieces: The Story of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1970): 218-222. After his wife's death, Blumenthal was named president of the Metropolitan Museum, serving from 1934 to 1941.

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bought three Matisse drawings, at twenty dollars: Standing Nude, Seated Nude (rear view), and Seated Nude (profile) (see figs. 1.49, 1.50, and 1.51).

The couple had recently returned from Europe, to which they had retreated after the death of their only child. Blumenthal had encouraged his grieving wife to take an interest in art history. In Italy they had met Bernard Berenson, who in all likelihood had conveyed to Mrs. Blumenthal his enthusiasm for Matisse.

As far as it is known, these Matisse drawings were the only works by a twentieth-century artist that the couple ever bought. Mrs. Blumenthal promptly donated them to the Metropolitan Museum.[60] They were the first works by Matisse to enter an American public collection.

The gift was reported in the Museum's May Bulletin, in an announcement signed "B. B.," for Bryson Burroughs, the Metropolitan's director. Burroughs discussed the significance of the drawings in terms of the controversy surrounding Matisse:

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[60] The three drawings, each titled "Nude Study" and dated ca. 1908-1909, are listed in the "Complete list of accessions, March 20-April 20," in the Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 5: 5 (May 1910): 129. In conversation with Dorothy Norman, Stieglitz recalled the sale, in an account summarized by Alfred Barr: "Stieglitz, with his quixotic contrariness, refused to let her buy them, thinking she would take them home to hang in her great mansion full of Gothic and Renaissance art. When she explained that she intended to give them to the Metropolitan Museum, Stieglitz was dumfounded. 'What, the Metropolitan Museum of Art! Why, they'll never accept them.' Mrs. Blumenthal drew herself up proudly. 'The Museum will take what I offer it,' she said" (Barr 1951: 115).

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> Since the controversy waged over the "Impressionists" a generation ago, no artist has been more violently discussed than this painter. His work makes for itself either ardent adherents or ardent opponents, but whether or not these studies appeal to the spectator, their appropriateness in the Museum's collection will be acknowledged by all who are interested in the newest development of modern painting.

Burroughs took note of the primitivism of the drawings, but was noncommittal as to their quality:

> The drawings are slight in workmanship, but give an epitome of the artist's style. The forms are simplified to an unusual degree and great insistence is placed on the particular gesture to be represented, or the distinctive quality of the substance portrayed, as was the habit of certain primitive artists and craftsmen.[61]

Although some curators surely had misgivings, the museum put the three drawings on display the following year.[62]

On March 21, 1910, immediately following the second Matisse exhibition, the 291 gallery presented "Younger American Painters." The nine artists in the show were D. Putnam Brinley,[63] Arthur B. Carles,[64] Arthur Dove,[65] Laurence

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[61] B. B. [Bryson Burroughs], "Drawings by Matisse," Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 5: 5 (May 1910): 126.

[62] Barr 1951: 115.

[63] Daniel Putnam Brinley (1879-1963) was in Paris from 1906 to 1908. He was a relatively conservative artist who painted in the impressionist style.

[64] Arthur B. Carles (1882-1952), who was born in Philadelphia and studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, had been in Paris since 1907 and was acquainted with Leo and Gertrude Stein. A friend of Edward Steichen, he lived for a time in Voulangis outside of Paris, where Steichen had a home.

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Fellows,[66] Marsden Hartley,[67] John Marin, Alfred Maurer, Eduard Steichen, and Max Weber. The exhibition, which ran through April 15, coincided with two others: the Exhibition of Independent Artists, organized by Henri and Sloan, and the spring annual of the National Academy of Design.

The question of whether or not the "Younger American Painters" were followers of Matisse immediately became at issue. Stieglitz encouraged the controversy. He objected to the indiscriminate characterization of the Younger Americans as Matisse followers; yet by raising the issue he was linking them with Matisse in the minds of gallery visitors. In the April 1910 Camera Work Stieglitz reprinted reviews of the Matisse exhibition, which, he reported, was held

> at a time when the name, Matisse, is being used indiscriminately to explain the influence to which any painter at present may have succumbed whose work is unacademic.

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[65] Arthur Dove (1880-1946), born in Canandaigua, New York, attended Cornell (class of 1903) and began as a commercial illustrator in New York City, where he encountered Glackens, Sloan, and Maurer. In Paris from 1908 to 1909, he was introduced by Maurer to the art of Cézanne and Matisse. He returned to New York in July 1909.

[66] Laurence Fellows (1885-1964) with Brinley, was one of the more conservative artists of the group. He worked "in a decorative mode influenced by Egyptian painting" (Homer 1977: 87).

[67] Marsden Hartley (1877-1943), born in Lewiston, Maine, studied at the Cleveland School of Art, the Chase School, and the National Academy of Design. He was influenced by Emersonian transcendentalism, and via reproductions, by Neo-Impressionism. In 1909 he went to Boston, where he met the Prendergasts—Maurice and his brother Charles—who gave him letters of introduction to Henri and Glackens in New York. In May 1909 he had a one-man show at 291.

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Stieglitz was careful to make a distinction between the artist and his purported followers. Matisse he characterized by "power and sanity," a scientific attitude toward form, and an "almost oriental" sense of decoration. He claimed that Matisse was

> irreconcilably opposed to some of the more emotional tendencies for which critics have tried to make him responsible. "Influenced by Matisse" has become the common explanation of anything that seems queer, any departure from the old standards of artistic representation.[68]

Elsewhere in the April 1910 Camera Work the "Younger American Painters" were introduced, and the question was posed—were they followers of Matisse? Stieglitz stated ambiguously that the work itself was "the best possible answer to those who classed these young pioneers as common disciples of Matisse."

> Each one of them is working along individual lines toward the realization of a new artistic ideal, the only points they have in common being a departure from realistic representation, the aim toward color composition, the vitality of their work, and the cheerful key in which their canvases are painted. The first impression as one entered the room was one of light and exuberant life.[69]

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[68] Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 47-48.

[69] Unsigned, "Paintings by Young Americans," Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 54. A similar observation could have been made about the nine French painters (Matisse, Derain, Friesz, Manguin, Marquet, Puy, Rouault, Valtat, and Vlaminck) who exhibited together at the 1905 Salon d'Automne. Like the painters of the "cage aux fauves," the nine Americans ran a gamut from avant-garde to relatively traditional.

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From the perspective of today, one might add other traits that the artists shared. A core group of five—Dove, Hartley, Marin, Maurer and Weber—comprise the first wave of modernist painters in America. All of the group except Hartley had been to Paris. Five of them—Brinley, Marin, Maurer, Weber, and Steichen—were members of Steichen's secessionist group, the New Society of American Artists in Paris.

An informed viewer of the exhibition, one well acquainted with the work of Matisse and of these artists—Walter Pach, for example—would have seen at once that those most strongly and directly influenced by Matisse were Maurer and Weber. Of the nine, however, only Max Weber and (perhaps) Arthur B. Carles had attended the Matisse Academy.[70]

It is not possible to identify many of the pictures in the exhibition, and I shall not attempt to reconstruct the exhibition here. One painting, however, can be identified with certainty: Arthur Dove's still life The Lobster (fig. 1.53). Dove apparently considered it a de facto diploma picture of his Paris education, for he had entered it in the 1909 Salon d'Automne, where it was exhibited several months after his return to New York. In its composition, color and decorative patterning, the painting is indebted to Cézanne, Gauguin, and

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[70] Arthur Carles claimed to have received criticism from Matisse, presumably at the Matisse Academy, in [Unsigned], "'True Art Emotional,' Carles Says," Philadelphia Press, July 21, 1913: 21, cited in Barbara Ann Boese Wolanin, "Arthur B. Carles, 1882-1952: Philadelphia Modernist," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1981: 46; also cited in Wolanin, The Orchestration of Color: The Paintings of Arthur B. Carles, Hollis Taggart Galleries, New York, 2000: 78-79, n. 20.

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Matisse. It is reminiscent of Matisse's Cézannian compositions such as Blue Still Life (see fig. 1.16), which Dove undoubtedly saw at the 1908 Salon d'Automne, in which he participated.

Most of the critics regarded the Younger American Painters as followers of Matisse, and most were open-minded toward the work, if not entirely convinced by it. Stieglitz's ally Sadakichi Hartmann, writing for Camera Work, defended the work and placed it in historical context.[71] Without discussing any of the Americans individually, he traced their lineage to Cézanne and Matisse and differentiated their use of color from color at the hands of the Impressionists and Neo-Impressionists.

> In several recent exhibitions [Hartmann wrote] I was astonished at the predominance of color....
>
> In contemplating them one has not only the impression of stepping forth into the open, but to be standing in the midst of a conflagration, amidst fires flaming up on all sides....
>
> And nowhere has this impression been more keenly felt than at the March exhibition at the Galleries of the Photo-Secession, when a group of younger American painters held a pictorial confab to prove that the Cézanne-Matisse influence has finally crossed the Atlantic and was asking for its right of existence, even in this uninspirational and artistically behind the time community. It is to the everlasting credit of the Photo-Secession Galleries to have been the first institution to offer the American public these latest revolutionary

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[71] Sadakichi Hartmann (1869-1944), of Japanese-German parentage, had a long association with Stieglitz, who had first published Hartmann eleven years earlier (Camera Notes 3:1 [July 1899]). Stieglitz later acknowledged only two people as having strongly influenced his thinking about art: Hartmann and Weber (Homer 1977: 282, n. 28).

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> accomplishments in the domain of color.
>
> ...As is always the case when painting undergoes a change and is entering on a new phase of development, a score of men, perhaps entirely unconscious of each other's efforts, are bent upon solving the same problems, to unravel the intricacies of a subtler and more convincing method of representation...
>
> The new movement is striving principally for the realization of the three vital principles of color, motion and form.

Hartmann's conclusion reads like a manifesto:

> ...We want no more painting for religion's sake. We want no more painting for the sake of some symbol, of some poetical or ethical idea. We want no more painting for painting's sake, to show off clever brushwork. We want painting primarily for the glorification of color.
>
> This is the war cry....[72]

Another perceptive and well-informed observer was the painter and critic Guy Pène du Bois.[73] Du Bois's review appeared under the banner headline, "Followers of Matisse Exhibit at the Photo-Secession Gallery." Du Bois posed the question of whether the "followers of Matisse" ought more rightfully to be considered "followers of Cézanne." Although he proposed only tentative answers, he was raising pertinent issues. Du Bois introduced his subject by musing, à la the

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[72] "'The Younger American Painters' and the Press," Camera Work 31 (July 1910): 47-49; reprinted in Jane Calhoun Weaver, Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991): 195-198.

[73] In 1907, Du Bois had encouraged Walter Pach to write an article on Matisse—ultimately rejected—for his newspaper, the New York American. More recently he had heard Pach sing the praises of Max Weber. See above: 1.5, pp. 39-41, and 1.8, pp. 111-112.

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poet Dante, on the relative fame of painters, in this case, Cézanne and Matisse:

> The fortunes of fame, as realized through notoriety, are truly inconstant, uncertain, different in aspect and result. Americus Vespucci, through the dispersal of his book on the discovery made by Columbus, robbed the latter of his due. A parallel to this great injustice is being enacted today. It is in the widespread publicity given to the name of Henri Matisse, who, in reality, far from being the originator, the head of a new movement in art, is simply a disciple of Cézanne...[74]

Du Bois attributed Matisse's greater fame to his superiority in articulateness and "perhaps magnetism." Apparently alluding to "Notes of a Painter" as well as to the paintings, he claimed that Matisse "has dissected and divulged the older man's theories, what there is of greatness in his art, so successfully as to have been awarded the spurs that rightfully belong to Cézanne." (Du Bois might have added, à propos Matisse's greater fame in America, that whereas Matisse had already exhibited twice at 291, Cézanne had yet to be shown publicly in New York.)[75] According to du Bois, the injustice to Cézanne was perpetuated when those "next in line" were "dubbed Matissites." He conceded, however, that there were

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[74] Du Bois' remarks are suggestive of a frequently quoted passage in Dante's Divine Comedy (XI, 94-96): "Cimabue believed that he held the field/ In painting, and now Giotto has the cry,/ So that the fame of the former is obscure" (cited in Frederick Hartt, History of Italian Renaissance Art, third ed. [New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1987]: 62).

[75] Cézanne lithographs were to be included in a group exhibition at 291 at the end of the year (November-December 1910). Cézanne's first one-man show at 291, an exhibition of twenty water colors, was to be held in March 1911.

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> "followers of Matisse" among the young men... at the Photo-Secession Gallery...
>
> "Yes," as some one remarked, "these are the children, but what is the father like, and has he taught them manners to equal his own? Do they represent him well or badly?"

To resolve these questions, du Bois proposed that exhibitions be held at the Metropolitan Museum: "We need here a comprehensive exhibition of the work of Matisse, and, better still, Cézanne. What an opportunity for the Metropolitan Museum of Art!" Du Bois correctly observed that Weber had bypassed Matisse for Picasso: "Many of the most promising young Americans... have followed Picasso... as one may see here in the drawings of Max Weber."[76]

In his review James Huneker, recent champion of Matisse, revealed a conflict between his intellectual sympathy for modernism and his inability to accommodate himself fully to advanced painting. He singled out Weber as the most radical of the group:

> We picked out Max Weber from the rest of the revolutionists... Mr. Weber caught our eye (collided with it would be more truthful) with his dainty exposure of three ladies in search of the mad naked summer night [probably the painting Summer]. That their legs are like casks, their hips massive as moons, their faces vitriolic in expression is beside the mark. The chief thing that interested us was to note the influence of Matisse. We know that Cézanne reduced all forms to the sphere, the cone and the cylinder, and this study viewed as such

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[76] Guy Pène du Bois, "Followers of Matisse Exhibit at the Photo-Secession Gallery," New York American, March 21, 1910: 8; reprinted in Camera Work 31 (July 1910): 46-47.

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> reveals plenty of cleverness and research. In the meantime the "picture" has vanished. Like the old saying at the hospital, "The operation was successful but the patient died." The entire new movement, its æsthetic, is based on the avoidance of the picturesque, of the "picture," of the lyric interpretation of nature.

Huneker went on to discuss Maurer and Hartley:

> As for shadows, they are antique studio baggage.... A garden scene with tea table by Alfred Maurer is another vivid piece. It is vital paint this... Marsden Hartley makes you catch your breath, yet a mountainside of his has a touch of the grandiose and no doubt looked that way to the young artist. Sincerity is the keynote, even the interpretation of the ugly, or what is called ugly, for it's all a matter of degree. Monet, now a rosewater idealist in landscape, was declared hideous thirty years ago. The fact is that opticians and aurists tell us that the capacity for optical and aural "accommodation" of the human eye and ear is very great. Therefore do not be surprised if some of these chaps... loom up as pontiffs of the Futurists.

Huneker confessed that after leaving 291 he had visited the spring annual at the Academy "in a chastened mood and sought the compositions" of academic painters as "anodynes." He concluded his review with a skeptical appraisal of the Younger Americans: "We mustn't forget that the followers of Matisse, like the followers of Manet and Whistler, should be regarded with a suspicious eye."[77]

A few weeks later, however, Huneker was more favorably disposed to Stieglitz's painters. Reviewing Henri's Independent exhibition, he complained: "The pendulum has swung from

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[77] James Huneker in the New York Sun, March 19, 1910, reprinted in Camera Work 31 (July 1910): 43-44.

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the insipidity and conventionality of the Academy to the opposite extreme—to rawness, dull vulgarity… As for novelty, at Alfred Stieglitz's Photo-Secession Gallery… there was a grouping of the minor spirits of the Matisse movement that were actually new, not mere offshoots of the now moribund impressionists as are the majority of the Independents."[78]

A. Harrington of the New York Herald, who had written that it had become fashionable "to apply the name Matisse to anything which is not understood,"[79] now did precisely what he had inveighed against, associating the Younger Americans with the name Matisse:

> The echoes of the cry of the last generation, "Art for art's sake," are heard in this new school of color for color's sake, of which Mons. Matisse is probably the best known.
>
> It may be this strange school will be recognized as the beginning of an important evolution in art. Certain it is that the exhibition is attracting much attention, and the snug little gallery over which Mr. Alfred Stieglitz presides is crowded most of the day, especially when he is there to tell why the bright hued, shadowless things in frames are there.[80]

In all likelihood Harrington repeated the catchphrase "color for color's sake" after having heard Stieglitz use it during a gallery talk. Stieglitz in turn had probably picked

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[78] James Huneker in the New York Sun, April 7, 1910, reprinted in Camera Work 31 (July 1910): 49-50.

[79] Harrington, New York Herald, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 52.

[80] Harrington, New York Herald, reprinted in Camera Work 31 (July 1910): 45.

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up the phrase in conversation with his associate Sadakichi Hartmann (see Hartmann's review in Camera Work, cited above).

Elisabeth Luther Cary of the New York Times had recently praised Matisse but denigrated his followers as "a crowd of feebler minds."[81] She now had some words of praise for some of the individuals in the exhibition but expressed reservations about the group—reservations that suggest an ambivalence on the part of the critic about the enterprise of modernism. Once again she cited Cézanne as a progenitor:

> These various talents offer a kaleidoscopic vision of that new art for which Cézanne, we suppose, is primarily responsible... but we confess ignorance of the general aim of the group, unless it is to make color and pattern do all the work of a picture, leaving out values of dark and light and substituting symbol for representation. Of course painting may develop incredibly in such direction, but leaving out values of dark and light upsets all our Western conceptions of a picture. So long as the color and pattern are kept stimulating and vigorous there is nothing to complain of. When they suggest disease and decay the lover of art may justly rebel.

Israel White of the Newark Evening News was typical of the critics in his response to the Younger Americans in that he was sympathetic, if not entirely comprehending, and in that he associated the group with Matisse:

> Well, they went out after color and now they've got plenty of it. But we cannot see that they have much else. They have such color, however, as was never seen on canvas before. And they do not know what to do with it. They have outgrown the idea of making a picture, and

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[81] Elisabeth Luther Cary, New York Times, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 53.

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> their notions of art are very, very radical.
>
> However, this strange work is not to be scorned or laughed at. We have to accommodate ourselves to it just as we have had to adjust ourselves to Sunday trains along the Lackawanna and have had to keep accommodating ourselves to social changes all the time....
>
> ...Intimate acquaintance makes even one of Marsden Hartley's mountainsides a fascination and, hitherto, Hartley has been nothing more to us than an eccentricity; we begin to see something in the use he is making of color. Of the entire company, Putnam Brinley is on the safest ground. He still adheres to the idea of making a picture. He is not a radical except in his quest for color and light.
>
> But every step in the progress of art has been a triumph over opposition; a victory for the radicals. The pioneers hardly outlive the ridicule they create. Their bodies are still warm when another group advances beyond them to repeat the experience. It was so with Constable and Turner, and the men of 1830. Manet and Monet and Degas have not been fully accepted by the public yet. And here comes Matisse and his disciples. Maybe—who knows—we will live to see them become recognized as the sanest exponents of art... The critic is always privileged to keep a loophole open as a refuge for his open mind.[82]

Yet another open-minded critic was James B. Townsend of American Art News, who had written that he had faith in Stieglitz and Huneker, if not yet in Matisse. Now he reported that the Younger Americans were winning converts:

> It would be well for all art lovers who wish to keep abreast with the spirit of the times and to know what were the new movements in art, to visit this little display by these young experimenters, these birdlings, who are trying their wings, which will be found weirdly interesting. It may best be called a pathological art laboratory—an exhibit, as it were, of the vivisection-

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[82] Israel White, the Newark Evening News, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 45-46.

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> ists of modern art. Not that all the works shown can be characterized as productions of the criminal insane or sketches by students of anatomy or makers of crazy-quilt designs. There are some exhibits, notably those of Alfred Maurer, John Marin and Eduard Steichen, which are sane and which, either in richness and riot of color and sunlight, or in delicacy of tone, are delightful. But there are others, such as the productions of Max Weber, which can only have proceeded from a close student of "The King in Yellow." Over this remarkable display presides and preaches in a most interesting way, the high priest, Alfred Stieglitz. It is understood that certain art writers and critics have been affected by the show, as by an emetic, and that others have refused even to mention it, but that a remnant, which came to scoff, has remained to pray.[83]

One reason that members of the press by and large gave the Younger Americans the benefit of their doubt was that they were charmed by Stieglitz. Another reason for the preponderance of open-mindedness was that conservative critics, such as Arthur Hoeber and Royal Cortissoz, seem to have boycotted the exhibition. These critics, in all likelihood, did not want to dignify the artists by acknowledging them, nor did they want to give them publicity. They apparently believed that they could oppose the Younger Americans more effectively by ignoring them than by denouncing them. B. P. Stephenson of the Evening Post reported: "A well-known critic, himself a painter, refuses to publish a word about the exhibition, which he considers 'an insult to the public.'"[84]

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[83] James B. Townsend, American Art News reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 47.

[84] James B. Townsend, American Art News, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 47.

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The harshest review, written in a vernacular, tabloid style, appeared in the New York World. Its headline, apparently the creation of a headline writer who had not read carefully the contents of the article, includes the false information that Mrs. (Gertrude Vanderbilt) Whitney had bought a painting by one of the Younger Americans:

> No Faked Names on These Paintings!
> No, Sir-ree! They're by the "Group of Younger American Painters," They're the Last Word in Art, Says Mr. Stieglitz, Who's Been Exhibiting Them in Fifth Avenue, and Mrs. Whitney Has Bought One of 'Em. So There!

The body of the article includes the claim, attributed to Stieglitz, that Mrs. Whitney's purchase was of a work not by an American, but by Matisse. The author quotes Stieglitz:

> "In five years I have held forty-one exhibitions here, and never have we sold a thousand dollars' worth of pictures in a year. Perhaps, before this exhibition is over, some society woman will buy one. Three years ago Mrs. Whitney bought a Matisse and laughed at herself. 'You need not apologize by laughing, Mrs. Whitney, I said to her. You are the first, but in two or three years, you may claim this artist as your discovery.' And she could if she so desired."

The claim that Mrs. Whitney bought a Matisse appears to be incorrect, and is probably a misquotation of Stieglitz's words.[85]

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[85] Had Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney bought a Matisse from Stieglitz, which the reviewer implies, the purchase could have not have occurred in 1907, but in 1908 at the earliest. I have not, however, found any other evidence suggesting she ever bought a Matisse from Stieglitz or from anyone else. Avis Berman has written, à propos Mrs. Whitney's attraction to Henri and The Eight, rather than to the Stieglitz group: "She was not ready for the advanced art Stieglitz defended, the intellectually

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The article was written in a tone of mock incomprehension that attempts to be humorous. The reviewer singles out Dove and Weber for ridicule:

> … Do you want a new sensation? (Keep on, reader! This isn't an advertisement for Rejuvenating Juice.) Do you want your optic nerve stimulated so that you will see life with a new vision? Go and see Dove's delineation of a diabolical lobster who died a horrible death.
>
> Arthur Dove has done other things, but of all the paintings by him that are on view none shows so much feeling as that lobster. One would judge that it was painted from memory. Unquestionably Dove knew the inside but perhaps erronious [sic] history of that lobster.
>
> But let us hasten to the inner sanctum where the nudes revel. That is where the crowd is—mostly feminine. It isn't embarrassing because—Well, we don't want to seem personal, but really! no ladies you ever saw have anything in common with the new nudes. These nudes never knew what it was to wear a petticoat. By no stretch of your imagination or their anatomies could you squeeze one of them into a straight front. They are all bumps and curves and twists.
>
> Max Weber is the lad who goes in strong for the gyrating ladies. Their muscles stand out in great humps and every other one is curled up in the throes of stomach ache.…

The review includes a variation on a refrain that was to be repeated frequently by American critics confronted by avant-garde exhibitions: "Every masterpiece looks as though the painter's artistic soul had gone into convulsions and

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intimidating atmosphere of his gallery, or his daunting behavior" (Avis Berman, Rebels on Eighth Street [New York: Atheneum, 1990]: 72). Although Mrs. Whitney was a patron of American artists, including Alfred Maurer, there is no indication (other than this headline) that she purchased work from the "Younger American Painters" exhibition.

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committed hari-kari with [the] brush. It isn't a riot of colors. It is the explosion of a paint factory."[86]

Even this critic seems to have been charmed by Stieglitz: "But the patron of art for anarchy's sake was not really violent; he was not even harsh. In fact, he is one very good fellow, and he has a sense of humor besides."

The series of modernist art exhibitions at 291 from 1908 through 1910 had a noticeable impact not only on critics and public but the Stieglitz group itself. After the opening of the Younger American Painters show, Stieglitz announced in Camera Work that the meaning of "Photo-Secession" had changed. The term had once characterized a group of photographers who seceded from traditional approaches to photography; now "Photo-Secession" could be said to refer to artists working in a variety of media who had seceded from the notion of photographic representation.

> The Photo-Secession [Stieglitz wrote] stood first for a secession from the then accepted standards of photography and started out to prove that photography was entitled to an equal footing among the arts with the productions of painters whose attitude was photographic. Having proved conclusively that along certain lines, pre-eminently in portraiture, the camera had the advantage of the best trained eye and hand, the logical deduction was that the other arts could only prove themselves superior to photography by making their aim dependent on other qualities than accurate reproduction. The works shown at the Little Galleries in painting, drawing and

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[86] Unsigned, "No Faked Names on These Paintings!", New York World, March 14, 1910, Scrapbook, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art. See Arthur Hoeber's review of Prendergast in The Eight exhibition of 1908, above, p. 53.

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> other graphic arts have all been non-photographic in their attitude, and the Photo-Secession can be said now to stand for those artists who secede from the photographic attitude toward representation of form.[87]

The May issue of Architectural Record featured "The Wild Men of Paris," an illustrated article by Gelett Burgess chronicling his studio visits to Parisian artists over the course of approximately nine months, beginning in April 1908.[88] It was the first exposure of most readers to Matisse, as well as to Picasso, Braque, and Derain (misidentified as "Dérain").

Burgess approached the subject as a baffled layman eager to educate himself in the latest artistic trends. His curiosity had been initially piqued by the 1908 Salon des Indépendants, at which, he reported, "There were no limits to the audacity and the ugliness of the canvasses." Although Matisse had not been a participant in this salon, Burgess interviewed him first, having ascertained that "It was Matisse who took the first step into the undiscovered land of the ugly."

In interviewing Matisse, Burgess dutifully reported the artist's seriousness, his bourgeois respectability, and his

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[87] Unsigned, "Paintings by Young Americans," Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 54.

[88] Burgess' interviews of artists began with his visit to Matisse at the Hôtel Biron in April 1908 (Haynes Irwin 1908: 105). Edward Fry concludes that the interviews were completed by the following autumn or winter 1908-1909 (Edward F. Fry, "Cubism 1907-1908: An Early Eyewitness Account," Art Bulletin 48, 1 [March 1966]: 70, n. 8).

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concern (then at its peak, due to his involvement with the school) about the "excesses of his unwelcome disciples." Burgess's attempts to convey Matisse's ideas on art met with mixed results:

> Maître Matisse… stands primarily for the solid existence of things. He paints weight, volume, roundness, color and all the intrinsic physical attributes of the thing itself, and then imbues the whole with sentiment.

Although the above statement may be accurate, it is only a partial declaration of Matisse's goals, which were to find equivalents for qualities found in nature, rather than to render them directly.

Burgess was more successful in dealing with the concrete than with the theoretical, as when he reported the following dialogue:

> You point out the fact to him that his painted woman has but three fingers. "Ah, that is true," he says; "but I couldn't put in the other two without throwing the whole out of drawing—it would destroy the composition and the unity of my ideal. Perhaps, some day, I may be able to get what I want out of sentiment, of emotional appeal, and, at the same time, draw all five fingers. But the subjective idea is what I am after now; the rest can wait."[89]

The frontispiece to the article is a full-page black-and-white reproduction, above the title "Tête d'expression," of Madras rouge (1908), one of two portraits of Mme. Matisse owned by Michael and Sarah Stein. Illustrated above the

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[89] Burgess 1910: 402-404; reprinted in Flam 1988: 119-120.

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beginning of the text is a plaster cast of Matisse's 1901 sculpture Madeleine I. (The article features documentation of other artists as well, including a photograph of Picasso with African carvings and reproductions of his Demoiselles d'Avignon [1907] and Three Women [1908], and of a now-lost preparatory drawing by Braque for Grand Nu [1908]).

Despite the breakthrough nature of the article and the enlightening visual and textual information it contained, it led to a confusion in terminology which affected American perception of French modernism. Burgess applied the label "fauves" to the eight artists he interviewed: Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Derain, Metzinger, Friesz, Herbin, and Czóbel. Only four of the artists—Matisse, Braque, Derain, and Friesz—could ever have been properly so classified, and by 1910 "fauve" no longer applied to any of them. A consequence of Burgess's confusion of terminology was that the terms "fauve," "wild men," and "wild beasts" would be employed by the American press indiscriminately, as designations for far-out tendencies in art.[90]

The time span encapsulated by Burgess's article—April 1908 to January 1909—was a particularly dynamic period in the history of modernist painting. It coincided with Matisse's first exhibition at 291 and with Braque and Picasso's first ventures in cubism. It was Matisse's misfortune that at the

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[90] For a discussion of the term "fauve" as it applies to American art, see William H. Gerdts, The Color of Modernism (New York: Hollis Taggart Galleries, 1997), especially pp. 5-7.

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very moment he was establishing his hegemony as leader of the avant-garde he was being supplanted by the cubists.

One reader who was immediately affected by Burgess's article was Max Weber. Percy North has concluded: "Weber's earliest cubist explorations... were probably inspired by the illustrations for the article 'The Wild Men of Paris' by Gelett Burgess."[91] Weber's reacquaintance with Picasso's work of 1907-8 (evoking the memory of his visit to the Bateau-Lavoir in late 1908), and his first sight of Braque's 1908 drawing for Grand Nu, confirmed him in the direction he was already moving—away from Matisse, toward cubism. It was at this time that Weber painted the first of his "crystal figures," angular proto-cubist works such as Two Figures (fig. 1.54).[92]

There is further evidence of Weber's disaffection from the Matisse camp in mid-1910. In the July issue of Camera Work Stieglitz published Weber's essay Chinese Dolls and Modern Colorists, a repudiation of painters who subordinate form for color.

> There are today painters [Weber wrote] who lay open the tubes upon their canvases, according to the laws of

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[91] Percy North, Max Weber: The Cubist Decade, 1910-1920 (Atlanta: The High Museum of Art, 1991): 23. The hypothesis of a connection between Burgess's article and Weber's cubist style was first made by John R. Lane, in "The Sources of Max Weber's Cubism," Art Journal 35, 3 (Spring 1976): 231-236. North found direct evidence of this connection in the title of Weber's 1912 painting Order out of Chaos, a phrase lifted from Burgess (North 1991: 23-24).

[92] On the "crystal figures," a term coined by Weber, see North 1991: 23-25.

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> modern chromatics, then step upon them until the canvas is well and purely covered, and uncovered canvas is a happy accident. After this marvelous achievement they expect trees, pots, heads, figures, or other forms, and even l'expression absolue, to grow out of these colored steps. Impossible! No smear of Veronese green, juxtaposed with one of vermilion, or other formless complimentary [sic] daubs or splashes, however brilliant in color, can ever take the place of even the dullest toned or moderately colored painting that has form.[93]

By using the term l'expression, a refrain in "Notes d'un peintre," Weber alluded to Matisse without mentioning him by name.

Although Weber was discreet in print, he could be grandiose and scathing in private. "Fifth Avenue and the Boulevard Saint-Michel" is an histoire à clef by Temple Scott, a member of the Stieglitz circle. Its protagonist is "Michael Weaver," a young artist who has recently returned to New York from Paris. Employing language that the author had probably heard Weber use, the narrator says of Weaver:

> In Paris he had painted and expressed himself. If he had made little money, he had, at any rate, found appreciation and encouragement. Matisse knew he could beat him at

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[93] Camera Work 31 (July 1910): 51. This same issue contains Weber's essay The Fourth Dimension from a Plastic Point of View (p. 25), which was promptly read and translated by Guillaume Apollinaire, who later incorporated much of it into Les Peintres cubistes (1913). Weber's preoccupation with the concept is further evidence of his affinity with the cubists (in this case, salon cubists such as Gleizes and Metzinger, rather than the Braque-Picasso camp); see Willard Bohn, "In Pursuit of the Fourth Dimension: Guillaume Apollinaire and Max Weber," Arts Magazine 54, 10 (June 1980): 166-169.

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> his own game, and Matisse was no small man even though he had begun to prostitute his genius for gain.[94]

In London, on November 8, 1910, the Grafton Galleries presented a grand survey of modern French art, organized by the British painter and critic Roger Fry.[95] The three "old masters" of the modern movement who were the focus of the exhibition—Cézanne, van Gogh and Gauguin—were still largely unknown in England, where the Impressionists were only just beginning to achieve recognition. As a gesture toward public acceptance, Fry had included Manet, whom he considered to be the progenitor of recent tendencies in art. In addition to the aforementioned, participating artists included Cross, Denis, Friesz, Maillol, Manguin, Marquet, Matisse, Picasso, Redon, Rouault, Seurat, Signac, Vallotton, and Vlaminck, among others. Coining the term "Post-Impressionists" to designate the fold, Fry gave the title "Manet and the Post-Impressionists" to the exhibition.[96] As a consequence of the publicity

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[94] Temple Scott, "Fifth Avenue and the Boulevard Saint-Michel," The Forum, 1910: 667-668. "Weaver" is the English translation of the German word "Weber." In what way Matisse "had begun to prostitute his genius for gain," was not explained.

[95] Roger Fry (1866-1934) was a lecturer in art, editor of The Burlington Magazine, and former Curator of Paintings of the Metropolitan Museum; he belonged to the Bloomsbury group of artists and writers. Fry visited Matisse at the Couvent du Sacré-Coeur in May 1909 and at Issy in June 1910 (see Frances Spalding, Roger Fry: Art and Life (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980): 118-119, and 281, n. 24 and 25; and Elderfield 1992: 183).

[96] The circumstances surrounding Fry's coining of the term are recounted in Desmond MacCarthy, "The Art-Quake of 1910," The Listener 33 (February 1, 1945): 124, and in Spalding 1980: 132-133.

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that the exhibition received in the states, "Post-Impressionists" would henceforth be the preferred term in the American press for Matisse and the first wave of American modernist painters.

At the Grafton show Matisse was represented by three paintings (all lent by American collectors), eleven drawings, eight bronzes, and a ceramic vase. Matisse's paintings were Trees near Melun (see fig. 1.32), lent by Bernard Berenson, The Girl with Green Eyes (fig. 1.55), lent by Harriet Levy,[97]

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[97] Michael Stein purchased the painting, on Harriet Levy's behalf, on November 23, 1908 (Bernheim-Jeune ledger, Gertrude and Leo Stein Collection, YCAL). Harriet Levy recalled: "The [Michael] Steins practically bought out the output of Matisse, even before they were dry. To them was given the privilege of first selection. Their claim preceded even that of Shchukin...

"There came a day when Matisse painted a canvas during the absence of Shchukin, which the Steins and other habitual purchasers did not desire. Mike told me of it as my opportunity to possess myself of a Matisse before it had been purchased by them.

"Early the next morning the Steins and I hurried to Bernheim-Jeune to see the painting. It was The Girl with the Green Eyes. It was still wet and unsigned...

"The Girl with the Green Eyes accompanied my joyous steps to Notre Dame des Champs.

"A week later the Steins brought word from Matisse. He was in a quandary. Shchukin had returned to Paris... He had heard that Matisse had painted another [picture] during his absence. Where was it? It had been sold. He must have it. Matisse said it was impossible, as it had been purchased by an American woman living in Paris. He must do something about it, Shchukin insisted. Matisse told him that all he could do was to introduce him to the American woman.

"It was arranged that the next Sunday morning Shchukin and the Steins and Matisse would come to my home and Shchukin would make an offer to me for my painting. Matisse grinned when he told me about it...

"Sunday morning came and with it Matisse and the two Steins to my apartment. Then came Shchukin. He was short, white-haired, bristling. He stammered. He stood before the picture, then turned to Matisse.

"'C'est be-a-u,' he stammered. And again. 'C'est excessivement beau.' Again he looked to me. 'A new note. No other is like it... Vous comprenez, Mademoiselle. I have thirteen Matisses. This is a new note. This is the only one which is lacking.'...

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and a Collioure landscape, lent by Leo Stein.[98] As Alfred Barr observes, Matisse was surpassed in the number of paintings by Denis, Derain and Vlaminck, but was better represented in the media of sculpture and drawings than was any other artist.[99] By contrast, Picasso was represented by two paintings, Girl with a Basket of Flowers (1905, David Rockefeller Collection) lent by Leo Stein, and Portrait of Clovis Sagot (1909, Hamburg), and five drawings.

"Manet and the Post-Impressionists," which ran through January 15, 1911, was a succès de scandale. It generated considerable controversy,[100] and in the process introduced modern art to a broader public, much as the Armory Show would do in America two years later. Fry, the target of much

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"I said, 'M. Shchukin, I have only one Matisse. The other thirteen are lacking.'" (Levy n.d.)

[98] Leo Stein owned two Matisse landscapes, both of 1906: Olive Trees at Collioure (see fig. 1.9) and View of the Sea, Collioure (see fig. 1.10). I do not know which of the two he lent to the exhibition.

[99] Barr 1951: 111.

[100] The critic of The Times of London declared: "It is the rejection of all that civilisation has done, the good with the bad.... It is the old story of the days of Théophile Gautier—the aim of the artist should be 'Epater le bourgeois' and by no means to please him. Such an aim is most completely realised by the painter Henri Matisse..." (November 7, 1910: 12, cited in Virginia Woolf, Roger Fry: A Biography [New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1940]: 155).

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abuse,[101] responded to his critics vigorously, taking advantage of the brouhaha to disseminate his esthetic views. In defending the artists, he introduced a vocabulary in which their work could be understood and appreciated. Using the new language of formalism, he analyzed art with quasi-scientific precision, eschewing anecdote and sentiment.[102]

In an account of the controversy that was sympathetic to the new painting, the London correspondent of American Art News attributed a prominent role to Matisse, then better known in New York than in London:

> At last we have a real art sensation. The miracle has happened, and for the moment everybody is talking about modern paintings. How has it happened? First of all it is due to the enterprise and energy of the Paris correspondent [Roger Fry] of "The Burlington Magazine," who like Mr. Bernhard Berenson is an enthusiastic admirer of Matisse and other advanced moderns, and has persuaded a London Gallery to give them a trial.

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[101] Dr. T. B. Hyslop, in a lecture titled "Post-Illusionism and the Art of the Insane," spoke of "critics who fall into raptures and exhibit vehement emotions over works which are manifestly ridiculous and degrading" who were "themselves either impostors or degenerates" (Nineteenth Century, February 1911: 270-281, reprinted in Bullen 1988: 221). The artist Henry Tonks "circulated caricatures in which Roger Fry, with his mouth very wide open and his hair lying wildly, proclaimed the religion of Cézannah" (Woolf 1940: 156).

[102] See Fry's four essays, "The Grafton Gallery: I," "The Post-Impressionists: II," "A Postscript on Post-Impressionism," and "Post-Impressionism," reprinted in Christopher Reed, ed., A Roger Fry Reader (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996): 81-110, and in J. B. Bullen, ed., Post-Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception (London: Routledge, 1988): 120-124, 129-134, 147-151, and 166-179. In England, where the Victorianism of Ruskin and Pater held sway, Fry brought art criticism into the twentieth century.

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> ... The collection includes 30 Cezannes,[103] Manet's "Bar at the Folies Bergeres" and 12 others, "Orpheus" by Maurice Denis, and representative collections of works by Gauguin, Van Gogh and Henri Matisse. The last three are practically unknown to the London public and the revolutionary character of their painting is certain to provoke keen controversy and create a sensation. Already the exhibition is the principal topic of conversation in art circles and critics have started taking sides before the doors are open. The most advanced men here welcome the exhibition and say it will have a healthy influence on our painters, teaching them the uselessness of mere literal realism and the all importance of decorative arrangement.[104]

Readers of the New York Times found a supercilious description of the London exhibition under the headline "Post-Impressionist 'Art'"—the word "art" placed within quotation marks. The piece was illustrated with a presumably egregious example of this "art"—a van Gogh painting, misidentified as "Girl with Sunflower."[105] It was noted that the show was "drawing large numbers of visitors" who were "at any rate amused," but that artists who visited the gallery,

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[103] The exhibition catalogue lists 21 Cézannes; see Grafton Galleries, Manet and the Post-Impressionists (London: Ballantyne & Company Ltd., 1910).

[104] "London Letter," American Art News 9: 6 (November 19, 1910): 5.

[105] "Post-Impressionist 'Art,'" New York Times, Sunday, November 27, 1910, part 3: 3. Van Gogh's painting is listed as Jeune fille au bleuet in the exhibition catalogue (Grafton Galleries 1910, no. 67). The flower in question, a bluet or cornflower, does not resemble a sunflower in shape, color or size. The figure has subsequently been identified as male; in Jacob-Baart de la Faille, L'oeuvre de Vincent van Gogh: catalogue raisonné (Paris and Brussels: G. van Oest, 1928), the painting, no. 787, is designated L'homme au bleuet. In Rainer Walther and Ingo F. Metzger, Vincent van Gogh: The Complete Paintings, trans. Michael Hulse (Cologne: Benedikt Taschen, 1990): 676, the figure is identified as a madman or village idiot. The painting's present location is unknown.

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"too angry to feel any other sentiment," considered the Post-Impressionists to be madmen and farceurs.

On his first visit to the Grafton Gallery show, the British painter Augustus John was among the detractors. Writing to his friend and patron, the American collector John Quinn, he quipped: "There is a show of 'Post-Impressionists' now on here, and my post-impression of it is by no means favourable."[106]

Quinn responded with eager curiosity:

> Have you been to see the Post-Impressionists again? Let me know if you have time what you think of Mattisse's work and Gaugain and Van Gogh. These names will probably be all spelled wrong but you will know what they mean.[107]

On his second visit the painter modified his opinions in nearly every respect:

> Here's in answer to your letter... I went to the "Post-Impressionists" again yesterday, and was more powerfully impressed by them than I was at my first visit. There have been a good many additions made to the show in the meanwhile and important ones. Several new paintings and drawings by Van Gogh served to convince me that this man was a great artist. ... Gauguin too had been reinforced and I admired enormously two Maori [sic] women in a landscape. While in Paris the other day I saw a show of paintings by Picasso which struck me as wonderfully fine—full of a secret beauty of sentiment—I have admired his work for long....
> I forgot to mention Cezanne—he was a splendid

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[106] John to Quinn, undated [December 1910], John Quinn Memorial Collection, New York Public Library.

[107] Quinn to John, December 30, 1910, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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> fellow one of the greatest—he too has work at the Grafton.

There was, however, an exception to John's general approbation:

> As for Matisse, I regard him with the utmost suspicion. He is what the French call a fumiste—a character but an ingenious one. He has a portrait here of a "Woman with Green Eyes" which to me is devoid of every genuine quality—a vulgar & spurious work.[108]

Quinn's interest in the Post-Impressionists intensified. He wrote to John in February, unaware that the exhibition had closed. He was now thinking about adding work by some of the artists to his collection (Matisse not among them—John's distaste having put him off for the moment).

> Are any of Picasso's things for sale or do you think I ought to have any of them and do you know anything about their prices?
>
> I assume that none of the pictures of the Post-Impressionists exhibit at the Grafton Gallery are for sale. Do you know anything about it? …
>
> I like your description of the Post-Impressionists.
>
> I was reading the other night the last volume of Lafcadio Hearn's letters and he had a wonderful letter about Japanese eyes and the complexions of different

---

[108] John to Quinn, January 11, 1911 [erroneously dated 1910], Quinn Collection, NYPL. To London art critic P.G. Konody, who shared John's distaste for Femme aux yeux verts, the painting embodied "the imbecility of an intentionally childish daub" ("Art Notes: Post-Impressionism at the Grafton Galleries," The Observer, November 13, 1910: 9, cited in Bullen 1988: 16, and 37, n. 35). A reader of the New Age, however, apparently a disciple of Walter Pater, compared Matisse's painting to the Mona Lisa: "There are strange secrets in her green eyes, deep tragic eyes that will fascinate the dreamers of future centuries, her destined votaries, as the eyes of the Mona Lisa have fascinated men from Leonardo's day to ours" (John J. Adams, letter in the New Age, December 15, 1910: 167, cited in Bullen 1988: 18, and 37, n. 41).

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> races and climes. If I had a stenographer I would have dictated out the passage and sent it to you. It seems to me a complete justification of the Post-Impressionists.
>
> I have never seen any of Picasso's work.
>
> I wonder if any of the things at the Grafton Gallery are for sale. I suppose they would be devilishly high anyway. I mean those of Van Gogh and Gaugin [sic].
>
> ...All the artists here are grumbling. The dealers seem to be over-stocked and the two or three dealers who are interested in modern work don't seem to make much of a go of it and some of the poor devils here are hard up.
>
> I wish the Post-Impressionist pictures were brought over here but I suppose that Durand, Ruel [sic] and fellows of that sort who are interested in cashing in on the Impressionists would "knock" the Posts.[109]

Without waiting for a reply Quinn wrote John again four days later, having now decided to add Post-Impressionists to his collection:

> As to getting two or three specimens each of Van Gogh, Gauguin and Cezanne, I have thought that I should do this some time myself, perhaps in Paris or in Holland. Could you find out whether any of the pictures that are exhibited in London are for sale and whether you care for any of those that are for sale and what the price would be. I don't want to take you away from your work and if this is going to take your time or distract your thoughts please drop it at once. Picasso's things, which you wrote that you admired very much, are in a different class because he is living and his work could be seen.
>
> But if there was a chance to get one or two good Van

---

[109] Quinn to John, February 3, 1911, Quinn Collection, NYPL. In a letter to his friend May Morris, daughter of designer William Morris, Quinn expanded upon the reference to Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), an American writer on Japanese life: "He has one wonderful letter about the middle of the book upon Japanese eyelids and colours of various races. As I read it I said to myself, 'This fully justifies the Post-Impressionists'; for Hearn too saw green eyes and blue skins and purple hair, or at least claimed that such there was." Quinn to Morris, February 3, 1911, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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> Goghs, or one or two first-class Gauguins, at a fair price, I should be much interested. I shouldn't want any but the best, though—something that met with your approval. …
>
> …If the show is over please don't bother about the above suggestion at all. Sometime when we are in Paris together we might be able to look up some of Gauguin's and Van Gogh's work, and perhaps of Cezanne's.…[110]

Until this time Quinn's collecting interests had been primarily literary—manuscripts and first editions of Anglo-Irish writers—with a secondary interest in literary, unadventurous painting: Augustus John, John Butler Yeats and Puvis de Chavannes. A combination of circumstances would lead him from this point to his status, slightly more than a dozen years later (at the time of his death in 1924), as the possessor of the most advanced collection of modern art in the world.

Henri-Pierre Roché characterized Quinn: "The Napoleon of modern collectors… He was a renowned jurist, imperious, suspicious, tyrannical, naïve, generous. He resembled a buccaneer."[111]

Quinn's Anglophilia attracted him to the London exhibition; this would be superseded by his growing Francophilia. The limitations of his wealth would be fortunate for his situation as a collector. As a prosperous lawyer, rather than a capitalist, he lacked the resources of such collectors as

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[110] Quinn to John, February 7, 1911, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[111] Henri-Pierre Roché, "Adieu, Brave Petite Collection!" L'Oeil (March 1959): 35: "Le Napoléon des collectionneurs modernes… C'était un juriste renommé, impérieux, méfiant, tyrannique, naïf, généreux. Il avait l'air d'un corsaire."

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Louisine Havemeyer or Isabella Stewart Gardner, and was forced to concentrate on younger artists such as Picasso, Matisse, Derain, Rouault, Brancusi, Duchamp-Villon, and Gaudier-Brzeska, rather than on the more established masters Cézanne, Gauguin and van Gogh. His friendship with the American painter Walt Kuhn and his skills as a lawyer would lead him to involvement in the financial and legal affairs of the Armory Show, which would in turn augment his interest in modern French art.

The Grafton exhibition was in its waning days in London when, in New York, Max Weber's one-man show at 291 opened on January 11, 1911. Critics now had a convenient label for Weber: Post-Impressionist. The term appeared with frequency in their headlines.[112]

In the exhibition there were thirty oils and watercolors, all but two painted in New York; in addition, Weber showed some of his academic drawings, to demonstrate his skill in

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112 Examplea of the newpaper headlines follow: "Art of New School by Mr. Max Weber/ Post-Impressionist Painter Shows Unusual Canvases, Including Aviator's View of Park," New York Herald, January 11, 1911. "Brooklyn Produces a Post-Impressionist," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, January 16, 1911. "Extravaganzas in Art/ Exhibition of Works by an American Post-Impressionist," New York Evening Post, January 17, 1911. "Revolt Against 'Respectability'/ Max Weber Shows What is to Be Expected from Post-Impressionism," Newark Evening News, January 21, 1911 (Scrapbook file, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art).

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traditional draftsmanship.[113] In style the paintings ran a gamut from Cézannian to Matissean to proto-cubist.

To Weber's dismay the reviews were scathing, the harshest that any exhibition at 291 had yet received. There appear to have been two factors at work: first, the critics now had a label—Post-Impressionist—to attach to the paintings, and hence tended to be angry rather than baffled by works for which they had seen no precedent. ("Post-Impressionist" was a convenient term, because it could mean virtually anything that a critic wanted it to mean: it could, for example, encompass each of the three stylistic tendencies cited in the previous paragraph.)

Second, the most recent works, Weber's "crystal figures," contained more jarring deviations from classical norms than anything most of the critics had yet seen. (Those familiar with Burgess's article would have seen precedents, but only in monochrome reproduction.) Picasso had yet to exhibit in New York (he would debut at 291 the following spring).[114] The presence of Weber's academic drawings, intended to reassure the critics, angered some of them further. Tyrrell of the Evening World wrote of Weber:

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[113] The exhibition catalogue lists titles only, with no dates or numbers to correspond with the uncaptioned paintings on the 1911 (Scrapbook file, Weber papers, NY 59 #6, Archives of American Art). Reviewers complained about the confusion which resulted.

[114] Picasso would show 83 drawings and watercolors at 291, from March 28 to April 25, 1911.

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> Here are some charcoal drawings of his that won prizes at the Paris art schools, only they are not shown with the other things. There is no distinction in mere draughtsmanship, you know. It is the freaks that get the attention nowadays. They are conjectured to prove independence of convention, and a naive, fresh and primitive way of seeing things.
>
> No one is going to believe, however, that nature alone ever made anybody so bad an artist as all this. Such grotesqueries could only be acquired by long and perverse practice.[115]

Arthur Hoeber, as might be expected, was apoplectic:

> Here are travesties of the human form, here are forms that have no justification in nature, but that seem for all the world like the emanations of someone not in his right mind, such as one might expect from the inmate of a lunatic asylum...
>
> It is difficult to write of these atrocities with moderation, for they are positively an insult to ordinary intelligence... We are told that such pictures are the rage abroad, that they make all other efforts seem impossible beside them, which we can well understand, for if these are right, then surely all the rest of the world is wrong. At any rate, by the side of these offerings by Max Weber, the Matisses seem academic, conventional, commonplace, and we are sure before long the French innovator will be relegated to a back seat.[116]

Weber's new paintings were too much for James B. Townsend of American Art News, who had been receptive to the exhibitions of Matisse and of the Younger American Painters. Under the heading "Weber's Weird Work" he wrote:

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[115] Unsigned (Tyrrell), New York Evening World, January 18, 1911, reprinted in Camera Work 36 (October 1911): 32.

116 Unsigned (Arthur Hoeber), "Art and Artists," New York Globe, January 17, 1911, reprinted in Camera Work 36 (October 1911): 31.

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> Weber is a Post-Post Impressionist, or in other words, Matisse, Gauguin and the late Henri Rousseau—plus.[117] … They cannot be called pictures—these presentments of distorted vision on canvas or paper—but productions or expressions of an emotion and a vision that are not shared by other human beings. A future generation may call this "art," but the present writer cannot conscientiously give it that term.[118]

Even the temperate Elisabeth Luther Cary of the New York Times was skeptical:

> Visitors to the Grafton Galleries during the recent Post-Impressionist exhibition and readers of the London newspapers will certainly be interested to see what impression such an artist as Max Weber… makes on America.
>
> The impression made upon the visitor accustomed to the academic conventions and to the bland tenderness of modern ideas in art inevitably will be deeply shocking.…
>
> …The Post Impressionists are prepared to sacrifice everything to… intensity of feeling and of simplification, and they propose not to lose the first force of their impression, the most difficult thing possible to keep. We are not Post Impressionists, and we must express the honest conviction that they are going the wrong way about it.[119]

Weber and Stieglitz quarreled on the opening day of the exhibition and their relationship was permanently severed.[120]

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[117] A Rousseau memorial exhibition was held at 291 from November 18 to December 8, 1910, consisting of paintings, drawings and a painted vase from Weber's collection (Homer 1977: 297).

[118] James B. Townsend, "Weber's Weird Work," American Art News, January 21, 1911: 6.

119 Unsigned (Elisabeth Luther Cary), New York Times, January 22, 1911, reprinted in Camera Work 36 (October 1911): 34-35.

[120] The immediate cause of the quarrel was a dispute over prices: Weber wanted the price set at $1000 a painting, which Stieglitz considered too high. See North 1984: 14 and 18-19.

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When Stieglitz reported on the exhibition in Camera Work, it was clear to readers that his enthusiasm for Weber had waned:

> Mr. Weber shows that he possesses thoroughly the technique of drawing and painting. His compositions are logical and forceful, his mind is creative, his color is pleasing—and yet his work worries one. It appeals so much to the mind that it challenges criticism, and one cannot quite relax in front of it. The show was a preparation and an introduction to the work of Paul Cézanne and of Pablo Picasso, which followed respectively in March and April....
>
> The water-colors of John Marin, which decorated the walls of the Little Galleries during February, following the exhibition of Mr. Weber, were like a breath of fresh air or a field of flowers to one who had just left the classroom after working out an arduous problem of trigonometry.[121]

Of the Younger American Painters, only Dove, Hartley and Marin stayed on as members of the Stieglitz circle. Compatibility of temperament seems to have been as important as esthetic considerations. Moreover, Stieglitz preferred home-grown talent to artists who were overtly influenced by Europe. Dove, Hartley and Marin had more tenuous ties to the School of Paris than did three who did not continue with Stieglitz—Weber, Maurer and Bruce.

In 1911 Patrick Bruce was in Paris, working, in Barbara Rose's words, "in a highly assured Cézannesque style derived from Matisse that, while not yet original, was very accomplished."[122] When Helen Bruce arrived in New York with some of

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[121] "The Exhibitions at '291,'" Camera Work 36 (October 1911): 29.

[122] Barbara Rose in Agee and Rose 1979: 49.

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her husband's paintings (plus examples of her own work), she hoped to interest Stieglitz in giving him a show. Steichen wrote to Stieglitz on her behalf:

> Bruce's wife is over here in New York now with his stuff. You will hear from her. I think he wants something of a chance. In spite of his limitations his stuff is genuine and only differs from Weber's in so far that he only follows one man, that Matisse—in fact they are really the only thing strictly speaking that are à la Matisse. Mrs. Bruce has her own stuff which is good enough but ordinary. She hopes to place them some place so as to make money while her dear husband pursues his serious ideals!![123]

There is no record of Helen Bruce's interview with Stieglitz, but it is apparent that Stieglitz showed little interest in her husband Patrick's work.

Nor did Stieglitz show continued interest in Maurer, who, like Bruce, was a Paris resident in 1911. As witness to the fact that Maurer's paintings of the time were influenced by Matisse, we have Guillaume Apollinaire. Reviewing "The Americans of Paris," Apollinaire wrote:

> A group of American artists living in Paris has just organized a very pleasant exhibit at the Devambez Gallery. The Americans have all, it seems, been influenced by contemporary French painting. One finds here all the tendencies of our various schools of painting, with the notable exception of the École des Beaux-Arts.

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[123] Steichen to Stieglitz, undated [early 1911], Alfred Stieglitz Collection, Yale University; cited in William C. Agee and Barbara Rose, Patrick Henry Bruce: American Modernist (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1979): 93, n. 36.

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> M. Alfred H. Maurer is visibly under the spell of Matisse, even down to his signature.[124]

In April 1911 John Quinn bought The Iron Table (fig. 1.56), a still life in a garden by Alfred Maurer. The only Maurer in his collection, it is painted in a style comparable to that of Matisse and Derain, ca. 1905. Quinn purchased it at the Independent Exhibition of twelve artists held in the rooms of the Society Beaux-Arts Architects. Organized by Rockwell Kent, the exhibition featured three of the Younger American Painters (Maurer, Hartley, and Marin) and several painters from the Henri group (Kent, Davies, du Bois, Luks, and Prendergast).[125]

Quinn wrote to Augustus John about his purchase:

> I bought ... Alfred Maurer's Still Life the other day out of the independent show here. He is a young American artist who is now in Paris and is painting in an entirely different key from what he used to paint in when he was here, a high, bright key. In fact I think artists are beginning to learn more and more that their pictures should not look as though they were painted in

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[124] Apollinaire, "The Americans of Paris," in L'Intransigeant, February 24, 1911; cited in LeRoy C. Breunig, ed., Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews 1902-1918 (New York: Viking Press, 1972): 138. The only other artist in the exhibition asscociated with Matisse was Steichen.

[125] The exhibition, was dubbed "Kent's Tent" by the press. Kent insisted that the Independents disallow any artist who exhibited at the National Academy of Design. Kent's demand caused a breach with Henri, who refused to participate, as did several artists loyal to Henri, including John Sloan, William Glackens, Ernest Lawson, George Bellows, and Jerome Myers. See David Traxel, An American Saga: The Life and Times of Rockwell Kent (New York: Harper & Row, 1980): 60-62, and Vogue (May 1, 1911): 102, 104.

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> a coal cellar or in a prison cell with very little light coming through a small hole in the wall.[126]

Given that Dove, Hartley and Marin were closer to Matisse's orbit than to Picasso's, one might think that Stieglitz preferred Matisse to Picasso; this was not the case. Publicly he was a supporter of both men. Writing to Fitzgerald, editor of the Evening Post, he urged the Metropolitan Museum to exhibit Cézanne and van Gogh, adding: "Should the Metropolitan desire to extend the scope of the exhibition, it might include the work of Matisse and Picasso. two of the big minds of the day expressing themselves in paint."[127]

Stieglitz revealed his preference in a letter to Sadakichi Hartmann, after visiting the artist at Issy, in advance of Matisse's sculpture show at 291: "Matisse is doing some beautiful work, but somehow or other it didn't grip me. Possibly he is ahead of me! Picasso appears to me to be the bigger man. I think his viewpoint is bigger..."[128]

Steichen preferred Matisse. In a letter to Stieglitz he confessed:

> Picasso was a man I never could see—but he himself is an extraordinary chap and has a live mind so he deserves a chance like the rest of 'em.— I admire him but he is worse than Greek to me. I am afraid I am too human and too sensitive to flesh to follow a man's abstraction

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[126] Quinn to John, May 19, 1911, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[127] New York Evening Sun, December 18, 1911; cited in Norman 1960: 109.

[128] Stieglitz to Hartmann, December 22, 1911. Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL.

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> into such [fields?]. Their [sic] is a nude woman. If you can make it out you are as good as I am. It's something like in his paintings he has abandoned color almost entirely painting with black and white and an occaisonal [sic] touch of yellow ochre or grey green scumbled in.

But when Steichen saw Music and Dance (figs. 1.57 and 1.58) at the 1910 Salon d'Automne, he judged them to be failures:[129]

> Matisse always remains a big man but he bit [?] himself this year even as Coburn and Kasebier have done when they made enlargements.— He tried to outdo himself the result is obvious.— And he failed to do just what he wanted to do—answer his critics.— Instead of telling them to go to — and doing himself unto himself— Oh well the whole show is not worth mentioning— Of course this year painting took a back seat—all members limited to 2 pictures instead of six because of the big decorative art section—[130]

The American art critic Henry McBride had been no more receptive to Dance when he had seen the panel at Matisse's studio in Issy. McBride had arrived in the company of Roger Fry and Metropolitan Museum director Bryson Burroughs in June 1910. Although Matisse had provided an "eloquent explanation of the genesis" of the painting, McBride was unmoved. He would later maintain: "For me, those bacchantes were not 'endiablée' ['frenzied'], as Marcel Sembat held, but over-

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[129] Steichen had visited Matisse's studio at Issy several times while the Dance was in progress (Barr 1951: 135-136, and 537, n. 5 and n. 1).

[130] Steichen to Stieglitz, undated [February 1911], Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL. Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882-1966) and Gertrude Käsebier (1852-1934) were Photo-Secession photographers.

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intellectualized and dry. If they were dancing to music, I didn't hear it."[131]

In summer 1910, Matisse received another American visitor, Charles Caffin, who had previously interviewed Matisse in 1908. In preparation was Caffin's book, The Story of French Painting. When it was published in late 1911, it would have a chapter on Matisse, with an astute analysis of the Music and Dance panels:

> In the summer of 1910 I found him in his country studio working upon two large decorations, Dance and Music, for a private house in Russia. Each composition involved a group of nudes seen upon a grassy summit, partly against the sky. The latter was blue; the grass a lively green and the figures vermilion; the pigments being pure from the tubes, except for some mixing of white to render the variety of tones.
>
> ...The effect... is barbaric, which may well have been the artist's intention, and assists the primitive, elemental, one might almost say rudimentary, expression of the whole. For the rhythms of these dancing figures are those of instinct and nature. Matisse explains that he derived inspiration for them from watching the soldiers and ouvriers dancing with their sweethearts at the Moulin des Galettes; and added that the ballet at the opera interested him but was too artificial; in fact too organisé. He searches for the natural impression and then does the organizing for himself. And in the case of the Dance, organization and simplification were schemed to produce an expression of purely physical abandonment of lusty forms to sense intoxication. Contrasted with the dynamic delirium of this canvas was the static character of the Music panel. A nude youth stood erect playing a violin, the tension of his body as taut and vibrating as

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[131] Henry McBride, Matisse (New York: Knopf, 1930): 21. McBride confided to a friend two days after his visit that "there was great uncertainty in my mind whether... [Dance] was meant as a joke or as a serious attempt at something beautiful" (McBride to "Otto," June 8, 1910, Henry McBride Papers, Archives of American Art, cited in Gerdts 1997: 127, n. 82).

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> that of the strings. Beside him was seated a woman playing upon two pipes, the fluting freedom of the music being remarkably echoed in the mobile, willowy arabesque of the figure's torso and limbs. There was also a man who sang. His limbs were gathered up close to his body very much in the attitude of a jumper, while through the wide opening of the mouth his whole nature seemed to be draining out. There were other figures, but the above are sufficiently suggestive of the abstract character of the conception and treatment. I understand that they have been changed, in order to approach more nearly the movement of the other canvas.
>
> This seems to me significant, for the Dance was animal in feeling, compared with the subtlety of expression of the Music. It suggests that the bias of Matisse's imagination is physical; that it is deficient in the finer qualities. Even on the physical side he is gourmand rather than gourmet. In his technique he does not exhibit the Frenchman's sense of craftsmanship; his surfaces and contours are as uncouth as those of his African wood carvings.
>
> To a considerable extent this is probably intentional, a means of discouraging the eye from dwelling upon externals and of drawing the imagination to the inner movement of the forms. [132]

In early 1912 Albert C. Barnes, the Philadelphia-born physician, chemist, and self-made millionaire, asked William Glackens to go to Paris and buy modern paintings on his behalf.[133] Glackens agreed, and on February 12 he arrived in Paris with $20,000 of the doctor's money. The next day he

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[132] Charles H. Caffin, The Story of French Painting (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911): 214-216. The chapter on Matisse has one illustration: Madras rouge.

[133] Albert Barnes (1872-1951) was born into a poor family of Methodist German-Irish origins. After attending Central High School, where he met Glackens, he studied medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, earning an M.D. at age 20. In Germany he studied chemistry and met his future partner Hermann Hille. Following his marriage to Laura Leggett in 1900, he and Hille developed the antiseptic Argyrol, the basis of his fortune.

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wrote to his wife Edith: "I am to meet Alfy [Maurer] at one o'clock and he is to introduce me to a Mr. [Leo] Stein, a man who collects Renoirs, Matisse, etc."[134]

Three days later Glackens wrote to Edith again:

> I have been all through the dealers places and have discovered that Mr. Barnes will not get as much for his money as he expects. You can't touch a Cezanne under $3000 and that for a little landscape. His portraits and important pictures range from $7000 to $30,000.
>
> I got a fine little Renoir at Durand Ruel, a little girl reading a book, just the head and arms, in his best period. I paid seven thousand francs for it ($1,400). They asked eight but came down. I consider it a bargain. That is all I bought so far. Am still looking around.
>
> ... Hunting up pictures is not child's play. Poor Alfy is about worn out.[135]

By the time of Glackens' departure on March 2, he had purchased about twenty canvases from Paris dealers, including two more Renoirs from Durand-Ruel, a blue period Picasso from Vollard (1,000 francs), a Cézanne Mont Sainte-Victoire (13,200 francs), a van Gogh portrait of the postman Roulin, and a Pissarro landscape.

Despite the success of this venture, it was the only time Glackens acted on his friend's behalf. In June Barnes was in Paris himself, at which time he purchased a Gauguin Tahitian picture from Bernheim-Jeune. Back in Philadelphia, he continued to correspond with Paris dealers, to arrange for

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[134] William Glackens to Edith Glackens, February 13, 1912, cited in Glackens 1957: 157.

[135] William Glackens to Edith Glackens, February 16, 1912, cited in Glackens 1957: 158.

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Maurer to scout for him in Paris, and to buy pictures from the Paris dealers' satellites in New York. He was accumulating pictures at an extraordinary rate.[136]

In February a hand-delivered package appeared at 291, containing manuscripts of Gertrude Stein's word portraits of Matisse and Picasso. Stieglitz wrote to Gertrude:

> They interest me hugely and I feel as if I would like to publish them. I am not in business, and therefore cannot afford to pay for the privilege... My idea would be to have a few Picasso's and a few Matisse's [sic] reproduced as illustrations to accompany your text, and to publish text and pictures in a special number of Camera Work... Naturally I'd let you have 100 or 200 copies for yourself... You may also rest assured that I shall be exceedingly careful in the proof-reading as I realize the special significance of extreme care in this instance. You have undoubtedly succeeded in expressing Matisse and Picasso in words, for me at least.[137]

March 14 was the opening day of Matisse's third and last show at 291. The exhibition—his first anywhere devoted primarily to sculpture—comprised 6 bronzes, 5 plaster casts, 1 terra cotta, and 12 drawings. The bronzes shown included Woman Leaning on Her Hands (fig. 1.59), Small Torso with Head (La Vie) (fig. 1.60), and The Serf (fig. 1.61). The plasters included La Serpentine (fig. 1.62) and Jeannette I (fig.

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[136] Richard Wattenmaker, "Dr. Barnes and the Barnes Foundation," and Anne Distel, "Dr. Barnes in Paris," in Wattenmaker 1993: 6-7 and 34. See also Epstein 2000: 35-38.

[137] Alfred Stieglitz to Gertrude Stein, February 26, 1912, Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL, reprinted in Donald Gallup, The Flowers of Friendship: Letters Written to Gertrude Stein (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953): 57.

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1.63), Jeannette II, (fig. 1.64), and Jeannette III (fig. 1.65). Among the drawings in the exhibition were Kneeling Nude (fig. 1.66), Reclining Nude (fig. 1.67), and Standing Nude (fig. 1.68).

In a note to readers of Camera Work, Paul Haviland reported that the sculptures had been "selected by Matisse, assisted by Eduard J. Steichen" and were "typical examples of the principal steps of Matisse's evolution as a sculptor." Moreover, the show would give "the New York public a chance to judge fairly the merits of one of the most potent influences among the young generation of artists."[138]

Critical reaction was mostly negative. Critics whose taste was formed by academic sculpture saw the sculptures, with their pronounced anti-classicism and primitivism, as a direct challenge to their esthetic and social values.

As usual, the most unrestrained indignation came from Arthur Hoeber, who declared that Matisse's sculptures

> seem like the work of a madman, and it is hard to be patient with these impossible travesties on the human form. There are attenuated figures representing women seriously offered here which makes [sic] one grieve that men should be found who can by any chance regard them with other than feelings of horrible repulsion, and their significance is quite beyond the ken of those not inoculated with the virus of post-impressionism....
>
> ... We have never before seen such a travesty on humanity, while the meaning is entirely beyond the present reviewer. It all seems decadent, unhealthy,

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[138] Paul Haviland, "Photo-Secession Notes," Camera Work 38 (April 1912): 36-37.

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> certainly unreal, like some dreadful nightmare, and is depressing to a degree.[139]

Also dismissive of Matisse as a sculptor was James Huneker, his former booster, who two years earlier had written that Matisse could "make his pencil or brush sing at the bidding of his brain."[140] Now he wrote:

> After Rodin—what? Surely not Henri Matisse. We can see the power and individuality of Matisse as a painter, particularly as a draughtsman, but in modeling he produces gooseflesh.[141]

Charles de Kay, writing in American Art News, disdained Matisse for his primitivism and perceived ultra-modernism:

> I understand that there has been some squabbling in Paris as to the right to the new title of Futuristes among those by whom Post-impression [sic] and Cubism are felt to be already behind the times. I boldly claim the name for Monsieur Matisse and this is why.
>
> He takes, let us say, a female figure and models it as well as he can. But it's too commonplace, too human. So he cuts away the flesh and some of the ribs from the torso, slaps enormous calves on the legs, draws out the neck, slams down the forehead, pulls out the ears, gives a twist to the whole figure and calls it "Serpentine." But where, you ask, does the futurist come in? Why that's the way the poor girl may look after she has gone the way of all flesh or perhaps been mangled by wolves.
>
> You are permitted to observe the method in three phases of the same head [Jeannette]. Number one is an indifferently modeled head of a woman. Number two is a candidate for an asylum for imbeciles with her retreating

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[139] Arthur Hoeber, New York Globe, reprinted in Camera Work 38 (April 1912): 45.

[140] Huneker, The Sun, reprinted in Camera Work 30 (April 1910): 48.

[141] Huneker, The Sun, reprinted in Camera Work 38 (April 1912): 45.

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> chin and goggle eyes. Number three—and we are assured it is the same lady—has the cranium of P. T. Barnum's "Last of the Aztecs," and the expression of those carved gods from Easter Island you will find in the Museum of Natural History....
>
> ...For sheer intentional cold-blooded ugliness, for limbs that are swollen as with scurvy or emaciated as by famine, for faces heavy with overdrinking and surfeit or blighted by idiocy, Matisse has Gauguin beaten out of sight.... Monsieur Matisse win[s] the prize for hideous sculpture from the many men in Paris who are striving for that distinction.[142]

A split verdict came from Joseph E. Chamberlin, who by 1910 had become a reluctant admirer of Matisse:

> The large bronze figure called "The Serf" makes no pretense of beauty anywhere: it is a knotty figure horribly roughened by toil and bent with the weight of many more centuries than Millet's "Man with a Hoe" ever dreamed of. It is tremendously strong and graphic, and a work of genius.
>
> In the "three states of a portrait of a young girl," the first state is the only one which bears any resemblance to nature. One of the others is manifestly a caricature; the third is a conceit of plastic cubisme, and frightfully, masterfully ugly. "Serpentine" is a grotesque design based upon a sinuous female figure.[143]

Elisabeth Luther Cary of the Times wrote a mixed review but weighed in on the negative side:

> Matisse is here at the Photo-Secession Galleries to indicate to the public his independence of his followers. Flesh-like modeling is one of his links with conservative modern art. A gothic fondness for the

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[142] Charles de Kay, "Matisse—Sculptor? 'Mazette'!", American Art News 10: 24 (March 23, 1912), 8, excerpted in Camera Work 38 (April 1912): 46.

[143] Joseph E. Chamberlain, New York Evening Mail, reprinted in Camera Work 38 (April 1912): 45-46.

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> hideous is one of his links with mediaevelism. His sculptured heads seen as gargoyles under the hospitable roofs of Notre Dame would charm by their evil strangeness. The short-legged full-lengths, and the elongated figure [Serpentine] in a meditative attitude, elbow on pillar, finger at chin, are abnormal humanity produced with a certain vital energy, but without feeling for beauty or intellectual balance. One large bronze [The Serf] in the centre of the gallery is a full-length of a man with the muscles and sinews ruggedly modeled, the structure is normal, and the type athletic. Matisse worked three years at this model and got the sense of weight and power in the human figure, as well as many a secret of anatomy. In other things one notes fragmentary beauty, but seldom a richly coordinated whole. Judged by these examples Matisse would appear not to be an important figure in art, although undoubtedly he is an eccentric representative of an important movement.[144]

The most favorable—and most perceptive—critique of the exhibition appeared in an article by Felix Grendon in the radical monthly The International:

> Twelve specimens of Matisse's sculpture at the Photo-Secession gallery have set the art world by the ears.... Even the irrepressible gallery rover was taken off his feet, for he was not sufficiently familiar with Matisse to know how completely an exhibition of his figures would give the coup de grace to that lady-like academicism in modelling hitherto so daintily cultivated in America....
>
> The comments of the visitors were highly instructive.... It took an artist [of the] caliber of Henri[145] to halt, to wonder, to absorb, to sense the companionship of a talented personality. Art connoisseurs raised their eyebrows slightly and gave the patronizing

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[144] Unsigned [Elisabeth Luther Cary], "A Few Sculptures by Matisse," The New York Times Magazine, March 31, 1912: 15.

[145] See Homer 1969: 174: "We know that Henri counseled his students, several years before the Armory Show, to approach Matisse's work with an open mind"; see also 285-286, n. 22.

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tribute that mediocrity usually pays to very fine work. As for the common man of an independent turn of mind, he liked the sculpture without probing for reasons, although he marveled perhaps, why it should occasion such a stir.

"I see nothing extraordinary in the three modeled states [Jeannette]... one doubting Thomas was heard to say. "In the first state she's a fright, in the second the sculptor improved her into a frump, and in the third he succeeded in making her tolerably pretty and fair."

"Quite so," returned the guardian spirit of Matisse. "Only it happens that what you call the complete stage is the first, and what you call the first stage is the last."

"The last! But it's hideously incomplete. It's a mere experiment!"

"What of that? Life itself is a continuous experiment. Let me add that I take no offense at the titles Fair, Frump, and Fright... Fair represents what, at a casual glance, any young woman we meet may look like. Or better, what we conventionally think such a person should look like. But were we to arrest the vast array of correlated sentiments, romantic notions and cultural ideas that rush to transfigure our first impression, we should see a head with outrageous clumps of hair and, say, with insistent eyes—in fine, the second state, Frump. A further glance might throw into relief a palpable proboscis that overshadows a receding chin. We should then form a mental picture resembling the sunken-eyed state, Fright. That this third state has an appearance of incompletion, I am far from denying. But I cannot pretend that any one state shows all that there is to be seen in a given person or object...."

Widely divergent opinions were held on the meaning of each of the sculpted figures.... In view of the continuing development of the sculptor himself it is doubtful whether any definite interpretation of his work can be of much importance. What is important is that we feel Matisse's work to be suggestive, inspiring and stimulating to us in our daily discovery of life through novel experience. Robert Henri lately said to me: "I judge a work of art to have value, when it presents new

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> evidence of life." Tested by this criterion. Matisse's work is the most valuable contemporary contribution to sculpture after the masterpieces of Rodin.[146]

According to Haviland, more than 4,000 people visited the exhibition in the course of three weeks.[147] Even if Haviland's figure is exaggerated (it entails an average turnout of nearly 200 a day), it appears that the show generated a great deal of interest.

One interested spectator was Henry McBride, future critic for the New York Sun and The Dial. McBride had visited Matisse in Issy in June 1910, had seen La Serpentine, and had been bewildered "by the Venus whose thighs were almost as thin as wires and whose lower legs were as thick as her thighs should have been." But viewing the same work at the 291 Gallery less than two years later, he had an epiphany:

> I chanced to see it through two doorways which produced a refracted light that must have been exactly like the one Matisse had worked in, for I saw the intention of the artist clearly. Matisse had merely "painted" in sculpture, putting in the streak of high-light on the thigh of his Venus and lengthening out the shadows on the lower legs just as they had occurred on his model; and when properly seen, as on the occasion I describe, the bronze figure, which at first had seemed an

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[146] Felix Grendon, "Matisse," The International 6, 2 (July 1912): 34-35. I thank Francis Naumann for bringing this article to my attention.

[147] Paul Haviland, "Photo-Secession Notes," Camera Work 38 (April 1912): 37.

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ineffective joke, did actually resolve itself into an excellent interpretation of form.[148]

Another interested spectator was Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, who, on the verge of buying The Serf, was dissuaded from doing so by her friend and mentor, the portrait painter Howard Cushing.[149]

Despite the public's interest, not one sculpture was sold. Stieglitz himself bought a cast of Small Torso with Head (La Vie) (now in the Metropolitan Museum), but the purchase seems to have been made later.[150] Stieglitz did, however, sell three drawings. Standing Nude was purchased by Belle Greene, J. P. Morgan's personal librarian,[151] and John Quinn bought two drawings.[152] With these modest purchase, Quinn and Greene

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[148] McBride 1930: 14-15. Cf. Barr 1951: 140. Barr questions McBride's conclusion and strongly implies "that Matisse conceived and modeled his sculpture as a sculptor not as a painter."

[149] This anecdote was reported to Alfred Barr by Dorothy Norman; see Barr 1951: 148-149.

[150] In late November Steichen wrote to Stieglitz reporting Matisse's disappointment at "not selling any of his sculpture" at 291 (Steichen to Stieglitz, undated [received early December 1912], Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL.

[151] On May 3, 1912, Stieglitz wrote to Belle Greene: "I hope you still like the Matisse. It was sent to you yesterday. I laid out 26.50 for it. At your convenience you can send a check to Treasurer Photo-Secession for the amount" (Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL). Belle da Costa Greene became director of the Morgan library when it was incorporated in 1924, a post she held for 24 years. I thank Charles Brock of the National Gallery, Washington, for this information. The pose of the drawing is nearly identical to that seen in a drawing Matisse did in Morocco during his visit there from October 1912 to February 1913. This drawing, "Nudes Seen from Behind with View of Tangier," is reproduced in Flam 1986: 367.

[152] The two drawings were purchased $50.00 ($53.00, including frames) (Stieglitz to Quinn, May 3, 1912; Quinn to Stieglitz, May 11, 1912, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

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joined the tiny cadre of Americans who collected Matisse before the Armory Show.

In August Stieglitz published a Special Number of Camera Work, containing Gertrude Stein's word portraits of Matisse and Picasso, along with fourteen photographs of the two artists' work. An editorial informed readers that the word portraits, not "the subjects with which they deal or the illustrations that accompany them, are the true raison d'être of this special issue." Readers were reminded that "the exhibitions that have been held by the Photo-Secession during the past five years have been devoted to phases of a general art movement that… has been christened Post-Impressionism," and it was claimed that "in these articles by Miss Stein, the Post-Impressionist spirit is found expressing itself in literary form."[153]

Despite the difficulty that readers seemed to have had in comprehending them, the word portraits are straightforward, though non-narrative, evocations of the personalities of the two men, written in rhythmic and repetitive, though simple, prose. Matisse is depicted as "a great one" who is "clearly expressing something" and who is "struggling":

> He certainly was clearly expressing something, certainly sometime any one might come to know that of him. Very many did come to know it of him that he was clearly expressing what he was expressing. He was a great one. Any one might come to know that of him. Very many did come to know that of him. … Certainly he was expressing

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[153] "Editorial," Camera Work Special Number [August 1912].

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> something being struggling. Any one could be certain that he was expressing something being struggling.[154]

The word "expression" was a motto for Matisse; he repeated in his teaching, and in "Notes of a Painter" it was "what I am after, above all."[155] Besides "expression," the portrait conveys Matisse's clarity, which so impressed Leo Stein and Bernard Berenson in their conversations with him. The theme of struggle was related to his clarity and expressiveness. Like Cézanne, Matisse struggled to simplify and clarify his vision. Gertrude presented Matisse as a commanding and impressive figure, but one whose greatness was willful, rather than effortless.[156]

Picasso is presented as one who was "completely charming," whom "some were following," and who was "working":

> One whom some were certainly following was one who was completely charming. One whom some were certainly following was one who was charming. One whom some were following was one who was completely charming. One whom some were following was one who was certainly completely charming....
>
> This one was working and something was coming then, something was coming out of this one then.[157]

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[154] Camera Work Special Number [August 1912]: 23.

[155] Flam 1995: 37.

[156] For other interpretations of Gertrude Stein's word-portrait of Matisse, see Catherine Bock-Weiss, Henri Matisse: A Guide to Research (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1996): 251; Richard Bridgman, Gertrude Stein in Pieces (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970): 118; and John Malcolm Brinnin, The Third Rose: Gertrude Stein and Her World (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison Wesley, 1959): 147-149.

[157] Camera Work Special Number [August 1912]: 29.

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In contrast to Matisse's doggedness was Picasso's charisma. The intensity of Picasso's presence made him a leader, with an effortless charm, but with a constant need to work. Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler later commented on the leitmotif "This one was working"—that it "strikes truly at the crux of the problem of the man and the painter Picasso, who lives only in order to work and is unhappy when he is not working."[158]

Gertrude sent a copy of the Special Number of Camera Work to Berenson, who responded politely but admitted bafflement:

> My cordial thanks for the pamphlet full of extraordinarily fine reproductions of Matisse's and Picasso's. In a moment of perfect peace when I feel my best I shall try again to see whether I can puzzle out the intention of some of Picasso's designs.
>
> As for your own prose I find it vastly more obscure still. It beats me hollow, & makes me dizzy to boot. So do some of the Picasso's [sic] by the way. But I'll try try again.[159]

When Steichen received his copy of the issue he wrote to Stieglitz:

> The Matisse Picasso number was good in every way—and I suppose it served a purpose you had and saw—but I feel it was putting the cart before the horse— A Cézanne number would have seemed more logical but of course the text must have been your chief reason for getting it out.— I am not sure but that was enough reason in itself. —The first time I read it of course I laughed— the second time interested the next time I got it. And now I don't care if I ever read it again— I understand

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[158] Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, "Introduction," to Gertrude Stein, Painted Lace and Other Pieces (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1955): xi.

[159] Bernard Berenson to Gertrude Stein: November 23, 1912, Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL, reprinted in Gallup 1953: 66-67.

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> a Frenchman[160] has been writing like that for a number of years— I will try and get some of it for you—but I'm afraid it won't be as "good" in French because French is very much that way anyhow.— Did you ever send Matisse and Picasso any copies— I haven't seen Matisse in an age. There was some delay in delivering his things here… so what between that and not selling any of his sculpture he is a little "off."— He had a very swell thing at the autumn salon this year—but just a little "stunty"— however it was easily the finest thing there.[161]— I understand he is getting rich—selling everything. — Most of his sculpture editions sold and orders for 3 or 4 years—[162]

It was "probably in 1912" that the first painting by Matisse entered an American museum.[163] The painting, Terrace, St. Tropez (fig. 1.69), was a gift from the archeologist and Byzantinist Thomas Whittemore to Boston collector Isabella Stewart Gardner, whose museum at Fenway Court had been open to the public since 1903. The painting, which depicts Mme. Matisse on the terrace of Paul Signac's boathouse in summer 1904, can be considered proto-fauve, more for its "structural use of color" than for its coloristic intensity.[164] Mrs.

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[160] Steichen's biographer Penelope Niven has identified the "Frenchman" alluded to by Steichen as "Charles Péguy (1873-1914)… the author of poems and meditations, as well as works on Joan of Arc, Victor Hugo, and… Bergson"; see Penelope Niven, Steichen: A Biography (New York: Potter, 1997): 361-362.

[161] Matisse's works in the 1912 Salon d'Automne were two interiors, Nasturtiums with "Dance" II (Moscow) and Corner of the Artist's Studio (Moscow). Steichen is probably referring to Nasturtiums, the "stuntier" of the two pictures.

[162] Steichen to Stieglitz, Early December 1912 [received], Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL.

[163] Philip Hendy, European and American Paintings in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (Boston: 1974): 162.

[164] Flam 1986: 111.

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Gardner had known of Matisse through Bernard Berenson, who advised her on her purchases and was, like Whittemore, one of her protegés.[165] In addition to the painting, her collection would include 5 Matisse drawings, at least 3 of them gifts from Whittemore.[166]

In autumn 1912 Walt Kuhn was in Europe, on behalf of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors, to assemble the European section of the Armory Show. After visiting the Sonderbund exhibition in Cologne on its closing day,[167] he traveled to the Hague, Amsterdam, Berlin, and Munich. On October 25 he arrived in Paris. He later recalled:

> There I looked up that old-timer, Alfred Maurer, who introduced me to the formidable Monsieur Vollard, who although willing to listen remained somewhat noncommit-

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[165] On September 27, 1909, Berenson wrote to Mrs. Gardner: "I have heard a story about how… [the Steins] and I have combined to push Matisse for our own profit.… As a matter of fact I have seen Matisse only for the second time a few days ago, and thus far I have got nobody to buy any pictures of his. By the way he Matisse is much frequented, he tells me, by [Matthew Stewart] Prichard, who also frequents the Michael Steins quite a little" (Rollin Van N. Hadley, ed., The Letters of Bernard Berenson and Isabella Stewart Gardner [Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987]: 456). See above, 1.6, p. 73, n. 61; see also below, n. 166.

[166] On the Matisse drawings at the Gardner Museum, Karen Haas writes: "At least three, and possibly four of the drawings were bought for her by… Whittemore. Another drawing was the gift of her friend, fellow Bostonian Sarah Choate (Mrs. J. Montgomery) Sears. Matthew Stewart Prichard, assistant director of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts from 1903 to 1907, presented her with his own portrait etched by Matisse [1914] and perhaps the sheet of studies done in Tangier as well" (Karen E. Haas, "Henri Matisse: 'A Magnifient Draftsman,'" Fenway Court [1985]: 37). See above, n. 165.

[167] The Sonderbund international exhibition ran from May 25 to September 30, 1912. It was partially modeled on the first Post-Impressionisnt exhibition and was a prototype for the Armory show. It included 5 works by Matisse and 16 works by Picasso.

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> tal. My mission abroad had already been noised about and I could detect a slightly rising interest all around me. I next looked up Walter Pach, then resident in Paris... To his wide acquaintanceship among French artists and dealers, the advantages of his linguistic abilities and general knowledge of art, should be credited a large measure of our success....
>
> ... We went from collection to collection, from gallery to gallery, with constantly growing success.[168]

Aware that the project was becoming too big to handle alone, Kuhn summoned Arthur B. Davies, who arrived November 6. In a whirlwind ten days, Kuhn, Pach, and Davies put together the core of the European section of the exhibition. A moment that lingered in Pach's memory occurred when Pach and Davies had viewed the magnificent collection of Matisses[169] at Michael and Sarah Stein's: "When I had left the Steins' apartment in the Rue Madame with Arthur B. Davies, that extraordinary appreciator made a respectful bow to them—on the other side of the door."[170]

On November 12 Kuhn and Davies left Paris for London. On the 16th they went to the Grafton Galleries to see the Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition.[171] The second Grafton show, like the first, had been organized by Roger Fry, though along

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[168] Kuhn 1938: 10, reprinted in AAPS [American Association of Painters and Sculptors], The Armory Show: International Exhibition of Modern Art 1913 (New York: Arno Press, 1972): vol. 3.

[169] In early 1912 the Michael Steins had added Interior with Aubergines (Grenoble) to their collection.

[170] Pach 1938: 118.

[171] The Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition ran from October 5 to December 31, 1912.

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different lines. Of the three old masters—Cézanne, van Gogh, and Gauguin—only Cézanne remained, and with just five paintings. The emphasis was on living painters in France, Russia, and England. In the French section, Matisse was the best-represented artist, with nineteen oils, seven bronzes, one plaster, and drawings and prints. (Picasso was second, with thirteen oils and three drawings.) The Matisses that attracted the most press attention were Dance I (1910, MoMA) and Le Luxe II (see fig. 1-35).[172]

Kuhn and Davies, greatly impressed by what they had seen in London, urged Pach to get Matisse's help in securing works from the Grafton exhibition for the Armory Show. Pach promptly wrote to the artist. Matisse, then on his second visit to Morocco,[173] sent a cooperative reply:

> You may have for your New York exhibition the paintings that you requested in your letter of November 18, namely:[174]
>
> | | No. in Grafton Gallery Catalogue |
> |---|---|
> | x 4,000 Les Capucines | no. 22 |

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[172] Bullen 1988: 347.

[173] Matisse was in Morocco from early October 1912 to mid-February 1913, headquartered in Tangiers. As was his previous visit (from late January to mid-April 1912), this was an extremely productive period for him.

[174] The seven paintings listed by Matisse are: Nasturtiums with "Dance" II (Les Capucines) (fig. 1.70); Still Life with Greek Torso (Nature Morte) (fig. 1.71); Marguerite with a Black Cat (Portrait de Marguerite) (fig. 1.72); Le Luxe II (Le Luxe) (see fig 1.36); The Red Studio (Panneau rouge) (fig. 1.73); The Young Sailor II (Jeune Marin) (see fig. 1.13); and Goldfish and Sculpture (Les Poissons) (fig. 1.74).

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	4,000 Nature Morte	no. 25
	6,000 Portrait de Marguerite	no. 30
x	5,000 Le Luxe	no. 32
x	15,000 Panneau rouge	no. 35
x	5,000 Jeune Marin	no. 36
x	8,000 Les Poissons	no. 37

The prices opposite each work are for the insurance that I trust you will take out on them. As for the works marked by a cross (x), which are for sale, the price is net—your commission will have to be added. I particularly bring to your attention one package, the one containing Le Luxe, which is painted in tempera and is fragile.[175]

I have no drawings to exhibit. Those which I have in Paris are known, and those which I have done here, I intend to keep for my own use. I am going to write to M. Fénéon[176] to urge him to lend you as many canvases as he can. I believe that this letter is sufficient authorization for the Grafton Galleries; however, I am writing another one for you which I enclose in this letter.

Finally, Mr. Pach, I wish you good luck and I thank you for your interest in the success of my work.

Yours truly,

Henri Matisse

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[175] Matisse's word for the medium used in Le Luxe II was détrempe. The French détrempe has two meanings, distemper and tempera. Distemper is a special type of tempera that uses glue or casein as a binder, rather than egg. As the term "distemper" is not American usage, the word détrempe was translated as "tempera"; the binder that Matisse used was casein.

[176] The art critic Félix Fénéon (1861-1944) had been in charge of contemporary art at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery since 1906. In 1909 he signed Matisse to a contract there, marking a change in the artist's fortunes.

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> I have just received your telegram. I will write to Mr. Fry to tell him to let you have the canvases at the end of December.[177]

In early December Barnes was back in Paris, for three weeks of intense buying. He bought pictures from private dealers and at public auction. From Vollard he bought three Cézannes and two Renoirs. The most important auction was the estate sale of Henri Rouart, who had been an engineer, a minor Impressionist painter, and a close friend of Degas. There were five Cézannes in his collection, for which he had purportedly paid the equivalent of $100 each.[178] Barnes bought three of them, including a small bathers for 18,000 francs (about $4000), outbidding Vollard, Bernheim-Jeune, and Druet. When Barnes put in the winning bid, the Burlington Magazine reported, "there was derisive laughter from some of the worthy dealers and others in my neighborhood. Who, they evidently thought, are the lunatics let loose among us? As the sale proceeded, their derision turned to indignation, for they saw all their standards of value shattered."[179]

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[177] Matisse to Pach: December 6, 1912. Pach papers, Archives of American Art; the letter appears in English translation in (my own) John Cauman, "Henri Matisse's Letters to Walter Pach," Archives of American Art Journal 31, 3 (1991): 3.

[178] Rewald 1989: 162.

[179] Burlington Magazine, cited in Richard Wattenmaker, "Dr. Barnes and the Barnes Foundation," in Wattenmaker 1993: 8.

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Barnes called on both branches of the Stein family. One Saturday evening, with Harriet Levy in attendance. Barnes arrived at the Michael Steins' open house. Levy recalled:

> ...A tall man came into the room and examined the walls. He stood before a large canvas, examined it for a moment, then walked across the room to Mr. Stein. "My name is Barnes," he said.... He motioned to a... painting of a young nude. "I'll take that one."
>
> Mr. Stein followed the direction of his arm. "The Picasso?"
>
> "I'll give you $5000 for it."
>
> "We are not dealers," Mr. Stein said in the low voice habitual to him.
>
> "Not dealers?"
>
> "No, we are collectors."
>
> "You don't sell? Anything?"
>
> "No."
>
> "What are you doing with all these pictures?"
>
> "We enjoy them."
>
> The visitor drew a card from his pocket. "In case you change your mind."[180]

Barnes visited the rue de Fleurus and comported himself in a similar manner. Gertrude did not like him. "There has recently been an American millionaire from Philadelphia," she wrote to her friend Mabel Dodge. "He did literally wave his checquebook in the air. He came over to buy the Rouard [sic] collection at least a piece of it."[181]

But Barnes, despite his gruff manner, was not simply a vulgar parvenu. He was a complicated man, and, surprisingly,

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[180] Levy n.d.

[181] Gertrude Stein to Mabel Dodge, December 1912, in Patricia R. Everett, ed., A History of Having a Great Many Times Not Continued to Be Friends: The Correspondence between Mabel Dodge and Gertrude Stein, 1911-1934 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996): 93-94.

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he and Leo had a lot in common. As Brenda Wineapple observes, "both were ardent, amateur aestheticians, and both were reformers at heart."[182] They struck up a lifelong friendship.

Leo was starting to break up his collection. On December 9, through Durand-Ruel, Leo sold Barnes two Matisses of 1906, a still life and a landscape: Still Life with a Statuette and Melon, (fig. 1.75) and View of the Sea, Collioure (see fig. 1.10).[183]

On Christmas day, back in Philadelphia, Barnes gloated to Robert Henri: "I got some important Cézannes and Renoirs a few days ago in Paris... There are 6 Cézannes... and four Renoirs... I also got two very typical Daumiers, some early Picassos and the Matisse still life and landscape which I believe you saw at the Stein's [sic] apartment in Paris."[184]

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[182] Brenda Wineapple, Sister Brother: Gertrude and Leo Stein (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1996): 377.

[183] Barnes bought the still life for 3500 francs total, including an 80-franc frame, and the landscape for 900 francs total, including a 12-franc frame (see Jack Flam, "Henri Matisse," in Wattenmaker 1993: 308).

[184] Barnes to Robert Henri, cited in Richard Wattenmaker, "Dr. Barnes and the Barnes Foundation," in Wattenmaker 1993: 8.

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Chapter 2. Matisse and America, 1913-1919

2.1. Introduction

Two events shaped Matisse's fortunes in America for the seven years 1913-1919. The first, the Armory Show, has been called "the single most important art exhibition ever held in the United States."[1] The second, the Great War, was an event of global and catastrophic proportions that produced economic and cultural dislocations in Europe and America.

At the Armory Show, Matisse's notoriety was second only to Marcel Duchamp's, and his Madras rouge was second in notoriety to Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase. As Milton Brown has observed, the attack on Matisse by conservative critics was harsher than the attack on Duchamp and other modernists. Matisse had attracted a following among Americans at home and abroad, and the fervor of his supporters had encouraged a backlash among his detractors. In Matisse they found a target for their rage at the pernicious influence of modernism.

Despite the uproar and the publicity, Matisse failed to make much impact on the buying public at the Armory Show, selling only one work, a drawing (to Eliza Radeke of Providence, Rhode Island). Only after his one-man show at the

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[1] William Innes Homer, "The Armory Show and Its Aftermath," in Homer, Avant-Garde: Painting and Sculpture in America 1910-25 (Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington: Falcon Press, 1975): 15.

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Montross Gallery in 1915 did Matisse begin to be in demand among American collectors.

The Steins had been first and foremost of Matisse's American supporters, in their capacities as collectors, promoters, and facilitators. After 1913, these responsibilities shifted. Matisse's principal promoter stateside became Walter Pach, who was in part responsible for his ample representation in the Armory Show. Pach organized a one-man exhibition of Matisse at the Montross Gallery, as well as group shows at other venues in which Matisse participated. Pach also served as advisor to two American collectors, Walter Arensberg and John Quinn, Matisse's principal buyers at the Montross exhibition. By decade's end Quinn had amassed the finest collection of modern art in America.

When Leo and Gertrude Stein separated in 1913, their support for Matisse effectively ended. Sarah and Michael Stein continued to be devoted friends, collectors, and promoters of Matisse, although Sarah's zeal as a Matisse promoter had ebbed, following her conversion to Christian Science around 1911. In 1914 the Michael Steins were separated from the bulk of their collection when, upon the outbreak of war, 19 paintings they had lent to a Matisse exhibition in Berlin were seized as alien property. They continued, nevertheless, to collect Matisse on a smaller scale during the war.

The confluence of the war and the Armory Show's aftermath created an audience and a market for modern art in New York. New galleries sprung up, and older galleries began to sell

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modern works. Among the dealers who sold Matisse were N. E. Montross, Harriet Monroe (of the Carroll Gallery), Stéphane Bourgeois, and Marius de Zayas (a protégé of Alfred Stieglitz). In 1916, Willard Huntington Wright presented the Forum Exhibition of Modern American Painters at the Anderson Gallery, 17 artists who could be considered heirs of Matisse. European exiles such as Marcel Duchamp converged in New York and acted as catalysts for modernism. Writers who supported Matisse and modernism included Pach (whose essay "Why Matisse?" appeared in conjunction with the Montross show), Charles Caffin, W. D. MacColl, J. N. Laurvik, Henry McBride, Arthur Jerome Eddy, and Willard Huntington Wright.

This chapter will explore the Armory Show and its aftermath, particularly as it affected Matisse's reputation in America.

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2.2. The Armory Show, 1913

In early 1913, at the Armory Show in New York, a selection of Matisse's paintings was seen for the first time by the American public. It was a much larger public than the exclusive group who, between 1908 and 1912, had viewed sculpture, works on paper, and one figure-and-landscape painting by Matisse at Alfred Stieglitz's 291 gallery.

The Armory Show, officially titled the "International Exhibition of Modern Art," opened at the 69th Regiment Armory on February 17. It was the fourth such international exhibition in as many years. Compared with each of its predecessors —the two Post-Impressionist exhibitions in London and the Sonderbund exhibition in Cologne—the Armory Show was bigger, more comprehensive, and had greater impact on its host country.

To the dismay of many American artists, it was foreign art—French art, in particular—that generated the excitement of the Armory Show, although foreign works represented only a third of the approximately 1300 pieces in the exhibition. "The great French moderns revealed themselves in all their pristine glory," recalled Jerome Myers, one of the event's organizers, "and while the American artists were finally shown, in this swirling medley of art on parade, they had to take it on the chin."[1]

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[1] Jerome Myers, Artist in Manhattan (New York: American Artists Group, 1940): 36.

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Thanks to Walter Pach, Arthur B. Davies, and Walt Kuhn, the selection of French art was dazzling, in both quality and quantity. In their scouting expeditions abroad, the three men had acted on their own, usurping the function of the committee of the AAPS (Association of American Painters and Sculptors, the sponsoring group) that had been designated to select foreign entries.

Matisse was the best represented of younger School-of-Paris artists, with 13 paintings, one sculpture (fig. 2.1, Back I, in plaster), and three drawings.[2] Among the paintings were Madras rouge (see fig. 1.17), Nude in a Wood (see fig. 1.8), La Coiffure (see fig. 1.18), Blue Nude (see fig. 1.20), Le Luxe II (see fig. 1.22), The Red Studio (see fig. 1.73), Young Sailor II (see fig. 1.12), Marguerite with a Black Cat (see fig. 1.72), Nasturtiums with "Dance" II (see fig. 1.70),[3]

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[2] The Armory Show catalogue lists 3 Matisse drawings: 2 lent by Emile Druet (the Parisian gallery owner) and 1 lent by Stieglitz. According to Milton Brown and Joseph S. Travato, Stieglitz lent 6 Matisse drawings to the show. It is likely that eight drawings were available for purchase, though only three were hung at the Armory.

I am able to identify 4 of the 8 drawings. One of the Druet drawings was Four Studies of a Nude (n.d., Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design). Three of the Stieglitz drawings were Nude (see fig. 1.44), Sitting Nude (see fig. 1.47), and Reclining Nude (see fig 1.67). Of the 3 Stieglitz drawings cited, the first two appeared in Matisse's 1910 show at 291, and the third appeared in the 1912 show. I do not know which, if any, of these three drawings from Stieglitz was actually hung at the Armory. See AAPS [American Association of Painters and Sculptors], The Armory Show: International Exhibition of Modern Art 1913 (New York: Arno Press, 1972, vol. 1): 36; Milton W. Brown, The Story of the Armory Show, second ed. (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988): 293; and Joseph S. Travato and Milton W. Brown, The Armory Show: 50th Anniversary Exhibition (Utica: Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, 1963): 82, 83, and 197.

[3] Recent research in the Archives Matisse, Paris, indicates that the second version of the painting, now at the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, and not the first version, now at the Metropolitan Museum, New York (see fig. 4.12, Nasturtiums with "Dance" I), was in the Grafton and Armory

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Joaquina (fig. 2.2), and Goldfish and Sculpture (see fig. 1.74).

In contrast with the 13 paintings Matisse had in the show, Villon had 9; Picasso, 5; Vlaminck, Marquet, Picabia, and Duchamp, 4; Braque, Derain, and Manguin, 3; and Delaunay, 2. The sculptors Brancusi and Duchamp-Villon each had 5 works in the exhibition.

Of the three Post-Impressionist "old masters," only van Gogh was a bigger presence than Matisse, with 17 paintings; Cézanne matched Matisse, with 13; while Gauguin showed just 8 paintings.[4]

Matisse's ample participation can be credited, in large part, to his friendship with the Steins and with Pach. Leo and Michael Stein lent key works,[5] and Pach, as we have seen, had been instrumental in securing Matisse paintings from the Grafton Gallery's Second Post-Impressionist exhibition.

From the perspective of today, Matisse's entries are notable for their stunningly high quality.[6] The selection

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exhibitions of 1912-1913. See Dominique Fourcade and Isabelle Monod-Fontaine, Henri Matisse 1904-1917 (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1993): cat. nos. 103 and 104, which correct Brown 1988: cat. no. 409.

[4] These statistics derive from the catalogue raisonné in Brown 1988: 244-327.

[5] Leo lent Blue Nude; Michael lent La Coiffure and Madras rouge. In addition, their cousin Bird Stein (Mrs. Howard) Gans, of New York, lent "Flowers"; I am unable to make a more precise identification of this work.

[6] Most of the 13 paintings (a notable exception being the Barnes Foundation's Madras rouge) were included in Matisse's 1992 retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, where they again made a powerful impression on the New York public, though of a very different order from that of 1913.

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included some of the masterpieces of his life as an artist, such as Blue Nude, Red Studio, Le Luxe II, Young Sailor II, Madras rouge, and the relief sculpture Back I.

It takes a leap of imagination to conceive the bewildered and outraged reaction that these entries provoked. New York in 1913 remained esthetically provincial—in Max Weber's words, "the north pole in modern art"[7]—despite the best efforts of Stieglitz and Steichen over the preceding five years. Although Matisse had been given three one-man shows at 291, only one of his paintings had been exhibited. Few even among the discerning public had much previous exposure to Matisse's revolutionary color.

It is well known in art-historical lore that Marcel Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase was the succès de scandale of the Armory Show. A less-known fact is that a close rival in notoriety to Duchamp's Nude was Matisse's Madras rouge, which was reproduced and lampooned in the press with comparable frequency.[8]

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[7] See above, 1.8: p. 101, n. 1.

[8] For example, Madras rouge is reproduced under the following headlines: "Odd Paintings and Sculptures at American Art Exhibition" (with the subheading "Critics See Nothing but European Intellectual Degeneracy"), New York Press, January (19 or 26), 1913; "Art Extremists, in Broadsides of Lurid Color, Invade New York and Capture an Armory," New York Herald, February 17, 1913; "Art with the Appeal of a Bullfight," Collier's Magazine 50: 22 (February 15, 1913); "Art Show Open to Freaks," (with the subheading "American Exhibition in New York Teems with the Bizarre"), Chicago Tribune, February 17, 1913. These clippings can be found in the Walt Kuhn papers, Press scrapbook, vol. 1, Archives of American Art. The painting is caricatured as "'Portrait of a Lady' by Gyp the Futurist" in "The 'New Art' Fest!", New York American, February 27, 1913; the caricature is reproduced in Archives of American Art Journal 27: 2 (1987): 24.

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At various junctures in the early years of Matisse's relationship with America, portraits of his wife played a significant part: in 1905 The Woman with the Hat was the first painting by Matisse purchased by an American collector; in 1906 The Green Stripe and Madras rouge (smaller version) were among the first paintings by Matisse brought to America; and in 1913 Madras rouge was among the first paintings by Matisse to acquire notoriety in the United States.

Summarizing Matisse's critical reception, Milton Brown writes: "Unquestionably the leading target of the American critics was Matisse. No one else suffered the lacerating critical assault that he did. Cubism appeared so strange that it could be ridiculed, but there was absolutely no humor in the disparagement of Matisse; it was angry, vicious, and almost psychotic in its ferocity."[9]

Allowing for some hyperbole in Brown's characterization of the critical assault (despite Brown's claim that "there was absolutely no humor in the disparagement of Matisse," a disparaging Matisse critic did make a puerile attempt at humor),[10] Brown's general observation is sound: New York

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[9] Brown 1988: 168.

[10] A critic writing under the name "Nixola Greeley-Smith" (which Brown surmises to be "a pseudonym of humorous intent") characterized The Blue Nude as "a nude which suggests that a washerwoman has fallen into the bluing intended for the clothes. It also suggests that a little starch might have helped a lot, the naked woman is so flat and flabby." The same author described Le Luxe II as "a study of three horribly ill-formed women on what is perhaps a beach. One of these ladies is offering the other a Dutch nosegay... with a little paper frill around it, like the railing about a grave, but there are no frills around the ladies, nor on them. They look like the drawings done by a bad schoolboy on a slate or a back fence" ("An Alienist Will Charge You $5,000 to Tell You If You're

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critics (particularly the conservatives Cox and Cortissoz) were extremely harsh in their appraisal of Matisse.

Brown proposes three reasons for this harshness:

(1) "Matisse was the most completely represented of all the contemporary artists; the selection included some of his greatest works, so that the impact of his work was especially strong."

(2) "His style exhibited a distortion of form and an erratic use of color which was incomprehensible.... Matisse was blatantly undermining all the accepted and recognizable forms of art: the nude, the still life, the portrait," etc.

(3) "He had a reputation as an accomplished painter and draughtsman,...[so] that his works appeared to American eyes as a willful impertinence."[11]

Brown's three reasons are indisputable; yet they are essentially formal explanations which do not entirely account for the venom exhibited by Matisse's harshest detractors. A fourth reason for the critical venom can be found in the reputation that Matisse had acquired in America by 1913. Matisse was widely regarded as a ringleader with a band of followers. When Cox and Cortissoz attacked Matisse, they were attacking what they regarded as a pernicious and infectious influence on young American painters. To these critics, Matisse, more than

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Crazy; Go to the Cubist Show and You'll Be Sure of It for a Quarter," Evening World, February 22, 1913, clipping book, Walt Kuhn Papers, Archives of American Art, D73: 443, vol. 1: 142). See also Brown 1988: 163.

[11] Brown 1988: 168.

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any other single artist at the Armory Show, embodied modernism itself.

Not even Matisse's severest detractors accused him of incompetence; but to the eyes of his harshest critics his offense was more reprehensible: flouting the rules of design and color in pursuit of a false naïveté. "There is a legend to the effect that [Matisse]… had some academic ability," snarled Royal Cortissoz in the Tribune,

> and it is easy to believe that once, at all events, he at least knew how to draw. Vaguely, beneath what is monstrous in the paintings by him in this exhibition, one discerns the grasp upon form and movement which a man has when he has been trained in the rudiments and has used his eyes. But first going after some will o' the wisp leading him into the ways of wanton ugliness, and then, we infer, persuading himself that he had a "mission," Matisse has proceeded to paint his nudes and his studies of still lifes not with the naivete of a child, but with the forced simplicity of an adult playing a trick. In the process he would appear to have relinquished all respect for technique, all feeling for his medium, to have been content to daub his canvas with linear and tonal coarseness. The bulbous, contorted bodies in his figure pieces are in no wise expressive of any new and rationalized canon of form. They are false to nature, they are ugly as the halting efforts of the veriest amateur are ugly, and, in short, their negation of all that true art implies is significant of… smug complacency… Whether through laziness or through ignorance, Matisse has come to the point where he feels that in painting an interior like his "Panneau Rouge," or nudes like "Les Capucines"[12] or "Le Luxe," he is exercising the function of an artist, and, of course, there are crowds of half-baked individuals who are ready to tell him that he is right.

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[12] Les Capucines (see fig. 1.70) is not a nude, but an interior, comprising still life and a picture-within-a-picture of nudes. It appears that Cortissoz was unable to read the work, even superficially.

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> As a matter of fact, these things are not works of art; they are feeble impertinences.[13]

The Academician Kenyon Cox, writing in Scribner's, shared Cortissoz's indignation:

> With Henri Matisse we have not to deplore the deliquescence of a great talent, for we have no reason to suppose he ever had any. It is true that his admirers will assure you he could once draw and paint as everybody does; what he could not do was to paint enough better than everybody does to make his mark in the world; and he was a quite undistinguished person until he found a way to produce some effect on his grandmother the public by shocking her into attention. His method is to choose the ugliest models to be found; to put them into the most grotesque and indecent postures imaginable; to draw them in the manner of a savage or a depraved child, or a worse manner if that be possible; to surround his figures with blue outlines half an inch wide; and to paint them in crude and staring colors, brutally laid out in flat masses. Then, when his grandmother begins to "sit up," she is told with a grave face that this is a reaction from naturalism, a revival of abstract line and color, a subjective art which is not the representation of nature but the expression of the artist's soul. No wonder she gasps and stares!

Cox condemned Matisse (and other modernists) on seemingly contradictory grounds, for being opportunists and for being fanatics: "With Matisse, with the later work of Rodin, and above all, with the Cubists and the Futurists, it is no longer a matter of sincere fanaticism. These men have

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[13] Royal Cortissoz, "The Post-Impressionist and Cubist Vagaries," New York Tribune, February 23, 1913.

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seized upon the modern engine of publicity and are making insanity pay."[14]

Cox fretted that this "fanaticism," albeit insincere, was a threat to social order:

> There is only one word for this denial of all law, this insurrection against all custom and tradition, this assertion of individual license without discipline and without restraint; and that word is "anarchy." And, as we know, theoretic anarchy, though it may not always lead to actual violence, is a doctrine of destruction.[15]

Frank Jewett Mather, giving Matisse the benefit of the doubt, allowed that the artist might not be a charlatan, but merely deluded. "It is the distinction of Post-Impressionism," Mather wrote in the Independent,

> to have retained the theory of the isolated ecstatic state, but it is now supposed to be complete within the personality itself. Nature does not come in at all, being merely a disturber of the authentic inward emotion. The Post-Impressionist boils within and overflows upon the canvas without any aid from outside, just as a sufficiently enterprising and self-centered silk worm might convert himself into fishing gut by raveling out his own insides. Such is the doctrine of Matisse and his followers. "We express ourselves immediately in paint," is their cry; "and our forms and colors are not those of nature, but those of our own inner emotions." In such a view lies either lamentable self-deception or utter charlatanry.

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[14] Kenyon Cox, "The Modern Spirit in Art: Some Reflections Inspired by the Recent International Exhibition," Harper's Weekly, March 13, 1913: 10.

[15] Kenyon Cox, "Artist and Public," Scribner's 55 (April 1913): 519.

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Mather was unperturbed about the anarchist threat, taking the reasonable position that art is more likely to reflect disruptions in society than to cause them.

> Of course the view is possible that Post-Impressionism is merely the harbinger of universal anarchy. But since art movements usually have followed their social causes rather tardily, it seems more reasonable to believe that we have to do, not with impending revolution, but merely with a particular and transient form of eccentricity which began twenty-five years ago in literature with the Symbolists.[16]

Mather had championed Matisse's work in 1910 and must have felt bitterly disappointed upon seeing Matisse's paintings. Matisse was "an original and powerful draughtsman," Mather acknowledged in the Nation. "One has only to see his crayon drawings from the nude to be convinced of that. They are of quite extraordinary potency and simplicity." But as a painter, Mather lamented, Matisse was a disgrace:

> His pictorial ideas... are either trivial, monstrous, or totally lacking.... It is pitiful to find a really talented draughtsman the organizer of a teapot tempest.[17]

To Matisse's misfortune James Huneker, another critic who had championed his work in 1910, had recently left the Sun. Henry McBride, Huneker's replacement, remained circumspect at

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[16] Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., "Newest Tendencies in Art," The Independent 74 (March 6, 1913): 510.

[17] Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., "Old and New Art," The Nation 96: 2488: 241.

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the time of the Armory Show, though he would soon be counted among Matisse's supporters.[18]

Like Mather, Elizabeth Luther Cary, the Times' critic, respected Matisse as a draftsman but dismissed him as a painter. Of his draftsmanship she wrote:

> Matisse... knows the trick, so difficult to learn, of placing the limbs in their sockets so that they may move with the motion of life. He also has studied the muscular development of the body and can give that great twist of the waist which Michael Angelo taught us to look for and which the weak draughtsmen avoid as they would the plague.

As for Matisse the painter, that was a different story. Cary would not call into question his sincerity, but deemed the results frightful.

> Matisse has been frequently called a charlatan, which implies willful eccentricity in pursuit of sensation, but our business is not with his motives.... All that concerns us is what he has done that is different from the work of his predecessors and that is at the same time worthy of consideration. We may as well say in the first place that his pictures are ugly, that they are coarse, that they are narrow, that to us they are revolting in their inhumanity. His simplification are so extreme that the lines at which he finally stops as expressing the essential contours are to the ordinary observer no more suggestive of the human face and figure than the paintings of animals in the palæolithic age are suggestive of the originals. Nevertheless he has found in the human structure the basic lines, which he throws so brutally upon

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[18] See Daniel Catton Rich, "Introduction," in Henry McBride, The Flow of Art: Essays and Criticisms of Henry McBride (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1975): 17-20.

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his canvas. They are not created out of nothing, and it is here that we feel their defect most strongly.[19]

Less harsh in his appraisal of Matisse was Charles Henry Dorr, writing in the World with a tone of bemused tolerance:

> Henri Matisse, who has a legion of followers, is well represented. His "Le Lux" [sic], the interior of a studio, is amusing.[20] For a novel example of portraiture by this artist turn to "Jeune Marin," a young gentleman with green eyes. There is decorative note in a "Portrait of a Lady" by Matisse which is not quite so freakish as other examples of this eccentric painter's brush.
>
> An American artist, speaking recently about the art of the post-impressionists and their followers, said:
>
> "The revolution in Mexico may accomplish some good, and possibly the rebellious cubists and futurists[21] may have a stimulating effect on American art. It is the centrifugal force, you know, that makes the music of the spheres."

Dorr added that he discerned the influence of Matisse in the work of William Zorach:

> Evidently a follower of Matisse, who has been termed a hypnotist in the movement of advanced art, William Zorach contributes a portrait of a girl with brown eyes and green eyelashes, which in color supplement the

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[19] "Art at Home and Abroad: History of Modern Art at the International Exhibition Illustrated by Paintings and Sculpture," Unsigned [Elizabeth Luther Cary], New York Times Magazine (part 6), February 23, 1913: 15.

[20] Dorr was conflating Le Luxe II and The Red Studio (or possibly Nasturtiums with "Dance" II).

[21] Although the American press often referred to the "futurists" at the Armory Show, there were in fact no Futurist works in the exhibition. The term "futurist" was used interchangeably with "extremist" to refer either to younger modernists in general, or to younger modernists other than Matisse (who was usually designated a "Post-Impressionist").

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verdure of distant hills in the background. This may be art according to the theories of Matisse; maybe not.[22]

The most perceptive reviewer of Matisse at the Armory Show, and the only reviewer to have known the artist personally, was Charles H. Caffin of the New York American. Caffin had interviewed Matisse on two occasions, in 1908 and in 1910, and had devoted a chapter to the artist in his 1911 book The Story of French Painting.

A member of the Stieglitz circle, Caffin had initially been peevish about the exhibition, quibbling in advance of its opening that that it was unwieldy and overly hyped, that it was the enterprise of one man (Arthur B. Davies), and that Cézanne and van Gogh were underrepresented.[23] By March 3, however, he had changed his tune. Although he reiterated his qualms about the inadequate representation of Cézanne and van Gogh, he praised the show: "The International exhibition has won out. Not a visitor to the armory would have missed it, and

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[22] Charles Henry Dorr, "Cubists And Futurists Have Reached America," The World, February 23, 1913, sec. 2: 2.

By the time William Zorach wrote his memoir, Art Is My Life, he had lost track of his work from the show and had forgot that it had been reviewed: "When the Armory Show was revived at the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute in Utica in 1963, we [Marguerite and I] had no idea of what had become of our paintings that were in the original show and could not include them.

"The Armory Show came and went. My pictures were not mentioned in the reviews..." (William Zorach, Art is My Life [Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1967]: 34).

[23] See Brown 1988: 156-157. Oscar Bluemner, writing in Camera Work, echoed Caffin's complaints about the Armory Show; see "Audiator et Altera Pars: Some Plain Sense on the Modern Art Movement," Camera Work Special Number (June 1913): 31-32.

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most of them go again and again. For we are not slow to realize when we have come in contact with something vital."

Caffin focused on Matisse and Picabia, who, with Picasso, he considered to be "the most live spirits of the modern movement." He defended Matisse against the charge of drawing like a child:

> For many years his aim has been to get at the kid's point of view of drawing; to reach that condition of mind and conduct where the thing one does is not the continuation of a formulated system, but the immediate response to a natural, instinctive impulse. He has tried to be the kid, before papa critic got in his fine work of sophistication, and thereby diminished the chance of spontaneous creativeness.
>
> On the other hand, he has what the kid is unconscious of, the Frenchman's need of logical and orderly arrangement. With his search for spontaneous, instinctive expression is united the necessity that his picture shall be organized into a completely co-ordinated composition. He is simultaneously the spontaneous instinctive child and the man of highly systematized intellectuality. This is at once Matisse's problem and that of those who try to understand him.

In effect conceding Cortissoz's accusation of "forced simplicity,"[24] Caffin acknowledged a conflict between "the crude, rude instinct of the child" and "the highly refined intellectuality of the man." Caffin, however, found the conflict to be a source of the power of Matisse's work:

> Every one of his pictures betrays the conflict of the compromise. Accordingly they produce at first the sensation of a shock, but as you come to know them, they grip you with a fascination that is the result of this

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[24] Royal Cortissoz, "The Post-Impressionist and Cubist Vagaries," New York Tribune, February 23, 1913.

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> artist's rare esthetic feeling and highly cultivated intellectuality. For any one who wishes to comprehend Matisse I recommend a study especially of "Le Madras Rouge," "Jeune Marin" and "Panneau Rouge."

Caffin observed that Picabia worked in a reverse process from that of Matisse, whose method

> involves a simplification that strips away as much as possible of the details of objective appearance. Picabia, on the other hand, emulating the musician as he manipulates the notes of the octave, starts with a few forms, colored according to the key of the impression he wishes to create, and combines and recombines these in a variety of relations until he has produced a harmonic composition... In a word, he does not proceed from the concrete to abstraction, but from abstraction to a spiritual impression of the concrete.[25]

In view of the general critical assault, one might have expected that the organizers of the show would leap to Matisse's defense. Such was not the case; in fact, to defend the artists was contrary to Association policy.

Arthur B. Davies, president of the AAPS, resolved that a neutral stance be maintained by the Association. Unlike that tireless spokesman for modernism, Roger Fry, Davies saw his role as educator, not advocate. In an official statement he declared that "in getting together the works of the European Moderns," the Association

> has embarked on no propaganda. It proposes to enter on no controversy with any institution. Its sole object is to put the paintings, sculptures, and so on, on exhibi-

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[25] Unsigned [Charles H. Caffin], "The International—Yes—But Matisse and Picabia? Work of Leading Spirits in Modern Movement Is Discussed in Contrast," New York American, March 3, 1913: 8.

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> tion so that the intelligent may judge for themselves by themselves. Of course controversies will arise, just as they have arisen in similar circumstances in France, Italy, Germany and England. But they will not be the result of any stand taken by this Association...
>
> Any individual expression of opinion contrary to the above is at variance with the official resolutions of this Association.[26]

The March 1913 issue of Arts and Decoration was a special number dedicated exclusively to the Armory Show. The issue was edited by Guy Pène du Bois, a member of the AAPS publicity committee. Du Bois later recalled:

> A great many of its articles signed by other names were ghost-written by me from long and careful interviews with the authors—among them Arthur B. Davies, William Glackens and Robert Henri. The magazine was put together before the show opened. It was, as I look back on it, an enthusiastic blast in celebration of the new freedom in art, a generalization made before the pictures were seen in toto. The young publisher, Thomas Walker Ashwell, gave me free rein.[27]

The issue's "Frontispiece" is a short inspirational essay by van Gogh, under the title, "The Spirit of Modern Art." It concludes with the lines: "There is an art of the future and she must be so beautiful and young that if we now sacrifice to her our own youth we must gain in joy of life and peace."[28]

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[26] Arthur B. Davies, "Explanatory Statement," Arts and Decoration: Special Number (March 1913): 149; and AAPS 1913: vol. 2, "For And Against": 11-12.

[27] Guy Pène du Bois, Artists Say the Silliest Things (New York: American Artists Group/Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1940): 173-4.

[28] Vincent van Gogh, "The Spirit of Modern Art," Arts and Decoration: Special Number (March 1913): 148. The essay is excerpted from a letter

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Next is a "Chronological Chart Made by Arthur B. Davies Showing the Growth of Modern Art." Davies divides modern art into three columns, with the headings Classicists (beginning with Ingres), Realists (beginning with Courbet), and Romanticists (beginning with Delacroix). Cézanne is listed with the Classicists and the Realists, Gauguin with the Classicists and Romanticists, and van Gogh with the Romanticists. In the Classicists column are placed Matisse, Picasso, the "Post-Impressionists," and the "Cubists" (with no artists itemized for these two designations).[29]

The article that follows, "The Spirit and the Chronology of the Modern Movement," is an elaboration upon the chart. Though based on Davies' ideas, it is credited to du Bois (who apparently erred when he recalled that he had ghostwritten it).[30] In a curious omission, the article contains not one mention of Matisse.[31]

The only discussion of Matisse in the issue appears in an article on sculpture by William Murrell Fisher. Accompany-

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from van Gogh to his brother Theo. The complete letter appears as #489 in Vincent van Gogh, The Complete Letters, second ed. (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1978): 567-570, undated (February-August 1888); and also as #489 in W. H. Auden, ed., Van Gogh: A Self-Portrait (New York: Paragon House, 1961): 292-294, where it is dated May 20, 1888.

[29] "Chronological Chart Made by Arthur B. Davies Showing the Growth of Modern Art," Arts and Decoration: Special Number (March 1913): 150.

[30] Guy Pène du Bois, "The Spirit and the Chronology of the Modern Movement," Arts and Decoration: Special Number (March 1913): 151-154, 178. See n. 29, above.

[31] Nor does the term Post-Impressionism appear in the article. Following a discussion of van Gogh, Gauguin, and Cézanne, and a mention of the Futurists, the survey concludes with Picasso and the cubists.

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ing a photograph of Back I is the brief commentary, "The bas-relief... is a splendid example of true decorative use, and its simplicity of pose and execution enhances its plastic appeal."[32]

As a response to the controversy engendered by the show, the AAPS published the pamphlet "For and Against," edited by Frederick James Gregg, a newspaperman who was acting as the show's public relations representative. The pamphlet featured contributions by (among others) modernism's supporters Gregg, Pach, and Picabia, and its detractors Cox and Mather. The only contributor to discuss Matisse was Gregg, who included a negative appraisal of American modernists:

> Until the present occasion the most that Americans knew, in America, of the "movement" abroad, outside some few examples shown at certain small exhibitions here, were the works of certain young men who had gone to France and become immediately and deliberately, perhaps, sensitive to their new environment. Many of them were but weak imitators. It seemed that it was the extravagance of the new foreign painters and sculptors that affected them, and of that extravagance they were the feeble reflectors, all the strength of the originals having evaporated in the process.
>
> The result was the natural one, the public looked on the productions of these disciples as a joke, and could not be convinced that it [sic] had any real or valid reason for its existence. The Association, in bringing over the work of the men so eagerly imitated

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[32] William Murrell Fisher, "Sculpture at the Exhibition," Arts and Decoration: Special Number (March 1913): 169. Apparently, there had been plans to include another Matisse sculpture in the show, for the author also discusses a freestanding figure (not illustrated): "The female figure by Matisse expresses to a wonderful degree the sense of the elasticity of life and its upgrowing from the earth." This is probably a reference to La Serpentine, a plaster cast of which had been shown at 291 in March 1912.

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> wished to allow Americans to see among other things the difference between the substance and the shadow...

After introducing Cézanne, Gauguin, and van Gogh to his readers, Gregg, in a perfunctory manner, surveyed the younger generation. What follows is his discussion of Matisse, in its entirety:

> Matisse is better known here as a painter than a sculptor. He is a graduate of the Beaux Arts, but came early under the influence of Cézanne and Renoir. He has a wide following and his work is in great demand in Russia and Germany.[33]

It should be noted that AAPS members were, by and large, realists rather than modernists, from the Henri rather than the Stieglitz wing of progressive artists. Though inclusive rather than exclusive in their attitudes toward the exhibition of artworks, they tended to be tolerant of, rather than sympathetic to, Matisse. Few were knowledgeable enough about his work to defend it, even if they were inclined to do so.

One might ask, where was Stieglitz in the midst of this uproar? Though he held the honorary title of vice-president of the exhibition, he had little direct involvement, beyond lending the Picasso bronze Head of a Woman (Fernande) of 1909 and six Matisse drawings (only one of which was hung).[34] He wrote a piece for the New York American in advance of the

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[33] AAPS 1913: vol. 2 (Pamphlets), "For And Against": Frederick James Gregg, "Letting in the Light": 23. The article is reprinted from Harper's Weekly.

[34] See n. 2, above.

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exhibition, exhorting readers not to miss it.[35] Yet he appears to have been ambivalent about the show, pleased that modernism was getting recognition, yet resentful that he was being swept aside; but since he had never intended to "bring art to the masses," he was not really being usurped. Concurrently with the Armory Show he presented a exhibition of his own photographs at 291, returning to his mission of promoting photography as a fine art.[36]

In the wake of the Armory Show, the advocate who made the most effective case for Matisse was Matisse himself. On Sunday, March 9, the New York Times Magazine published an interview with the artist by Clara MacChesney.[37]

The previous summer, on a hot day in late June, MacChesney had visited Matisse at his home in Issy. He was by then an old hand at meeting with American reporters, having been interviewed in 1907 by Walter Pach, in 1908 by Gelett Burgess, and in 1908 and 1910 by Charles Caffin.[38]

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[35] Alfred Stieglitz, "The First Great 'Clinic to Revitalize Art,'" New York American, January 26, 1913, Scrapbook, Modern Art in America, assembled by Aline Farrelly, MoMA.

36 Stieglitz's exhibition of his own photographs—about 30 prints—was held from February 24 to March 15; see Richard Whelan, Alfred Stieglitz: A Biography (Boston: Little, Brown, 1995): 317, and William Innes Homer, Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-Garde (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1977): 297.

[37] Clara Taggart MacChesney (1860-1928) studied at the San Francisco Academy of Art and at the Académie Colarossi (Jack Flam, ed., Matisse on Art, second ed. [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995]: 269, text 8, n. 1).

[38] Pach's interview for the New York American was never published. Burgess had interviewed Matisse in 1908 for The Architectural Record. Caffin had interviewed Matisse in 1908 for Camera Work and in 1910 for his book The Story of French Painting.

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As Leo Stein and Bernard Berenson had discovered, Matisse had the unusual trait among artists of being a lucid and cogent articulator of his own esthetic ideas. Having codified his principles in "Notes of a Painter" and reaffirmed them in lectures to students, he was a superb advocate for himself.

His message had changed little since 1908, but it would now appear in the New York Times Magazine, a publication with a much wider readership than Camera Work or the Architectural Record. Despite MacChesney's lack of appreciation—and limited understanding—of his work, she succeeded to a considerable degree in imparting his words in unmediated fashion.

When MacChesney asked Matisse for his theory of art, he replied:

> "Well, take that table, for example," pointing to one near by, on which stood a jar of nasturtiums. "I do not literally paint that table, but the emotion it produces upon me."

Readers of Camera Work would have found this a familiar refrain; Charles Caffin had written: "What is his motive? As he himself explains it, it is the effort to interpret the feeling which the sight of an object stirs in him."[39]

Matisse spoke not only of his theory, but of his practice:

> "I always use a preliminary canvas the same size for a sketch as for a finished picture, and I always begin with

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[39] Charles Caffin, "Henri Matisse and Isadora Duncan," Camera Work 25 (January 1909): 17.

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> color. With large canvases this is more fatiguing, but more logical. I may have the same sentiment I obtained in the first, but this lacks solidity, and decorative sense. I never retouch a sketch: I take a new canvas the same size, as I may change the composition somewhat. But I always strive to give the same feeling, while carrying it on further. A picture should, for me, always be decorative. While working I try never to think, only to feel."

As he had been in interviews with Caffin and Burgess, Matisse was eager to dispel the notion that he was a "wild man":

> "Oh, do tell the American people that I am a normal man; that I am a devoted husband and father, that I have three fine children, that I go to the theatre, ride horseback, have a comfortable home, a fine garden that I love, flowers, etc., just like any man."

No doubt with an eye to his American audience, Matisse stressed his continuity with tradition, rather than his links to the avant-garde. In response to MacChesney's inquiries, Matisse told of his training as an artist, his skill as a draftsman, and his activities as a teacher.[40] As he had done in his interview with Burgess, he dissociated himself from the excesses of his followers. No doubt at Matisse's instigation, MacChesney reported: "He has many followers, who, unlike him, are not expressing themselves, but are imitating him."[41]

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[40] Cf. Jack Flam in Flam 1995: 65: "It is interesting to note his stress on technical competence… and on his extensive preparation and training as an artist." MacChesney quoted Matisse as saying, "I have a class of sixty pupils." By 1912 Matisse had stopped going to the school, but he continued to meet informally with students at Issy.

[41] Cf. Flam 1995: 69, n. 10, and 270, n. 10.

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John Quinn had already begun to collect Matisse, having bought two Matisse drawings from Stieglitz the previous year. An ardent booster of the Armory Show, Quinn was attorney for the Association and the single biggest lender to, and buyer from, the exhibition. He spent some $5,800 for 41 works by, among others, Derain, Duchamp-Villon, Redon, Signac, and Villon.[42] Yet Matisse's paintings failed to impress him. On March 2 he wrote to the Irish poet George Russell (known as A. E.):

> I delivered the opening address and I said that it was the best exhibition of contemporary art that had ever been held anywhere... There is something in the work even of the Cubists and Futurists. They are not all charlatans by any means. Matisse I do not see. Some of Picasso's things are good; others not. But I want to say this: that after studying the work of the Cubist and Futurists, it makes it hard to stomach the sweetness, the prettiness and the clawing [sic] sentiment of some of the other work.[43]

One might have expected that Dr. Barnes, who had purchased two Matisse paintings from Leo and Gertrude Stein the previous year, would have bought some Matisses from the Armory Show; that, however, did not happen. Indeed, as Milton Brown has observed, Barnes missed an opportunity to buy Matisses at bargain prices.[44] Madras rouge, at the time

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[42] Brown 1988: 122.

[43] Quinn to Russell, March 2, 1913, John Quinn Memorial Collection, New York Public Library.

[44] Cf. Brown 1988: 127: "It is interesting... that he [Barnes] did not respond to any of the important works by that master at the Armory Show. And for a bargain hunter, the prices should have been enticing: $4,050

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Matisse's most celebrated—or notorious—work in America, would eventually enter Barnes' collection, but it was on loan to the show from Michael Stein and was not for sale. Barnes' only purchase from the show was a Vlaminck still life, for $162.[45] On March 30, Barnes wrote to Leo Stein:

> I enclose a newspaper clipping anent the big show... It was the sensation of the generation and proved a big money-maker for the organizers. The attendance was frequently 10,000 a day, many paintings were sold, and the newspapers had columns almost daily about it. Academic art received a blow from which it will never entirely recover. The works of Matisse—the critics said —did not indicate that he is as great a painter as he has been acclaimed. Picasso and the outre Cubists got more attention than all the rest of the show but the public attitude toward them was largely that of amusement, curiosity and derision—so you had better sell all your Picassos....
>
> The Matisse still life that I got from you is now one of my favorites and grows daily in my liking. Tell your sister that I am mighty glad that she would sell the two Matisses but not one.
>
> I suppose Maurer told you about his show and the big crowds that he drew every day.[46] If he had been a few weeks later, when the effects of the big show were manifest, I believe he would have sold all he exhibited. I enclose clippings about it and also about that of Glackens, whom [sic] I think is the strongest man in America.
>
> Remember me to your sister and to Miss Tauglitz [Toklas] (I've guessed at the spelling).

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for the famous Panneau rouge (Red Studio), $1,350 for the Jeune Marin, and the same price for Le Luxe."

[45] Brown 1988: 322.

[46] Alfred Maurer's one-man show was held at the Folsom Galleries, 396 Fifth Avenue, from January 15 to 29. According to one reviewer, 27 Post-Impressionist works were shown, along with four academic canvases which looked "dead when compared with the artist's new pictures" (cited in Elizabeth McCausland, A. H. Maurer [New York: A. A. Wyn, 1951]: 115-116).

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> I expect to be in Paris about June 1st and will look you up.[47]

Of all the visitors to the Armory Show, only one had the daring and perspicacity to buy a Matisse. The work sold was Four Studies of a Nude (fig. 2.3), one of two drawings lent to the exhibition by the Galerie Druet, Paris. The buyer was Eliza Radeke of Providence, Rhode Island.[48]

Mrs. Radeke, president of the Rhode Island School of Design, was a distinguished collector and a generous benefactor to the school's Museum of Art.[49] Her broad collecting interests encompassed antiquities, folk art, furniture, drawings, and French and American painting. Carla Mathes Woodward writes:

> Mrs. Radeke's strongest mark on the [museum's] collection was undeniably in the area of 19th century French painting and drawings. Drawings were her personal passion, and she and [her husband] Dr. Radeke had collected in many areas; his old masters came to the collection first. It is Mrs. Radeke's French drawings, however, that are truly extraordinary.[50]

John R. Frazier, a former student at the school and one of her successors as president, remembered her as

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[47] Barnes to Stein, March 30, 1913, Leo Stein Collection, YCAL.

[48] Mrs. Radeke purchased Four Studies of a Nude on March 2, 1913, for $67.50 (Brown 1988: 293).

[49] Eliza Greene Radeke (1855-1931) was the daughter of Helen Rowe (Mrs. Jesse) Metcalf, founder of the Rhode Island School of Design. She was the widow of Dr. Gustav Radeke, who died in 1892.

[50] Carla Mathes Woodward, "Acquisition, Preservation, and Education: A History of the Museum" in Rhode Island School of Design, A Handbook of the Museum of Art (Providence, 1985): 32.

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> the personification of devotion and dedication. These qualities inspire like devotion. She was quiet, retiring, and kind, but she had a strong will and could be arbitrary without causing resentment. She sailed a taut ship, but everyone respected the skipper.

Frazier noted that she "had a respect for expert opinion and a willingness to be guided by professional direction."[51] Yet there is nothing to indicate she followed anyone's counsel but her own in purchasing the Matisse.

The Armory Show had a powerful effect on young artists. Five years earlier, William Zorach, visiting Matisse's first one-man show at 291, had caught a glimpse of "a bigger, deeper, more simple and archaic world."[52] Now the twenty-year-old Stuart Davis joined the ranks of the converted. "I was enormously excited by the show," Davis later recalled

> and responded particularly to Gauguin, van Gogh and Matisse, because broad generalizations of form and the non-imitative use of color were already practices within my own experience. I also sensed an objective order in these works which I felt was lacking in my own. It gave me the same kind of excitement I got from the numerical precision of... Negro piano players... and I resolved that I would quite definitely have to become a "modern" artist.[53]

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[51] John R. Frazier, "History of Rhode Island School of Design," an address to the Rhode Island Historical Society, November 13, 1960, cited in Carla Mathes Woodward, "Acquisition, Preservation, and Education: A History of the Museum" in Rhode Island School of Design 1985: 23.

[52] "Impressions of 291," Camera Work 47 (July 1914): 61.

[53] "Autobiography," New York, American Artists Group, 1945: unpaginated, cited by Diane Kelder, in "Stuart Davis and Modernism: An Overview," in Lowery Stokes Sims, Stuart Davis American Painter, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991): 20. Stuart Davis (1894-1964), was born in Philadelphia to artistic parents: his father was art editor of

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The collector Louisine Havemeyer attended the Armory Show and wrote about it to her friend Mary Cassatt. Now in her late sixties, Cassatt was decidedly unimpressed with Matisse. In the 1870s she had been one of the progressives; now her views echoed those of the conservatives. When Mrs. Havemeyer compared Matisse to the composer Richard Strauss, Cassatt demurred:

> As to what you write about pictures, I think you flatter Matisse, Strauss after all is a musician now Matisse is a "farceur." ...My dear Louie, it is not alone in politics that anarchy reigns, it saddens me, of course it is in a certain measure our set [the Impressionists] which has made this possible. People have been persuaded that composition, pictures, were not necessary that sketches hints were enough. Certain things should not have left the artists studio nor his portfolios. Then the public accepted everything.[54]

Cassatt conveyed similar sentiments, but with more heat, to her nineteen-year-old niece Ellen Mary Cassatt. When her niece solicited her opinions of Matisse, other Armory Show artists, and Gertrude Stein, she replied:

> Yours of the 17th is just here; and as the weather is storming.. I have plenty of time before me to answer some of your questions about cubists and others. No Frenchman of any standing in the art world has ever taken any of these things seriously. As to Matisse, one has only to see his early work to understand him. His pictures were

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the Philadelphia Press, and his mother was a sculptor. He was a student of Robert Henri.

[54] Mary Cassatt to Louisine Havemeyer, Easter [March 23, 1913], cited in Frances Weitzenhoffer, The Havemeyers: Impressionism Comes to America (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1986): 210. Although Cassatt, who was living in Grasse, in the Alpes-Maritimes, did not attend the show, she was represented by two works: an oil and a watercolor (see Brown 1988: 252).

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extremely feeble in execution and very commonplace in vision. As he is intelligent, he saw that real excellence, which would bring him consideration, was not for him on that line. He shut himself up for years and evolved these things; he knew that in the present anarchical state of things—not only in the art world but everywhere—he would achieve notoriety—and he has. At his exhibition in Paris you never hear French spoken, only German, Scandinavian, and other Germanic languages; and then people think notoriety is fame and even buy these pictures or daubs. ...As to this Gertrude Stein, she is one of a family of California Jews who came to Paris poor and unknown; but they are not Jews for nothing.[55] They—two of the brothers—started a studio, bought Matisse's pictures cheap and began to pose as amateurs of the only real art. Little by little people who want to be amused went to these receptions where Stein received in sandals and his wife in one garment fastened by a broach, which if it gave way might disclose the costume of Eve.... The pose was, if you don't admire these daubs I am sorry for you; you are not one of the chosen few.... When Degas and Monet, Renoir and I first exhibited, the Public did not understand, the artists did.... Now the Public say—the foreign public—Degas and the others were laughed at; well, we will be wiser than they... not knowing that the art world of those days did accept those men; only, as they held "L'assiette de beurre,"[56] they would not divide it with outsiders. No sound artist ever looked except with scorn at these cubists and Matisse.[57]

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[55] Cassatt's biographer, Nancy Mowll Mathews, writes: "Considering that she [Cassatt] was not free of the stereotypes of Jews, blacks, and the poor that characterized her age, she was remarkably democratic in her outlook. She thought nothing of using labels such as 'Jew' or 'niggerbaby' in a derogatory manner, but did not seem to be affected by racial bias in her friendships or treatment of others." Mathews also notes that Cassatt's pro-Dreyfus views caused a temporary breach in her relationship with Degas (Nancy Mowll Mathews, Mary Cassatt: A Life [New York: Villard Books, 1994]: 275-276).

[56] As Nancy Mowll Mathews notes, "l'assiette de beurre," in this context, means "a soft government job" (Nancy Mowll Mathews, ed., Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters [New York: Abbeville Press, 1984]: 311, n. 4).

[57] Mary Cassatt to Ellen Mary Cassatt, March 26 [1913], reprinted in Mathews 1984: 310.

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That the Armory Show found a home at the Art Institute of Chicago can be credited in large part to Arthur Taylor Aldis, the Chicago realtor and patron of the arts. Aldis was in Paris in November 1912, where he met Davies and Kuhn.[58] Right on the spot, Aldis committed the Art Institute to be host to the show following its New York run, without consulting the director or trustees. He must have wielded considerable influence at the Art Institute, for he was to prevail, despite the ambivalence of director William M. R. French and the opposition of several of the trustees.[59]

When the exhibition opened at the Armory, one of the reviewers was the Chicago Tribune's Harriet Monroe. While favorably disposed to the exhibition, Monroe had reservations about Matisse:

> "All modern art speaks French," said Arthur B. Davies... "We have tried to follow the line of development [from Ingres to Delacroix, Corot, Courbet, Manet, Monet, Renoir, Degas, and Whistler]... and on to Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, and the modern groups in the various nations. You will find they all take their places as offshoots of one branch or another of the main tree. They all fall in line."

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[58] Davis and Kuhn were introduced to Aldis by the sculptor Jo Davidson, who had belonged to Steichen's "New Society of American Artists in Paris" and who remained a Paris resident (see Andrew Martinez, "A Mixed Reception for Modernism: The 1913 Armory Show at the Art Institute of Chicago," Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies 19, 1 [1993]: 102, n. 14). Aldis, a governing member of the Art Institute, was a patron "at a time when patrons played a major role in shaping museum exhibitions"; see Martinez 1993: 36.

[59] Director French's ambivalence about the exhibition is documented in Richard R. Brettell and Sue Ann Prince, "The Art Institute Assimilates Modernism" in Sue Ann Prince, ed., The Old Guard and the Avant-Garde: Modernism in Chicago 1910-1940 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990): 209-214; see also Martinez 1993: 36-57.

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> It is true; they all fall in line. Even the cubists seem to be playing interesting games with kaleidoscope polygons of color; even Matisse is dancing the tango on some weird barbarous shore. We cannot always tell what they mean, but at least they are having a good time.
>
> They are as sure of themselves and as eager as children, and Matisse, in his Panneau Rouge [Red Studio], and one or two other pictures, throws figures and furniture on his canvas with precisely the prodigal impartiality and the reckless drawing of a child.
>
> If these leave us cold, we may go back to their predecessors, the three great painters whom they claim as masters of post-impressionism…
>
> There is a generous amplitude about the show, and a superb vitality. It is brimful and running over with things that are at least alive, even if one does not like their kind of life.

"Thus it is fortunate," Monroe concluded, "that Chicago is to see part of the exhibition."[60]

Director French went to New York to see the exhibition early in its run. On the train back to Chicago, he drafted a report to Charles L. Hutchinson, president of the Art Institute's board of trustees. French's reaction to the show was mixed, but sharply negative with regard to Matisse:

> To my surprise, nine galleries, a full half the space, is [sic] occupied by American works, some good, some bad, some extreme, some normal.… Beside this American half there is another fraction given over to modernists of former years… so that considerably less than half the exhibition is of the real foreign modernists… Another considerable fraction of the works exhibited, if offered by themselves, would not arrest attention by any original or striking characteristics, but would appear simply incompetent, just plain bad…

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[60] Harriet Monroe, "Art Show Open to Freaks," Chicago Tribune, February 17, 1913. The headline—in all likelihood not written by Monroe—belies the measured tone of the review.

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> The fraction of the exhibition comprising the real modernists—the post-impressionists, cubists, pointillists, futurists—six or seven galleries, is eminently satisfactory. Anything more fantastic would be hard to conceive.... As an appeal to curiosity this part of the show is a decided success....
>
> I went over the exhibition with Mr. Davies, the President of the new association, and with Mr. Kuhn, the Secretary... Mr. Davies is a sincere and attractive man, and as a painter an accomplished technician. His works are freakish, but they contain fine passages of color and form, which any critic, however classical, will admire. He is eccentric, but his eccentricities are sanity itself compared with the works of the extremists. He however pointed out, with evident sincerity, in the works of such artists as Matisse beauties which I was unable to see. ...
>
> Matisse's work: If this work were submitted to me without explanation, I should regard it as a joke. It is asserted that he is an accomplished painter. I have never seen anything to show it, and I am of the opinion that if he ever did anything really distinguished it would now be exhibited. I think it probable that Matisse, failing to distinguish himself in regular lines, resorted to this work to attract attention. Certainly the work is without merit. It has no subtlety of line, no sweetness of color, no refinement of sentiment, no beauty of any kind.[61]

On February 28, a contract was signed between the AAPS and the Art Institute, agreeing on the terms of the exhibition's installation in Chicago. Soon thereafter, French's ambivalence became manifest: after assisting in the

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[61] French to Hutchinson, February 22, 1913, Archives of the Art Institute of Chicago, published in its entirety as an Appendix to Martinez 1993: 56-57. It is excerpted in John Rewald, Cézanne and America (Princeton University Press, 1989): 188-190, where it is attributed to Arthur Jerome Eddy, the Chicago collector. Richard R. Brettell and Sue Ann Prince, however, subsequently established that French was the author; see "The Art Institute Assimilates Modernism" in Prince 1990: 264, n. 5.

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installation, he left for vacation in California for the duration of the show's Chicago run.

It was an abbreviated version of the Armory Show (now called the "International Exhibition" or the "Post-Impressionist Exhibition") that opened in Chicago on March 24. It had been reduced by half—from about 1300 works to 634—and Matisse's role was now more prominent.[62]

With considerable pride and excitement Walter Pach wrote to Michael Stein from Chicago:

> We are going to put a mark on American thought that will be simply indelible. We have done it already. Total attendance in N.Y. about 100,000—most all paid. Yesterday and today in Chi about 20,000 people! each (they are free-days at the Institute but the pay-days have been big too) and the show is not yet open a week here. Total number of sales in N.Y.—237... Our great sale was a glorious Cézanne landscape to the Metropolitan Museum. That just about made me wild with joy. ... No Matisse painting yet (confound it) nor Picasso. Matisse, I really believe, awakens more interest than any one else in the show and I do not have to work hard to keep up my hopes of a sale or two from the splendid long wall he has to himself here, the first thing you see as you enter. Davies made the plan for the hanging here, and designed it that Matisse should first meet the eye and set a pace,—enunciate the character of the exhibition. ... [Pach's ellipses] I send you a day's clippings from the Chicago press. The New York critics were sometimes a little better informed, spoke less of the cubists, but in the end were nearly as idiotic. Not one article showing real critical insight of importance has appeared. But no matter—we have two enormous scrapbooks more than

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[62] The Chicago and Boston catalogues of the exhibition, however, list one fewer Matisse than does the New York catalogue. Whereas the New York catalogue lists two Matisse drawings from Druet and one from Stieglitz, the Chicago and Boston catalogues list only the Druet drawings. Apparently, Stieglitz did not allow his Matisse drawings to travel; see above: n. 2, and AAPS 1972, vol. 1: Chicago and Boston catalogues.

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> filled with press notices that sent the public in by thousands—and they are talking of it everywhere and all the time. You would be astounded at the amount of intelligence I find in my rounds of the galleries (I am chief salesman you know),—even as a small fraction of the comment, it more than makes up for the idiots. Oh how the old academic rotters feel that they are hit! John Quinn in a public speech quoted Admiral Philip at Santiago about them "Don't cheer boys, the poor devils are dying." We certainly have hot times,—but oh, won't I be glad when I see Paris again.[63]

Harriet Monroe, writing in the Chicago Tribune, complained about the new prominence given to Matisse:

> Compared with the New York exhibition, this is limited. The radicals overbalance the rest, and one misses the retrospective exhibition by which Mr. Davies and the other leaders of the new association sought to express their idea of the artistic succession through the nineteenth century....
>
> ... If Matisse has admirers in these woods, let them rush to his defense; the present critic, while acknowledging his ability, cannot believe in his sincerity, but finds him an intolerably egoistic bore.[64]

The venue of the Art Institute had both positive and negative ramifications for the exhibition. On the positive side, the more limited wall space necessitated a condensed and more focused presentation, with the emphasis now clearly on the European modernists. Undoubtedly, the exhibition looked better on the museum's walls than in the cavernous space of the Armory.

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[63] Pach to Michael Stein, March 30, 1913, Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL.

[64] Harriet Monroe, "A Live Exhibition at the Art Institute; Visitors' Opinions Strong," Chicago Sunday Tribune, March 30, 1913, Armory Show Scrapbook, MoMA.

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On the other hand, the presence of an avant-garde exhibition on the site of a traditional art academy was a situation ripe for conflict. "The teachers at the Art Institute were almost a solid unit against our exhibition," Kuhn later recalled.[65] Matisse was the main target of their wrath. Charles Francis Browne, a former instructor at the Art Institute, delivered well-attended lectures at the museum's Fullerton Hall, disseminating misinformation such as the following:

> One day he [Matisse] left an unfinished canvas on his easel while he went to lunch. His child wandered in, took some brushes and paint haphazardly, and daubed away. Was the child punished? No. Matisse surveyed the work, and exclaimed, "That's it!" and a new school of art was founded.[66]

Kuhn complained to Davies:

> The art students and public are a lot of rowdy rough-necks. You would get sick at heart if you were here.... The press here is what I would expect at Paducah, Kentucky. All the instructors at the Institute are mad through, one even went so far as to take a big class of students into the French room and threw a virtual fit condemning Matisse. We three [Kuhn, Pach, and Gregg] stood in the hall and laughed at him. However, I had this stopped and

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[65] Kuhn 1938: 21, reprinted in AAPS 1972, vol. 3.

[66] "Chicago Artist Starts Revolt," Chicago Daily Tribune, March 26, 1913, Armory Show Scrapbook, MoMA. Charles Francis Browne's preposterous tale contains a germ of truth. As Alfred Barr notes, Matisse "learned something... from the drawings and watercolors of his own children, all of whom painted," as, for example, in Portrait of Marguerite (1907, Musée Picasso, Paris); cf. Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Matisse: His Art and His Public (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951): 94.

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> after this the lecturing will be done outside the exhibition rooms.[67]

Complicating matters further, the Illinois senate vice commission got into the act. When members received complaints that the exhibition was immoral, the commission dispatched an investigator to the Art Institute. According to the Chicago Daily Journal:

> The investigator reported that he found "every girl in Chicago" gazing at the examples of "distorted art."
>
> He particularly condemned one picture entitled "Luxury" [Matisse's Le Luxe II] and described it as a "distorted female form, with four toes on each foot."[68]

No action, however, was taken.[69]

On April 16, the closing day of the exhibition, a group of Art Institute students held a mock trial of one "Hennery O'Hair Mattress," charging him with "artistic murder, pictorial arson, total degeneracy of color sense, artistic rapine, criminal abuse of title, and general aesthetic abortion."[70] According to contradictory accounts, the students

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[67] Kuhn to Davies, date not cited [March or April 1913], in Brown 1988: 209.

[68] Chicago Daily Journal, "Futurist Art Included in State Vice Inquiry," April 1, 1913, Armory Show Scrapbook, MoMA. Although the right foot of the foreground figure in Le Luxe II does indeed have four toes (see fig. 1.36), a consequent deleterious effect on the morals of the girls of Chicago remains unproved.

[69] Although the state of Illinois did not interfere with the exhibition, the Art Institute successfully pressured the Association to refrain from selling a pamphlet of extracts from Gauguin's Noa-Noa, on the grounds of its supposed immorality; see Martinez 1993: 50-51.

[70] "Cubist Art Exhibit Ends 'at the Stake,'" Chicago Record-Herald, April 17, 1913: 1.

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had originally planned either to burn or to hang "O'Hair Mattress" in effigy. According to one account, the effigy was not burned, as a result of the intervention of acting director Newton H. Carpenter (at the urging of Walter Pach and Elmer MacRae); it was, however, "stabbed, pummeled and dragged about the terrace"[71] of the Art Institute, and caricatures of Blue Nude, Goldfish and Sculpture, and Le Luxe II were burned. According to another account, the effigy burning of "O'Hair Mattress" actually did take place.[72]

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[71] Chicago Examiner, April 17, 1913, cited in Brown 1988: 210.

[72] Accounts of the student demonstration differ as to details; these differences are not consequential. Milton Brown, in Brown 1988, and Andrew Martinez, in Martinez 1993, appear to have based their accounts on different newspaper reports, on those of the Examiner and the Record-Herald, respectively. According to Brown, students planned to hang Matisse, Pach, and Brancusi in effigy; Martinez writes that they planned to burn Matisse in effigy (with no mention of Pach or Brancusi). In Brown's account, the effigy is named "Henri Hairmattress"; in Martinez's account, it is "Hennery O'Hair Mattress." Brown reports that the event "did not come off as planned, first, because some of the members of the Chicago Art Students League were not willing to go along with the prank, and also, because Elmer MacRae… lodged a complaint with Carpenter." Martinez reports that both Pach and MacRae complained to Carpenter and does not mention any division in the ranks of the students. Martinez reports that caricatures of three paintings were burned; Brown mentions only two (he does not include Goldfish and Sculpture).

The Record-Herald is contradictory as to whether the effigy of "O'Hair Mattress" was actually burned. The report on the front page of the April 17, 1913 issue claims that the three pictures "were thrown together and a match touched to the funeral pyre," and that "after the show it was explained that officials had objected to the effigy burning" (it is unclear whether this "effigy burning" was only of the pictures or whether it also included "O'Hair Mattress"). On page 3 of the same issue, a photograph of the mock trial has a caption reporting that "Mr. Mattress himself had to suffer the penalty imposed—burning."

Walter Pach later recalled "the burning in effigy of one of Matisse's big nudes, also a figure representing myself and… an image of… [Paul Chabas'] September Morn—which, of course, was not in our exhibition" (Walter Pach, Queer Thing, Painting: Forty Years in the World of Art [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938]: 195).

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Boston, the third and final stop of the International Exhibition's tour, proved anticlimactic after the crowds and turmoil of New York and Chicago. It was the only one of the three venues where the exhibition lost money. "Boston did not take to it," Kuhn later recalled. "Maybe the sight of a large plaster relief by Matisse hanging between two drawings by Ingres was just a bit too much."[73]

The exhibition was held under the aegis of the Copley Society, at Copley Hall, where it ran from April 28 to May 19. Because of limited wall space, it was reduced to fewer than three hundred works, with the historical and American sections deleted.

William H. Downes wrote in the Boston Evening Transcript: "If the majority of the works in this exhibition were conceded to be works of art, one would have no other choice but to spurn art." Like the New York critics Royal Cortissoz and Kenyon Cox, Downes condemned Matisse as a false naïf, "a mountebank of the first water" whose "primitivism is the

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[73] Walt Kuhn, The Story of the Armory Show (Privately printed, 1938): 22, reprinted in AAPS 1972, vol. 3. The relief was Back I. Pach, covering the Armory Show for a Parisian journal in 1913, wrote: "Even at the Boston exhibition, where some Ingres drawings were hung next to a large Matisse bas-relief, many saw this arrangement more as a criticism of the modern artist than as the continuity of the sense of beauty in a very evolved form" ("Même à l'exposition de Boston où l'on avait accroché des dessins d'Ingres à côté d'un grand bas-relief de Matisse, beaucoup voyaient plutôt dans cette disposition une critique de l'artiste moderne que la continuité du sens de la beauté dans des formes très évoluées") Walter Pach, "L'art aux États-Unis," La Vie, September 6, 1913, cited in Fourcade 1993: 108.

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deliberate reversion to barbarity of a sophisticated and educated modern man."[74]

During the exhibition's run in Boston, J. N. Laurvik—critic, photographer and Stieglitz associate—arranged to have his pamphlet, "Is It Art? Post-Impressionism, Futurism, Cubism," sold outside of Copley Hall. Although Laurvik was a defender of modernism, his pamphlet had not been authorized by the Association, and Frederick James Gregg soon put a stop to its distribution.[75]

Laurvik classified Matisse as a "pseudo-primitive" who was drawing inspiration from tribal and archaic prototypes:

> Most of those painters and sculptors who are to-day regarded as the most original and revolutionary of all… have simply discovered a fruitful source of inspiration in the works of the primitive races and much that appears so startling, such as the sculpture of Brancusi, of Maillol, Archipenko, and Lembruck [sic], as well as the painting of Matisse, is very closely related to primitive African art and primitive Greek and Etruscan art. …
>
> This indebtedness to the past is very apparent in the work of Henri Matisse who of all these men is the one who has given the greatest impetus to this movement. Like Gauguin he was an academic draughtsman of the most approved type, saturated with the principles of the schools. After the exhibition held a few years ago of Cézanne's paintings he saw a new light and changed his whole style of painting; gathering all the energies of his indisputable talent and forcing them into the

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[74] William H. Downes, Boston Evening Transcript, April 28, 1913, cited in Garnett McCoy, "The Post-Impressionist Bomb." Archives of American Art Journal 20, 1 (1980): 15, and 17, n. 17.

[75] Brown 1988: 218.

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> service of the new ideal he shot into instant prominence in the artistic firmament.[76]

The closing of the International Exhibition did not put an end to the controversies it had engendered. Reverberations continued, for both the champions and the foes of modernism. Modern art, and Matisse as one of its foremost exemplars, were now on the nation's intellectual agenda.

"The International Exhibition of Modern Art: An Impression" by W. D. MacColl appeared in Forum Magazine in July. The article, a spirited defense of modernism, was a reply to Royal Cortissoz's "The Post-Impressionist Illusion," which had appeared in Century Magazine the previous April. MacColl introduced his piece with Cortissoz's coda:

> Here, from the incomplete, halting methods of Cézanne, there has flowed out of Paris into Germany, Russia, England, and to some slight extent the United States, a gospel of stupid license and self-assertion which would have been swept into the rubbish-heap were it not for the timidity of our mental habit. When the stuff is rebuked as it should be, the Post-Impressionist impresarios and fuglemen insolently proffer us a farrago of super-subtle rhetoric. The farce will end when people look at Post-Impressionist pictures as Mr. Sargent looked at those shown in London, "absolutely skeptical as to their having any claim whatever to being works of art." [77]

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[76] J. Nilsen Laurvik, "Is It Art? Post-Impressionism, Futurism, Cubism," reprinted in AAPS 1972, vol. 3. This passage is illustrated with a reproduction of Madras rouge.

[77] Royal Cortissoz, "The Post-Impressionist Illusion," Century Magazine 85: 6 (April 1913): 805-815, reprinted in AAPS 1972, vol. 3; the quotation appears on p. 815. Although the article appeared after the Armory Show had closed, it was written before Cortissoz had seen the exhibition, as he states on p. 805, n. 1.

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MacColl parried Cortissoz's charge of "stupid license and self-assertion," declaring that the painters were making direct and powerful appeals to the viewer's instincts. MacColl's emphasis on instinct, vitality, and change suggests a debt to the contemporary French philosopher Henri Bergson:

> They lead us with ease into great subjects; and they enter as unaffectedly into our consciousness of what is beautiful as any of those revelations which come to us only through our instincts.... The appeal which they make is so direct and so personal that it removes life to another court by referring it not to any past experience of life, but exactly to a sense, a recognition of new life, new art. They give us something that was not in our life, that was not in the art of painting before, and it appeals to us with all the power and the charm of a quickened consciousness of the value and meaning of life itself....
>
> ... There is no more beauty now than there was before; but there has been a quickening. It is this quickening, this sense of change into something rich and strange, which we feel as beauty, as life...

MacColl contrasted the vitality and originality of Matisse to the staleness of academic painters:

> Even in some of the puzzle pictures of Henri Matisse, like the Jeune Marin or Les Capucines or Les Poissons [see figs. 1.12, 1.70, and 1.74], we may find something of reality, of life. His color is not ugly, as so many suppose. Quite the contrary. It is a bigotry of form and of color formula only which makes us think so. But it is a bigotry which Matisse quite deliberately and unhesitatingly undoes; for he gives form to color... He seems to be exercising himself with lines, colors, patterns in a purely decorative way.
>
> His pictures have a very refined beauty of color, if you can forget that the destiny of color is not to make a piece of paint look like a piece of fish, or like a piece of flesh... His color is simply instrumental to the design which he has in mind...
>
> His mannerisms in any case are not mere affecta-

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> tion; they are his style, his meaning. If he hasn't quite the warmth or passion of invention which a more dramatic instinct would have provided, he has unquestionably at all events grace, dignity and repose. I feel that we get some measure of his reaction to life by noting this, that he is always at ease with himself and with his subject, careful, never flustered. And there is nothing petty or snobbish about his work....
>
> ...I received a more direct and spontaneous pleasure I believe from La Coiffeuse [see fig. 1.18] as a piece of drawing, of architectonic in paint, than from any other picture in the exhibition.... In Matisse nothing is really obvious. Yet all through his pictures you get the most logical, sometimes the most exquisite relationship of values, of sheer and pure insistence on his meaning, —with no very obvious story to tell perhaps, but by his manner, his style, putting you in a frame of mind to tell a story yourself. And that is a better achievement, is it not, than being lost in admiration for the merely obvious tricks of painting (as every artist knows and certainly not every artist wants to copy) of a "master like Sargent." It is a shy abstract discriminating art, this, like a curious pattern framed by the sun on an old countryside wall. It suggests that Matisse is not wanting to please but to discover. It is a healthy reaction against the pseudo-romantic sentimentalism, the actual enslavement for all who are doing and living and vital, of the Academy.[78]

Duncan Phillips entered the fray with the essay "Revolutions and Reactions in Painting" in the December International Studio.[79] The future Matisse collector[80] weighed in as a vigorous opponent of modernism:

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[78] W. D. MacColl, "The International Exhibition of Modern Art: An Impression," Forum 50 (July 1913): 34-36.

[79] Duncan Phillips (1886-1966) was born in Pittsburgh. Heir to a banking and steel fortune, he grew up in a house filled with academic art. As an undergraduate he wrote "The Need for Art at Yale" in the June 1907 Yale Literary Magazine. Following his graduation in 1908 he devoted himself to studying and writing about art.

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> The air of studios in New York is charged with much talk about painting, talk that is full of fanaticism and mystification and real concern for the future of art, all agitated by a recent exposure of crass sensationalism in pictures—an International Exhibition of Modern Art quite stupefying in its vulgarity. With this experience fresh in memory, the first thought that occurs to me about contemporary painting is that it is lawless, the second… is that its lawlessness has in many cases made the painter a slave to his own mad whims and bad habits. Instead of trying to become like the Old Masters, he tries to be what nobody ever wanted to be before him. Superficially, such a philosophy has a gallant air. Gauguin's much-quoted classification of painters as either plagiarists or revolutionists was like a call to battle. The motley hoard [sic] of studio-adventurers heard the call. Today they are riotously proclaiming that everything shall be upside down, that in the new art no woman need have a mouth. Instead she may have four eyes, all on the same side of her face. It is not true. But who shall say what is truth?… Scratches of pale pink and blobs of blood-red may not suit an anemic taste, but can we be sure that it is not a very exquisite color scheme for interior decoration. Who shall say what is beauty? Pale pink and blood red will give a man a new and strange emotion. That emotion is art. So runs the philosophy of Matisse and his followers.
>
> But of course such extremists are anarchists, not artists. They no more deserve consideration as technicians (in this I agree with Kenyon Cox) than the bad boys whose nasty smudges in colored chalks they unconsciously imitate. …
>
> The movement is not new. It is in its last decrepitude. It is the end of a reaction against

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[80] Phillips would acquire his first Matisses in 1926-1927, when he bought 3 Nice period paintings from American dealers; these were later exchanged. According to Margrit Hahnloser-Ingold, "Ten Matisse pictures passed through his hands as he constantly exchanged one oil for another," including Anemones with a Black Mirror (1918-19, Reader's Digest Collection) and Plaster Torso, Bouquet of Flowers (1919, São Paolo); see Hahnloser-Ingold, "Collecting Matisses of the 1920s in the 1920s" in Cowart 1986: 251-252, and 272, n. 42. The collection now contains two Matisse paintings, both major works: Studio, Quai St. Michel (see fig. 4.16), purchased in 1940, and Interior with Egyptian Curtain (1948), purchased in 1950.

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> impersonal truth telling... and...subjective estheticism... The present decadence... set in with Cézanne and Van Gogh and Gauguin... Instead of devotion to the great masters of the past, to the Greek standard of form, the Venetian standard of color, the Velasquez standard of values, the Dutch standard of surface quality, these men harked back instead to primitive models, to Gothic gargoyles and monastic missals, to Egyptian carvings and Indian carpets, to Persian miniatures and Chinese embroideries, even to Polynesian textiles.

Phillips reserved his harshest invective for Matisse:

> Finally with Matisse the degeneration of this so-called "expressionism" reached its bottom. Certainly this person creates patterns unworthy of the mere ignorance of little children and benighted savages, patterns not only crude but deliberately false, and insanely, repulsively depraved. The Cubists are simply ridiculous. Matisse is also poisonous.[81]

On December 8 a meeting of the Contemporary Club in Philadelphia became "an art battle," as reported in American Art News. After Kenyon Cox read a paper on cubism, Futurism, and other "isms," which reiterated his newspaper attacks on modernism, William Merritt Chase, a renowned artist and teacher with a flamboyant presence, took the floor. According to the report,

> Chase paid his respects to "Messieurs les ennemis"... his extempore remarks on the "Futurists" causing

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[81] Duncan Phillips, "Revolutions and Reaction in Painting," International Studio 51: 202 (December 1913): cxxiii-cxxix. Phillips included the essay in his collection The Enchantment of Art, published in 1914. In the introduction to the second edition (1927), Phillips wrote, "the book seems to me the work of another person," and apologized for his treatment of Matisse. In the second edition he revised the essay (in Milton Brown's words) to "rob the original of its sting"; see Milton W. Brown, American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression (Princeton University Press, 1955): 91, and 198, notes 21-24.

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> considerable merriment. Matisse, he labeled as a "charlatan and a faker" and the selling of "futurist" pictures as a "gold brick swindle" and a "misdemeanor worse than selling money under false pretenses." He finished by reading an appreciation of Matisse by a sister of M. Stein, one of his patrons, that convulsed the audience with the insane composition of it somewhat in the style of "The House That Jack Built."[82]

The spokesman for the defense was the ineffectual Frederick James Gregg. As a representative of the Association, he had the disadvantage of arguing for open-mindedness rather than making the case for the validity and vitality of modern art. Gregg "attempted to give the audience a very wise hint to approach the works of the radicals with an open mind, but his remarks did not seem very convincing."[83]

In January Chase delivered a lecture on Whistler at McCoy Hall in Baltimore. Claribel Cone was in the audience. To her surprise, after Chase had completed his talk, he announced that he would report on new movements in art. Dutifully and ingenuously, Claribel wrote to Gertrude Stein:

> He began with an opening sentence on the "Cubists, Futurists, Post-Impressionists." When he launched into "Matisse" I thought he was going to tell us something about Matisse when he—here it is, I wrote it down as he said it, he chose to give us Matisse in this guise:

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[82] Cf. Julian Street, "How I Became a Cubist," Everybody's Magazine, June 1913: 814-825, reprinted in AAPS 1972, vol. 3. After quoting the last paragraph of Gertrude Stein's portrait of Matisse, Street makes the sarcastic comment: "Does it not sum up in words, the painting of Matisse? It does! Does it not wipe from one's mind at one stroke all doubt as to Matisse and his painting? It does! And you may take my word for it that Miss Stein on Picasso is no less illuminating."

[83] Eugene Castello, "An Art Battle," American Art News 12: 12 (December 27, 1913): 9.

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"There is a Gertrude Stein a sister of a man of considerable means who is buying Matisse's works and making him known. Each one of these paintings is a gold brick to the owner" etc. "Gertrude Stein has written an appreciation of Matisse and says:" (he picked up the—it did not look like Camera Work—I think it must have been a paper in which your sketches of Matisse & Picasso were quoted in full. He began) "One was quite certain—etc." He read on and on—and although he did not put the commas (imaginary) exactly in the right places, sitting as I was in the back part of the hall it sounded very well—all did not agree with me however, but I thought so. He read a large part of your sketch of Matisse. The next day another mention of you was made in the Baltimore Sun..."[84]

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[84] Claribel Cone to Gertrude Stein, January 25, 1914, Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL, published in Donald Gallup, ed., The Flowers of Friendship: Letters Written to Gertrude Stein (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953: 93-94.

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2.3. Paris, 1913-1914

In Paris as well as New York, the year 1913 marked a turning point for Matisse's American supporters. At 27 rue de Fleurus the growing estrangement between Leo and Gertrude Stein was coming to a head. The break was precipitated, not, as might be expected, by the addition of Alice Toklas to the ménage,[1] but rather by Leo's manifest disdain for Gertrude's writing. In February Leo wrote to his friend Mabel Weeks:

> One of the greatest changes that has become decisive in recent times is the fairly definite "disaggregation" of Gertrude and myself. The presence of Alice was a godsend, as it enabled the thing to happen without any explosion. As we have come to maturity, we have come to find that there is practically nothing under the heavens that we don't either disagree about, or at least regard with different sympathies. The crucial thing of course is our work. In my case this is of comparatively little importance because in the first case I never suspected Gertrude of having any interest in the criticism of ideas, and in the second case I have no desire for glory.... Gertrude on the other hand hungers and thirsts for gloire, and it was of course a serious thing for her that I can't abide her stuff and think it abominable. This would not have been so bad if there had been general recognition without; a prophet can support not being honored in his own country when other lands sufficiently acclaim him, but when the acclamation otherwhere is faint the absence of support at home is painful. To this has been added my utter refusal to accept the later phases of Picasso with whose tendency Gertrude has so closely allied herself. They both seem to me entirely on the wrong track.[2]

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[1] Alice Toklas moved to the rue de Fleurus in autumn 1910.

[2] Leo Stein to Mabel Foote Weeks, February 7, 1913, in Leo Stein, Journey into the Self (New York: Crown Publishers, 1950): 52.

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Gertrude—with characteristic self-aggrandizement—later gave her perspective on the "disaggregation" of Leo and herself:

> I was writing in the way I was writing. I did not show what I was doing to my brother, he looked at it and did not say anything....
>
> Slowly and in a way it was not astonishing but slowly I was knowing that I was a genius and it was happening and I did not say anything but I was almost ready to begin to say something. My brother began saying something..
>
> He did not say it to me but he said it so that it would be true for me. And it did not trouble me and as it did not trouble me I knew it was not true and a little as it did not trouble me he knew it was not true.
>
> But it destroyed him for me and it destroyed me for him.[3]

Gertrude was—if not a "genius"—a disciplined and prolific writer. As of 1913 she had written, in addition to her short pieces, two full-length books: Three Lives (published in 1909) and The Making of Americans (subsequently reworked and published in 1925). Leo, afflicted with an extended case of writer's block, had not lived up to his early promise.

After 1907 Leo had ceased to add paintings by Matisse to their collection.[4] "Then," he later recalled, "I brought

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[3] Gertrude Stein, Everybody's Autobiography (New York: Vintage Books, 1937): 76-77.

[4] Leo claimed that Blue Nude was his last purchase of Matisse (Leo Stein 1947: 162). But he remembered incorrectly: it was bought early in 1907, following the Salon des Indépendants, whereas Music (Sketch) was bought late in 1907, following the Salon d'Automne (Fourcade 1993: no. 52).

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several [Matisse] pictures to the house for consideration, but did not keep any. For the moment they no longer served me."[5]

As he told Mabel Weeks in the letter of February 1913 cited above, Leo rejected not only Gertrude's writing, but also "the later phases of Picasso"—i.e., cubism. He was, in effect, turning his back on the modernist enterprise after Cézanne. Although he continued to admire Cézanne and, to a greater degree, Renoir, he now found "the rhythm in Matisse" to be "insufficient."[6] Inasmuch as Matisse created some of the most rhythmic paintings of his career between 1908 and 1913—among them Music and Dance (see figs. 1.57 and 1.58)—one might reasonably conclude that the insufficiency was to be found in the collector, not in the artist. Leo—of whom Alfred Barr would write, "for two brief years between 1905 and 1907 he was possibly the most discerning connoisseur and collector of 20th-century painting in the world"[7]—had, like the poet Wordsworth in his latter years, lost his "visionary gleam."

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[5] Leo Stein, Appreciation: Painting, Poetry and Prose (New York: Crown Publishers, 1947): 162.

[6] Leo Stein 1947: 162. In 1909, however, Stein told Stieglitz that he continued to admire Matisse's sculpture (Norman 1960: 111). Stein may have purchased a Matisse sculpture in 1908; in an undated later, marked "1908?" at the Beinecke Library, Yale, Matisse wrote to Leo: "Here is your bronze! If you don't like its patina, return it, or have it brought back Monday, or later. It would be a simple matter to give it a more golden patina, if you prefer" ("Voilà votre bronze! Dans le cas où la patine ne vous plairait pas[,] rendez le bronze ou faites-le reprendre lundi, ou plus tard. Il sera très facile de lui donner une patine plus dorée si cela vous convient") Leo Stein Collection, YCAL.

[7] Barr 1951: 57.

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Sarah and Michael Stein continued to collect Matisse and to be enthusiastic boosters of his work. The artist's prices had risen, however, particularly after September 1909, when he signed a contract with Bernheim-Jeune, and the Michael Steins' purchases diminished accordingly. Among the works they collected after 1907 were Sculpture and Persian Vase (1908, Oslo), "Autumn Landscape" (1909), Nu dans un paysage ensoleillé (1911, Jacobs Collection, San Francisco), and View of Collioure and the Sea (1911, MoMA).[8]

In early 1912, Michael Stein informed Claribel Cone that he and Sarah had acquired "a great big new decoration about 8 x 10 feet which has necessitated rearranging our rooms entirely."[9] He was undoubtedly referring to Interior with Aubergines of 1911 (fig. 2.4), their most significant Matisse purchase since 1907.[10] Rendered in tempera, with a decoratively painted canvas frame, it was even larger than two comparably ambitious interiors of the same year, Pink Studio (Pushkin Museum, Moscow) and Red Studio (see fig. 1.73).

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[8] Hélène Seckel, "27, rue de Fleurus, 58, rue Madame: les Stein à Paris," in Pontus-Hulten, ed., Paris/New York, Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris: Gallimard, 1977): 280; and Barr 1951: 540-541, n. 4 (see below: n. 42). I have been unable to determine the present whereabouts of "Autumn Landscape."

[9] Michael Stein to Claribel Cone: January 5, 1912 (postmark), cited in Barr 1951: 143 and 539, n. 2.

[10] Barr could not identify the "big new decoration" to which Michael referred (see Barr 1951: 539, n. 2), in all probability because of a discrepancy between the original and later dimensions of Interior with Aubergines. The original dimensions included the painted canvas frame, which was lost sometime after 1916. The current dimensions are 6' 103/8" x 8' 7/8"; if a canvas frame with a width of 7 inches were to be added, the dimensions would be approximately 8' x 9' 3", not far from the 8' x 10' estimated by Michael Stein.

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At around this time Sarah stunned her friends and relations with an announcement. Harriet Levy later recalled:

> Out of nowhere she declared she would not become a painter. To be a first-class painter... would take at least ten years, she said. At that moment she felt her work as a Christian Science practitioner was something certain and would bear immediate fruit.
>
> In the face of all the praise for her painting from Matisse, whom she had accepted and extravagantly advertised, she gave up painting and declared that she would give her life to the practice of Christian Science.[11]

Although Sarah's decision to abandon painting came "out of nowhere," her conversion to Christian Science was not a sudden whim; her interest went back several years. The sect was active in San Francisco, where a number of her relatives were adherents. In Paris, in 1907 and 1908, she, Michael, Leo, and Gertrude followed a series in McClure's magazine about the cult's founder Mary Baker Eddy and her "science" of spiritual healing.[12] In January 1912 Sarah signed the official registry, having joined the mother church in Boston the previous year.[13]

The key tenet of Christian Science is that matter is subservient to the spirit, and accordingly, health is attained through prayer. The church has no ordained clergy. "Readers,"

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[11] Harriet L. Levy, "Recollections," Typescript (Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley), n. d.: 11.

[12] Brenda Wineapple, Sister Brother: Gertrude and Leo Stein (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1996): 281. The series, "Mary Baker Eddy: The Story of Her Life and the History of Christian Science" by Georgia Milmine, appeared in McClure's from January 1907 to June 1908. Mrs. Eddy (1821-1910) founded Christian Science in 1879. She wrote its principle text, Science and Health, an interpretation of the Bible, in 1875.

[13] James Ward, "Le Corbusier's Villa 'Les Terrasses' and the International Style" (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1984): 26.

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elected by the membership, conduct services; "practitioners" devote full time to spiritual healing. For years Sarah had suffered from psychosomatic illnesses. Through the efforts of a Christian Science practitioner, she experienced relief from what ailed her.[14]

Other factors contributed to Sarah's receptivity to Christian Science. As has already been noted, she had a predilection for the messianic, for which Matisse had once been the principal object. An instance of her attraction to the occult was her practice of palmistry.[15] She was no doubt aware of the penchant of the avant-garde for the spiritual—as in the cases of Kandinsky and Mondrian, and, to a degree, of Matisse, who in 1908 wrote of his "so-to-speak religious feeling towards life."[16]

Sarah's remarks to Harriet Levy give additional insight into her motives for giving up painting. She was mindful of her own limitations as a painter and frustrated by her slow progress. Cognizant of the superior talents of Leo and Gertrude, she knew that her limited artistic skills were no match for her in-laws' verbal and intellectual gifts.

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[14] Ward 1984: 27.

[15] Wineapple 1986: 281. Although Leo and Gertrude were religious skeptics, they too were susceptible to esoteric notions. For a time Gertrude was an advocate of the pseudo-scientific psychological theories of Otto Weininger. Leo was a devotee of the nutritional theories of Horace Fletcher, who developed a system of the thorough chewing of food. See Wineapple 1996: 262-264 and 282.

[16] "Notes of a Painter," in Flam 1995: 41.

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There is no record of Matisse's reaction to Sarah's decision. In all likelihood his disappointment in his disciple's abandonment of painting was mitigated by other factors. Since his move to Issy in 1909, he had been less engaged with the life of Montparnasse. Though he remained on amicable terms with the Steins, they had been supplanted as his principal patrons by the Russian merchants Sergei Shchukin and Ivan Morosov.

In late April 1913 Gertrude received a note from Alvin Langdon Coburn,[17] the expatriate American photographer:

> I am greatly interested in modern painting, and have heard, as who has not, of your splendid collection of paintings by Matisse. I am therefore writing to inquire if it would be possible for me to see it?
>
> I first became interested in the work of the modern school through my friend Mr Max Weber of New York whose work you no doubt know, and about twenty of whose paintings are in my collection, which I would consider it a great honour to show you if ever you are in London where I live.
>
> You may even have seen some of my own work in photography?[18]

Gertrude welcomed Coburn and his wife to the rue de Fleurus, where the young photographer was impressed not only by the art collection, but by Gertrude herself. He made a

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[17] Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882-1966), born in Boston, was a founding member of the Photo-Secession. Like his friend Max Weber, whom he met through the Stieglitz circle in 1910 or 1911, he had been a pupil of Arthur Wesley Dow. Coburn spent much of his early adulthood abroad and in 1912 left the United States permanently to live in England and Wales.

[18] Alvin Langdon Coburn to Gertrude Stein (from Paris), April 30, 1913, Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL, reprinted in Gallup 1953: 78.

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portrait photograph of her and would soon champion her writing.[19] Gertrude introduced Coburn to Matisse, who invited him to his studio at Issy.

Coburn later recalled:

> In Paris we visited Gertrude Stein, who I think has something to tell us which the world will come to appreciate... Through her I met and photographed Matisse, admired by us both...
>
> It was through my friendship with... Max Weber, a pupil of Matisse and Henri Rousseau, that I first came in touch with the Post-Impressionists....
>
> I first saw the work of Henri Matisse in the Second Post-Impressionist exhibition organized by Roger Fry and Clive Bell in London...
>
> In the Post-Impressionist exhibition was a small picture in primary colours by Matisse of a bather on the seashore with her straw hat hung on a tree, which particularly attracted me, but it was a sketch and marked "not for sale." When I went to Matisse's Paris [sic, Issy] studio in May 1913, there was the little sketch which I had admired in the London show to greet me. I persuaded the artist to let me buy it...[20]

The "little sketch" that Coburn bought from Matisse was Nude by the Sea (fig 2.4).

At Issy Coburn took a series of photographs of the artist at work on the large oil Bathers by a River (Chicago) and on the relief Back II. One of the photographs was included

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[19] The following year Coburn attempted to enlist Henry James in an effort to get her published (Wineapple 1996: 380). He wrote in his autobiography: "Words are symbols of things, but they are also sounds, and Gertrude Stein used them in both these ways. To find a new form of expression in any form of art is an achievement and a triumph" (Coburn 1966: 90).

[20] Alvin Langdon Coburn, Alvin Langdon Coburn Photographer: An Autobiography, second ed. (New York: Dover, 1966): 92.

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in Coburn's Men of Mark, a book of portraits of notable people, for which he also wrote the text, published in 1914.

From October 27 to November 8, the Bernheim-Jeune gallery in Paris presented the exhibition "Les Synchromists," the work of color abstractionists Morgan Russell and Stanton Macdonald-Wright. Russell, who had been a student of Matisse, and fellow American Macdonald-Wright had held their first Synchromist exhibition in Munich the previous June.

Russell had coined the term "Synchromism," as he explained in a 1914 letter to the American artist Andrew Dasburg, when he sought a word that

> would apply to painting and not to the subject—My first idea was of course, synphonie but on looking it up to see if it could reasonably be applied to a picture I found that Syn. was "with" & "phone" sound—the word "chrome"... immediately flashed on my mind—(I knew it meant color) & there you are.[21]

The Synchromists systematically applied color theory to depict three-dimensional form in space. Russell had studied color theory, first at the Matisse Academy, and then, along with Macdonald-Wright, in the Paris classes of Canadian artist Ernest Percyval Tudor-Hart. Russell's Synchromy in Deep Blue-Violet (fig. 2.5) is among the first works of pure abstraction in western art, contemporaneous with the earliest abstract

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[21] Russell to Dasburg, March 12, 1914 (postmark), Dasburg Papers, Washburn Gallery, cited in Marilyn S. Kushner, Morgan Russell, Montclair Art Museum (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1990): n. 67. See also Gail Levin, Synchromism and American Color Abstraction, 1910-1925, Whitney Museum of American Art (New York: Braziller, 1978): 20, and 123, n. 17.

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paintings of Delaunay, Dove, Kandinsky, Kupka, Léger, and Malevich.

In his emphasis on color and in his analytic approach to painting, the Synchromist Russell was influenced by Matisse, but his art was fundamentally different. Matisse was intuitive and empirical, whereas Russell was polemical and theoretical. Russell was closer in spirit to the Futurists than to either Matisse or the cubists. Synchromist exhibitions were accompanied by statements setting forth the theories on which the works were based.[22] These statements were not broad social critiques, as were Futurist manifestoes, but they were sharply critical of other modern art movements.

In a joint statement that accompanied the Bernheim-Jeune exhibition, Russell and Macdonald-Wright wrote:

> We consider that orientation toward color is the only direction that painters can engage in for the moment. We shall speak neither of Cubists nor Futurists, finding their efforts superficial and of secondary interest… Let us first consider that young school of painting, Orphism.[23] A superficial resemblance between the works of this school and a Synchromist canvas exhibited at the last Salon des Indépendants has led certain critics to confuse them: this was to take a tiger for a zebra, on the pretext that they both have a striped skin.[24]

Gail Levin reports: "By the spring following the Bernheim-Jeune exhibition, at the Salon des Indépendants of

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[22] See "Appendix: Documents of Synchromism" in Levin 1978: 128-132.

[23] "Orphism" is the term coined by Guillaume Apollinaire to designate the art of Robert Delaunay and his circle. Delaunay himself preferred the term "Simultanism."

[24] See "Les Synchromists S. Macdonald-Wright et Morgan Russell: General Introduction" in Levin 1978: 129.

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1914, critics grouped the artists working with pure abstract color either around Robert Delaunay as the Simultaneists or around Morgan Russell as the Synchromists."[25]

Patrick Henry Bruce, another former Matisse student who had taken up color abstraction, was in the Delaunay camp. He had met Robert and Sonia Delaunay in spring 1912, and by year's end 1912 had become as close to the Delaunays as he had once been with the Matisse family.[26] Robert Delaunay, four years Bruce's junior, had supplanted Matisse as Bruce's mentor.

When Steichen viewed Bruce's paintings at the 1913 Salon des Indépendants, it was apparent to him that Bruce had defected from the Matisse camp. In a letter to Stieglitz he wrote: "Pat Bruce must have had a row with Matisse—he has certainly gone everyone one better in cubes—and he has thrown in to boot all the shrieking colors of Maurer."[27]

Leo Stein declared himself disgusted with the various cliques and factions of the Paris art world. Surveying the scene in a letter to his friend Lee Simonson (a copy of which he sent to Alfred Stieglitz), he scorned both Russell and

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[25] Levin 1978: 24, and 124, n. 13. See note 23, above.

[26] Sonia Delaunay, in an interview with Barbara Rose in April 1978, recalled that the Delaunays and the Bruces "lived a life together" (William C. Agee and Barbara Rose, Patrick Henry Bruce: American Modernist [New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1979]: 138).

[27] Steichen to Stieglitz, received April 8, 1913, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, YCAL. Bruce's paintings of 1913 to 1915 have been destroyed, and are documented only in black-and-white photographs.

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Bruce. The latter, Stein maintained, was beginning to assert his independence from Delaunay:

> I shall soon cease to be a Parisian.... I don't believe that ever before have there been so many cliques and such little ones. Russell and [Macdonald-] Wright find virtue in each other's work and in none other. Picasso and Braque are a world apart, the six futurists form an independent system. Delaunay stands in lonely grandeur on a mountain top. For a while he had Bruce in his train but Bruce has ruptured the bond that left him revolving in Delaunay's sphere of influence and he is now a system all by himself. If Russell has invented the ugliest art form, Bruce has achieved one that is by all odds the stupidest.[28]

By November 1913, Leo and Gertrude had arranged to sever their household. Leo was to live in Settignano near Florence, and Gertrude and Alice were to remain in Paris.[29] Their separation entailed a division of their art collection. As they were barely speaking to each other, they frequently communicated by means of notes, or used Alice as intermediary.

The dispensation of their Matisses was not a contentious issue; for neither Leo nor Gertrude was Matisse the forefront of concern. Gertrude's allegiance had shifted definitively to Picasso, while Leo's passion was reserved for Renoir and for the apples of Cézanne. In a note to Gertrude, Leo wrote:

> The Cézanne apples have a unique importance to me that nothing can replace.... I am willing to leave you the Picasso oeuvre, as you left me the Renoir, & you can have everything except that... I'm afraid you'll have to look

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[28] Leo Stein to Lee Simonson, September 1913, Leo Stein Collection, YCAL, cited in Wineapple 1996: 372.

[29] Gertrude and Alice originally planned to find new living quarters in Paris, but eventually decided to remain at the rue de Fleurus.

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> upon the loss of the apples as an act of God. …I shall not only propose but shall insist with happy cheerfulness that you make as clean a sweep of the Picassos as I have of the Renoirs with the exception of the drawings which I want to keep, partly on the account of their actual delightfulness & partly on the account of the personal note.[30]

In their division of paintings, the only Matisse retained by Gertrude was The Woman with the Hat; Leo kept The Blue Nude (late of the Armory Show), Le Bonheur de Vivre, Margot, Music (Sketch), and Olive Trees at Collioure (see figs. 1.1, 1.20, 1.2. 1.19, 1.21, and 1.9).

Henry McBride considered the breakup of the Steins and of their art collection of sufficient newsworthiness that he published an account in the New York Sun:

> Leo Stein of Paris has taken a house just outside of Florence and will move there in the spring. His sister, Gertrude Stein, remains in Paris. This means that the celebrated studio on the Rue de Fleurus, with its collection of modern art which has had so important a bearing upon recent art history, is to be given up. Miss Stein guards, as her share of the treasure, the important portrait by Cezanne of his wife, the Matisse "Femme au Chapeau" and the cubist works of Picasso and others. Leo Stein takes off to Paris all the Renoirs, the Matisse "Bonheur de la Vie" and many of the Cezannes.[31]

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[30] Leo to Gertrude [November 1913], YCAL, cited in Gallup 1953: 91-92. To ameliorate Gertrude's distress at her loss of the Cézanne apples, Picasso painted a watercolor of a single apple (David Rockefeller collection) and presented it to Gertrude and Alice on Christmas 1914.

[31] Unsigned [Henry McBride], "What Is Doing in World of Art, Artists and Art Dealers," The Sun, Sunday, November 30, 1913, section 6: 2. As indicated above (n. 29) Gertrude and Alice eventually decided to keep their rue de Fleurus studio.

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Leo wished to simplify his life and divest himself of works that "no longer served" him. Before departing for Italy he consigned three Matisse paintings to Bernheim-Jeune's Paris gallery for sale: Margot, Olive Trees at Collioure, and Le Bonheur de Vivre.[32] He lent Matisse's Music (Sketch), along with paintings by other artists in his collection, to the Second International Secession in Rome, held from February to June 1914.[33] (At the Secession's close, Music (Sketch) would be consigned for sale at Bernheim-Jeune's branch in Lausanne.)[34]

In February the Sun's Paris correspondent interviewed Leo and Michael. "Our collection as a collection has served its purpose," Leo told the reporter, "and has now, I feel, every right to retire from publicity and become entirely a domestic affair. I shall take mine to Florence. My sister Gertrude will take hers to an apartment she has rented over

---

[32] Félix Fénéon to Gertrude Stein, November 26, 1914 (Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL). Fénéon sent Gertrude an inventory of the paintings that Leo consigned to Bernheim-Jeune earlier in the year.

[33] The January 29, 1914 issue of Le Bulletin, published by Bernheim-Jeune, announced that Leo was lending works to the Rome Secession: "Paintings by Cézanne, Renoir, Henri Matisse, Vallotton, and Picasso will be shown in Rome. They will not come back to France. Mr. Léon [sic] Stein is leaving the rue de Fleurus and will establish himself next spring in the environs of Florence" ("On verra à Rome des toiles de Cézanne, Renoir, d'Henri Matisse, de Vallotton, de Picasso. Elles ne reviendront pas en France. Abandonnant la rue de Fleurus, M. Léon Stein s'établira dès le printemps prochain aux environs de Florence"); cited in Fourcade 1993: 112. The assertion that Leo owned any Picasso paintings after his separation from Gertrude is apparently in error; see the letters cited in n. 30, above, and n. 39, below. The list of works in the 1914 Rome Secession, in Donald E. Gordon, Modern Art Exhibitions 1900-1916, 2 vols. (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1974): vol. 2: 794-795, does not include any Picassos.

[34] Félix Fénéon to Gertrude Stein, November 26, 1914 (Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL).

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the Palais Royal gardens,[35] while my brother Allan [sic, Michael] will remain in Paris and keep his twenty-five Matisses."

The reporter credited Michael[36] with having a collection second only to Shchukin's. Michael explained his affection for Matisse's work by citing its restorative power, a position long held by the artist. "Matisse's pictures are good to live with," Michael asserted.

> My friend Schoukine built a special room for a picture by Matisse representing a scene in a Moorish cafe [Arab Café, 1913, St. Petersburg]. There is nothing else in the room but this picture, a couch and a few hangings. Schoukine says that when he returns home tired and worried he sits for a short time in front of the picture and very soon his fatigue vanishes. His brain clears and a feeling of warmth and calm steals over him under the influence of the picture.[37]

Just prior to his departure, Leo—disenchanted with recent trends in art and in a melancholy frame of mind—wrote to Mabel Weeks:

> I'm going to Florence a simple minded person of the 'Old School,' without a single Picasso, hardly any Matisses, only 2 Cézanne paintings & some aquarelles, and 16 Renoirs. Rather an amusing baggage for a leader in the great modern fight. But que voulez vous. The fight is already won & lost... Cézanne & Matisse have permanently interesting qualities, Picasso might have had... if he had developed his gifts instead of exploiting those that he

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[35] See above: n. 29.

[36] Throughout the article the author refers to Michael as "Allan," conflating his name with that of his son.

[37] Michael Stein, in Unsigned [Henry McBride?], "Paris to Lose Fine Art Collection," New York Sun, February 1, 1914, section 5: 3.

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> did not possess.[38] The general situation of painting here is loathsome with its cubico-futuristic tommyrotting. I don't believe it can last very long, however, as its effectiveness is soon seen through & when no longer curious it becomes a bore. It is, even on the part of the most distinguished representative, nothing better than an exploitation of ingenuity."[39]

In late April Leo was ensconced at the Villa di Doccia in Settignano. To his future wife Nina he wrote:

> The news of Matisse selling us his paintings for nothing as a friendly gesture—that really does an injustice to Matisse, who has always been a very good businessman, and why not. We did not buy his paintings because of his beautiful eyes but because we were interested in what he was doing. Nor did he sell us his paintings as a jest but because we were ready to buy them and the others were not. Well, that is not complicated. There was a mutual friendship, that is true, but that never mixed with business in the case of Matisse.... Not only I, but others who were closer,[40] have sometimes found his prices rather high enough. They also make a mistake in thinking that it is easy to sell Matisses at a large profit.... Someone told me, and it was authentic, that Matisse complained not that I had sold his paintings—that wounded him naturally, because it showed that they did not have for me a value sufficient to prevent me from doing it—but because I wrote him only to excuse my action.[41]

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[38] Leo believed that Picasso squandered his genius for narrative painting when he abandoned the rose period for cubism. Cf. Leo Stein to Mabel Foote Weeks, February 7, 1913, in Leo Stein 1950: 52: "Picasso is to my belief an illustrator by his gifts, one of the greatest who was ever born. But illustration in our day is anathema and he wants to be the creator of a great and original form."

[39] Leo Stein to Mabel Foote Weeks, April 2, 1914, YCAL, cited by Irene Gordon, in "A World Beyond the World: The Discovery of Leo Stein," Four Americans in Paris (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970): 33.

[40] Leo is probably referring to Michael and Sarah Stein.

[41] Leo Stein to Eugènie (Nina) Auzias, April 29, 1914, in Leo Stein 1950: 58-59.

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Leo's selling of the paintings, and his awkward attempt to justify his behavior to Matisse, nailed the coffin on their already strained friendship.

In June Michael and Sarah Stein prepared to leave for a summer holiday in Agay, on the Côte d'Azur. Before departing they agreed to lend most of their collection to a Matisse retrospective in Berlin, organized by Hans Purrmann. The exhibition was to be held at the Fritz Gurlitt gallery, where Matisse had participated in a group exhibition the previous November.

Michael and Sarah lent nineteen pictures, dating from 1897 to 1909, among them Blue Still Life, La Coiffure, The Gypsy, The Green Stripe, Portrait of Derain (1905, Tate), Madras rouge, Pink Onions, Sculpture and Persian Vase (1908, Oslo), Self-portrait, and Young Sailor I (see figs. 1.16, 1.18, 1.15, 1.5, 1.6, 1.13, 1.14, and 1.11).[42]

War broke out in early August. It would be years before they would see their paintings again.

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[42] An inventory of Matisse paintings from the Michael Stein collection sent to the Gurlitt gallery in 1914 appears in Barr 1951: 540-541, n. 4. Barr reports that this list was "sent to a member of the Cone family about 1918." As Jack Flam notes, in Flam 1986: 502, n. 31, some works on the list are misdated.

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2.4. The Montross Exhibition, 1914-1916

By early 1914, the furor over the Armory Show was subsiding. Walter Pach, John Quinn, and Arthur B. Davies, among others, were determined to continue the battle for modernism in America.

In New York, galleries were springing up with the mission of exhibiting and selling modern art. Harriet Bryant, who was in the decorating business, opened the Carroll Galleries in 1914. Quinn advised Bryant and made frequent purchases through her establishment.[1] Newman Emerson Montross, formerly of the art-supply business, had founded the Montross Gallery in 1885. After the Armory Show he began showing modern art, explaining to a New York Times reporter: "I consider it wiser to open the door from inside rather than to have it thrust in your face from outside."[2]

According to Pach, when Matisse "was asked what was needed here," the artist had advised, "more exhibitions." To that end, Pach requested the assistance of his friend in Puteaux, the sculptor Raymond Duchamp-Villon.

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[1] It has been written that Quinn "backed" the Carroll Galleries; see William C. Agee "Walter Pach and Modernism: A Sampler from New York, Paris, and Mexico City," Archives of American Art Journal 28, 3 (1988): 3, and (my own) John Cauman, "Henri Matisse's Letters to Walter Pach," Archives of American Art Journal 31, 3 (1991): 4. However, according to Judith Zilczer, "whether Quinn himself... provided capital for the... gallery is unclear"; see Judith Zilczer, "The Noble Buyer": John Quinn, Patron of the Avant-Garde." Hirshhorn Museum (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1978): 32, and also B. L. Reid, The Man from New York: John Quinn and His Friends (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968): 207.

[2] Unsigned, "'Modernist' Exhibition at Montross Galleries," New York Times, January 30, 1914: 8.

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> Duchamp-Villon agreed to assemble in Paris a large group of works that would carry on the idea of the Armory through the season of 1914-1915. But then came the war, my friend was mobilized, as were all the other men of military age, and there was no one to carry out the plans and to ship the works to America. At first the beautiful shows we had planned seemed lost, but when the battle of the Marne had been fought and we felt sure, a few weeks later, that the Germans would not take Paris, it was decided that I should go abroad and collect the promised exhibits.[3]

Pach made plans to go to Paris on behalf of Harriet Bryant and N. E. Montross. For Bryant he was to assemble a group show of contemporary European art; for Montross, a one-man show of Matisse.

The time was ripe for a full-scale Matisse exhibition in New York. Although Matisse's sales at the Armory Show had been disappointing, his work had attracted a great deal of interest. Matisse had become known in America as the leading modernist and as the artist with the most influence on young painters. Moreover, with Europe at war, it was not a propitious time for the European art market. Pach would have little competition from other venues.

In October 1914 Pach left for Paris. Upon arrival he wrote to Michael Stein, who, because of the war, had remained in Agay instead of returning to Paris at summer's end. Pach informed Stein of his exhibition plans and inquired about Matisse's current situation. Stein, astonished that Pach had

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[3] Pach 1938: 218.

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forsaken the safety of their homeland for the peril of wartime France, replied:

> Certainly nothing could have surprised me more than the receipt of your letter from Paris, nor do I gather what you are there for. What kind of an exhibition are you gathering stuff for? I last heard from Matisse about three weeks ago. He had heard nothing from his brother, who lives near St Quentin. He wrote me that the house in Issy-les-Moulineaux was occupied by French officers… Should you get into communication with him, don't fail to impress on him that he must now look to America for a market for his art for sometime [sic] to come and he might as well send all the things that are at Issy, especially the older and smaller things, black and whites etc. etc. and not to put the prices too high, as now is the time to have the Americans begin to own Matisse. They have read about him, discussed him, seen him in exhibitions at [sic] infinitum. It is about time he were ranked among the accepted classics and bought freely.[4]

Matisse was in Collioure, with Juan Gris and Albert Marquet. Matisse was grappling with cubism, and he and Gris were having spirited esthetic discussions. "We argue so heatedly about painting that Marquet can hardly sit still for boredom," Gris wrote to his dealer, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler.[5]

Gris was in severe financial straits. As a consequence of the war he was no longer receiving his stipend from Kahnweiler, a German national who rode out the war years in

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[4] Michael Stein to Walter Pach, October 19, 1914, Pach Papers, Archives of American Art, roll 4217, frames 197-198; see also Cauman 1991: 3.

[5] Gris to Kahnweiler [September or October 1914], cited in Barr 1951: 178. The undated later, in the Archives Kahnweiler-Leiris, Paris, is cited in the original French in Fourcade 1993: 114: "Nous parlons de peinture avec acharnement tandis que Marquet écoute en trainant ses pieds."

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Italy and Switzerland. Matisse promised Gris that he would do what he could to help him.

In late October 1914 Matisse was back in Paris. Avoiding the bleak autumn and winter of Issy (and a house occupied by the French military), he was back at his old address on the quai St. Michel, in quarters directly below his former studio, now inhabited by Marquet.

Matisse enlisted Gertrude Stein in an effort to help Gris. When the arrangement fell through, Matisse permanently severed his relationship with her. He later recalled:

> I had returned from Collioure after having promised Gris to see several people in Paris who might take an interest in his situation. I met Brenner,[6] an American sculptor, who was also a kind of picture broker, and who, I knew, admired Gris. I informed him of the predicament Gris was in, at the same time broaching the possibility of his helping Gris who was living in Collioure in very modest circumstances. It was understood that if Gertrude Stein would agree to share the responsibility, he, Brenner would give fr. 150 per month and she the same, which would have sufficed. In return Gris would let them have canvases that would cover the money advances. I saw Gertrude Stein and made the proposition which she accepted immediately. To my stupefaction I learned later through Gris that she had done nothing about it and that as a result he had been obliged to come to Paris and make out as best as he could. For this reason I have never seen Gertrude Stein since the first months of the war.[7]

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[6] The sculptor Michael Brenner (1885-1969) was born in Lithuania. In the early 1890s he emigrated with his family to New York. He worked as an apprentice to his elder brother, the medalist Victor Brenner, and studied at the Art Students League with Augustus St. Gaudens. In autumn-winter 1914-1915 he was in Europe, acting as "leg man" for the Washington Square Gallery, which he and Robert J. Coady had opened in 1914.

[7] Matisse, in "Testimony against Gertrude Stein," Transition, supplement to no. 23 (February 1935): 7. Gris and Gertrude were reconciled after the war, and Gertrude may not have been culpable in the breakdown of

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The immediate trigger of Matisse's break with Gertrude, however, was not so significant as the underlying cause: the cessation of her patronage and advocacy of Matisse, a consequence of her abandonment of him for Picasso.

Gertrude was soon to part with the last of her Matisses, the notorious Woman with the Hat. When she and Alice decided to take a respite from the hardships of wartime Paris and seek refuge on the Spanish island of Majorca, they found they were short of funds. She arranged to sell the painting to Sarah and Michael for $4000.

In February 1915 Michael wrote to Gertrude from Agay:

> Enclosed you will find draft for $2000— Will send you the other $2000 in the early part of March.
>
> For the present the picture had better remain at your place, as it is covered by your policy. Should you want to leave earlier let me know and I'll send the second draft to you in Spain.
>
> Do you plan to leave your Cézannes in your studio when you leave? If not put the Femme au chapeau with them....
>
> P. S. When I got to the Bank the man who signs drafts was away for the day, so I am sending my checque, which your bank will take for encaissement.[8]

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their financial arrangement. Of this arrangement James Mellow writes: "Kahnweiler... interpreted the move as a breach of his contract and adamantly refused to give his permission, leaving Gris in an awkward position. The arrangement broke down by Christmas, with Gertrude and Brenner both angry at having paid for pictures that they did not receive. Gertrude later wrote Gris that her 200 francs had been a gift, but it caused a rift in their friendship that was not mended until after the war. Eventually, Kahnweiler, to everyone's relief, arranged to send Gris money by way of the painter's sister in Spain" (James R. Mellow, Charmed Circle: Gertrude Stein & Company [New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1974]: 216-217).

[8] Michael Stein to Gertrude Stein, February 12, 1915, YCAL, cited in Gallup 1953: 106.

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Thus did Sarah Stein, in the midst of war and separated indefinitely from most of her beloved collection of Matisses, finally realize her dream of acquiring The Woman with the Hat.

Until Pach departed for the states on November 18, 1914, he was a frequent visitor to the quai St. Michel, as he and Matisse selected works for the Montross exhibition. Matisse's portrait etching of Pach documents their friendship and collaboration at this time.[9]

The Montross exhibition would be comprehensive, comprising 14 paintings, 11 sculptures, and 49 works on paper (of which there were 25 etchings, 17 lithographs, 5 drawings, and 2 woodcuts).[10] Matisse's austere paintings of 1914, such as Interior with a Goldfish Bowl (fig. 2.6), Woman on a High Stool (fig. 2.7.),[11] and Branch of Lilacs (fig. 2.8) show the impact of cubism; Mlle. Yvonne Landsberg (fig. 2.9) reveals the additional influence of Futurism. All four paintings were selected by Matisse and Pach for inclusion in the Montross show.[12] Also selected for inclusion were The Purple Cyclamen

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[9] For the circumstances surrounding the making of this etching, see Pach 1938: 219-20.

[10] Montross Gallery. Henri Matisse: Exhibition. New York: 1915.

[11] Woman on a High Stool had been reserved by Shchukin on his visit to Paris in mid-July 1914. When Matisse requested permission to lend it to the Montross show, he received the following telegram: "HAPPY TO EXHIBIT IN NEW YORK REGARDS" ("CONTENT EXPOSER NEW-YORK AMITIÉS," Shchukin to Matisse, November 21, 1914, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, cited in Albert Kostenevich, Collecting Matisse [Paris: Flammarion, 1993]: 43, n. 31). As a consequence of world war and the Russian revolution, Shchukin never gained possession of the work; it was his last purchase of Matisse.

[12] Another work of 1914, Still Life with Lemons That Correspond in Form to a Drawing of a Black Vase on the Wall (Rhode Island School of Design)

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(fig. 2.10), an intensely hued still life, and The Hat with Roses (fig. 2.11), a portrait of Matisse's daughter Marguerite.

The exhibition would also include early works, such as Studio under the Eaves (fig. 2.12). It would lack a work from the Stein collections. Only two paintings from 1905-1913 can be identified as having been in the exhibition: Purple Cyclamen, mentioned above, and Young Sailor II (see fig. 1.12),[13] whose companion piece Young Sailor I (see fig. 1.1), owned by the Michael Steins, was behind enemy lines in Berlin.

Among the sculptures were The Serf (see fig. 1.61), Reclining Nude I (fig. 2.13), Deux Négresses (fig. 2.14), La Serpentine (see fig. 1.62), and Jeannette: 4 states (1910-1913) (see figs. 1.63, 1.64, and 1.65).

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may also have been in the show. William Gerdts identifies it as the work designated "The Lemons," no. 57 in the Montross catalogue (William H. Gerdts, The Color of Modernism [New York: Hollis Taggart Galleries, 1997]: 18). The RISD Museum catalogue, however, does not cite the Montross show in the painting's exhibition history (Daniel Rosenfeld, ed., European Painting and Sculpture in the Museum of Art, 1770-1937 [Providence: Rhode Island School of Design, 1991]: 200). Nor does Barr, for whom Pach was a source, list it among the works in the Montross show (Barr 1951: 179). In a letter to me of April 1, 1998, Susanne Cloeren of the RISD Museum writes: "We have no conclusive evidence to indicate whether or not the painting was exhibited at the Montross Galleries in New York in 1915."

[13] Matisse insisted that Young Sailor II be included despite Pach's reservations: it had been poorly received at the Armory Show (Barr 1951: 179). It was fortunate for the exhibition that Matisse prevailed, for the work helped fill a gap left by the absence of pictures from the Steins.

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Of the etchings, all but one[14] were of 1914. There were two series of lithographs: one series of 1906-1907 and one of 1913-1914. The two woodcuts were of 1906.[15]

Pach, serving a function once filled by the Steins, acted as facilitator for Matisse. Just as the Steins had introduced Matisse to Picasso in 1906, now Pach introduced Matisse to Duchamp-Villon, on leave from the war. Pach later recalled:

> I brought Henri Matisse out to Puteaux... Matisse was making gingerly approaches to the Cubism that the younger men were developing, and he wanted to talk to Duchamp-Villon, who as he said, interested him the most of all his group.

Matisse, recognizing the "explosive yet balanced power" of Duchamp-Villon's 1914 sculpture The Horse, "asked about the ideas underlying... [its] evolution." Duchamp-Villon replied with a recitation of his theories concerning man and the machine.

> "It's a projectile," said Matisse several times, as he continued to turn about it and see the way its harmony was maintained from every viewpoint.... Matisse went away with a strong feeling of the man's sensibility, as he said at dinner in Paris that evening, what he feared in

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[14] The exception was listed in the Montross catalogue as #6, "Woman Standing," and dated "about 1904.". This work is probably the etching and drypoint Standing Nude, Hands on Her Face ("La Pleureuse") (1902-1903, Duthuit #7) that Matisse sent to Harriet Bryant of the Carroll Galleries at Pach's request (see Matisse's letter to Pach of November 20, 1915, in Cauman 1991: 4).

[15] Montross 1915. Among the graphic works in the exhibition were the etching Mlle. Landsberg (1914, Montross #19, Duthuit #33), the lithographs Nu, mi-corps (1906, Montross #31, Duthuit # 393) and Face with Bangs (1913, Montross #39, Duthuit #413); and the woodcut Le Grand Bois (Montross #49, Duthuit #317). See also n. 14, above, and n. 49, below.

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> the new group was the submerging of every sensuous quality in the rising tide of intellectualism.[16]

In January 1915[17] the Carroll Galleries presented a group exhibition of modern French art, featuring works that Pach had brought back from Paris. Among them were two works by Matisse, a still life and a 1914 portrait of Marguerite, The Leather Hat (private collection).

Quinn wrote to the British painter Gwen John:

> Artists are having a hard time here. Very little is being sold at the exhibitions. A friend of mine, Walter Pach, went abroad for the Carroll Gallery and brought back things by Matisse, Picasso, Dufy, Derain, Duchamp-Villon, Renoir, Gleizes, Segonzac and others. One or two of the Picassos of the blue period are magnificent things. If I can afford it, I'm going to buy one of them.[18]

An article in Arts and Decoration, written in advance of Matisse's show at Montross, announced "the first comprehensive exhibition of the great Extremist's work ever shown in this country." It predicted that

> among those who are to drag their feet over the Montross carpets, there will be many actuated to do so by an ill-

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[16] Pach 1938: 144-146.

[17] In January 1915, Alfred Stieglitz published in Camera Work a symposium on the theme "What '291' Means to Me." William Zorach's contribution was a testimonial to Matisse's first New York exhibition (1908). Zorach wrote that Matisse's works on paper at the 291 Gallery brought him "the feeling of a bigger, deeper, more simple and archaic world" (Camera Work 47 [dated July 1914; published January 1915]); see above, 1.6: p. 65.

[18] Quinn to Gwen John, January 15, 1915 (John Quinn Collection, NYPL). Gwen John (1876-1939), sister of Augustus John (1878-1961), lived in Meudon, France. Quinn was a patron of hers, as he was of her brother.

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> considered desire to laugh. The proportion, we dare to predict, will not be so great as attended the Armory Show. The art of Henri Matisse has come to stay for a time at least and its influence to stay permanently.

Regarding Matisse's influence, the article went on to say:

> Monsieur Matisse, whatever we may think of him, is the greatest force of contemporary painting. He tempts artists with a thesis that offers them a greater independence than any they could have found in nights of the happiest dreams. It tells the artist that he is superior to his subject, not that he is a manipulator of it, as with Whistler; but that he may be himself a creator.[19]

The Montross exhibition opened on January 20, 1915. It was presented in three rooms: one gallery for paintings, one for sculpture, and one for works on paper. The walls, according to one reviewer, were draped with "attractive creamy white filmy stuff."[20] The gallery produced an illustrated catalogue for the occasion. Among its 14 illustrations was a color reproduction of Interior with a Goldfish Bowl, probably only the second Matisse work to be reproduced in color.[21] The frontispiece was a Steichen photograph of the artist, posing with La Serpentine.[22]

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[19] Unsigned, "Henry [sic] Matisse at Montross's," Arts and Decoration 5, February 1915: 150-151.

[20] Arthur Hoeber, "Art and Artists," Globe and Commercial Advertiser, January 22, 1915: 12.

[21] The first, Male Guitarist (1903, private collection), was reproduced in the Russian publication La Toison d'or 6, 1909 (Fourcade 1993: 350).

[22] The photograph had previously appeared in Camera Work 42-43: 11 (April-July 1913), published November 1913.

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The show was widely reviewed in the press. Critics were more favorable than they had been to Matisse's work at the Armory, for three reasons. First, as the Montross show included earlier, more traditional examples as well as recent, avant-garde work, it was evident that Matisse was solidly grounded in academic fundamentals. Second, the wide array of graphic work assured that his skill as a draftsmen was apparent. Third, since a number of the pieces had previously been shown in New York—among them The Serf, La Serpentine, Jeannette I, II, and III, Young Sailor II, and the lithograph Nu, mi-corps—critics were more familiar with the work on display than they had been with the selection at the Armory.

The exhibition generated a lot of interest. The public, by and large, was way ahead of the critics. Despite an admission charge of 25 cents, the show was well attended. Of ten reviews—nine from the daily press and one from American Art News—two were negative, five were mixed, and three were positive.

Royal Cortissoz, conservative critic for the Tribune, offered a predictably negative assessment. His pen dripping sarcasm, he bitterly attacked what he regarded as the pretensions of Post-Impressionism. The exhibition, he wrote

> opened at the Montross gallery with every circumstance of high erected gravity, including a guardian at the gate, in whose imposition of an admission fee we are to recognize, presumably, the special importance attached to the affair. We would not be discourteous, not for a wilderness of monkeys, but, to speak quite frankly, the thing bores us to death.

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The source of Cortissoz's indignation, not surprisingly, was Matisse's flouting of academic principles:

> When M. Matisse paints, in his own inimitable way, a melancholy female seated on a stool, with her hands folded and her back to what looks like a drawing table [Woman on a High Stool], he has only to call it "Woman Seated" and there you are. He gives you thereby the very essence of woman, universal woman, seated. And he throws in the very last word in "rhythm." That, at any rate, is what we gather from the oracles. They know—no one knows better—that when M. Matisse paints "The Young Sailor" and puts the unhappy lad into a blue jersey, with green panties, and sets him against a pink background, drawing him, the while, with the divinely simple, summary touch of a child, he is not merely making a portrait. No, we repeat, not at all. What M. Matisse is doing is to summon the thrilling spirits of Line and Mass out of the vasty deep. He is reviving the Fundamental Principles of Art. He is returning to the Basic Simplicities of Nature. He is snatching Style out of Chaos. He is being Original, he is making Rome howl. And the poor little clay-footed godlets of art, old and modern art, the art most of us live with, are tumbled incontinently off their pinchbeck pedestals to make way for the real thing.
>
> Well, we do not blame M. Matisse. Doubtless he does the best he can. These uninteresting pictures of his, these forcible-feeble drawings and etchings, these ugly bits of modelling, busts and nudes, he doubtless makes as he makes them because he cannot help himself. But the blether about there being some sort of artistic inspiration, some sort of beauty, deeply concealed in the stuff, promotes not only boredom but indignation. In the world of art there are standards, ideals, which are precise to thoughtful men and women. It is disgusting that they should be flouted to make a Post-Impressionistic holiday.[23]

Also predictably conservative was Arthur Hoeber of the Globe and Commercial Advertiser. Though blind to Matisse's

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[23] Royal Cortissoz, "Exhibitions and Other Matters of Fine Art," New York Tribune, January 24, 1915: part 3: 3, 9.

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virtues, he was more deferential than Cortissoz. The review, illustrated with Mlle. Yvonne Landsberg, begins soberly:

> This revolutionary Frenchman stops at the difficulties of no particular medium of expression. As to his success in any of them, that will be a question that will bring forth much discussion. He has many adherents, however, men and women who grow enthusiastic over the results he achieves, and indeed, he has not lacked for patrons for some time past.
>
> ...There are early drawings here that disclose M. Matisse to have had an academic training and to be capable of limning his figures with fidelity to form and construction, as these are familiar to the average eye accustomed to looking at people about us.

Hoeber, however, could see nothing in the recent work other than that it was "ugly."

> The latest effort in a painting here is called simply a "Portrait" [Mlle. Yvonne Landsberg], but it resembles no human being, though the intention is to portray a woman. One is certain of this because of the costume.
>
> For no obvious reason there are swirls from head and dress, from arms and breast, the significance of which entirely escapes us. From this one may turn to still another manikin, on a high desk chair. "Seated Woman" [Woman on a High Stool] is the title, and there is a sad, drab color throughout, with an expression of deep dejection, due perhaps to accidental touches on the face. The beauty of this, too, eludes us. Of the others, one may say only the same general thing, for they take us nowhere, and seem as hopelessly ugly as possible.[24]

Most of the critics had mixed reactions to the show, admiring at least some of Matisse's work. The harshest opprobrium was directed at Matisse's sculpture; in this medium

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[24] Arthur Hoeber, "Art and Artists," Globe and Commercial Advertiser, January 22, 1915: 12.

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the Greco-Roman ideal was more firmly ingrained, in the eyes of critics, than in the medium of painting.

In the New York Herald, above an illustration of La Serpentine, there appeared this headline: "Atrocities of New Art by Henri Matisse Shown Here/ Sculptures by Leader of Modern Extremists Are Revolting—Paintings Have Some Merit and Some Etchings Are Good." The reviewer characterized the room containing sculpture as a "Chamber of Horrors."

In the opinion of the Herald reviewer, La Serpentine was "the most conspicuous work in the collection of atrocities. Some artists of the new school, in maltreating the human form, at least make over the outlines into a decorative scheme. This nude has no quality except the power to shock."

The Herald reviewer recognized the primitivism of two of the sculptures:

> "Recumbent Woman, Nude" [Reclining Nude I] is thoroughly exotic, accenting curves and voluptuousness. It has no beauty, no nobility. "Group of Two Women" [Deux Négresses] with arms on each others' shoulders, looking into each other's faces, resembles somewhat the work of savage tribes. The art works of savages are sincere attempts at expression, however, but this is crudity that is forced.

The Herald reviewer characterized the process of abstraction revealed in the Jeannette series in pejorative terms:

> There is a series of heads of the same woman, labelled "First State," "Second State," "Third State," and "Fourth State," showing the progress of the sculptor

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> from literal representation to the horrible thing that stands for his final impression.[25]

The critic from American Art News characterized Matisse's sculpture as "ugly":

> In his sculpture Matisse seems to delight in choosing the ugliest models possible. Witness his four studies of a woman's head, two in plaster and in bronze, finely and strongly modelled, but each repulsive in expression, to a degree. "The Serf," ugly as it is, is true and "Rodinesque," but the snake-like "Nude Woman, Standing," [La Serpentine] is so utterly untrue to Nature in the modelling of the form as to be a travesty.
>
> The striving after sensational effect and the love of the morbid and ugly, characterize the sculpture of Matisse as now displayed.[26]

Joseph E. Chamberlin of the Evening Mail joined in the chorus, likewise disdaining the "ugliness" of the sculpture:

> in the sculpture... the best things and the worst are found. "The Serf," the "Child's Head," are vigorous and real. Much beauty and strength in them. Note the gulf between them and the pure artistic bluff of the "Nude Woman Standing," [La Serpentine] or "Recumbent Woman" [Reclining Nude I]. The man who made the "Serf" could not make the "Nude Woman Standing" except as an artistic joke. The sculptured "Woman's Head" [Jeannette] in four states, bronze and plaster, can hardly impress any observer except as a conscious and deliberate attempt to make the ugliest thing possible. As such it is a success.[27]

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[25] Unsigned, "Atrocities of New Art by Henri Matisse Shown Here," New York Herald, January 21, 1915: 12.

[26] Unsigned, "Matisse at Montross'," American Art News 13, 16 (January 23, 1915): 2.

[27] J.E.C. [Joseph E. Chamberlin], "The Unlike Work of Matisse and Lavery/ The Frenchman Succeeds in Astonishing Fifth Avenue with Pictures and Sculpture," New York Evening Mail, January 30, 1915: 8.

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Elisabeth Luther Cary of the Times, who knew Matisse's work and admired much of it, concluded her review with a single sentence on the sculpture: "In sculpture Matisse is neither convincing nor tolerable."[28]

The artist's recent painting, too, disturbed and baffled the critics. A characteristic response was that of the critic for American Art News, who admired Matisse's evident gifts but could not fathom his attraction to "ugliness." This critic dubbed Matisse "The Apostle of the Ugly" (dusting off a phrase that had been hurled at The Eight in 1907).[29] The critic went on to compare Matisse's Woman on a High Stool to Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase; this was high praise—albeit unintentional—for it elevated Matisse's painting to the status of succès de scandale:

> As the influence which, with the exception of that of Cezanne—has been the strongest on the younger French and Continental artists of the day—the work and ideas of Matisse calls [sic] for special attention and study and even if one cannot admire his too evident love of the ugly in form and feature, his frequent vulgarity of subject and treatment in all the mediums, one cannot but marvel at his versatility and be impressed, above all, by his draughtsmanship and grace of line. For the man, despite his glaring faults, is unquestionably able and capable of higher flights than he has yet made. He is a paradox—for with at times his evident love of the beautiful as shown by his grace of line and infrequently his composition and color, he seems to prefer to render the ugly in an ugly way. In fact he may be called "The

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[28] Unsigned [Elisabeth Luther Cary], "Art Notes," New York Times, January 21, 1915: 8.

[29] Cf. New York Sun, May 15, 1907: 5: "A group of eight painters who have been referred to often as… 'the apostles of ugliness'… have formed themselves into a body."

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Apostle of the Ugly."…

The oils and sculptures will excite the most interest and discussion. Of the former the last work of the artist, "A Woman Seated" [Woman on a High Stool] with its wooden face, curious spiral curves, which indicated a chair, and dirty gray color scheme, will draw the public almost as much as the famous "Nude Descending a Staircase" of the Armory Show.… The "Woman Seated" and the "Hat with Roses," are both distinctly ugly with untruthful color, flat unmodelled features and vacant expression.

These works violate the essential canons of art and it is difficult to see how they can have any educational or art value.[30]

Cary of the Times, in a review illustrated with Interior with a Goldfish Bowl, wrote favorably of Matisse as a painter:

> When we follow the course of development in the art of Matisse as it is shown by the chronologically arranged paintings in the second gallery, we see how far from eccentric was the working of the painter's mind in his earlier interrogations of nature. Something more of a realist than most of us can make ourselves is revealed in the "Nude Model Posing" of 1901 and "The Road Under the Trees" of 1897 is even commonplace in color. The pictures of 1914 skip a disturbing interval and show Matisse returned from his experimental period, revived and refreshed, and ready to enjoy his true role of colorist. The "Bouquet of Lilacs" is marvelous in the paintless quality of the paint, in the purity and lightness of the color. The "Goldfish" is a room uninhabited except by the little creatures in their globe, and for this suppression of human interest the normal observer must be unfeignedly grateful. It gives him an opportunity for the purest enjoyment of the gay and tender color and the noble simplicity of the composition.

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[30] Unsigned, "Matisse at Montross'," American Art News 13, 16 (January 23, 1915): 2.

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Yet overall she regarded Matisse as a limited and superficial artist:

> Matisse is comparatively a simple creature, competent, a great colorist, less certain in his handling of form, not over interested in humanity and tending hideously toward its degradation in his portraiture of its physiognomy, without a powerful psychological instinct, and ridden by a sadly restricting intellectual formula. There are artists like that in every movement. Those who are chiefly interested in technical problems will find the exhibition of his work now at the Montross Galleries a mine of information, those who look for symmetry and the Greek ideal will run from it in horror, those who ask of art a deep emotion will find it superficial and incapable of stirring the mind or soul. Those who respect the fine proportions of human anatomy will be revolted. It is not a bad idea to come face to face with such a painter as Matisse, fairly representing his age on the technical side, isolated from his companions and delivering his message alone on the exhibition platform.[31]

Like Cary, the reviewer for the Evening Post found merit in Matisse's paintings but shared her judgment that Matisse was superficial. This reviewer characterized Matisse as "essentially a studio artist, unattached to life":

> In his slight, inconsequential etchings, in his drawings and lithographs, there are many proofs of his talent for line. In his paintings he shows a flair for pattern and rhythm, as in the Cyclamen, or The Coucous, or Gold Fish. He not only shows it but flaunts it. These paintings are labelled rhythm. Look at his latest portrait [Yvonne Landsberg], in which he has imitated his imitators imitating him.
>
> ...Matisse's painting falls to pieces like a house of cards when removed from the studio forum. Place it beside El Greco and its essential lightness, its bald obviousness is at once apparent. From El Greco to Cézanne to

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[31] Unsigned [Elisabeth Luther Cary], "Art Notes," New York Times, January 21, 1915: 8.

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> Matisse there is a sharp decline, particularly from Cézanne to Matisse, like the decline from thought to exclamation....
>
> ...Matisse has some knowledge of certain principles of art and it may be that he has helped to make it clear that in decoration these principles cannot be replaced by literary drudgery. He has screamed "simplicity" just as he has screamed "line," "rhythm," "color." He has helped to revive the necessary elements, against which the schoolmasters are ever writing and painting. For the artists he is not valuable, because at his best he gives only a little away.[32]

The critic for the New York World, in a favorable review of the exhibition, was pleased to discover that Matisse's work was "not as extreme as his reputation." This critic admired Matisse, while disparaging his "worshippers" and his "army of imitators."

The World critic compared the portrait of Yvonne Landsberg to a photograph of an early state of the picture and expressed admiration for the transformation the painting had undergone:

> When one of the canvases shown first left Matisse's easel it pictured a demure young woman. It was very well done. A photograph of it in that state may be seen in the galleries. If it had gone out in that condition Matisse's reputation would have dropped into conventional lines, so he set about giving the picture his personal stamp. He raised the downcast eyes, making one glare north and the other squint south. Then he enveloped his subject in so-called rhythmic lines, with arcs of white paint, like limp skipping rope, to express his notion of accord with nature.
>
> The product as it hangs is far from displeasing, and its presentable appearance testifies to the genius of the painter. It is extremely difficult for him to do

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[32] "Art Notes," New York Evening Post, January 23, 1915: 9, 12.

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> anything very badly, and therein lies the difference between him and his army of imitators.

Of Interior with a Goldfish Bowl he wrote:

> Admirers at the galleries seem to give special admiration to one example called "Goldfish," which is adroitly treated in respect to the title subject and its immediate environment. Goldfish occupy a glass globe in an open window. The light falls caressingly on a couch distant from the window, and its distribution over the room is satisfying. Matisse marked the picture for his own by showing through the window a commonplace factory building [sic],[33] drawn in proper perspective and true to line, but presenting sordid contrast with the quiet seclusion of the main part of the picture.

The World critic admired Studio under the Eaves—"a really fine study of bright outdoors seen from a darkened interior"—and Branch of Lilacs—"a masterpiece of striking decoration," while professing distress that these works were being neglected by visitors in favor of "freaks in figure painting, nude and otherwise," that commanded "unstinted admiration" (which paintings were considered to be "freaks" is unclear—perhaps one of them was Young Sailor II).

"In sculpture and prints," the World critic wrote, "the exhibition shows Matisse more as his worshippers would like him to be. He lets his hands run free in sketches, with the result that he draws well rather than pleasingly; and in sculpture his fancy leads him into the field of the grotesque." The reviewer concluded by comparing Matisse favorably

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[33] The view depicted is that of the Préfecture de Police, on the opposite bank of the Seine from Matisse's quai St. Michel studio.

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to his American followers: "Any number of Americans can give him points in productions that cannot be understood."[34]

Another favorable notice came from Henry McBride, writing in the New York Sun. It was a very different kind of piece from that of the anonymous writer in the World. In this wholehearted defense of modernism, McBride illustrated his article with the sculpture Reclining Nude I, but did not discuss individual works. Most of the article took the form of imaginary dialogues between the writer and an academician, and between the writer and an art dealer, the theme of the dialogues being that academic art was done for. McBride predicted that at the end of the Great War, "Matisse himself will not be broken" and "the academicians will not get back their dear Bouguereau."

A contention of Matisse's conservative critics was that in willfully suppressing his own skill, he affected an insincere primitivism. In the dialogue with the academician, McBride adopts an arch tone, refusing to defend the "honesty" of Matisse's work:

> "Tell me one thing. Is he honest?"…
> "How on earth should I know? Honesty isn't essential to good art, as Jimmy Whistler and Oscar Wilde discovered simultaneously.… All that I can say about Matisse is that he is now rich enough to be honest if he wishes.…"
> I regret to say that at this point my academical friend lost his temper.…
> The discussion had, in fact, the usual Matisse

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[34] Unsigned [Charles Henry Dorr?], "News of the Art World," New York World, Sunday, January 24, 1915, section 2: 5.

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> ending. Why even old friends cannot talk Matisse talk without squabbling is one of the mysteries, and... one of the blessings of the modern movement.

McBride aptly observed that in recognizing the value of Matisse, the public and the art dealers were miles ahead of the art establishment:

> Businessmen and people in general take a more rational viewpoint than my academical friend. My friend wishes to know how Matisse's work conforms to the principles of Leonardo da Vinci... The businessman merely desires to know if the public is interested....
>
> The public... knowing almost nothing of Leonardo and caring less, simply sees in these strange new paintings something that corresponds to some of their own experiences. They jump at them, as children do for new toys.... That they are accepted by the people any one may see who goes to the show.
>
> The spectators glue their eyes to the weird colors and shapes, they linger long.... They were accepted by the people some time ago. They have now been accepted by the dealers. But it will be years before our public museums accept them.
>
> "Yes," said one of the rival picture dealers. "Brother Montross has stolen a march upon us. Undoubtedly he will be able to do good business with this Matisse show. I'm sorry now I allowed him to get it away from me....
>
> "Matisse is the greatest name in art today. There is no one in France who is talked about with the same earnestness, no one who arouses deep interest but him."[35]

Although McBride chose not to write about any specific works for his Sun article, at least one painting in the show made a profound impression on him. Some fourteen years later,

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[35] Unsigned [Henry McBride], "What is Happening in the World of Art," The Sun, January 24, 1915, reprinted in McBride 1975: 75-80.

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although he had not seen Interior with a Goldfish Bowl in as many years, he recalled:

> I have an overpowering affection... for a considerable group of paintings in which the compositional lines are so heavily indicated that they might be thought by some to be the whole thing in the picture—though those who hold with me that "Matisse is always the painter" will scarcely be contented with phrasing it in that way. On the contrary, the heavy lines are "painted" and balanced beautifully with the colour masses however simply they may have been indicated. The most memorable work in this class that came to New York was a huge "Gold Fish" picture, shown at Montross', which returned to Paris and is now probably adorning some French private collection. It is superb.[36]

Charles H. Caffin of the New York American, who had been Matisse's most discerning critic at the Armory, was the most knowledgeable and informative critic of the Montross exhibition. Caffin began with an affirmative verdict on the issue of Matisse's "sincerity":

> At the International Exposition held here those who were making acquaintance with the modern men for the first time seemed to find Matisse not only embarrassing but particularly exasperating. Meanwhile, even to those who had been pretty familiar with his evolution, he was still to a considerable extent an enigma. In the first place, he has had many pupils to whom he has appeared as an inspired prophet of the new. How far has he been able to escape the poison of adulation, to be free of pose and sincere?...
>
> As to those questions any one who writes about his art ought to put himself on record. Therefore I say that after some doubt I have been convinced of his sincerity. I recognize in his work and influence a very notable contribution to the modern attitude toward art.

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[36] McBride 1930: 20.

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Caffin predicted that Matisse's influence might prove to be "more important than his work" and characterized Matisse as (like Cézanne) a "pathfinder."

> From what? From the view that the chief aim of art was the representation of nature and that it was largely by its resemblance to nature that a work of art was to be estimated. Moreover, from the view that the secrets of the future were to be discovered in the traditions inherited from the Renaissance, and consequently, that knowledge and the tricks of technique as usually taught, were the chief arrows in an artist's equipment.

Caffin, who had first written about Matisse and primitivism in the pages of Camera Work in 1908, now explained that Matisse sought to "unlearn the knowledge he had inherited and gained, and acquire the unsophisticated attitude of the child-mind." To that end, "he went to the carved work of the so-called savages of Africa."

> What suggestion did he derive from them? In the first place, that they were the product of an instinct to decorate; secondly, that in selecting motives of decoration the early artist studied nature but did not try to imitate it. Instead, he fixed on some quality of the object he was studying and set out to express it in terms of abstraction. Were it, for example, protuberance of form, then it was the suggestion of protuberance that he emphasized. Were it the slimness of a human figure, then he emphasized its elongation. He, as we say, conventionalized the forms to make them express some abstract quality....
>
> It is in his sculpture that Matisse's debt to the savage carvings is most directly apparent.

Drawing upon his own interviews with the artist, Caffin discussed Matisse's sculpture and paintings using "words

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continually on Matisse's lips: 'Simplification, Organization, and Expression.'" Of Young Sailor II he wrote:

> The motive of the composition is clearly decorative. The design is flat, and the sense of volume is conveyed, as in his lithographs, by the contour lines, aided in the case of the painting by the tones of color. It is painted not only without any manual dexterity or regard for beauty of surfaces, but also untidily....
>
> Many people who were originally antagonized by this picture have grown to like it. To what is due such spell as it exerts? Unquestionably to its organization; its harmoniously assembled unity, not less engaging because it is so apparently simple and conveys an expression of frank simplicity, the quality in the model that seems to have inspired the artist.

Caffin concluded his review with analyses of two "recent examples": Interior with a Goldfish Bowl (illustrated) and the portrait of Yvonne Landsberg. The interior, he wrote, "illustrates how Matisse has been alive to the suggestions of so-called 'cubism,' and has assimilated what they could give himself in the way of enrichment."

> The composition is more structurally complete than that of the earlier pictures, for no ornament is introduced to carry the eye back and through; the planes themselves, the organic structural elements, produce the sense of rhythm and suggest the cubic capacity of the composition. Suggest it, I repeat; for we receive the pleasure of actual space, filled with actual forms, without detriment to the impression of flatness that so helps the composition as a decoration.

Caffin wrote of Mlle. Yvonne Landsberg:

> That his appetite for experimentation is not exhausted is indicated by his most recent canvas, "Portrait." After painting this seated figure of a woman, he has scraped a number of curved white lines, radiating from the body like spray from a fountain. It is a crude device for

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> suggesting vibrations, which is chiefly interesting in the possibility that it points to a further step in Matisse's evolution.[37]

Concurrent with the above reviews, Pach's defense of the exhibition, entitled "Why Matisse?", appeared in Century Magazine. Illustrated with Young Sailor II, which was in the exhibition, and Blue Still Life (owned by Michael and Sarah Stein), which was not, the article can be seen as a collaboration between the author and the artist. Pach wrote it after extensive discussions with Matisse, and presented him as he wished to be portrayed. Pach reiterated three points that Matisse had often made to American interviewers: his academic training, his links with tradition, and his dissociation from the excesses of his followers. Pach translated and expanded upon two key passages from Matisse's "Notes of a Painter" of 1908 (the essay would not be fully translated into English until 1931).[38] As Alfred Barr later observed, Pach's article

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[37] Charles H. Caffin, "Matisse's Career Is Shown in Representative Exhibition," New York American, January 25, 1915: 8.

[38] "Notes of a Painter" was fully translated by Margaret Scolari in Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Henri-Matisse: Retrospective Exhibition (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1931): 29-36. The two passages translated by Pach in 1915 were: "Everything which has no use in a picture is, by that very fact, harmful. A work must have a harmony of ensemble: every superfluous detail would take the place in the spectator's mind of an essential detail"; and "What I pursue above all is expression.... [Pach's ellipsis] This does not, to my mind, reside in the passion that may break forth in a face or manifest itself by a violent movement. It is in the whole disposition of my picture: the space occupied by the bodies, the empty places around them, the proportions, all that has its part in the expression."

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would have made an appropriate preface to the Montross exhibition catalogue.[39]

Pach began his essay by discussing Matisse's process of simplification:

> I shall try the difficult task of translating into words the qualities I see in these pictures and sculptures. What is more readily seized is what Matisse omits—the bag and baggage of surface realism, which has become for him unessential, and which no chance to acquire popularity can tempt him to retain in his art.... When a given thing is necessary for expression, it is a virtue to use it; when the thing has become a hindrance to expression, it is a virtue to do away with it.

Pach linked Matisse to the "classic point of view," which he defined as the tradition of "painters of sensibility" such as Corot and Renoir, two painters with bona fide credentials among American collectors:

> The phase of art which developed through Corot and Renoir, and which finds its purest expression to-day in Matisse, is that of sensibility. Notice any pair of colors as they come together in his work, and you will feel that they could have been so related only by one who is deeply sensitive to color. Notice, too, how each line in his drawing moves according to the working of his thought, not from the accident of an appearance in the external world. So the volumes and masses of his composition are adjusted always under the control of a mind which is unceasingly in contact with nature. What differentiates the sensibility of Matisse from that of others is its intensity. Where the layman feels the beauty of color and design for a moment and then lets his attention turn to something else, where the mediocre artist gives up the struggle after a short time and contents himself (and his public) with a copy of an object, Matisse keeps up the search for a month, perhaps for a

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[39] Barr 1951: 179.

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> year, and will not let the work go from his studio until the particular expression he needed has been reached.... Sensibility is of course no new thing in art, but it is a quality specially emphasized in our time. And the fact that Matisse's work is thus modern in the best sense is reason enough for showing it in New York again.

Pach concluded by distancing Matisse from those perceived to be his followers, emphasizing his uniqueness rather than his status as leader of a school:

> No effort could be more futile than that of the student who took it into his head to "paint just like Matisse." It has been tried by clever men, and all of them have failed. The stimulus and inspiration he affords are for every one; his means of procuring for us these experiences are personal and indivisible.[40]

The issue of American Art News of February 13, published while the exhibition was in progress (it would close February 27), included the following item, under the headline "Matisse Sells Well":

> The sales from the Matisse exhibition at the Montross Galleries, 556 [sic, 550] Fifth Ave., number over 80, including sculptures, drawings, lithographs and woodcuts. The supply of several of the prints being exhausted Mr. Montross has sent to Paris for others. The sculptures sold include "Nude Woman Standing," $325 and "Nude Woman Crouching."[41]

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[40] Walter Pach, "Why Matisse?", Century Magazine, February 1915: 633-636.

[41] Unsigned, American Art News 13, 19 (February 13, 1915): 9.

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The buyer of "Nude Woman Standing" (La Serpentine) was Arthur B. Davies.[42]

In the pages of Vanity Fair, Frederick James Gregg reported that at the "recent Matisse show, the lithographs, etchings and drawings, available as they were for persons of moderate means, were simply gobbled up by the general public." Gregg noted that a sea change was taking place:

> Painting and sculpture are in a state of flux. All is disturbance. Change is everywhere....
>
> In Russia, Germany, Scandinavia, Switzerland, Italy and England, the younger men are breaking with recent tradition as they have done in France. Those who complain, in America and elsewhere, are those who are in a position to make the most noise—men whose names are well known. But their opposition... cannot be called disinterested... The vested interest of the teacher in an art school... differs not at all... from that of a dealer anxious about the older things in his shop. In justice to certain of the dealers, however, it must be admitted that they have been watching the weather. The Montross exhibition of Henri Matisse... was naturally condemned by the conservatives as a deplorable interference with the landmarks in art.
>
> Take the New York critics! Two years ago they were almost unanimously against the new men. Now the most important of them... have abandoned their opposition. Cézanne is spoken of with almost as much respect as Rembrandt.... Van Gogh and Gauguin are derided only by the irresponsible....
>
> The whole process, begun radically in our time by Cézanne, continued by Gauguin and Van Gogh, carried further by Matisse and Picasso, has resulted in a realization of the temporarily obscured importance of design or pattern.... Instead of the appearance of the thing that affected him, the new painter or sculptor tries to convey to the spectator the quality in the

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[42] Barr 1951: 180. Barr identifies William Scranton Pardee as the buyer of Jeannette IV. Pardee (1859-1918) was a lawyer from New Haven, Connecticut.

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> object that produced his creative emotion or impulse—in a word, significant form...[43]

In addition to organizing the exhibitions for the Montross and Carroll galleries, Pach was advising two collectors, John Quinn and Walter Arensberg, both of whom made purchases from the Montross show. Quinn bought 2 Matisse oils from Montross, both of 1914: Purple Cyclamen and Hat with Roses. In addition, he bought graphic works: 4 lithographs in February, [44] and, in March, 13 lithographs, 2 woodcuts, 2 etchings, and 2 drawings.[45]

In February Quinn wrote to Ezra Pound, announcing that he had decided to sell his manuscript collection and devote his energies to collecting "vital contemporary art." Defending his reputation as a collector, Quinn gave an inventory of his holdings:

> I have bought and own a fine Cézanne,—a portrait of Madame Cézanne; one of the best Van Goghs in the world; a first rate Gauguin; more than one painting by Derain; three or four fine Picassos, three of the blue period

---

[43] Frederick James Gregg, "What the New Art Has Done," Vanity Fair 5, April 1915: 30-31. Gregg's references to "significant form," and, elsewhere in the article, to "Post-Impressionism," demonstrate the pervasive influence of Roger Fry on progressive American critics of the period.

[44] Quinn bought 4 Matisse lithographs, second series (1913-1914) via the Carroll Galleries: "Head and Bust (full face)" (Montross #40) for $8.00, "Head and Bust (three-quarter face)" (Montross #41) for $8.00, "Study of a Figure" (Montross #47) for $10.00, and Nude in Profile Reading (1913, Montross #44, Duthuit #408) for $8.00; total: $44. The last item was also purchased by Arensberg; see below, n. 50 (Receipt, Carroll Galleries to Quinn, February 3, 1915, John Quinn Collection, NYPL).

[45] Quinn bought 13 lithographs (@ $8.00), 2 woodcuts (@ $12.00), 2 etchings (@ $15.00), and 2 drawings (@ $100.00); total: $358. (Receipt, Montross Gallery to Quinn, March 1, 1915, John Quinn Collection, NYPL).

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> and two of his latest cubist work; two important Matisses and a large number of lithographs and etchings by Matisse.

Quinn went on to cite his holdings of Duchamp, Dufy, Rouault, Jacques Villon, Augustus John, Davies, Kuhn, Lawson, and Prendergast, among others.[46] By year's end Quinn had purchased an additional 12 etchings by Matisse,[47] via the Carroll Galleries, and three Matisse monotypes,[48] from the artist via Pach.

On West 67th Street, a few blocks away from Quinn's bachelor quarters at 58 Central Park West, Walter and Louise Arensberg were amassing a collection of modern art that would rival Quinn's, while presiding over a salon of artists and writers that would rival Leo and Gertrude Stein's. In the years before the Great War, Americans in Paris met their European counterparts at the Steins' atelier; in the war years

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[46] Quinn to Pound, February 15, 1915, John Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[47] Due to a misunderstanding, Matisse shipped 49 etchings to Harriet Bryant, "destined for a collector [Quinn] who wanted to have the entire collection of my etchings" (Matisse to Pach, November 20, 1915, cited in Cauman 1991: 4). Quinn, however, wrote to Bryant that he had selected only 12, "all of them old ones but one," and had "returned thirty-seven to you." Quinn paid a total of $144 for them (Quinn to Bryant, October 9, 1915, Quinn Collection, NYPL). Quinn apparently had little interest in the recent etchings and drypoints, of which Matisse produced a prodigious number in 1914-1915.

[48] In Alfred Barr's words: "The nine known monotypes of 1914 form a very special series within Matisse's graphic art" (Barr 1951: 187). In these unique prints, the black and white elements are transposed and contours appear in white against a black ground. Quinn paid a total of $120 for the three monotypes (Quinn to Bryant, October 9, 1915, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

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and after (until 1920), Europeans in exile met their American counterparts at the Arensbergs' New York apartment.

Arensberg, son of a Pittsburgh industrialist, was a Harvard-educated poet and scholar; his wife Louise was heiress to a textile fortune. Before their move to New York in 1914, they lived in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Arensberg made his first art purchases at the Armory Show of 1913, acquiring, during its final days in Boston, works on paper by Cézanne and Gauguin and an oil by Jacques Villon. At this time he met Walter Pach, with whom he had extensive conversations about modern art.

From the Matisse exhibition at Montross, Arensberg bought two etchings and three lithographs.[49] He would acquire two other works on paper by the artist, but only one Matisse painting would join his collection.[50]

That painting was the portrait, Mlle. Yvonne Landsberg, which Arensberg acquired from Montross in March 1916, a year after the close of the exhibition. The painting had failed to

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[49] The two etchings were: Three Studies of a Nude (1914, Montross #7, Duthuit #46) and Portrait of Iturrino (1914, Montross #18, Duthuit #39). The three lithographs were: The Large Nude (1906, Montross #35, Duthuit #403), Nude in Profile Reading (1913, Montross #44, Duthuit #408), and Black Eyes (1913, Montross #32, Duthuit #411). I thank Naomi Sawelson-Gorse for this information.

[50] For a few months in 1920, Arensberg would briefly own, then relinquish to Quinn, Matisse's Blue Nude; see below, 3.2: p. 346. The two other Matisse works on paper owned by Arensberg were: Nude with Right Foot on Stool, lithograph (1906, Duthuit #404), purchased from Howard Putzel, ca. 1936-7, and Still Life, drawing (1915, illustrated in Martin 1954: #134) purchased ca. 1915-1920, probably from the Carroll Galleries or the Modern Gallery; I thank Naomi Sawelson-Gorse for this information.

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sell until Pach persuaded Matisse to lower its price. Pach also used his persuasive powers on Arensberg.

Further words of encouragement regarding Matisse came to Arensberg from Marcel Duchamp. Arensberg had met Duchamp (through Pach) soon after Duchamp's arrival in New York harbor in June 1915; before long Duchamp and Arensberg were fast friends. In an interview published in September, Duchamp praised Matisse:

> Matisse's color has not the solidity of Cézanne's, but it cannot be viewed from the same angle. There is nothing that you can take hold of in Matisse's color, not in the old sense of quality in color. It is transparent, thin, perhaps, but when you have left his pictures you will see that they have taken hold of you.[51]

In late March 1916 Pach wrote to Matisse with the news that the portrait had been sold; the buyer was "most interesting but not very rich (he is a writer of great merit, one of my best friends, M. Arensberg)."[52] The price had been 4,000 francs.

"I am glad to have been honored by your friend Mr. Arensberg," Matisse replied, "and I trust in his greatest discretion regarding the price, which is extremely reduced. You have to admit that I was anxious to please you. For this

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[51] Unsigned, "A Complete Reversal of Art Opinions by Marcel Duchamp, Iconoclast," Arts and Decoration 5 (September 1915): 442. The article has just two illustrations: a Daumier and Matisse's Madras rouge.

[52] Pach to Matisse, March 30, 1916, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in Laurette E. McCarthy, "Walter Pach: Artist, Critic, Historian, and Agent of Modernism" (Ph.D dissertation, University of Delaware, 1996): 161, and 179, n. 129.

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painting the price had already been reduced due to these times of war."[53]

In July Pach described to Matisse his first view of the painting at the Arensbergs' home: "The wall... is covered with a paper of golden tone, with a little metal in it, and it brings out the color in all its force, better than I have seen it before."[54]

In November Pach reported to Matisse that Arensberg was delighted with the Landsberg portrait. Now displayed on a "white, light and matte" wall, "the painting goes not badly without a frame."[55] Pach elicited the artist's opinion on a suitable frame for the picture. Matisse replied:

> As for the frame of Mr. Arensberg's portrait, I must tell you that I am very much opposed to frames, and particularly to heavy frames that surround the paintings with a yellow color, stopping all expansion. A modern painting has no need for a frame: it should have a simple border at most. I can very well see the portrait in question against a matte white wall with a simple golden rod—acting like a 3 cm. wide string around the painting—but without concealing any part of it: a well-polished, golden wooden rod properly nailed around the stretchers. I am glad that Mr. Arensberg is pleased with his painting.[56]

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[53] Matisse to Pach, April 26, 1916, Pach papers, Archives of American Art, translated in Cauman 1991: 6.

[54] Pach to Matisse, November 22, 1916, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in McCarthy 1996: 179, n. 129.

[55] Pach to Matisse, July 7, 1916, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in McCarthy 1996: 179, n. 129.

[56] Matisse to Pach, December 14, 1916, Pach papers, Archives of American Art, translated in Cauman 1991: 7.

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Although Mlle. Yvonne Landsberg was Arensberg's sole Matisse painting, it would be disproportionately influential. That it was the keystone of the collection is evident from a photograph, circa 1919, of the walls of the West 67th Street apartment (on the evidence of the photograph, Arensberg has followed Matisse's advice regarding the frame). Francis Naumann writes that at the Arensbergs' soirées, "guests usually gathered around the fireplace in the impressively large studio."[57] The portrait is centered above the fireplace; on the mantel below, at left and right, are Brancusi's sculpture Prodigal Son and an African figurine; on the wall, works by Braque, Picasso, Duchamp and Picabia radiate outward from it.

The Landsberg portrait occupied a place on the wall that would undoubtedly have been occupied by Nude Descending a Staircase, had Arensberg acquired Duchamp's painting at the time of the Armory Show (he bought it later, in 1919, shortly before his departure for California).[58] He seems to have purchased the portrait in part to compensate for his failure to acquire Duchamp's Nude; the two paintings share a Futurist influence and are similar in size and format.[59]

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[57] Naumann 1994: 27.

[58] Nude Descending a Staircase was purchased from the Armory Show by Frederic C. Torrey, a San Francisco antique dealer. Arensberg purchased it from Torrey in 1919 for $1,000 (Calvin Tomkins, Duchamp: A Biography [New York: Henry Holt, 1996]: 148).

[59] This idea was suggested to me by Francis Naumann; see also Francis M. Naumann, "Walter Conrad Arensberg: Poet, Patron and Participant in the New York Avant-Garde, 1915-20," Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin 76, 328 (Spring 1980): 3.

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Beatrice Wood, a frequent visitor to the Arensbergs, later recalled her first glimpse of the collection:

> Their large two-story duplex had a sitting room full of oriental rugs, carefully chosen early American furniture and comfortable sofas and chairs. But there on the walls—not only in the sitting room but in the hall, the bedroom, bath and kitchen—hung the most hideous collection of paintings I had ever seen.
>
> Walking into this incredible home I caught my breath, suppressed a giggle, and sat down in a state of shock. One by one I confronted each disconcerting image as it shrieked out at me. The most awful, if I had to choose, was a Matisse, an outlandish woman with white streaks—like daggers—surrounding her entire body.

On a subsequent visit she gave the painting a second look:

> One night while Sheeler and Stella discussed color theory, I gazed at the terrifying Matisse over the fireplace.... Willing myself to be open-minded, I almost went into a trance. My eyes locked on its angular lines until suddenly out of the canvas appeared a creature of wondrous beauty. Matisse had spoken, and at last, I listened.[60]

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[60] Beatrice Wood, I Shock Myself (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1988): 26, 28. Beatrice Wood (1893-1998), later a distinguished ceramicist, was brought into the Arensberg circle by Duchamp.

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2.5. In the Wake of the Armory Show, 1913-1916

In 1914 and 1915, two authors advanced the modernist cause in America and solidified Matisse's place in the canon. The first was Arthur Jerome Eddy; the second, Willard Huntington Wright.

Chicago lawyer Arthur Jerome Eddy (1859-1920) was the Armory Show's second biggest buyer (after John Quinn). At that exhibition he purchased 25 works by, among others, Duchamp, Derain, Gleizes, Picabia, Villon, and Vlaminck. These acquisitions, it has been observed, were bolder than those made by Quinn.[1] Unlike Quinn, Eddy believed that the responsibility of a serious amateur goes beyond making purchases and assembling a collection. Eddy maintained that "a work of art is profoundly the property of its creator, and it must be the privilege of the owner to do all in his power to promote the reputation of the artist."[2]

On March 27 and April 3, 1913, while the exhibition was in Chicago, Eddy lectured at the Art Institute in defense of the new art. One prominent Chicagoan later recalled: "Before I

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[1] Paul Kruty, "Arthur Jerome Eddy and His Collection: Prelude and Postscript to the Armory Show," Arts Magazine 61, 6 (February 1987): 43.

[2] Eddy to Rodin, September 23, 1912, Musée Rodin archives, Paris, cited in Kruty 1987: 45, and 47, n. 75. Eddy's original statement reads: "Je sens qu'un ouvrage d'art est profondément la propriété de celui qui la crée et cela devrait être le plaisir de celui qui en a possession de faire tout en son pouvoir pour avancer la gloire de l'artiste."

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knew it, the discriminating coaching of Arthur Eddy, Walt Kuhn, [and] Walter Pach made a modernist of me."[3]

That summer Eddy went to Munich and London, adding more than a hundred works to his collection. In Munich he visited Kandinsky, from whom he bought extensively, and who introduced him to his colleagues Münter, Marc, and Jawlensky, from whom he also made purchases. In London he bought a bronze cast of Brancusi's Sleeping Muse (1912), a plaster version of which he had seen at the Armory Show.

Back in Chicago, Eddy spent autumn and winter researching and writing a comprehensive book on modern art, published in March 1914 as Cubists and Post-Impressionism. It was a pioneering and widely read—though flawed—presentation of modernism to American readers. Its virtues were its clarity and the inclusion of informative primary and secondary sources, along with color and black-and-white reproductions of artworks. Its faults lay in the inaccuracies and in the insufficient synthesis of the research.[4] In the opening chapter (titled "A Sensation," a reference to the Armory

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[3] Carter Harrison, Growing Up with Chicago (Chicago, R. F. Seymour, 1944: 331), cited in Kruty 1987: 47, n. 40. Andrew Martinez, however, argues that Eddy "squandered his opportunities to defend the modernists" at the Chicago exhibition by being "more interested in promoting himself than in explaining the new art to the public"; see Martinez 1993: 47-48.

[4] John Quinn, singularly unimpressed with Eddy's book, wrote to Mitchell Kennerly, owner of the Anderson Galleries and publisher of Forum magazine: "A book like that can do no good but only harm. I have only glanced at it and dipped into it here and there. It seems to have everything jumbled and pitch-forked together without rhyme or reason" (Quinn to Kennerly, April 12, 1914, cited in Judith Zilczer, "John Quinn and Modern Art Collectors in America, 1913-1924," The American Art Journal 14, 3 [1982]: 60).

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Show), Eddy set forth his purpose: "to describe some of the changes that are taking place in art and try to explain them in plain, every-day terms."[5]

Cubists and Post-Impressionism includes four black-and-white reproductions of Matisse works: The Dance (see fig. 1.58), Madras rouge (see fig. 1.6), Jeannette (3 states) (see figs. 1.63, 1.64, and 1.65), and Back I (see fig. 2.1).

Most of Eddy's discussion of Matisse appears the Chapter entitled "Les Fauves," where his taxonomy is extremely flawed. (In 1908 Stieglitz introduced Matisse to his gallery visitors and to readers of Camera Work as "the leading spirit of… 'Les Fauves,'"[6] but the term failed to became current in America. Far more popular was the term "Post-Impressionist," which, after Roger Fry's first Grafton show of late 1910, was frequently used to designate Matisse and his American followers. In the May 1910 issue of Architectural Record, Gelett Burgess misapplied the term "fauve" to apply to a range of modernist painters, including Braque and Picasso.)[7]

With Cubists and Post-Impressionism, Eddy compounded Burgess's error:

> With the name of Cézanne are associated the names of two men whose work shows his influence, VanGogh [sic] and Gauguin, and one whose work is wholly different,

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[5] Arthur Jerome Eddy, Cubists and Post-Impressionism (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1914): 9.

[6] [Unsigned], "Henri Matisse at the Little Galleries," Camera Work 23 (July 1908): 10.

[7] See above, 1.8: 144.

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> Henri Rousseau…; later, but also conspicuously, Henri Matisse.
>
> These are the leaders of Fauvism.[8]

And later in the same chapter:

> Fauvism does not mean a particular mode or technic, like Classicism, Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism, etc., etc. It means a mood rather than a mode. Every painter in revolt against prevailing taste and standards was and is a Fauve.
>
> Not all Post-Impressionists are Fauves, but many are so called, for instance, the following:
>
> Odillon [sic] Redon, Othon Friez [sic], Picasso (the founder of Cubism), Van Dongen, André Derain, Vlaminck, Marquet, George [sic] Braque, Raoul Dufy, Robert Delauney [sic], M'lle Laurencin, Jean Metzinger, Pierre Gireud, Verhoeven.…
>
> Les Fauves in Germany are "Die Wilden," embracing the "Brucke" [sic] of Dresden, the "Neue Sezession" of Berlin, the "Neue Vereinigung" of Munich.

Eddy went on to list 19 Russian and 11 English "Fauves," but no Americans: "In America they are so scattered they have as yet attracted no attention by concerted action." He added: "Almost the only man in this country who persistently painted in the modern fashion prior to the International was Arthur Dove."[9]

Eddy expressed reservations about Matisse, apparently based on his reading of André Salmon, a member of la bande Picasso whose comments on Matisse reflected the rivalry between Matisse and the cubists. Eddy wrote that while

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[8] Eddy 1914: 37.

[9] Eddy 1914: 47-48. Eddy was a collector of Dove's works before the Armory Show.

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Matisse's "color is always interesting and his drawing facile, there is at times something about his work that is not satisfying, an atmosphere of superficiality." Eddy quoted Salmon (from La jeune peinture française, 1912) to the effect that Matisse's gifts were essentially feminine, that he was second-rate, and that he had the taste of milliner.[10] One can almost hear the derisive laughter of Picasso behind these quips.

Most importantly, Eddy included an extract from Clara MacChesney's interview with Matisse, which had been published in the New York Times in March 1913.[11] This selection had the valuable effect of giving wide circulation to a text in which the artist spoke in his own defense.

A brief discussion of Matisse also appears in the chapter entitled "Ugliness," a term used by Eddy to denote the shock of the new:

> One's first impression on entering an exhibition of extreme modern works is not an impression of beauty but of ugliness....
>
> Many of the pictures are brutal and most of them are crude, but while the first impression may be one of ugliness it is more, it is one of exceeding vitality.
>
> There is nothing musty about the moderns, their canvases are so alive they scream....

---

[10] Eddy wrote: "One is tempted to agree with the opinion [of Salmon] that Matisse's 'true gifts are those of address, of souplesse, of quick assimilation, of limited but easily acquired knowledge—essentially feminine gifts'"; and continued the citation in fractured French: "'On a beaucoup vante [sic] le gout [sic] d'Henri Matisse. Il n'est pas neable [sic], mais d'une qualité secondairé [sic]. C'est le gout d'une modiste; son amour de la conteur [sic] vaut un amour du chiffon'" (Eddy 1914: 43-44). Cf. "Les Fauves," excerpted from André Salmon, La Jeune Peinture Française, in Jack Flam, ed., Matisse: A Retrospective (New York: Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, 1988): 129-130.

[11] See above, 2.2: 209-211.

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> There is a great deal of the ugly in the work of Matisse, mixed with a great deal of extraordinary technic. He is a good man to study, but a bad man to imitate...[12]

In the chapter entitled "Sculpture," Eddy returns to theme of "ugliness" in Matisse:

> The movement back to nature, to a closer observation of life, even to the rendering of the human figure with brutal frankness, is exemplified in the work of Matisse, work so ugly—to most people—it seems a grotesque caricature of the human form...[13]

If Eddy's remarks on Matisse show no great originality, they reflect the discussion that had appeared in the American press and presented it before a wide readership.

The Californian Willard Huntington Wright (1887-1939), a protégé of H. L. Mencken, arrived in New York in January 1913 to assume the editorship of the literary magazine Smart Set. Although he was the elder brother of the Synchromist Stanton Macdonald-Wright, he had little knowledge of the visual arts. By year's end, however, he had penned his first article in defense of modern art.

In March, Wright attended the Armory Show. His reaction to Matisse is not known, but we can surmise that it was no more insightful than his comment on Nude Descending a Stair-

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[12] Eddy 1914: 157.

[13] Eddy 1914: 206-207.

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case, scrawled in a postcard to his wife in California: "The most talked of picture in New York. It's too deep for me."[14]

Wright's real education is modernism began with a one-month visit to Europe in June. In London he met Ezra Pound and acquired for his magazine pieces by Pound, Yeats, Ford Madox Ford, George Moore, and Joseph Conrad. In Berlin, Vienna, and Munich he became acquainted with the paintings of Kandinsky, Klimt, and Kokoschka and the music of Berg, Schoenberg, Strauss, and Webern. In Munich he attended the first Synchromist exhibition, met Morgan Russell, and was reunited with his brother Stanton, who became his tutor in modern art, he the eager pupil. The tour concluded with a sojourn in Paris.

After Wright's return to New York, his brother's tutelage continued with a packet of "art notes" sent to him in October. In November, following the closing of the Synchromism show at Bernheim-Jeune, Stanton joined him in New York.

In December, Wright published his first piece of art criticism, "Impressionism to Synchromism," in Forum magazine. The essay, credited solely to Willard, featured, according to Wright's biographer John Loughery, "Stanton's... ideas in Willard's prose."[15] Indebted to Synchromist manifestoes, it disparaged all of Russell's and Macdonald-Wright's contempo-

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[14] Willard Huntington Wright to Katharine Wright, March 1913, Wright Collection, University of Virginia, cited in John Loughery, Alias S. S. Van Dine (New York: Scribners, 1992): 68 and 276.

[15] Loughery 1992: 82.

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raries except Matisse, a man of "real imagination" who had "shaken to the foundations the habits of modern painting." His one proviso about Matisse reflects an opinion that Leo Stein might have expressed in the presence of Stanton: Matisse "lacked a sense of rhythm."[16]

From March 2 to 16, 1914, Synchromism had its American debut, an exhibition at the Carroll gallery. Willard wrote a foreword to the catalogue, based on information supplied by Russell and Stanton. The lukewarm reception to the show was in part a consequence of the Synchromists' lack of generosity toward their contemporaries. Stanton later characterized the exhibition as a complete fiasco, ascribing much of the blame to Willard.[17]

Within two weeks of the show's closing, Willard and Stanton had departed for a five-month stay in Paris, where Willard's intense engagement with modern art took place. Guided by his brother, he attended the Louvre, the Luxembourg, and modern art exhibitions. John Loughery reports that his reading encompassed "the criticism of Baudelaire, the journals of Delacroix, the writings of all the color-theorists Tudor-Hart had recommended... and everything he could find by the French aesthetician Hippolyte Taine."[18] When war broke out

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[16] Willard Huntington Wright, "Impressionism to Synchromism," The Forum, December 1913: 757-770, cited in Levin 1978: 27.

[17] Stanton Macdonald-Wright to Lloyd Goodrich, July 16, 1963, cited in Levin 1978: 27, and 124, n. 1.

[18] Loughery 1992: 88.

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in August, they went to London, where Willard resumed his reading on art and his museum tours with Stanton.

In February 1915 the two brothers returned to New York. Willard began writing monthly art criticism for Forum magazine. He was at work on a treatise on modern art, published in October as Modern Painting: Its Tendency and Meaning.

Wright's book is far superior to Eddy's. Whereas Cubists and Post-Impressionism is a hastily assembled pastiche, Modern Painting is a well-organized, professional work of criticism. Wright set forth his viewpoint in the foreword: "Only by relieving painting of its dead cargo of literature, archaeology and illustration can it be made to function freely." Like Roger Fry in England, Wright was seeking new criteria to evaluate modern art, in place of Victorian and academic notions of content. He likened painting to music and drew an analogy between color and sound; like music, he wrote, painting need not imitate nature:

> Painting should be as pure an art as music... Its medium—colour—is as elemental as sound, and when properly presented... it is fully as capable of engendering aesthetic emotion as is music. Our delight in music, no matter how primitive, is not dependent on an imitation of natural sounds. Music's pleasurable significance is primarily intellectual. So can painting, by its power to create emotion and not mere sensation, provoke deep aesthetic feeling of a far greater intensity than the delight derived from transcription of drama.[19]

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[19] Willard Huntington Wright, Modern Painting: Its Tendency and Meaning (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1915): 10.

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The chief weakness of Wright's book is its highly questionable agenda: to demonstrate that Synchromism was the ultimate artistic style. With Synchromism, or three-dimensional color abstraction, held up as the ideal, Matisse was seen to fall short. Matisse's works that are characterized by flatness were faulted by Wright for being merely decorative.

Wright devoted a chapter to Matisse, illustrated with two black-and-white illustrations: Bathers with a Turtle (see fig. 4.11) and The Painter's Family (1911, St. Petersburg). He cited the former as an instance of a painting that possesses

> a perfect disposition of forms to fill a given space, a harmony of subject with its frame, a dazzling succession of uncommon and beautifully proportioned spaces and an amazing feeling for two-dimensional form. ...His greatest claim to consideration is that he gave painting its final impulse toward abstraction. But his canvases, while being aesthetically just, are not aesthetically satisfying, because in composition he never penetrated further than the surface. And even on the surface he did not attain to a greater fluency than that permitted by parallelisms and simple oppositions, although there has never been an artist who more perfectly adapted his expression to the shape and size of his canvas.[20]

Wright presented an informative overview of Matisse's career, though with scant references to specific works. He discussed Matisse's academic background—his rebellion against Bouguereau, his training with Moreau—and his sources, both western and nonwestern. He wrote that

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[20] Wright 1915: 235. In this context, Wright cites, along with Bathers with a Turtle, illustrated, three non-illustrated examples: Music (Sketch) (see fig. 1.21), Music (see fig. 1.57), and Game of Bowls (1908, St. Petersburg).

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> Gauguin... served as a provenance for the later colour vision of Matisse. Indeed it as much from Gauguin as from Cézanne that he stems. The broad planes of rich tones and the decorative employment of form in the former had as great an influence as did the perfect displacement of spaces of the Provençal master.

Another source cited was Goya, who demonstrated in the Caprichos that

> he... was tired of the established formulas regarding the human body, and strove to vary and enrich it. By emphasizing a characteristic trait, by shifting a certain form, by exaggerating a certain proportion, he sought to obtain, as did Matisse, the complete expression of what he felt to be essential in his model."[21]

The lineage of Matisse's "simplified version of form" was traced "from Ingres and Daumier through Seurat, Degas and Gauguin."[22]

Wright claimed that in Oceanic, Pre-Columbian, and African tribal sculptors Matisse found "an inspiration toward synthesis and also a substantiation for his own desire to emphasize salient characteristics." From the Persian miniaturists Matisse learned "a more direct method of image making, a method which was at once more delicate and more femininely sensitive." Matisse was reported to have been influenced by "the decorative illustrations of the Mille et Une Nuits, published in Paris by Fasquelle"; Wright demonstrated this

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[21] Wright 1915: 225.

[22] Wright 1915: 226.

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influence with the reproduction of the 1911 interior The Painter's Family.[23]

Wright praised Matisse highly for his color, as he might have praised a gifted musician for perfect pitch:

> The perfect harmony between tints, which in him reaches more advanced stage than in any preceding artist, is the result of a highly sensitive eye and an impeccable taste. The beauty of his colour alone makes him of paramount importance. Every one of his canvases is a complete colour gamut created by taste and authenticated by science not only as to pure colour but also as to greys and tone.

Wright believed that Matisse's followers misunderstood and vulgarized the artist's use of color:

> Matisse is accused of dealing in raucous and blatant colours which set the head aching and the eyes smarting. But the accusation is true only of his followers who display little sensitivity and even less artistry, and who, in imitating the superficial aspects of his work, see only grotesque distortions and pure colour. Matisse once had a school where he endeavoured to develop the native talents of the Americans, Poles, Russians, and Germans; but when a Bohemian woman, in reply to his question as to what she wished to do, answered, "Je veux faire le 'neuf'," he abandoned the enterprise and retired to Clamart. She unwittingly summed up the desire of those meagre painters who, on seeing something novel, immediately throw themselves into imitating it.[24]

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[23] Wright 1915: 230-231. The illustration of The Painter's Family is placed in proximity to the discussion of Persian miniatures but is not referred to in the text, nor cited in the index; these omissions suggest that it was a late addition, included just before the book went to press.

[24] Wright does not acknowledge that the Synchromist Morgan Russell was one of Matisse's students.

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Like other American writers on Matisse, Wright displayed confusion about the term "fauve":

> Matisse is called the Chef des Fauves, and his art has been catalogued and labeled, turned into a "school" and has come to be known in many quarters as Post-Impressionism, although that title, as well as the one of Fauvism, was originally intended to designate all the art movements after Impressionism and Neo-Impressionism and included such wildly dissimilar men as Cézanne, Van Gogh, Picasso, Kandinsky, Matisse and Friesz.[25]

Wright's contribution to Americans' understanding of modernism was considerable. He presented an overview of the currents and crosscurrents at work in contemporary painting, and of Matisse's place in the scheme, and did so in a lucid, erudite fashion.

One convert to modernism was the young E. E. Cummings, a Harvard undergraduate and budding poet. His classmate, the future literary critic S. Foster Damon, acted as his mentor, instructing him on the newest tendencies in the visual arts, literature, and music. In spring 1913 Damon accompanied Cummings to Copley Hall in Boston to view the International Exhibition. Also in Cummings' circle at Harvard was Scofield Thayer, future Matisse collector and future editor of The Dial magazine.[26]

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[25] Wright 1915: 232-234.

[26] Thayer would purchase Nasturtiums with "Dance" I (see fig. 4.12) from Oskar and Greta Moll, via the Flechtheim Gallery, Berlin, in 1922.

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In spring 1915 Thayer gave the twenty-year-old Cummings a copy of Willard Huntington Wright's newly published Modern Painting: Its Tendency and Meaning. Cummings, his biographer Richard Kennedy reports, "marked and annotated [it] like a textbook."[27]

For an English course that spring, Cummings prepared a term paper on recent developments in the arts. After revising it and submitting it in competition, he was selected by his classmates to read it at commencement.

At the June 24 festivities, reported the Harvard Alumni Bulletin,

> the weather was unseasonably cool, and the Yard seemed less filled with graduates than in other years. The presence of women as invited guests... made good the deficiency in numbers.
>
> At the morning ceremonies in Sanders Theatre... Edward Estlin Cummings, '15, spoke on "The New Art"....[28]

"The New Art has many branches," Cummings began. "In each of these there is a clearly discernible evolution from models. In none is there any trace of that abnormality or incoherence which the casual critic is fond of making the subject of tirades against the new order. It is my aim to sketch briefly the parallel developments of the New Art in the fields of painting and sculpture, music, and literature."

Cummings continued:

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[27] Richard S. Kennedy, Dreams in the Mirror: A Biography of E. E. Cummings (New York: Liveright, 1980): 80.

[28] Harvard Alumni Bulletin, June 30, 1915, cited in Charles Norman, E. E. Cummings: The Magic Maker (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1958): 40.

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> Anyone who takes Art seriously, who understands the development of technique in the last half century, accepts Cézanne and Matisse as he accepts Manet and Monet....
>
> The term Cubism, properly applied, relates to the work of a small group of ultra-modern painters and sculptors who use design to express their personal reaction to the subject, and who further take this design from geometry. By using an edge in place of a curve a unique tactile value is obtained.
>
> The painter Matisse has been called the greatest exponent of Cubist sculpture.[29] At the 1912 [sic, 1913] Exhibition, the crowd around Brancusi's "Mlle. Pogany" was only rivaled by that which swarmed about the painting called "Nude Descending a Staircase," which Walter Pach has analyzed as "phrasing of the elements of motion, mass, and accentuation."

Cummings surveyed contemporary music and literature. After reading an excerpt from Gertrude Stein's Tender Buttons, he posed the question:

> How much of all this is really Art?
>
> The answer is: We do not know. The great men of the future will undoubtedly profit by the experimentation of the present period, for this very experimentation is the logical unfolding of sound tendencies.[30]

Cummings later recalled that his reading of Stein "really brought down the house," and that at the speech's conclusion he was received with "flattering applause."[31]

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[29] Where Cummings got the notion of Matisse as a cubist sculptor is not clear. Perhaps he had in mind Back I (see fig. 2.1), which he had seen in Boston in 1913, hanging between two Ingres drawings. Though not cubist in inspiration, it conforms to his definition of cubism as "design [taken] from geometry," particularly when juxtaposed with Ingres.

[30] Cummings 1915.

[31] Kennedy 1980: 84-85.

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Despite the glaring inaccuracy of the categorization of Matisse as an "exponent of Cubist sculpture," the speech is notable for Cummings' broad knowledge of avant-garde developments in the arts. As his biographer has noted, "it is a critically naïve piece of work... descriptive and impressionistic, indicating familiarity with the artistic works rather than ability to discourse maturely about them."[32] Nevertheless, it is evidence of cultural stirrings in America of 1915, and of Matisse's place in those stirrings, that even hidebound Harvard could not ignore.[33]

Stirrings of modernism could be felt on the west coast as well. In March 1913 the San Franciscan Frederic C. Torrey bought Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase from the Armory Show. Torrey was a proprietor of the firm of Vickery Atkins & Torrey, dealers in antiquarian and Far Eastern objets d'art. Although he displayed conservative works in his showrooms, he wished to educate the public in more challenging fare.

Upon his return to San Francisco, he organized an exhibition for the Portland Art Association. Along with Duchamp's Nude, and lithographs by Cézanne, Denis, and Renoir, the show featured reproductions of paintings by modern

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[32] Kennedy 1980: 83. Kennedy's remarks, made about the original term paper, apply equally well to the commencement address.

[33] In the following autumn of 1915, Paul Sachs would join the Harvard faculty as assistant director of the Fogg Art Museum. In the subsequent decade, he would encourage such students as Alfred Barr, John Walker III, Lincoln Kirstein, and Edward M. M. Warburg, who would keep alive the spirit of modernism at Harvard; see below, 3.5, p. 451, n. 54.

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artists, including Matisse. When the exhibition opened in the last week of November,[34] Torrey traveled to Portland to deliver two lectures on modern art. In Matisse's work, Torrey told the Portland audience,

> simplification has been carried to extreme limits, but it has been in the passionate pursuit of a high but abstract end. Similarly, he has carried the principle of conscious deformation—the same principle that Michelangelo and Botticelli and Pollaiuolo so habitually made use of—to the most extreme limit known to our modern art.... To represent the figure of a human being, five toes and five fingers are understood as normally necessary. But the attempt to render decoratively a certain rhythmic movement, with a marvelous convincingness of vitality and the quality of grandeur that we have seen come with simplicity... [leads] the artist to the result that toes and fingers and any especial obtrusive detail need find no place in the design.
>
> Matisse adds to his unquestioned power as a designer an absolute sense of color relations, his further theory of the necessary relation of color and form (which Cézanne also expressed) being a still further aesthetic innovation.

Torrey attested to the fact that Matisse was "a man of a high degree of culture, of most attractive and convincing personality, and with a deep, passionate, almost religious sincerity."[35] These remarks suggest that he had met the artist

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[34] No catalogue was published, and the approximate opening date was gleaned from newspaper clippings; see Francis M. Naumann, "Frederic C. Torrey and Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase," West Coast Duchamp, ed. Bonnie Clearwater (Miami Beach: Grassfield Press, 1991): 22, n. 8.

[35] Frederic C. Torrey, "The Significance of Certain Tendencies in Recent Art" (Typescript, Scarborough, Ottawa, Canada: Archives of William Hewlett Bayley, 1913). I thank Francis Naumann for making a photocopy of this manuscript available to me. This manuscript is excerpted in Naumann 1991: 15-16.

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during his visit to Paris in summer 1913, in all likelihood via the Steins.[36]

In spring 1914 Torrey brought the exhibition to his San Francisco showrooms. Although he did not repeat the lecture series, he was present to discuss the work of Duchamp, Matisse and others on an informal basis.

The first public exhibition of Matisse's work on the west coast took place in January 1916, at the Post-Exposition Exhibition, following the 1915 World's Fair. San Franciscans at large were not yet ready for Matisse and modernism.

The World's Fair, called the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, celebrated both the rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and the opening of the Panama Canal. The fair's art section, called the Department of Fine Arts, was nearly ten times the size of the Armory Show. Although it included some modernist works,[37] it was dominated by American impressionism and academicism. Of some 11,000 paintings, the exhibition included 2 Gauguins, 1 van Gogh, and 1 Cézanne, and no works by Matisse, Vlaminck, or Derain,

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[36] Torrey probably arrived in Paris with a letter of introduction to the Steins from Walter Pach. In July Duchamp wrote to Pach: "We have had a visit from Mr. Torrey, who is an excellent man. He seemed very happy to make our acquaintance" (Duchamp to Pach, July 2, [1913], cited in Francis M. Naumann, "Amicalement, Marcel: Fourteen Letters from Marcel Duchamp to Walter Pach," Archives of American Art Journal 29, 3 and 4 [1989]: 37).

[37] The most notable inclusion of modernists was that of the Italian Futurists, who had refused to exhibit at the Armory Show. They were represented at the Panama-Pacific exhibition by fifty works, as well as by a statement in the exhibition catalogue; cited in Nancy Boas, The Society of Six: California Colorists (San Francisco: Bedford Arts, 1988): 60.

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nor of Picasso, Braque, or Gris, nor of Duchamp, Picabia, or Kandinsky.

Several factors militated against a significant modernist presence at the fair. Despite the progressive sympathies of J. Nilsen Laurvik, the Director of the Department of Fine Arts, this was an official exhibition whose jury consisted of members of the art establishment. Moreover, as Nancy Boas remarks, "the very conception of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition—its beaux-arts point of view, its nostalgic conservatism, and its purpose of bringing an historical survey of American art to the western public—was antithetical to the modernist aesthetic."[38] Finally, the constraints of war made it difficult to import non-official European art.

For four months after the closing of the fair, from January 1 to May 1, 1916, a Post-Exposition Exhibition was held at the Palace of Fine Arts, the principal site of the original show. Though smaller than its immediate predecessor, it consisted of some 7,000 works (of which more than 2,000 were works on paper), and was, accordingly, five times the size of the Armory Show. More modern in spirit than its immediate predecessor, it included several artists who had been previously omitted, among them Matisse, Picasso, Picabia, and Weber. The contingent of Matisses consisted of fourteen etchings and lithographs, probably on loan from Montross.[39]

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[38] Boas 1988: 59.

[39] The Illustrated Catalogue of the Post-Exposition Exhibition in the Department of Fine Arts, Panama-Pacific International Exposition (San Francisco: San Francisco Art Association, 1916) lists 14 works on paper

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By the measure of gate receipts, the exhibition was not a success. "Post-Season Art at the Exposition Fails to Draw," ran a front-page headline of the San Francisco Chronicle on January 19. For the first 16 days of the exhibition, the newspaper reported, total paid attendance was only 6,500 visitors. Average daily receipts were less than $109, with expenses exceeding revenue by approximately $17 per day.

According to the same newspaper, Californians responded quite differently when local artists exhibited at the Memorial Museum in Golden Gate Park on January 22: "California Artists Are Appreciated/ Splendid Exhibition Draws Big Crowd."[40]

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by Matisse, numbers 621 to 634. Although these works are not illustrated, many of the titles conform to those in the Montross exhibition. I thank William Gerdts for giving me access to his copy of the catalogue.

[40] San Francisco Chronicle, January 24, 1916: 1. From 1923 to 1928, a group of northern California colorists known as the Society of Six would exhibit annually at the Oakland Art Gallery. These artists—William Henry Clapp, Bernard von Eichman, August Gay, Selden Connor Gile, Maurice Logan, and Louis Siegriest—had affinities with Post-Impressionism and fauvism, but with the exception of Clapp, they had little opportunity to view Matisse's paintings. (Clapp had been in Paris from 1904 to 1908 and had attended the 1905 and 1906 Autumn Salons.) Although there would be several exhibitions of modern French art in San Francisco in the twenties (at the Civic Auditorium in 1923, and at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in 1924-1925 and in 1926), few Matisse oils would be displayed in the Bay Area until the retrospective at the San Francisco Museum of Art of January-February 1936 (see Boas 1988, especially pp. 101-102).

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2.6. Matisse and the American Art Market, 1915-1919

In Paris and Issy, Matisse continued to work and to experiment, despite the economic and emotional strains of war. In New York, Walter Pach persisted in his efforts on Matisse's behalf, seeking both to help his friend and to advance the modernist cause. Pach agreed with Michael Stein that Matisse "must now look to America for a market for his art."[1]

In autumn 1915, Pach wrote to Matisse on behalf of three art dealers: N. E. Montross, who had presented a major Matisse show earlier in the year; Harriet Bryant, who often facilitated John Quinn's purchases through the Carroll gallery; and Stéphane Bourgeois, a Frenchman who had recently opened a New York gallery. For Bourgeois, Pach was helping to organize a group exhibition of modern European and American artists, to be held the following spring. Pach was also writing to solicit Matisse's criticisms of his own work.

Matisse replied on November 20, enthusiastically aiding Pach's plans and generously dispensing artistic advice. As the best teachers often do, he initially addressed the work of his pupil, then expanded the discussion to reflect on his own artistic process.

> I am delighted by what you say about prospective exhibitions of French art. I hope that you will have the large Seurat that you want. I will do everything I can

---

[1] Michael Stein to Walter Pach, October 19, 1914, Pach Papers, Archives of American Art, cited in Cauman 1991: 2-3; see above, 2.4: 254.

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for that in regards to the collector.[2] I thank you for arranging to show my monotypes as part of your exhibition at Bourgeois, and since you still wish to add one or two paintings (one or two?) of small dimensions, plus a few drawings, I am overwhelmed. I accept with great thanks—you will probably receive them together with the shipment of the Seurat, which will probably be done through the Bernheim company.

Tomorrow or the day after without fail, I will do the consular declaration that you have requested and I will send it (regarding the five drawings sent to Mr. Montross).

You don't speak about the etchings that you have requested for Miss Bryant—they were destined for a collector who wanted to have the entire collection of my etchings.[3]

49 prints:
7 prints from the 1st series
6 prints from the 2nd series
12 prints from the 3rd series
24 prints from the 4th series

The shipping was handled by Pottier around June 15 (I went to Pottier's to verify the exact date--he couldn't give me the name of the ship). In addition, on July 8 I sent Miss Bryant an etching in the mail, "Standing Nude, Hands on Her Face," print no. 22 which you requested [La Pleureuse, etching and drypoint, 1900-1903, Duthuit #7].

Now I must tell you that I viewed with pleasure the two photographs of portraits that you have sent me, and that I have noticed great progress in the second work, the portrait of a man—from the point of view of "style"—but I must also say that I find it a bit cold. I think that the progress you'll soon make will consist of warming up your formula a bit, which is pretty but severe. When your new skills are definitely secured, you

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[2] The unnamed collector was Félix Fénéon, Matisse's dealer at Bernheim-Jeune; the painting was the oil sketch Sunday at Grande-Jatte (1884-5, Metropolitan Museum, New York), no. 40 in the exhibition catalogue (Bourgeois Galleries, Exhibition of Modern Art Arranged by a Group of European and American Artists [New York, 1916]).

[3] The unnamed collector was John Quinn. Matisse was under the mistaken impression that Quinn wanted to purchase all of Matisse's etchings; see above, 2.4, p. 282: n. 46.

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> will be able to relax and show the sensitivity which is present in the portrait of your wife. I believe this is the natural course, at least for me (and we are not after all so different from one another that the same traditional discipline cannot achieve good results). I must say that the natural course seems to me like an energetic pull toward making some progress, during which what one wishes is most important, and then an easing of the will during which one only appears to regress a little and during which one shows what one really is deep down—and what one has acquired—and during this period the work is all feeling. In short, after all this chitchat, I would like to see the qualities of the two portraits brought together.
>
> When you are so kind as to let me know of new works, I will compare them with these two and will give you my opinion frankly, as I am giving it to you today. I cannot judge the colors in the two works, but I hope that too intense a background doesn't destroy the tender intimacy of both expressions.

Nine days later Matisse added the following paragraphs, which reveal him to be both systematic and discreet in the conduct of his business affairs:

> The war is still upon us, but since I haven't yet been drafted I believe it is my duty as a civilian to work as much as possible. I have just finished a large painting of 2.20 x 1.80 on which I worked for several months and which I have fortunately just sold [fig. 2.15, Variation on a Still Life by de Heem].[4]
>
> This letter has been delayed by the proceedings at the consulate. Enclosed find the certificate for Mr. Montross. Recently I had the opportunity to see Mr. Rosenberg (Léonce),[5] and I told him of the exhibition at

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[4] Matisse's cubist-influenced Variation on a Still Life by de Heem was sold to Léonce Rosenberg, owner of the Galerie de l'Effort Moderne, which specialized in cubism. Rosenberg subsequently changed his mind about the painting, and Matisse had to buy it back; see John Elderfield, Matisse in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1978): 206-207.

[5] Matisse's discretion should be noted here: he had just sold the de Heem Variation to Rosenberg, but refrained from informing Pach of the identity

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> Bourgeois. He seemed pleased, for he knows this gentleman and holds him in high regard. He spoke very well of him to me....
>
> I leave tomorrow for Marseille, where I will remain for two weeks in order to recover completely from my bronchitis. I am taking only my violin—I will resume painting when I return.
>
> I have received the 450 F. that you sent me for the 3 monotypes that you sold directly for me. Could you please tell me in your next letter where they are so that I can note it in my book[6]—many thanks.[7]

From April 3 to 29, 1916, the Bourgeois Galleries presented an "Exhibition of Modern Art," a group show of European and American artists. The exhibition comprised 81 works—paintings, sculpture, and works on paper—by 24 artists. The impressive roster included Europeans such as Cézanne, Redon, Seurat, Signac, and van Gogh, as well as Crotti, Duchamp, Duchamp-Villon, Dufy, Gleizes, Laurencin, Matisse, Metzinger, Picasso, Rouault and Villon, and Americans such as Pach, Prendergast, Schamberg, and Stella.

Matisse submitted 2 paintings—a portrait of his daughter Marguerite entitled The Leather Hat (1914, private

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of the buyer, stating merely that he "recently had the opportunity to see" Rosenberg. He would later confide to Derain that Rosenberg had insisted on secrecy (Matisse to Derain, end of February 1916, Archives Taillade, Chambourcy, cited in Fourcade 1993: 117-118).

[6] The three monotypes were sold to John Quinn; see above, 2.4: p. 282.

[7] Matisse to Pach (Issy-les-Moulineaux), November 20 and 29, 1915, Pach Papers, Archives of American Art, translated in Cauman 1991: 4-5.

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collection) and a still life of "Fruits"—as well as 3 drawings and 7 monotypes.[8]

A critic for American Art News said of the exhibition:

> Cezanne, Van Goch [sic] and Seurat were strong men, but have passed. But Matisse, Duchamp and Crotti still live and having courage, as well as technical ability, more or less misdirected, pipe like the piper of Hamelin and are followed by many whose efforts in eccentricity interest to a certain extent though they rarely attract. Did they but follow their true Saints like Cezanne and Van Goch all would be well, but they are led by false prophets and beguiled by vain imaginings.
>
> All this in preamble leads to the discussion of a display of painting, drawing and sculpture… now on at the Bourgeois Galleries…
>
> "The Leather Hat" is an incident in the view through a window suggested by Henry [sic] Matisse, who also is represented by a sketch of "Fruits." Among the drawings he has an interesting study of "Foliage," a couple of clever drawings, one a "Head of a Little Girl," and some interesting monotype [sic], white sketches on black of heads and nudes.[9]

In a letter to Matisse, Pach conveyed his well-founded enthusiasm for the show. "I am glad that the exhibition pleases you," the artist replied, "and I hope it is a great success."

Matisse asked for news of New York: "Someone assured me that Max Weber had a large art gallery… Isn't this a mere invention?" (His skepticism was justified; the false rumor may

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[8] Bourgeois Galleries 1916. The two paintings would travel to an exhibition in Philadelphia, "Advanced Modern Art," held at the McClees Galleries from May 17 to June 15.

[9] American Art News 14, 27 (April 8, 1916): 3.

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have originated in the fact that Weber exhibited at Montross in December 1915).

Matisse then asked about recordings of Maori and other non-western music:

> Through the Steins you had got me a phonograph record of Maori singing, which has a languorous and caressing character, a bit like the mewing of kittens. Unfortunately, I have lost this record. Would you be so kind as to send me another copy? If you find some other characteristic records in this genre (for example, Chinese songs) you could send those, too. I collect typical exotic songs, and here one finds only Arabic singing.[10]

In autumn 1916 Matisse began a series of portraits, launching the series by painting his dear friends Michael and Sarah Stein (figs. 2.16 and 2.17). The Stein portraits (now in the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art) were, in Alfred Barr's words, "labors of affection."[11] The Steins had been separated from the bulk of their collection of Matisses: 19 of their approximately 25 paintings had gone to the Gurlitt gallery in Berlin and had been seized as alien property upon war's outbreak in August 1914. Their acquisition of the two portraits compensated them in part for their loss.[12]

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[10] Matisse to Pach, Issy-les-Moulineaux, April 28, 1916, Pach papers, Archives of American Art, translated in Cauman 1991: 6-7. In this letter Matisse also spoke about Walter Arensberg's recent purchase of the portrait of Yvonne Landsberg; see above, 2.4: pp. 283-287.

[11] Barr 1951: 189.

[12] In the previous year, in early 1915, they had purchased The Woman with the Hat from Gertrude; see above, 2.4: pp. 256-257.

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The paintings were valedictory, commemorating ten years of friendship. The arduous war years were a far cry from the adventurous early days in Montparnasse. Michael and Sarah informed Matisse that they intended to return to America.[13] Yet they eventually changed their minds and remained.

The two over-life-size portraits are painted in an austere, pared-down style characteristic of Matisse's work during the war years. The more worldly Michael is rendered more naturalistically than is the ethereal Sarah. Michael's head and shoulders are depicted; in the case of Sarah, just her head and neck are in the frame. Both images are frontal and appear on abstract or neutral grounds. They resemble icons.[14]

During the war years Matisse, with the aid of Walter Pach, supplemented his income by arranging sales of works by old masters to American buyers. Acting on behalf of a French family "constrained by the events," Matisse wrote to Pach in November 1916, describing a portrait by Ingres of the composer Luigi Cherubini (1841, Cincinnati Art Museum), which he hoped Pach would be able to sell in New York. It is interesting to note that at a time when Matisse was painting portraits, he expressed a preference for the straightforward version of the

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[13] See Matisse to Pach, November 6, 1916, below: n. 16.

[14] Pierre Schneider characterizes the portrait of Sarah as a "virtual icon" (Pierre Schneider, Matisse, trans. Michael Taylor and Bridget Strevens Romer [New York: Rizzoli, 1984]: 326).

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Ingres portrait over the better-known Louvre version, which includes an allegorical figure of a muse.

> When I wrote you my last letter, I was so preoccupied by my work that I forgot to tell you about... the portrait of Cherubini by Ingres. I am happy to describe it to you precisely, for I saw it yesterday. Its measurements are 70 x 83 cm.... A few years ago it was in the Havemeyer collection in New York. It was sold in a big sale for a sum greater than that which is being asked today—today it belongs to a family somewhat constrained by the events. I viewed the painting yesterday—it is very beautiful and in splendid condition, without the least little crack. I find it far superior from several points of view to the one of the same subject at the Louvre. There the musician is crowned by a muse in a white gown lined with violet, but all this latter area of the muse is completely lost due to the tar placed underneath the sketch of the painting, which has caused surface cracks, often nearly a centimeter long from end to end; and what is more, the whole area has darkened. Then, from the point of view of esthetics, the mingling of allegory and realism is unworkable—the two sets of ideas are totally different; from a compositional point of view, the muse, although accessory, overwhelms the main figure.
>
> I am sending you the two photographs that were given to me for studying the two paintings. I know the painting in the Louvre very well, and I find that the photograph has rendered invisible the cracks, which spoil the painting for the spectator before he can be impressed by the beauty.
>
> The Steins are about to leave for America. I don't know when you will see them, however, for even though they are staying in a hotel, and are all packed and ready to go, they still do not know when they will leave —the events will decide for them.
>
> I hope that you work to your satisfaction, and that I will see some photos of your work soon. Business in Paris is going very well—and the dealers will be out of paintings soon. The Swiss and the Norwegians buy a lot—

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but the war is very long.[15]

I look forward to hearing your news.[16]

Pach, seeking a buyer for the Ingres portrait, requested further information about the painting. He also wrote of news from New York—the forthcoming first exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, of which Pach was a founding member—and asked for advice about his own work. Matisse replied:[17]

> As for your Society of Independent Artists, I wish you the best.
>
> I am glad to see that you are preoccupied with your work: the variety of your points of view shows me that you need to bring a lot of order to your thoughts. You shouldn't push them aside or you will run the risk of becoming impoverished before you can coordinate them—and find out which ones should win over the others.
>
> Every sincere person goes through your current state of mind, unless he blindly decides in favor of this or that point of view before experimenting with other approaches. Classical education is necessary in painting as well as in literature—I mean an education acquired with brush in hand, and after nature, considering the museums as libraries. I will always be interested in seeing the work that you send me.
>
> Let us now talk about Ingres' Cherubini portrait.... After repeating that this painting is frank and pure, and in a perfect state of preservation, I can add that

---

[15] In neutral Switzerland and Norway there were flourishing art markets during the war years. The Vallotton Gallery in Lausanne and the Tanner Gallery in Zurich were branches of Matisse's Paris dealer Bernheim-Jeune. In Oslo, Matisse's former pupil Walther Halvorsen presented an exhibition of modern French art from November 18 to December 10, in which Matisse participated. At this time Matisse was working on a portrait of Halvorsen's wife, the actress Greta Prozor.

[16] Matisse to Pach, Issy-les-Moulineaux, November 6, 1916, Pach Papers, Archives of American Art, translated in Cauman 1991, 6-7.

[17] In this letter Matisse dispensed advice about a suitable frame for the portrait of Yvonne Landsberg, recently purchased by Walter Arensberg and gave his general views on frames for modern pictures; see above, 2.4: pp. 284-285.

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> Mrs. Havemeyer concluded a painting sale in which she gave away a painting or paintings together with a sum of money, and that the dealer insisted that the Ingres in question be included in the exchange. That is to say that Mrs. Havemeyer might not have given it in full consent and that she may still be interested in it; we shall see. Then it was not Durand-Ruel who made the deal, but wouldn't it be possible for you to get more information in New York?[18]

Matisse, in contact with other owners wishing to dispose of their pictures in the American market, then presented Pach with an annotated list of twelve old-master paintings. The artists were Bronzino, Claude Lorrain, Constable, Corot, Jacques-Louis David, Gainsborough, Ingres, Jordaens and Fyt, Thomas Lawrence, Teniers, Tintoretto, and Watteau. Discussing the works, Matisse displayed an easy familiarity with the worlds of commerce and connoisseurship.[19] He concluded:

> All the paintings are absolutely pure, very well preserved—and of very good quality. Some other interesting ones which did not have the desirable frankness and condition have been rejected, so that you won't be surprised.
>
> They come from honorable milieux and from sound owners… C'est la guerre….
>
> Dear Mr. Pach, this will keep you busy—I wish you good luck, and I hope that the transactions that you will no doubt make with this lot will bring you the peace to

---

[18] Matisse was suggesting that Pach try to sell the Ingres portrait back to its former owner Louisine Havemeyer, reasoning that since she may have been coerced into selling the painting in the first place, she might still be interested in it. The dealer Paul Durand-Ruel helped Mrs. Havemeyer build her collection.

[19] The Watteau would later be determined to be a copy. Six of the paintings are portraits; of the remainder, three are landscapes. Matisse was discreet about the identities of the collectors seeking to dispose of thir works and did not divulge them in his correspondence with Pach. For the complete text of this letter, see Cauman 1991: 7-9.

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> work on your art. Best wishes to your family for the year 1917.[20]

In early 1916 Stanton Macdonald-Wright, in New York, wrote to fellow Synchromist Morgan Russell in Paris, inviting him to be part of "a big show":

> Willard is getting it up in conjunction with Kennerly, the president of the Anderson Galleries... & also owner of the one 'highbrow' magazine (the Forum) of America on which Willard is art critic. These galleries when they lend their name to a show are as good as cash. The exhibition will be called the Forum Exhibition of Modern American Painters... You and I, because of our reputation will sell everything. Of course, we will hang ourselves in the best space there!...
>
> After the Armory Show it will be the most talked of exhibition ever given here and as Willard by large amount of writing.. has already all but established modern painting on a serious & respected basis, the name of the Anderson Galleries (which opens its doors to the "carazies" [sic] for the first time) will establish us forever.[21]

Stanton's brother Willard Huntington Wright was bringing together a broad spectrum of American modernists into the Forum Exhibition, with the Synchromists playing a prominent part.[22] Willard was pursuing two objectives: to advance the

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[20] Matisse to Pach, December 14, 1916, Pach Papers, Archives of American Art, translated in Cauman 1991, 7-9.

[21] Macdonald-Wright to Russell, undated [early 1916], Morgan Russell Papers, Archives of American Art, cited in William C. Agee, "Willard Huntington Wright and the Synchromists: Notes on the Forum Exhibition," Archives of American Art Journal 24, 2 (1984): 10-11, and 15, n. 6.

[22] As Thomas Hart Benton later recalled, "Willard and Stanton were hatching plans for another Synchromist exhibit, but they had concluded that this time it would be politic to have it in conjunction with a few other artists" (Thomas Hart Benton, An Artist in America [New York: R. M. McBride & Co., 1937]: 37, cited in Anne Harrell, The Forum Exhibition:

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cause of Synchromism, and, more broadly, to relegate to American modernists the glory they were denied when the Europeans stole their thunder at the Armory.

In what Alfred Stieglitz characterized as a "clever tactical move,"[23] Wright appointed a committee to oversee the exhibition, so as to give the appearance of broad support. In addition to himself, there were five others: Christian Brinton, an art critic who had favorably reviewed his book; Robert Henri; W. H. de B. Nelson, editor of International Studio; Alfred Stieglitz; and John Weichsel, president of the People's Art Guild, a socialist-oriented group that arranged exhibitions.

Only Wright, Stieglitz, and Weichsel were involved in the selection of artists, of whom 17 were finally chosen, showing a total of 193 works.[24] There were four artists from the Synchromist camp: Russell, Macdonald-Wright, Thomas Hart Benton, and Andrew Dasburg. From the Stieglitz group came Oscar Bluemner, Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley, John Marin, George F. Of, and Abraham Walkowitz; Alfred Maurer, late of the Stieglitz group, was also included. From the Arensberg Circle

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Selections and Additions, Whitney Museum of American Art [New York, 1983]: 4, and 14, n. 4).

[23] Alfred Stieglitz to Paul Haviland, April 19, 1916, YCAL, cited in Harrell 1983: 5, and 14, n. 8.

[24] Ann Harrell reports that "Wright was making studio visits and working with Stieglitz and Weichsel to narrow down the over fifty artists under consideration to a preliminary group of twenty-one.…

"Among the twenty-one… were… Max Weber, Rockwell Kent, and Maurice Sterne, each of whom for various reasons declined to participate" (Harrell 1983: 5-6).

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came Man Ray and Charles Sheeler. Ben Benn[25] and William and Marguerite Zorach, who had exhibited in the People's Art Guild, were brought in by Weichsel. Also in the exhibition was the American cubist Henry L. McFee.

William Agee has characterized the Forum Exhibition as "a gauge of the state of advanced art in America in the years immediately following the Armory Show."[26] From this perspective, the exhibition is a useful means of assessing the influence of Matisse on American modernism, circa 1916.

In a broad sense, all of the Forum participants can be seen as heirs of Matisse. Matisse was a great assimilator of fin-de-siècle modernism, particularly that of Cézanne, van Gogh, and Gauguin, as well as of early twentieth-century primitivism; as his works at Montross attest, he was an assimilator of cubism as well. The Forum artists were subject to those influences, in some cases filtered through Matisse, though to isolate each specific instance would be a daunting task.[27] Those who were painting in a coloristic Post-Impressionist style, and who hence may be considered the most direct heirs of Matisse, were Benn, Maurer, and the Zorachs.

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[25] Ben Benn (1884-1983) attended the National Academy of Design, beginning in 1904, where was a classmate of William Zorach.

[26] Agee 1984: 10.

[27] The task of reconstructing the Forum Exhibition is difficult, as the exhibition catalogue contains no list of works and reproduces only one work by each artist (with the egregious exception of Marguerite Zorach, the sole woman in the show and the only artist not reproduced and not permitted to submit a statement, on the grounds that her husband represented the couple). The most thorough reconstruction was undertaken by Anne Harrell, in Harrell 1983.

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Several of the Forum artists had a demonstrable relationship with Matisse, as man or artist, that preceded the Armory Show. Alfred Maurer had known Matisse as a member of the Stein circle and in 1907 had begun to paint in a manner strongly beholden to his style. George F. Of, a pioneer American collector of Matisse, had purchased Nude in a Wood in 1907. Morgan Russell had studied with Matisse at the Couvent du Sacré-Coeur beginning in 1908. William Zorach had experienced a revelation at Matisse's 1908 exhibition at the Photo-Secession gallery.

Four of the Forum artists—Dove, Hartley, Marin, and Maurer—had exhibited in 1910 in Stieglitz's Younger American Painters show, where they had been labeled "followers of Matisse" in the press. William Zorach had been called a "follower of Matisse" by Charles Henry Dorr, a reviewer of the Armory Show. Although two critics of the Forum Exhibition did mention Matisse, by and large the critics did not stress Matisse's influence in their reviews.

The reason for the rhetorical de-emphasis of the influence of Matisse, and of European artists generally, can be found in the politics of the day, both of the art world and of the world at large. In his preface to the exhibition catalogue, Wright stated that "the object of the present exhibition is to... turn public attention for the moment from European art and concentrate it on the excellent work being done in America."

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Wright concluded his preface with a note addressed to "The Buying Public" which read in part: "No more genuine art service can be rendered, either to yourself or to the cause of serious art effort in America, than by the purchase of these works."[28] It was a tone, Christopher Knight observes, "that would soon become familiar in appeals for the purchase of war bonds"; Wright "in effect implored: Buy American."[29]

The Armory Show had triggered a nationalist reaction in some artists, exemplified by the following reminiscence of Jerome Myers: "Our land of opportunity was thrown open to foreign art, unrestricted and triumphant; more than ever before, our great country had become a colony... While foreign names became familiar, un-American propaganda was ladled out wholesale."[30] In America of 1916, with the country headed toward entry in the Great War, nationalism was the order of the day. In the words of Christopher Knight, the Forum Exhibition "was decidedly a nationalist affair."[31]

Nevertheless, there were critics who took note of Matisse's influence on Forum artists. Frank Jewett Mather,

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[28] Anderson Galleries, The Forum Exhibition of Modern American Painters, reprint ed. (New York: Arno Press, 1916): 5. Wright's unsigned preface is titled "In Explanation." In his review of the exhibition, Wright stated the object of the exhibition in identical language (Willard Huntington Wright, "The Forum Exhibition," Forum 55, 4 (April 1916): 457).

[29] Christopher Knight, "On Native Ground: U. S. Modern," Art in America 71, 9 (October 1983): 168.

[30] Myers 1940: 36-37.

[31] Knight 1983: 172. Ironically, Wright would be falsely accused of pro-German sympathies the following year; see Loughery 1992: 131-136.

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writing in the Nation, observed, "Walkowitz and Alfred Maurer are familiar figures to art lovers. They balance between the syncopations of Matisse and a kind of personal symbolism."[32] Wright, who with characteristic hubris reviewed his own exhibition, wrote of Alfred Maurer: "Maurer's greatest inspiration as to method and appearance is the great modern Fauve, Matisse: like him, Maurer essays the creation of works of art as in contradistinction to works of nature."[33]

Of all the artists in the Forum Exhibition, Maurer displayed the most unmediated influence of Matisse. This is evident in his two works identified as having been in the show, both landscapes, which show the influence of Matisse's Collioure landscapes of 1905-1906.[34] Maurer's statement, as it appears in the exhibition catalogue, reveals a similarity of method to that of Matisse:

> It is necessary for art to differ from nature, or we would at once lose the raison d'être of painting. Perhaps art should be the intensification of nature; at least, it should express an inherent feeling which cannot be obtained from nature except through a process of association. Nature, as we all know, is not consciously composed; and therefore it cannot give us a pure aesthetic emotion. I believe that the artist who paints before nature should order his canvases; and in doing this he is unable to adhere exactly to the scene before him. The principles of organization and form, which

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[32] Frank Jewett Mather, "The Forum Exhibition," The Nation 102: 2647 (March 23, 1916): 340.

[33] Wright, "The Forum Exhibition," Forum 55, 4 (April 1916): 465.

[34] The two Maurer paintings are: Landscape (c. 1911, Pittsburgh) and Landscape (c. 1912, formerly Weyhe Gallery, New York); the Pittsburgh painting is illustrated in the 1916 exhibition catalogue; both are illustrated in Harrell 1983: 25.

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> animated the older painters, must not be ignored. They form the true basis for artistic appreciation. But the modern men can make use of these principles through a different medium....[35]

Compare Maurer's statement to the following of Matisse:

> A distinction is made between painters who work directly from nature and those who work purely from imagination. Personally, I think neither of these methods must be preferred to the exclusion of the other. Both may be used in turn by the same individual, either because he needs contact with objects in order to receive sensations that will excite his creative faculty, or because his sensations are already organized. In either case, he will be able to arrive at that totality which constitutes a picture. In any event, I think that one can judge the vitality and power of an artist who, having received impressions directly from the spectacle of nature, is able to organize his sensations to continue his work in the same frame of mind on different days, and to develop these sensations...[36]

Yet Maurer, on the basis of his work at the Forum Exhibition, had not assimilated Matisse's work after 1906. Wright implied this fact in his review: "Matisse, in the last three years, has been undergoing a further metamorphosis, so it is still within the realm of possibility that Maurer also

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[35] Anderson Galleries 1916. Each artist (except for Marguerite Zorach—see above: n. 27) was invited to submit a statement, which was displayed at the exhibition and included in the catalogue, along with a reproduction of one painting. A complication is that Wright altered some of the statements; see Agee 1984. In my judgment this paragraph is wholly the work of Maurer. The final paragraph, which contains the suspicious phrase "color volumes," with its concomitant intimations of Synchromism, is more suspect.

[36] Matisse, "Notes of a Painter," 1908, in Flam 1995: 42.

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will take a further step to more intellectually profound inspiration."[37]

Some of modern art's supporters were critical of the nationalist stance of the Forum exhibition. Included in this group were Pach, Kuhn, and Davies, who had been responsible for the international section of the Armory Show. Robert J. Coady, proprietor with Michael Brenner of the Washington Square Gallery, objected:[38]

> Why are these two hundred paintings... American, what element or elements, quality or qualities, do they possess that make then American?
>
> What is the difference between "modern American art" and "modern European art"?
>
> Why "turn public attention for the moment from modern European art"?
>
> Why not turn public attention to art?[39]

John Quinn, who favored French artists, though he collected Americans as well, was unimpressed by the Forum exhibition, and did not buy a single work from it. Taking grim satisfaction from the exhibition's lack of critical and

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[37] Wright, "The Forum Exhibition," Forum 55, 4 (April 1916): 465.

[38] Artists shown at the Washington Square Gallery included Picasso, Gris, Derain, and Diego Rivera (Judith Zilczer, "Robert J. Coady, Forgotten Spokesman for Avant-Garde Culture in America," American Art Review 2 (November-December 1975): 79-80). Zilczer notes: "In March 1916, a small exhibition organized by Coady opened in Washington, D.C., in an artist's studio... which he renamed the Washington Square Gallery for the occasion. The show of about twenty works by such men as Matisse, Picasso, Metzinger, Derain, and Vlaminck was the first exhibition of European modernism in the nation's capital."

[39] Anderson Galleries 1916: advertisement [after page 78].

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financial success, he wrote to Pach, "Wright's show is a fizzle."[40]

Quinn had labored to secure equality in the marketplace for European art, having successfully lobbied Congress for an end to the tariff on imported artworks (an outcome that benefited his own collecting activities). He was opposed to collecting art on the basis of nationalist sentiment.

Since the Armory Show, Quinn had been building his collection, purchasing, in addition to paintings and graphics by Matisse, sculpture by Brancusi, Duchamp-Villon, Gaudier-Brzeska, and Jacob Epstein, and paintings by Derain, Duchamp, Dufy, Gleizes, Picasso, Rouault, Segonzac, Vlaminck, and the English Vorticists. Of American artists, he added works by Bruce, Hartley, Kuhn, Macdonald-Wright, Marin, Prendergast, Schamberg, Sheeler, Stella, and Weber.

Quinn made purchases not only from the 291, Bourgeois, and Carroll galleries, but also from the Modern Gallery, which opened its doors in autumn 1915. Directed by Stieglitz's associate Marius de Zayas, the Modern Gallery began as a commercial extension of 291, but shortly thereafter became independent of its parent. Quinn, de Zayas later recalled, "just bought and bought."[41]

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[40] Quinn to Pach, March 18, 1916, Quinn Papers, NYPL, cited in Judith Zilczer, "The Noble Buyer": John Quinn, Patron of the Avant-Garde," Hirshhorn Museum (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1978): 37, and 66, n. 51.

[41] Marius de Zayas, How, When, and Why Modern Art Came to New York, ed. Francis M. Naumann (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996): 94. De Zayas reported that the Modern Gallery had only three clients: Quinn, Arensberg, and

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In December 1916 Quinn added a sculpture by Matisse to his collection, the bronze Head of Boy (Pierre Matisse) (1905) purchased through the Carroll gallery.[42]

There were more paintings in Quinn's apartment than the collector could display. Henry McBride reported that "canvases were stored back to back against the walls, and piled high upon each other like goods in a warehouse."[43]

Unlike the Steins and the Arensbergs, Quinn did not host a salon and did not believe he had a mission to share the pleasures of his collection with others. In November 1918, the British art dealer A. W. Bahr wrote to Quinn:

> Two friends of mine from Paris, Miss Norris and Mme. Negroponte who are well acquainted with Mrs. Benjamin Guinness have expressed a great desire to see some of your modern French and American paintings and I promised them I would take the liberty of approaching you. They are very artistic and appreciative and well known in Paris circles.[44]

Quinn replied:

> ...Mrs. Guinness told me of the desire of Miss Norris and Mme. Negroponte to see my things. I told Mrs. Guinness that as a personal favor to her I would have them come up. But frankly and candidly, if I had known

---

Arthur B. Davies. Despite the limited clientele, the gallery survived for three seasons due to the financial support of Eugene Meyer.

[42] Harriet Bryant to John Quinn (with invoice, Carroll Galleries), December 14, 1916, Quinn Collection, NYPL. Quinn paid $134 for the bronze. It is illustrated in American Art Association, The John Quinn Collection: Paintings and Sculptures of the Moderns (New York, 1927): 233.

[43] Henry McBride, "Art World Has Its Busiest Week," New York Sun, January 9, 1926: 11, cited in Zilczer 1978: 38, and 66, n. 2.

[44] A. W. Bahr to John Quinn, November 8, 1918 (written in New York on Montross Gallery stationery), Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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> that this had been due to your suggestion, I should most emphatically have declined.
>
> … I do not consider it a favor, but quite the contrary, for any one to suggest… that I am glad to show my pictures, for I most distinctly am not. And this for many reasons, among others, first, my apartment is overcrowded; secondly, if one shows pictures to one or two people, they talk about it and others want to be asked; thirdly, the pictures are not arranged for showing; fourthly, it fatigues me very much to show and talk about them, and fifthly, I have been bored beyond words by people making stupid remarks about the things shown. It is a pleasure to show them to certain artists like Arthur Davies, Walt Kuhn and others, but to the ordinary people who say: "Now what do you see in that?"? And "What does this mean"?, it is a weariness and a bore to have them around.[45]

When the dealer Robert J. Coady asked Quinn to donate some of his collection to Howard University, the renowned educational institution for black Americans, Quinn replied, "While I sympathize with your generous spirit… frankly I am not especially keen upon art propaganda in schools and colleges… One of my criticisms of the Metropolitan Museum has been that… it has wasted much time and energy upon… art education 'for the masses.'" Quinn suggested that Coady get in touch with "artists like" Sloan, Henri, and Bellows.[46]

Quinn could be indulgent, however, at the ignorance of his cultivated friends. In May 1919 Quinn hosted a dinner for John Butler Yeats, the Irish painter (and father of poet

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[45] John Quinn to A. W. Bahr, November 11, 1918, Quinn Collection, NYPL. The churlish tone of Quinn's reply can be excused in part by the fact that Quinn was convalescing when he wrote it.

[46] Quinn to Coady, September 4, 1919, Quinn Collection, NYPL. Quinn had purchased paintings by Braque and Gris from Coady.

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William Butler Yeats) and three Englishman, one of them by name of C. C. Burlingham. Yeats left the party early, and Quinn later filled him in on events subsequent to his departure:

> Burlingham was amusing when he made fun of my Matisses and Picassos. But when he saw the marble heads by... Brancusi, particularly... "The Sleeping Muse", ...he nearly exploded with amusement, and pointing to the Matisse still life... "The Cyclamen", and waving one hand at the marble head, mispronouncing Brancusi's name, and the other at the painting, he said, "In the sense that Branucci is the greatest sculptor in the world, so Matisse is the greatest painter—but only in that sense —and which I think is nonsense." ...If you had been there, you, who have so often raved at the two Matisses in my drawing room, and pointed out how lacking in modeling they were, would have rushed to their defense. I did not defend them. I let Burlingham enjoy himself and he was very amusing.[47]

Shortly after the above-mentioned evening, Quinn added two more Matisses to his collection. Marius de Zayas had written to him from Paris the previous February, promising "to bring over some important paintings by Matisse, Picasso etc." De Zayas had reported that modern paintings were in great demand and were "rather scarce, most of them are gone to Holland Switzerland and Scandinavia."[48]

De Zayas was true to his word. On May 21 he sold Quinn two paintings of 1916, a portrait of the model Lorette enti-

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[47] John Quinn to John Butler Yeats, May 19, 1919, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[48] De Zayas to Quinn, February 14, 1919, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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tled The Italian Woman (fig. 2.18) and a large, luminously colored still life of Apples (fig. 2.19).[49]

Quinn was delighted with his new acquisitions, as he informed J. B. Yeats: "I have just got two wonderful paintings by Matisse, one the painting of a woman, and the other a large still life, a great bowl of apples. They fairly flash and sing and are wonderful things..."[50]

By decade's end Quinn had narrowed and focused his interests as a collector. Having assembled a range of living British, American, and French artists into his collection, he now wished to concentrate on major works by a few French artists. Although Armistice had been declared in November 1918, Quinn was precluded from European travel by the precarious state of his health (he was recuperating from cancer surgery) and by the demands of his law practice.

In early 1919 he passed up an opportunity to buy Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase, which Pach had offered to him on behalf of its owner Frederic Torrey, for $1000. Quinn replied the asking price was too high, but declined to

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[49] De Zayas to Quinn, May 22, 1919. Quinn Collection, NYPL. Quinn paid $2400 for The Italian Woman and $3200 for Apples (Ledger, Quinn Collection) . De Zayas had acquired Apples from Bernheim-Jeune.

[50] John Quinn to John Butler Yeats, May 23, 1919, Quinn Collection, NYPL. The critic Clement Greenberg has written that Matisse's "very best painting, perhaps, comes between 1914 and 1917... If his color sings, it's because his touch sings too"—using the same metaphor that Quinn used to evoke the power of the work (Clement Greenberg, "Matisse in 1966." Boston Museum Bulletin 64, 336 (1966): 67, 73).

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make a serious counteroffer.[51] Duchamp was not to be the focus of his collecting activities.

In spring Quinn enlisted Pach's help in a plan to buy paintings directly from Matisse, Derain, and Picasso, while remaining in New York. Quinn wished to enter into an arrangement with the three artists whereby he would choose among their latest works on the basis of photographs they would send him. By dealing directly with the artists, Quinn could both avoid the payment of commissions and take advantage of a law he had helped to engineer: sales by artists of their own work were exempt from the 10 percent tax that applied to all other art sales. Pach would smooth the way for Quinn with a letter singing his praises as a collector and as an attorney working on behalf of artists.

In June, Pach wrote to Quinn:

> Enclosed is a copy of my letter to Matisse, Derain and Picasso in its final form,—i.e., the one I wrote plus and minus your suggestions... I have written Matisse but shall not post the letter till I get yours and see if there is anything else to be included.
>
> ... I am in some doubt whether any of the three artists will be able to sell to you direct as all are or have been under contract with dealers to dispose of their entire production...

Pach's enclosure reads in part:

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[51] When Pach informed Quinn that Torrey was selling Duchamp's Nude as a consequence of the "high cost of gasoline," Quinn remarked disdainfully, "He is evidently willing to place Henry Ford's product ahead of Duchamp's work. In that, of course, he has the support of the vast majority of his fellow countrymen..." (Quinn to Pach, January 14, 1919, Quinn Collection, NYPL). The painting was bought without hesitation by Walter Arensberg.

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> I have just heard from Mr. John Quinn that he is about to write you regarding an arrangement whereby he could see more of your work, with a view to adding more examples of it to his collection, and I write especially to tell you that I think his offer is one that would be of very real interest to you. Mr. Quinn is not a rich man and he is a busy practising attorney who has given a great deal of his leisure time in the cause of art.... [Pach explains the changes in tax law that Quinn helped to effect.] Mr. Quinn has been able to buy a certain number of works of art each year for quite a long time, and as his interest as a collector is entirely in modern work, his collection of artists since Cézanne is by far the most extensive and important in this country.... Beginning with pictures by Chavannes, Cézanne, Redon, Gauguin, and van Gogh, he has worked ahead consistently and logically with Matisse, Rouault, Dufy, Derain, Picasso, Braque, Metzinger, Gleizes, the brothers Duchamp-Villon, Brancusi and others. Add to this the fact that he has been able to secure a considerable number of examples of these artists which must rank with their best works, and I think you will agree with me... that it is important for you to be represented in such a collection by a suitable number of works and by a quality of works which will give a true bearing of your art and its place in the movement of our time....[52]

As Pach foresaw, Quinn's plan was precluded by the artists' contracts with their dealers—in the case of Matisse, with Bernheim-Jeune. Quinn would arrive at another means of acquiring the artists' work, through the assistance of Henri-Pierre Roché. In the meantime, on June 19, Quinn purchased from the Bourgeois Galleries a third Matisse still life, to

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[52] Pach to Quinn, June 8, 1919, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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join Cyclamen and Apples in his collection. The painting was Still life with Fruit (fig. 2.20).[53]

In September Quinn renewed his acquaintance with Roché, whom he had known since 1917.[54] Roché was, in Leo Stein's words, "a tall man with an inquiring eye under an inquisitive forehead... He was a born liaison officer, who knew everybody and wanted everybody to know everybody else."[55]

Quinn arranged for Roché to act as his European agent. In an informal letter, which does not mention remuneration, he set forth the terms of their agreement:

> ...I am going to try to limit my purchases... to works of museum rank or what we sometimes refer to here as star pieces. I was glad that you agreed with me in that. Such a course takes more time and involves more patience, but it is the best in the end. By not following it I have in past years purchased a larger number of small things than I really wanted, and which really do not lift up the general average of my collection.
>
> ...Thank you for your generous offer to call things to my attention, from time to time, at your convenience, and to send me photographs of such modern things as you think I might be interested in, with the sizes and prices and medium indicated on the back of the photographs. Of course you know that I am not a dealer, for I have never sold any work of art, and my purchases are rather limited, and therefore I may not be interested in many of the things that you write about. At any rate I

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[53] Bourgeois Galleries to John Quinn, invoice, June 19, 1919, Quinn Collection, NYPL. Quinn paid $1100 for the painting. It is illustrated in Barr 1951: 397; see Zilczer 1978: 172.

[54] They were introduced by Jules Pascin in a letter of February 28, 1917 and first met at a dinner party at Quinn's apartment on March 6, 1917 (Reid 1968: 296-297).

[55] Leo Stein, Appreciation: Painting, Poetry and Prose. New York: Crown Publishers, 1947: 169. It was Roché who introduced Leo Stein to Picasso (see above, 1.3: p. 15).

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> will give you or the artist concerned a prompt answer and decision.[56]

Quinn soon had an opportunity to add more Matisses to his collection, without benefit of Roché's guidance. From November 7 to December 6, 1919, the De Zayas Gallery presented an "Exhibition of Paintings by Courbet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cézanne, Seurat, Matisse."[57] Matisse showed 6 paintings, including Music (sketch), a "star piece" formerly belonging to Leo and Gertrude Stein.[58]

In Paris, in late 1919, the Michael Steins were reunited with the greater part of their collection, thanks to the efforts of Hans Purrmann. In Germany, "armed with the Steins' power of attorney,"[59] Purrmann had been able to reclaim nearly all their Matisses, which had purportedly been sold at a private auction by the dealer Gurlitt at the outset of the war. But the reunion was to be short lived; the pictures would be sold the following year, to Scandinavian collectors. Now in reduced financial circumstances, the Steins could no longer

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[56] Quinn to Roché, September 17, 1919, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[57] The Modern Gallery, under De Zayas's direction, had closed at the end of the 1917-1918 season, and after a year in which De Zayas had continued to deal privately, he opened the De Zayas Gallery in October 1919; see Francis M. Naumann's "Afterword" in De Zayas 1996: 131.

[58] The Matisse paintings in the exhibition are listed in the catalogue as nos. 17 through 22: "Bedroom in a Hotel," "Bathers," "Landscape," "Music," "Apples," and "Women and Roses" (De Zayas Gallery, Exhibition of Paintings by Courbet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cézanne, Seurat, Matisse [New York, 1919]).

[59] Barr 1951: 178, and 541, n. 5. The information came to Barr from Purrmann in a letter of September 20, 1950.

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afford the luxury of a lavish Matisse collection. The world that they had known before the war no longer existed.

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Chapter 3. Matisse and America, 1920-1929

3.1. Introduction

By the early twenties Matisse had achieved critical acceptance in America. This phenomenon was touted by his longtime supporters and tacitly accepted by his erstwhile detractors.

When Matisse exhibited at the De Zayas Gallery in 1920, Henry McBride crowed that since the Montross show of 1915, "a change has taken place in the status of Matisse... Doubtless there will be fewer to laugh at the latest manifestations of his genius... than there were then. Most of the laughing may be done by Matisse himself, and by those who early backed him to win."[1] Hamilton Easter Field praised Matisse's paintings in the same exhibition as "classical in their beauty of color and arrangement... [They] recall the art of the great Italian classicists of the sixteenth century... Their appeal is to our sense of pure beauty."[2]

The following spring, Royal Cortissoz welcomed the Metropolitan Museum's Loan Exhibition of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings (in which Matisse had 9 works). The conservative critic regarded it as a "useful" event that would be a "stimulus... to clarifying discussion" and conceded

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[1] Henry McBride, New York Herald, December 12, 1920; see below, 3.2: p. 348, n. 32.

[2] Hamilton Easter Field, The Arts 1, 2 (January 1921): 40; see below, 3.2: p. 349, n. 33.

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that "the mere fact that this show is organized at the Museum may be regarded in some quarters as... proof that Post-Impressionism for America has 'arrived.'"[3]

Of the three great modern art collections in America, all accorded Matisse a central place. None of these collections, however, was accessible to the general public. Matisse supporters such as Walter Pach, Joseph Brummer, and Arthur B. Davies hoped for a permanent institution that would display and nurture modern art. By decade's end, these hopes were realized, with the founding of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Walter Pach had been Matisse's de facto stateside representative since the time of the Armory Show of 1913. By 1925, these responsibilities had shifted to the artist's son Pierre Matisse.

This chapter will explore the growth of three great Matisse collections in 1920s America: those of John Quinn in New York, Claribel and Etta Cone in Baltimore, and Albert Barnes in Philadelphia.

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[3] Royal Cortissoz, New York Tribune, May 8, 1921; see below, 3.2: p. 362, n. 68.

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3.2. The Quinn Collection, 1920-1927

In early 1920, John Quinn, in a letter to the English writer and painter Wyndham Lewis, gave a partial inventory of his collection:

> I have ten or twelve fine examples by Vlaminck, 15 or 20 by Derain, three or four of them among his very best, 3 excellent Picassos of the Blue period, two or three large ones of his Pink period, two or three large ones of his cubistic period, five stunning Matisses, among the best that he has ever done, two excellent Braques, and so on.

The modest representation of Matisse relative to Vlaminck, Derain, and Picasso did not signify ambivalence toward Matisse on Quinn's part. Rather, it was a consequence of his decision to limit new purchases to works he deemed to be of museum quality. In fact, as he told Lewis, he now preferred Matisse to Picasso: "Picasso sometimes seems to me to be more of an engineer than a painter. Matisse is the painter, and after all the business of a painter is to paint, and paint needs the smear. Painting should not be confused with engineering or with writing or criticism of painting.... By the way, I understand there was a Matisse show in London recently.[1] Did you see it?... It seems to me that as a painter

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[1] The "Exhibition of Paintings by Matisse with Sculptures by Maillol," held for one month beginning November 15, 1919 at the Leicester Galleries, London, included 51 works by Matisse, mostly "recent works made in Nice—landscapes, still lifes and studies of Matisse's models Antoinette and Lorette and of his daughter Marguerite." In the show were The Pink Marble Table (see fig. 3.23) and The Three Sisters with "Pink Marble Table" (see fig. 3.22). The exhibition received good reviews, notably from The Times and Burlington Magazine, and every picture was sold (Richard Shone, "Matisse in England and Two English Sitters," Burlington Magazine 135, 1084 [July 1993]: 480-481).

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he is today about the best bet…"[2]

Apart from tariff battles, Quinn had stayed out of the public arena since the Armory Show. He sought to aid and support worthy artists, but had little interest in elevating the taste of the public, was reluctant to show his collection to outsiders, and regarded with skepticism the idea of "art education for the masses."

When Walter Pach asked Quinn, on behalf of the Society of Independent Artists, for "the loan of the two Matisses you got last spring, two of the Rouaults and two of the Dufys," he did so in an apologetic tone. "Please don't think me a Bolshevik, 'nationalizing' private collections,"[3] he implored. Quinn consented to the request, but stipulated, "I do this for Pach, because Pach requests it personally, and not because of my love for the Independents."[4] The two Matisses were The Italian Woman (which Quinn knew as "Portrait of a Spanish Girl") and Apples (see figs. 2.18 and 2.19).

"I understand that you are doing it for me," Pach replied, "but I still hope you will have some pleasure yourself at having the things in the show, and at the delight

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[2] Quinn to Lewis, February 5, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL. Lewis replied that he shared Quinn's admiration for Matisse, "but not so exclusively as your remarks indicate that you feel. As a student of the absolute use of oil paint I do not think that Picasso compares unfavorably with him. Matisse's use of that medium appears to me if anything too monotonously summary and thin: rather adequate, than a positive quantity." He did not mention whether he had seen Matisse's show at the Leicester Galleries (Lewis to Quinn, June 14, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

[3] Pach to Quinn, February 10, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[4] Quinn to Pach, February 13, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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that appreciative people will have in them."[5] Pach asked Quinn whether he wished to lend the pictures anonymously, as he had done in 1917 and 1918: "I shall assume that the same holds true this year unless I hear from you to the contrary."[6] To Pach's surprise, Quinn replied: "I have no objection to your putting my name down as the owner of the works."[7] In the following year, Quinn would take a far more public stand in defense of the new art.

Quinn was actively searching for major works by Matisse and other School of Paris artists. In pursuit of this goal he wrote to the legendary Parisian dealer Ambroise Vollard, in the process cogently setting forth his credo as a collector:

> I have done so much buying of art "to help artists" or "to encourage artists" or "to make exhibitions a success," that I feel I have done my share, and now I desire to confine my purchases only to the best examples of work by artists whose work I am interested in. I am interested in the best work of Picasso, Matisse, Derain and Rouault... I confine myself to purchasing the work of living men, for two reasons: first, because I can more afford to buy their work than that of artists who are dead and whose work has gone up in price, and secondly, to me it is more interesting to buy the work of living artists, and besides there is satisfaction in feeling that... in helping them to live and to create one is in a sense a co-creator...
>
> If you should have any representative works by Derain or Matisse or Picasso or Rouault, I should be glad to have photographs of them with the dimensions

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[5] Pach to Quinn, February 14, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[6] Pach to Quinn, February 16, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[7] Quinn to Pach, February 17, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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and prices on the backs, and I will give you a prompt decision in each case.[8]

In spring, closer to home, Quinn purchased two Matisses from de Zayas that had been in the "Exhibition of Paintings by Courbet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cézanne, Seurat, Matisse" the previous autumn. The paintings were Girl with Roses, an oil-on-canvas mounted on wood (1917, collection of Mrs. Edward G. Robinson, Beverly Hills), and Music (Sketch), which had previously belonged to Leo Stein (see fig. 1.21.[9] In Music (Sketch), Quinn found what he had been seeking—an example of the best work of Matisse.

When an even more important Matisse soon became available through the De Zayas Gallery, Quinn hesitated and nearly missed his opportunity to acquire it. The picture was Blue Nude (see fig. 1.20), which Leo Stein had purchased contemporaneously with Music (Sketch) in 1907 and had subsequently lent to the Armory Show.

On July 1, the painter-photographer Charles Sheeler, manager of the gallery when de Zayas was abroad, telephoned Quinn with "important and exciting news" from de Zayas, who had asked him to see Quinn personally about it. The next morning Sheeler arrived at Quinn's apartment with "a special

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[8] Quinn to Vollard, March 2, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[9] Girl with Roses (illustrated in Judith Zilczer, "The Noble Buyer": John Quinn, Patron of the Avant-Garde," Hirshhorn Museum [Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1978)]: 123) was purchased for $600; Music (Sketch), for $1100 (De Zayas to Quinn, Invoices, April 21, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

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number of 'Camera Work'... devoted to the work of Picasso and Matisse... [with] one or two articles by Gertrude Stein,[10] Gertrude being now happily in the discard," Quinn reported to Walt Kuhn.

> The number had a reproduction of one of the paintings by Matisse [Blue Nude] that Matisse had at the International. Sheeler said that de Zayas called it a "superMatisse"; "superMatisse" being spelled as one word and not hyphenated. Sheeler offered to leave the special number of "Camera Work" with me but I did not want to have the trouble of returning it.

Quinn solicited Kuhn's advice on the wisdom of purchasing the Blue Nude:

> The size of the painting is 80 by 40.[11] It contains the single figure of a woman, painted in pink, lying prone,[12] on a thin grey background. She has two black bands across her forehead.[13] The most conspicuous thing about her is her large upper hip.... I recall it [the painting] distinctly at the International....
>
> ...De Zayas did not give the date when it was painted by Matisse, but it must have been somewhere around 1912.[14] De Zayas wants a cable answer. The price is $4,500, payable $2,500 on delivery and the balance

---

[10] The issue was Camera Work Special Number, August 1912, which contains Gertrude Stein's word-portraits of Picasso and Matisse and 14 photographs of the two artists' work.

[11] The Blue Nude's actual dimensions are 36 x 55 inches.

[12] The anatomically impossible pose of the Blue Nude is not "prone," which means having the front of the body downward on the supporting surface. The nude's lower body, twisted downward, implies a prone position, but the upper body is frontal, with the figure leaning on her elbow to face the viewer.

[13] The bands on the forehead are blue. The background is multicolored pink, green, blue, and violet. The illustration in Camera Work is monochrome, and Quinn was relying on his memory.

[14] Blue Nude was painted in early 1907 (Quinn assumed incorrectly that it was painted just prior to the Armory Show).

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in three months. In the event of a sale to me de Zayas wants the right to exhibit it at his gallery for two or three months before it is shown anywhere else. I enclose you a sketch of it which I have made from memory, which I think you will admit is a real work of art.[15]

Sheeler said that he recalled it perfectly from seeing it several times at the International, and he thought it was one of the greatest Matisses in existence. If that is so, the price does not seem to be out of the way... At the same time I have seven Matisses and perhaps it would be better for me to get a later Matisse. Sheeler said that good Matisses were hard to get. I hate to order a thing by cable or to buy without seeing the thing. But it occurred to me that you would recall it and be able to give me an impression of it as a work of art....

I am sending this special delivery and I will be awfully glad if you will drop me a note special delivery... and let me know what you think of the thing, particularly:

(a) Whether you remember the picture from the International, and if you do what you think of it as a work of art;

(b) Whether you prefer a Matisse of that period or a later one;

(c) What you think of the price; and

(d) Whether your judgment would be to cinch it now or to wait until de Zayas returns and reports about other possible things.[16]

Kuhn, vacationing in Good Ground, Long Island, wrote a prompt but hasty reply that began, "Have about ten minutes to get this off," and continued:

I would hold off for the following reasons—
—Not one of the greatest
—What you want is one in his flat color "persian" like "Madras Rouge" (Mrs Matisse & turban) [at the] Armory—

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[15] No such sketch remains in the Quinn Collection. Presumably, Quinn spoke in jest when he remarked "I think you will admit" his sketch was "a real work of art."

[16] Quinn to Kuhn, July 3, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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> or large landscape or interior
> Questions answered—
>
> A. Remember perfectly, sculptural line color like pale ink, period represented in your late purchase "Musique"
>
> B. Price 1500 to 2000 too high
>
> Would not have gone begging all these years, as has been shown much—hung several years in M. Stein's place,[17] Paris, seen by hundreds—regular weekly "salon."
>
> You might call it a great one of the "Musique" period. To me Matisse is greatest when purely painting.[18]

Quinn, to his later regret, followed Kuhn's advice rather than his own instincts and informed Sheeler that he would not buy the Blue Nude. "I was sorry to learn your adverse decision... regarding the Matisse," Sheeler replied.

> I cannot refrain from expressing my regret that you do not share my admiration for the canvas.
>
> Believing as I do, that there is nothing finer in the Artist's range of work than this little picture, it is only natural that I should feel that you have missed a fine opportunity....
>
> ...One could make quite a formidable list in your collection of works of the first order which lacked their due appreciation previously.[19]

The Blue Nude—Sheeler's "little picture"—is slightly under life-size, not over-life-size, as Quinn recollected it from having seen it at the Armory seven years earlier. Many viewers remember this powerful painting as bigger than its

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[17] The painting formerly belonged to Leo Stein. By "M. Stein," Kuhn probably meant "Michael Stein," not "Monsieur Stein"—suggesting two possibilities: (1) he incorrectly recalled seeing the picture at the rue Madame; or (2) he actually saw it at the rue Madame, the picture having been on loan to the Michael Steins.

[18] Kuhn to Quinn, July 3, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[19] Sheeler to Quinn, July 6, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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actual dimensions, in part because of the large scale of the figure compared to the surrounding landscape. Nor was it painted "around 1912," but in early 1907; it had been shown in the 1907 Salon des Indépendants, where it greatly affected Picasso, who responded later that spring with Demoiselles d'Avignon.[20]

On August 13, Quinn "incidentally dropped in to see de Zayas," who had returned from Paris, bringing with him the Blue Nude, still unsold. "I liked it very much," Quinn reported to Kuhn, without reproach, despite Kuhn's poor judgment in counseling him not to buy it. Quinn continued:

> He [de Zayas] told me that Sheeler had given an option on it.[21] I would be inclined to pay $4,000 for it. He told me of the 'still life,' by Matisse, that he expected to get in Paris. He gave me an option on that at about $2,500. He is going to Paris at the end of this month. He says that it is difficult to get things from the dealers there, but that one can get things from the collectors there, for the collectors can apparently sell to him and make the delivery in New York and so escape the sales tax, just the same as he could sell to a Frenchman here and make the delivery in France and escape the United States sales tax. It is probably from a private collector that this nude reclining woman, by Matisse, came from.[22]

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[20] On Picasso's response to the Blue Nude, see Jack Flam, Matisse: The Man and His Art, 1869-1918 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1986): 196-197.

[21] Sheeler, a close associate of Walter Arensberg, was probably acting on Arensberg's behalf; see below, n. 25.

[22] Quinn to Kuhn, August 14, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL. The "private collector" was Alphonse Kann; see Zilczer 1978: 117.

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A week later Quinn learned that he had lost the opportunity to purchase the Blue Nude: de Zayas informed him by telephone that Arensberg had bought it for $4,500. Quinn wrote to Kuhn: "Looking back now I think I should not have turned it down by cable but should have got an option on it until I saw it personally. When I did see it I liked it very much, for I saw it with eyes that were not the same eyes with which I saw it in 1913."[23]

The Blue Nude, however, remained in the Arensberg collection for only a few months. By November, it was back in the hands of de Zayas, who promptly sold it to Quinn.[24] In all likelihood, Arensberg's reason for allowing it to revert to de Zayas reflected no dissatisfaction with the Blue Nude, a superb companion to the Yvonne Landsberg portrait (see fig. 2.9), but was a consequence of financial setbacks.[25] Arensberg's loss was Quinn's gain.

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[23] Quinn to Kuhn, August 20, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[24] In December, Marius de Zayas sent Quinn two invoices from George de Zayas. Among Quinn's purchases was the Matisse "Nude," for which he was billed $4,500; the first payment was to have been made on December 1 (de Zayas to Quinn, December 12, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL). Quinn finally paid for the painting in full on February 21, 1921 (Ledger, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

[25] "Poor investments, coupled with Walter's habit of generously lending large sums of money to friends who made little or no effort to repay, caused the Arensbergs to experience serious financial reversals... In the early twenties... certain works were made available for sale. Charles Sheeler, who was then assisting Marius de Zayas in the management of his gallery, acted as the Arensbergs' agent" (Francis M. Naumann, "Walter Conrad Arensberg: Poet, Patron and Participant in the New York Avant-Garde, 1915-20," Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin 76, 328 (Spring 1980): 28).

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Before Quinn took possession of Blue Nude, it was shown at the De Zayas Gallery as part of the exhibition Paintings by Matisse, held from December 6 to 25.[26] Quinn lent a total of seven pictures,[27] among them The Italian Woman, Apples, and Large Cliff: The Eel (fig. 3.1). The last mentioned, a painting of the beach at Étretat on the Normandy coast, had been acquired by him in October.[28] This marine landscape, "the one example of Matisse's latest style... hangs to the right of the door as you enter," reported Henry McBride in the New York Herald. McBride continued:

> Mr. De Zayas chose it from this year's vintage, as being best fitted to represent the artist in America, before the crop of Matisses were dispatched to Bernheim-Jeune's, and where they did, they say, make more than the usual sensation.[29]
>
> It is a slashing, forceful beach scene.... Miss Florine Stettheimer,[30] who attended the private view...

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[26] Zilczer 1978: 116.

[27] In a letter to Quinn, de Zayas thanked him for the "seven paintings by Matisse you so kindly lent us for the exhibition" (De Zayas to Quinn, December 27, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

[28] Quinn purchased Large Cliff: The Eel from de Zayas on October 21, 1920, along with Seated Nude, Back Turned (fig. 3.2) (Ledger, Quinn Collection, NYPL). The latter painting, depicting the model Lorette, is an early instance of a motif prevalent in Matisse's work of the Nice period: a studio nude set against contrasting background patterns.

[29] De Zayas purchased the painting on September 24, 1920 (Jack Cowart and Dominique Fourcade, Henri Matisse: The Early Years in Nice: 1916-1930 National Gallery of Art [New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1986]: 303). The Matisse exhibition at Bernheim-Jeune, held from October 15 to November 6, 1920, included 58 paintings, all recent work from Étretat and Nice, except for 5 very early works.

[30] The painter Florine Stettheimer (1871-1944), who practiced her own brand of eccentric modernism, studied with Kenyon Cox and Robert Henri at the Art Students League. After living in Europe from 1900 to 1914, she and her two sisters returned to New York, where they hosted a salon frequented by, among others, Marcel Duchamp.

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> says the plage in the foreground is the one whereon fishermen sell fish directly from the nets. As only one fish, and that one a particularly slimy, eellike creature, reposes upon this beach, it is evidently not one of the days of the marche [sic, marché]. But then, Matisse never was "literary."

McBride declared triumphantly that Matisse's reputation had been transformed since the Montross show:

> Something of a change has taken place in the status of Matisse since the first big exhibition of his work in the Montross Galleries some years ago, and doubtless there will be fewer to laugh at the latest manifestations of his genius, now visible in the De Zayas Galleries, than there were then. Most of the laughing may be done by Matisse himself, and by those who early backed him to win. Rumor hath it that both the Matisse exhibitions in London and Paris have been the right kind of successes. Young Mr. Nevinson,[31] who exhibited in the same gallery with him in London, says that most of the Matisses sold, and for £1000 each—and £1000 is very good in London for the work of a living man. From Paris a similar tale arrives, though without the exact amount of francs.[32]

Nor was Matisse's triumph solely one of dollars, pounds, and francs. The artist who had been scorned as an "extremist" when he showed at Montross in 1915 was now celebrated as an upholder of the grand tradition. Hamilton Easter Field, in an editorial in his newly inaugurated publication The Arts,

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[31] The English painter C. R. W. Nevinson (1889-1946), who was associated with both the Vorticists and the Futurists, had a show at the Leicester Galleries which ran through November 22, 1919, partially overlapping Matisse's. According to his memoir, Nevinson attended the Matisse Academy (C. R. W. Nevinson, Paint and Prejudice [New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1938]: 50).

[32] Henry McBride, "New Matisse Art on Exhibition: Artist Once Ridiculed Now Has a Chance to Do the Laughing," New York Herald, December 12, 1920, sec. 3: 2.

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wrote: "The paintings by Matisse now being shown at the De Zayas Gallery... are classical in their beauty of color and arrangement... [They] recall the art of the great Italian classicists of the sixteenth century—Sebastiano del Piombo, Pontormo, Bronzino. It is a mystery to me that anyone should find these paintings of Matisse hard to understand. Their appeal is to our sense of pure beauty."[33]

The most interesting response to the exhibition was that of poet and physician William Carlos Williams. No stranger to modern painting, Williams was a frequenter of the Arensbergs' salon, an admirer of Alfred Stieglitz and Gertrude Stein, and a friend of Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, and Charles Sheeler.

Henry McBride had written of the De Zayas Gallery's "special kind of simplicity that has been found the best setting for modern art."[34] When Williams saw the Blue Nude anew in this setting (he had previously viewed the painting at the Armory Show), he was inspired[35] to write the prose-poem "A Matisse":

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[33] The Editor [Hamilton Easter Field], "Comment on the Arts," The Arts 1, 2 (January 1921): 40.

[34] Unsigned [Henry McBride], "New Art Galleries Opened in Avenue," the Sun, Sunday, November 9, 1919, p. 7.

[35] "Verse lifts me up superbly," Williams wrote to fellow poet Marianne Moore in 1928, adding: "The best of French painting does it. Matisse does it" (letter of August 30, 1928, in John C. Thirwall, ed., Selected Letters of William Carlos Williams [New York: McDowell, Obolensky, 1957]: 107).

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On the french grass, in that room on Fifth Ave., lay that woman who had never seen my own poor land. The dust and noise of Paris had fallen from her with the dress and underwear and shoes and stockings which she had just put aside to lie bathing in the sun. So too she lay in the sunlight of the man's easy attention. His eye and the sun had made day over her. She gave herself to them both for there was nothing to be told. Nothing is to be told to the sun at noonday. A violet clump before her belly mentioned that it was spring. A locomotive could be heard whistling beyond the hill. There was nothing to be told. Her body was neither classic nor whatever it might be supposed. There she lay and her curving torso and thighs were close upon the grass and violets.

So he painted her. The sun had entered his head in the color of sprays of flaming palm leaves. They had been walking for an hour or so after leaving the train. They were hot. She had chosen the place to rest and he had painted her resting, with interest in the place she had chosen.

It had been a lovely day in the air.—What pleasant women are these girls of ours! When they have worn clothes and take them off it is with an effect of having performed a small duty. They return to the sun with a gesture of accomplishment. —Here she lay in this spot today not like Diana or Aphrodite but with better proof than they of regard for the place she was in. She rested and he painted her.

It was the first of summer. Bare as was his mind of interest in anything save the fullness of his knowledge, into which her simple body entered as into the eye of the sun himself, so he painted her. So she came to America.

No man in my country has seen a woman naked and painted her as if he knew anything except that she was naked. No woman in my country is naked except at night.

In the french sun, on the french grass in a room on Fifth Ave., a french girl lies and smiles at the sun without seeing us.[36]

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[36] William Carlos Williams, "A Matisse," Contact 1, 2 (January 1921), reprinted in William Carlos Williams, Selected Essays of William Carlos Williams (New York: Random House, 1954): 30-31. I have reproduced it in its entirety.

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Williams published the piece in the second issue of Contact, a little magazine he had co-founded. In the premier issue, he had called for a distinctly American art.[37] Yet he believed that Americans had much to learn from the French, and it was his conceit that the Blue Nude, as displayed in the New York gallery, could serve as a bridge between the French and American cultures.

The critic Harold Bloom writes of the creative function of "misreading" in artistic influence.[38] Bloom's concept is applicable here; for Williams, in the course of creating his prose-poem, has misread Matisse's intentions. The painting, which is subtitled "Souvenir of Biskra," depicts a North African woman, not the Frenchwoman of Williams' imagination. The Blue Nude, as Jack Flam observes, is a synthesis of western painting and art nègre, a modernist response to the tradition of the salon nude.[39] Just as the depicted figure was "read" by Williams as an idealized Parisienne, so the painting embodied for him an easy Gallic sensuality (devoid of sniggering Anglo-American prurience), which, he maintained, American art would do well to emulate.

The style of "A Matisse" owes much to Gertrude Stein. Like Stein, Williams utilizes unorthodox capitalization

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[37] "We will be American because we are of America," proclaimed the unsigned editorial (Contact 1, 1 [December 1920]: 1, cited in Francis M. Naumann, New York Dada 1915-23 [New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994]: 133).

[38] Harold Bloom, The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975): 5-16.

[39] Flam 1986: 195-196.

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("french" is written in lower case), elemental vocabulary, and rhythmic repetition. Although Williams constructs a rudimentary scenario for his erotic reverie, the overall effect is iconic rather than narrative, like the painting itself.

By year's end 1920, Quinn had doubled the number of Matisses in his collection, increasing his holdings from five paintings to ten, including two that had formerly belonged to Leo Stein, Music (Sketch) and Blue Nude. Quinn had been cautious in his purchases, having turned down, in the course of the year, six Matisses that, he felt, would not deepen or broaden his collection. In February he thanked Sheeler for drawing to his attention "the Matisse flower piece at Knoedlers.... While I do not think it is as important an example of his work as the two or three that I have, it is still a most interesting and characteristic Matisse, and I am glad to have seen it."[40] In July he declined an offer by telephone from Mrs. Edward Steichen, who was asking $1,100 for a small flower piece by Matisse "painted about five or six years ago."[41] In September he cabled $2200 to de Zayas in Paris for a Matisse still life that de Zayas had acquired for him, on approval, to mitigate his (temporary) disappointment at losing out on the Blue Nude; the still life, delivered to

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[40] Quinn to Sheeler, February 3, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[41] Quinn to Kuhn, July 27, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL. Quinn informed Kuhn that Mrs. Steichen had "talked a lot about Matisse having been 'a perfect furor in London'"; see n. 1, above.

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his apartment on October 20, was returned to de Zayas the following day.[42] In November he cabled his companion Jeanne Robert Foster, who, with Gwen John,[43] had reserved for him three Matisses at Bernheim-Jeune: "NOT INTERESTED... RECENTLY PURCHASED THREE IMPORTANT MATISSES, HENCE UNINTERESTED FURTHER PURCHASES... EXCEPT... "SUPERMATISSES."[44]

Quinn rejected the three pictures from Bernheim-Jeune sight unseen, before he had the opportunity to see photographs. When his European scout Henri-Pierre Roché saw the paintings, he admired them, but conceded that they were not "SuperMatisses."[45]

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[42] Quinn to de Zayas (Cablegram, New York to Paris), September 14, 1920, and Ledger, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[43] Through Mrs. Foster, Quinn learned of Gwen John's meeting with Matisse. He reported to Walt Kuhn: "Gwen John thinks Matisse is a snob. She said that he told her in a cock-a-lofty manner: 'I—I squeeze the juice from the fruit', so to speak of the new art; 'those who come after me may have the rind and the dried pulp'" (Quinn to Kuhn, October 4, 1920). Kuhn defended Matisse: "About Gwen John and Matisse, he may be a little stuck on himself, but you know how easy it is to color a man's statement in repetition. It all depends on how he said it. ...We know he's the crème de la crème, and taking his statement as reported it really reduces itself to a purely personal thing. Work always 'is' or 'isn't'" (Kuhn to Quinn, October 8, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

[44] Quinn to Foster (Cablegram, New York to Paris), November 9, 1920. The recently purchased "three important Matisses" were Large Cliff: The Eel; Seated Nude, Back Turned; and Blue Nude, all bought from de Zayas.

[45] Roché wrote to Quinn: "These three paintings, without being important, are good" ("Ces trois tableaux, sans être importants, sont bien"). They were: "A little nude, pretty, dominant colors: red and white," painted in Nice in 1919; a nude of 1920 "that I find noble, successful, and that I recommend to you particularly""; and "a little seascape, very fresh, pleasant, and successful" painted in Étretat in 1920. ("Un petit nu, joli, couleurs dominantes: rouge et blanc... Un nu 1920 que je trouve noble, réussi, et que je vous recommande particulièrement... une petite marine très fraiche et plaisante, réussi") Roché to Quinn, January 6, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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Quinn and Roché were a felicitous combination. Quinn likened himself to a fisherman, waiting patiently for a bite, tossing his catch back in the water if it was too small. Roché saw himself as a hunter stalking prey. "In buying art," Quinn mused to the dealer Walther Halvorsen, "one does not go merely for numbers any more than in fishing one goes just for fish generally[,] but one should look out for kingfish or brook trout or other game fish. Buying art indiscriminately or the work of an artist indiscriminately is very much like catching fish in a net, only it is more expensive."[46]

Roché confessed to Quinn: "I often write to you in a hurry, like to-day, and rather excited, or with the enthusiasm I have always when I see real first class works, comme un chasseur qui voit du beau gibier [like a hunter who sees some beautiful game]."[47] Roché had in his sight two Matisse interiors at Halvorsen's, "La Famille" (The Music Lesson, fig. 3.3) and "Poissons rouges" (Interior with Goldfish, fig. 3.4):[48]

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[46] Quinn to Halvorsen, November 17, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[47] (Roché to Quinn, October 26, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL). Roché habitually wrote to Quinn alternately in English and French, sometimes within the same sentence.

[48] Matisse painted 6 poissons rouges compositions between 1912 and 1915, of which 5 were interiors (the version in Moscow is of a fishbowl in a garden). Of the remaining 5, there are 2 in New York, and 1 each in Copenhagen, Paris, and Merion. I have concluded, on the basis of published information on the provenances of the 5 paintings, that Halvorsen had the Merion version. Quinn's correspondence with Halvorsen and Roché is ambiguous on this question. On the basis of Halvorsen's photograph, Quinn thought he had seen the painting either at the Armory or at Montross (either the New York 1912 or Paris 1914 versions, respectively), but I believe that Quinn remembered incorrectly (see Dominique Fourcade and Isabelle Monod-Fontaine, Henri Matisse 1904-1917 [Paris: Centre

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> At last I think I have found one big Matisse so simple beautiful and full of strength and evidence [i.e., clarity] that it is for you: its title is "les poissons rouges"—its photo is going to be sent to you by M. Halvorsen—to-night—
>
> The same M. Halvorsen possesses the huge Matisse of the Salon d'Automne "La famille" of which the photo is sent too—very important—it is said that it is one of his paintings that Matisse likes most—one of his biggest too—[49]

Quinn came to no immediate decision on these two pictures (they would eventually go to Dr. Barnes). To another of Roché's suggestions, however, Quinn came to a prompt negative decision, that regarding the work of Matisse's former pupil Patrick Bruce. Roché wrote:

> Bruce P. H. American painter in Paris... I enclose some small photos just to give you an idea—
>
> Bruce works hard comme le diable; without any recognition, without wanting (almost) recognition, his work is very strong, simple, evident [i.e., clear], powerful, constructed—brutal, some would say (not I)—I do not think it is possible that he has not an important meaning—hard to crack and discover, undiscovered yet, but quite real and certain—He is a living protest, more than anybody, against the chief vices of almost all painting of to-day: is that enough to make a vertue [sic]?—Yes, if I consult the history of art.—I leave

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Georges Pompidou, 1993], nos. 100, 101, 102, 118, and 123; and Richard J. Wattenmaker, ed., Great French Paintings from the Barnes Collection [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993]: 309; also Quinn to Halvorsen, November 17, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

[49] Roché to Quinn, October 26, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL. In December Quinn heard from Halvorsen, who offered him "Poissons rouges" and "La Famille" for 60,000 francs (70,000 francs, if purchased separately) (Halvorsen to Quinn, December 9, 1920 [received December 22], Quinn Collection, NYPL).

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> it to you. Do you want to see some big and good photos of his works?[50]

Quinn replied:

> I return you herewith the three small Bruce photographs which you sent. I haven't the slightest doubt that Bruce works hard, but that does not mean art.... Bruce is trying to evolve some new architectural thing, but it seems to me that with all his hard work and with all his strength, he is attempting the impossible....
>
> His work seems to be very English, like furniture, English cubism, quite lacking in taste, and while it may be drawing, or it may be architecture, it certainly is not painting. It lacks the smear, the plastic quality.[51]

Nor was Quinn inclined to buy a cast of Matisse's Le Serf (see fig. 1.61), given Roché's lack of enthusiasm. Roché sent Quinn a photograph, along with dealer Paul Guillaume's offer of the bronze at 24,000 francs, with the comment, "'Le Serf' sculpture par Matisse is very much admired by Matisse's admirers—(does not move me.)"[52]

In January 1921 Quinn, along with five other New York collectors, signed a letter to the president of the Metropolitan Museum:

> Being deeply interested in having at the Metropolitan Museum a special exhibition, illustrative of the best in modern French art, and believing that interest in such an exhibition would be shared by a large public, we would like to call your attention to the fact that there are

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[50] Roché to Quinn, November 14, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[51] Quinn to Roché, December 8, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[52] Roché to Quinn, December 7, 1920, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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> now available for this purpose unusually fine examples of the work of Degas, Cézanne, Renoir, Gauguin, Monet, Derain, and others.
>
> We would be glad to co-operate, as far as we can, if it be deemed advisable by the Museum, in securing the loan of these paintings.[53]

The proposed loan exhibition had the enthusiastic backing of Bryson Burroughs, a disciple of Roger Fry, his predecessor as curator of paintings at the Metropolitan. (In the company of Fry and Henry McBride, Burroughs had visited Matisse at Issy in June 1910.) By giving Post-Impressionism the imprimatur of the museum, he was continuing in the tradition of his friend and mentor.

On March 23, Burroughs and assistant curator Harry B. Wehle visited Quinn at his Central Park West apartment to discuss plans for the exhibition, to be held later that spring. Burroughs later recounted to Walter Pach "how, for several hours, workmen kept bringing in and removing paintings which he [Burroughs] passed in review for his choice."[54]

Quinn agreed to lend works by Derain, Picasso, and Matisse. The next day Quinn wrote to Burroughs, recommending

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[53] Letter to Robert W. De Forest, January 26, 1921, Metropolitan Museum archives, cited in John Rewald, Cézanne and America (Princeton University Press, 1989): 323, and 335, n. 19. In addition to Quinn, the signatories were Lillie P. Bliss, Paul Daugherty, Arthur B. Davies, Agnes Ernst Meyer, and Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney.

[54] Walter Pach, Queer Thing, Painting: Forty Years in the World of Art (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938): 204-205. Pach estimated that by this time, Quinn's collection numbered close to the approximately 2,200 works it contained at Quinn's death in 1924.

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that he show Picassos of the cubist and Rose periods as well as of the Blue period, and added:

> I want to urge again upon you the beauty, as well as the importance, of... Matisse's "Portrait of a Spanish Girl". Matisse never did any figure more beautiful. You could hang it beside any one of Manet's things, and it would hold its own and the two would sing together.[55]

Burroughs replied: "We have not yet made out our final list but it will include the Spanish girl by Matisse... I do not see how we can possibly work in more than four Picassos... We find we are going to be very crowded. The only person we will not cut down will be Cézanne."[56]

Quinn's persistent officiousness must have tried the patience of the courteous Burroughs. On April 7, he wrote to the curator:

> I understood that you were to take the Matisse "Apples", which I think is much more representative than the small still life by Matisse of the melon and fruit. The "Apples" would look particularly fine in a large room and carry splendidly. It is Matisse at his best, for he is more than everything else a great colorist.[57]

Burroughs replied: "I'm sorry we could not work in the Apples. We shall have difficulty in getting in everything."[58] Quinn then wrote to Burroughs: "I delivered twenty-seven paintings to the Museum's representatives today.... I also

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[55] Quinn to Burroughs, March 24, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[56] Burroughs to Quinn, March 26, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[57] Quinn to Burroughs, April 7, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[58] Burroughs to Quinn, April 8, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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included Matisse's 'Apples'... I tried to get you on the telephone last night to talk to you about this, and again this morning, both at the museum and at your house in the country..."[59] Five days before the opening, Burroughs wrote to Quinn: "We should be very glad to have you take a preliminary look at our show if you can get over to the Museum this week... We have not been able to place the Apples..."[60] Three weeks into the run of the exhibition, Quinn wrote to his friend and fellow collector, Cornelius J. Sullivan: "There was one wonderful Matisse, a group of apples on a stand... that Burroughs did not hang. I am going to try to have him still put it there."[61]

The Metropolitan Museum's "Loan Exhibition of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings" ran from May 3 to September 15, 1921. It comprised 126 paintings by 22 artists, beginning (chronologically) with Courbet, Puvis de Chavannes, and Manet; continuing with Redon and 5 impressionists (Degas, Guillaumin, Monet, Pissarro, and Renoir); then Cézanne, Gauguin, van Gogh, Seurat, and Lautrec; and concluding with Bonnard, Vuillard, Derain, Vlaminck, Rouault, Dufy, Picasso, and Matisse. All the works were loans, purportedly made by New York collectors, though some were lent anonymously by dealers Marius de Zayas and Dikran Kelekian.[62]

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[59] Quinn to Burroughs, April 9, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[60] Burroughs to Quinn, April 27, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[61] Quinn to Sullivan, May 24, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[62] Rewald 1989: 323.

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Cézanne was the biggest presence in the exhibition, with 24 paintings; Renoir and Degas each had 12; Gauguin and Redon each had 10; and van Gogh had 7. Of twentieth-century artists, Matisse was the best represented, with 9 paintings, compared with Derain's 7 and Picasso's 4.[63]

Quinn's 27 paintings in the exhibition comprised 7 Redons, 1 Cézanne, 2 Gauguins, 1 van Gogh, 1 Lautrec, 4 Derains, 1 Vlaminck, 1 Rouault, 1 Dufy, 3 Picassos, and 5 Matisses.[64] The five Matisses that Quinn lent to the exhibition were: Purple Cyclamen (see fig. 2.10), Girl with Roses, The Italian Woman (see fig. 2.18), Large Cliff: The Eel (see fig. 3.1), and Still Life with Fruit (see fig. 2.20). The remaining four Matisses were lent anonymously by Kelekian: "Flowers in a Vase," "Window on the Garden" (The Green Pumpkin, fig. 3.5), "Interior" (The Window fig. 3.6), and "Woman in an Armchair" (Lorette with a White Blouse, 1916-1917).[65]

In the catalogue essay, curator Burroughs put Post-Impressionism and Matisse in historical context, in terms that would have won the approval of his mentor Roger Fry:

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[63] A complete list of paintings in the exhibition is given in "Crowds Flock to See Museum Show," American Art News, May 14, 1921: 6.

[64] "Memorandum of Paintings Receipted for by Metropolitan Museum of Art on April 9, 1921," Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[65] See Bryson Burroughs, Loan Exhibition of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1921). Lorette with a White Blouse, formerly in the Lewisohn collection, is illustrated in Pierre Schneider, Matisse, trans. Michael Taylor and Bridget Strevens Romer (New York: Rizzoli, 1984): 482.

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> The farther away we get from the nineteenth century the plainer it appears, in France at least, as one of the great periods of our artistic history. Artists as near to us as Courbet, Manet, Puvis de Chavannes, Renoir, and Degas, though the subjects of violent controversies during their lives, are already generally recognized as the latest of the old masters. Cézanne is still a subject of dispute, but the arguments are not so bitter as they were ten years ago—he also is taking his place in the Panthéon. The question as to Gauguin and Van Gogh, whose fame arose at about the same time as that of Cézanne, is also nearing solution. The battle about the latter painters, Matisse, Derain, and Picasso, still in the prime of life and work, wages furiously, with the decision still in doubt....
>
> Matisse is the most conspicuous of living painters. The synthetic tendencies of the post-impressionist period have developed in his work to the broadest simplifications and its distortions have become more purposeful and startling in his hands. His drawing has the audacity and spontaneity of drawings by untaught children; his colors are applied directly with no overworking at all. His method demands the clearest idea beforehand of what he is going to express, and allows of no elaboration. The freshness of his first impression is what he strikes for and he leaves out much that we have been accustomed to see. Character and light are his aims and his success in attaining the latter by the most summary means will be appreciated on comparing his "Interior" in this exhibition with similar works of the Impressionists, relatively drab in the contrast, though their glaring qualities were a scandal in 1890.[66]

Despite Quinn's entreaties, Burroughs had excluded cubist pictures, perhaps responding to pressures from higher-ups at the museum, but in any case mindful that cubism was outside

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[66] Bryson Burroughs, "Introduction" to Burroughs 1921, excerpted in "Museum Opens Its Modernist Show," American Art News 9, 30 (May 7, 1921): 5.

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the scope of a Post-Impressionist exhibition.[67] The show appeared at first to be relatively noncontroversial. As a measure of the respectability of Post-Impressionism in 1921, the exhibition won the approval of the conservative critic Royal Cortissoz, whose review for the New York Tribune was later excerpted in the Museum's bulletin:

> There have been many important and beautiful exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum, but there is a point of view from which the one just opened there, to remain throughout the summer, might be regarded as more useful than any of its predecessors. It illustrates the French school of impressionism, embraces also the men who are known as the Post-Impressionists and in giving a fairly well balanced account of both groups answers an immediate educational need. Evidence is here gathered together throwing light on a subject with which students of art are constantly wrestling. When works by Cézanne and Matisse turn up from time to time we are asked to regard them as constructive contributions to modern painting. Now we are offered an unusual opportunity to test the assertions commonly made in their favor. The mere fact that this show is organized at the Museum may be regarded in some quarters as an official ratification of ideas that have been in debate, as proof that Post-Impressionism for America has "arrived." But the Museum, quite properly, makes no pretense of settling the matter. The ideas to which we refer are still in debate. What makes the present occasion interesting is simply the stimulus that it gives to clarifying discussion.[68]

The New York Times reported that the exhibition was "said to be the largest group of impressionist and post-

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[67] Yet two of Matisse's paintings in the exhibition, The Italian Woman and The Window, both of 1916, might more aptly be termed "post-cubist" than "Post-Impressionist."

[68] Royal Cortissoz, New York Tribune, May 8, 1921, reprinted in Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 16, 6 (June 1921): 118.

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impressionist pictures ever shown in this country and perhaps the most representative ever brought together anywhere." The report continued:

> ...It is a very gay and brilliant exhibition in its general color scheme and one which will be of great general interest...
>
> ...Matisse and Picasso, who are said to be the immediate "heirs of Cézanne," and now for a number of years, "symbols of modernity" are... in the exhibition, a strong group of the former's work with a portrait [Lorette with a White Blouse], which has received the warmest comment by the admirers; still life and a variety of other canvases....
>
> Many of the paintings have the names of those who lent them attached. Others are anonymous. It is interesting to notice that it is the more modern paintings, those which would be likely to suffer from public criticism, which are hung anonymously. The one name which appears fearlessly with these is that of John Quinn, who... owns the work of the most pronounced modernists.[69]

American Art News characterized the exhibition as "probably... the biggest piece of art news of the season. It is sure to arouse bitterness and enthusiasm. Its importance to the art world is two fold—first, from the fact that it affords the best basis for an estimate of Post-Impressionism that the country has yet had; second, from the recognition of Modernism by a great institution like the Metropolitan Museum."[70]

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[69] Unsigned, "French Pictures Put on View Here," New York Times, May 2, 1921: 14.

[70] Unsigned, "Museum Opens Its Modernist Show," American Art News 9, 30 (May 7, 1921): 5.

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Hamilton Easter Field, who was one of the lenders, wrote an effusive editorial in The Arts: "The show is amazing... There has probably never been a finer exhibition of modern French art in the world. I have seen finer modern French paintings, but they have been in private homes... There has never, so far as I know, been a richer public exhibition."[71]

The show was a popular success. During the second week of its run, American Art News reported that it was

> greatly increasing the attendance at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Every day the large gallery devoted to the display is crowded with people, and the Museum officials are greatly pleased with the favorable impression that has been made.
>
> The attendance on the opening day was 1,500, and several days since have seen an attendance of more than 1,000, much of which is attributed to the Post-Impressionist show.[72]

In late June, Quinn left for a two-month Parisian sojourn which his biographer B. L. Reid designates "the richest cultural feast of his life."[73] While abroad he visited artists whose works he had collected: Brancusi, Braque, Derain, Duchamp, Dufy, Gwen John, Picasso, Rouault, Segonzac, Villon and Matisse; he also met with Fénéon, Vollard, Satie, Pound, and Joyce.

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[71] The Editor (Hamilton Easter Field), "The Metropolitan French Show," The Arts 1, 5 (May 1921): 2.

[72] Unsigned, "Crowds Flock to See Museum Show," American Art News, May 14, 1921: 6.

[73] B. L. Reid, The Man from New York: John Quinn and His Friends (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968): 501.

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Quinn was accompanied on these visits by Roché and by Jeanne Robert Foster. Roché later recalled that in the course of their travels he and Quinn sometimes shared a room, "to be able to talk through the night about paintings."[74]

To J. B. Yeats, Quinn wrote of his visit to Matisse at Issy:

> I spent a most interesting morning with him, and he spoke about painting at Nice for seven or eight months in the year in the winter time; he said that the clerks at the hotel where he stayed thought that he was not an artist "because he was so industrious"; that he was as industrious as a banker. And so he is; and he is very learned, in the history of the arts and in the work of the men that we refer to, Raphael and Michael Angelo and Giotto and Leonardo. He is a man of abundant health, as are the other artists... Derain looks like a giant. Braque is a wonderful wrestler and boxer... The thing that impressed me about all those men was their wonderful health, vigor and vitality. If I were choosing a group of men to accompany me on an expedition to the North Pole I do not know where I could get three better or stronger men than Matisse, Braque and Derain.[75]

In studio visits and in visits to galleries, Quinn purchased works by Braque, Cézanne, Derain, Dufy, Gwen John, Picasso, Segonzac, and Seurat. At Walther Halvorsen's home on place du Palais Bourbon he saw and admired Matisse's two large interiors The Music Lesson (see fig. 3.3) and Interior with Goldfish (see fig. 3.4), but refrained from buying them,

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[74] "Dans nos voyages à travers l'Europe, nous [Roché et Quinn] couchions parfois dans la même chambre pour pouvoir parler tableaux la nuit" (Roché 1959: 37).

[75] Quinn: Yeats, September 9, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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probably because of the prices.[76] His sole Matisse purchase of the summer was The Painter and His Model (fig. 3.7), bought from Georges Bernheim.[77]

"I... bought an interior by Matisse," Quinn wrote to (Irish playwright) Lady Gregory, "one of his latest things, showing himself at his easel, painting a nude model... sitting near a window, with flowers on the table; a typical Matisse, all light and color."[78]

Soon after Quinn's return to New York the Metropolitan's loan exhibition was thrust into controversy. With scarcely more than a week remaining in the exhibition's run, an anonymous circular was distributed through the mail and the press, signed by "A Committee of Citizens and Supporters of the Museum." It was a crackpot tirade attacking the modernist "cult" for its "deification of ugliness." According to the circular, three "prime stimuli" were responsible for modernism: Bolshevism, greed, and insanity. Modernism, the pamphlet

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[76] Apart from Quinn's buying spree of the summer, he had bought few pictures that year, in part because of Wall Street's panic of 1921, which had kept him extremely busy on behalf of his clients, while adversely affecting his fees.

[77] Quinn paid for the painting with a draft of 13,000 francs, for which he paid $903.50 (Georges Bernheim to Quinn, Receipt for "Tableau représentant Matisse peignant son modèle," July 27, 1921; Ledger, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

[78] Quinn: Lady (Isabella Augusta) Gregory, May 11, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL. In John Elderfield, Henri Matisse: A Retrospective (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1992), no. 247, the painting is dated "late 1918-spring 1919 or late 1920-spring 1921" (my emphasis); if Quinn spoke from good information when he called it "one of his [Matisse's] latest things," the date "late 1920-spring 1921" is the correct one.

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charged, was originated by small group of Parisian "Satanists" and perpetuated by avaricious art dealers peddling "absolutely worthless" paintings. Specific works in the exhibition were singled out for being "pathological in conception, drawing, perspective and color"; among the works cited (by catalogue number) were Matisse's "Window on the Garden" (The Green Pumpkin) [no. 66], The Italian Woman [no. 69], and "Interior" (The Window) [no. 71].[79]

Quinn was so infuriated by the attack and by its promulgation in the press that he abandoned his customary reticence and issued a rebuttal, which was published in the Herald, the Tribune and the Times:

> This is Ku Klux criticism. I was amazed that any New York paper should publish such a screed. One does not argue with degenerates who see nothing but degeneracy around them. The authors of that anonymous attack expressly exempt from their condemnation the works of Puvis de Chavannes, Courbet and Manet, but everyone knows that de Chavannes, Courbet and Manet were attacked and abused in precisely the same way when they were doing creative work. A new way of stating truth and depicting beauty is always a scandal to some men....
>
> I should no more think of replying in detail to that statement than I should of answering the ravings of a lot of lunatics....
>
> Let these Ku Klux art critics stand up and take off their masks and give their names and show their credentials. Then, if they are worthy of answer, if answer be necessary, answer will be given. At that we may leave it.

---

[79] Anonymous, "A Protest Against the Present Exhibition of Degenerate 'Modernistic' Works in the Metropolitan Museum of Art," excerpted in "Artists Rise in Aid of Impressionists," New York Times, September 7, 1921: 13, "Attack on Museum is Still Anonymous," American Art News 19: 40 (September 17, 1921: 4), and in Rewald 1989: 328-330. Besides those of Matisse, the 25 works singled out for attack included those of Cézanne, Degas, Derain, Gauguin, Picasso, and Renoir.

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Hamilton Easter Field and Robert Henri joined Quinn in publicly defending the exhibition. Field called the charges of Bolshevism "pure rot," and Henri praised the exhibition as "a particularly fine one [which] we should be thankful to have an opportunity to see."[80]

On the conservative side, the etcher Joseph Pennell entered the fray, declaring the exhibition "dangerous" and corrupting of art students. Pennell derided John Quinn:

> Mr. Quinn is a lawyer who buys pictures, and apparently dealers have persuaded him to make a hobby of impressionist and post-impressionist schools. But should I attempt to talk on law subjects, about which I know nothing, as authoritatively as he presumes to speak for art, I should be laughed out of hearing, and rightly so.

"Post-Impressionism," Pennell declared, "is not an outgrowth of impressionism at all, but is pure degeneracy." The exhibition, he charged, was backed by German dealers, eager to unload works on the American market that were "unsalable" in Europe. Marshaling the nationalistic argument, he added, "The Metropolitan Museum has room for an exhibition like this and not room enough to show works by living American artists! Mr. Quinn can get room for a showing of his post-impressionists and yet there is no room for a loan exhibition

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[80] Unsigned, "Artists Rise in Aid of Impressionists: John Quinn Calls Anonymous Attack on Museum Exhibit Ku Klux Criticism," New York Times, September 7, 1921: 13.

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of Sargents. A museum that does this is not worthy of receiving public money."[81]

"I declined to have a newspaper controversy with an old fossil like Pennell," Quinn wrote to J. B. Yeats. "Pennell thinks... that the kind of art I admire, the work of Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso, Derain, Toulouse-Lautrec, is 'dangerous.' I think the kind of art he likes is stupid and feeble.

"I am glad that you are beginning to get a glimmer of what Matisse stands for," Quinn added. "His aim is not merely, as you seem to imply... 'to imitate the palpability of flesh'. One cannot sum up a great artist in one sentence. But if I tried to state it... I would say that Matisse was the greatest colorist living...

"I do not agree with you," Quinn concluded, "that Matisse 'is of course very far from being a great artist'. You do not know Matisse. You have not seen the magnitude or variety of his work as I have.... Matisse is indeed 'a great artist', one of the greatest artists living, an infinitely greater artist than Sargent ever was."[82]

Word of Quinn's participation in the "art fight" reached Europe. Roché, writing from Weimar, relayed his encouragement: "Some American friends have written me from New-York that the

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[81] Unsigned, "Pennell Enters into Art War Here," New York Times, September 8, 1921: 13.

[82] Quinn to Yeats, September 9, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL. John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) was still alive at the time of this controversy.

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attack against the French paintings had been most serious and dangerous, and that your intervention... was badly needed."[83]

The Metropolitan Museum responded to the anonymous protest in its September Bulletin:

> The Museum welcomes helpful criticism from citizens and supporters. Had the authors of this protest intended to be helpful to the Museum, we should have supposed that they would have made it directly to the Museum authorities at the opening instead of at the closing of the exhibition, and they would have appended their names so that the Museum could judge of the weight which should be accorded to it.... In exhibiting... [impressionist and post-impressionist paintings] the museum has passed no judgment upon them... It has provided... an opportunity for the public to see the best examples of these schools which could be assembled in New York...
>
> It is... interesting to note that... only ten letters expressing disapproval have reached the Museum... out of a membership of over seven thousand.[84]

As a result of the controversy, attendance at the exhibition soared in its waning days. A New York Times editorial, after pronouncing the anonymous attack "intemperate and unfair," noted:

> One excellent purpose was served undesignedly by the attack.... Public curiosity was excited. Great numbers of persons, like most New Yorkers, full of virtuous resolutions to visit the museum, but much slacker about it than are the strangers within our gates, went to the show, enjoyed it and wondered what all this rumpus was about and if it wasn't a joke of some mystifier. The public interest in the Museum was increased. The replications and rejoinders, philippics and anti-

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[83] Roché to Quinn, November 10, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[84] Unsigned [Bryson Burroughs?], "The Anonymous Protest against the Museum's Exhibition of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings," Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 16, 9 (September 1921): 179.

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> philippics, that have fluttered and spun over the town since the quarrel began have been a lively lecture and correspondence course on modern art.[85]

Efforts on the part of the press to determine the authorship of the pamphlet were unsuccessful.[86] Although the virulence and apocalyptic language of the attack relegated it to the lunatic fringe, the themes of Bolshevism (or its pre-1917 variant, anarchism), greed, and insanity had long been staples of the conservative assault on modernism.

The fact that journalists were unable to uncover the identity of the "Committee of Citizens and Supporters of the Museum" lends credence to the theory that the "committee" was but a single person. That individual has finally been unmasked by John Rewald, who identifies him as F. W. Ruckstull, an academic sculptor and fervent opponent of modern art. Rewald makes this attribution on the basis of a comparative analysis of the rhetoric of Ruckstull's writings and that of the anonymous circular.[87]

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[85] Editorial, "A Useful Controversy," New York Times, September 12, 1921: 12.

[86] Unsigned, "Attack on Museum is Still Anonymous: New York Newspapers Fail to Find Who Sent Out Vituperative Attack Against Modernist Art Exhibit," American Art News 19, 40 (September 17, 1921): 4.

[87] Rewald 1989: 331-332; see also 228-231. For example in "Social Art," an address delivered to the National Arts Club in 1915, Ruckstull (né Ruckstuhl) inveighed against the "insane tendencies" of "modernistic" art and the "moral degeneracy" of the modernist pantheon beginning with the "Parisian semi-maniac, Baudelaire" (F. W. Ruckstuhl, Social Art [New York: The National Arts Club, 1915], unpaginated).

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Quinn looked forward with interest, but also wariness, to the New York art world's next big event, the Kelekian sale.[88] In late December he wrote to Roché:

> There is to be a sale late in January of the Kelekian collection. ...He has a large number of Derains and Matisses and Picassos. ...The Matisses are not of the best.... It is the first big important sale of modern, non-cubistic French art that has been held here since the International Exhibition in 1913. ...As to the Derains and the Matisses and the Picassos, a few enthusiasts may buy, men like Arthur B. Davies and Arensberg, and one or two others who have money. But that would be all.[89]

In January, Kelekian explained to Quinn:

> In making my collection, it was never my intention to sell it, but circumstances have forced me to dispose of it. In one sense I am very happy to do it, because, first of all, there was no museum in this country that ever asked me to sell it en bloc. Secondly, it is much better that the paintings I assembled with such love be more generally dispersed among art lovers. Thirdly, being art antiquarian for thirty six years, I wanted to

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[88] Dikran Kelekian (1868-1951), born in Turkey of Armenian parents, was a dealer and collector of Mideastern antiquities, with galleries in New York, Paris, and Cairo. He amassed a collection, mostly during the war years 1914-1918, of French nineteenth- and twentieth-century artworks. "I liked them because they were the little children of the antiquities," Kelekian later told an interviewer. Indicating some fifth-century Coptic textiles, he said, "That is where Matisse found his technique.... When Matisse saw these things in my place he was kneeling down before them" (Richard Beer, "As They Are: 'Namesake of Tigranes,'" American Art News 32, 20 [February 17, 1934]: 11; see also Thomas Lawton and Linda Merrill, Freer: A Legacy of Art [New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993]: 111-114, and Frances Weitzenhoffer, The Havemeyers: Impressionism Comes to America [New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1986]: 165).

[89] Quinn to Roché, December 29, 1921, Quinn Collection, NYPL. As it turned out, Quinn purchased from the sale a Picasso landscape of 1919 and Seurat's La Poudreuse (1889-1890, Courtauld), but no Matisses (see Zilczer 1978: 177 and 186; see also American Art Association, The John Quinn Collection: Paintings and Sculptures of the Moderns [New York: 1927]: 92.)

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be the first man to marry ancient Assyrian, Egyptian, Chinese, Greek and Persian art with Modern Art.[90]

Before the sale, the Kelekian collection of 161 paintings and drawings was exhibited at the American Galleries on Madison Avenue, where, the New York Times reported, there was "an exceptionally large attendance... an average of 1,000 a day, and an unusual group, including many artists."[91] The works in the exhibition—mostly of nineteenth- and twentieth-century French artists—included those by Barye, Bonnard, Camoin, Cassatt, Cézanne, Corot, Courbet, Daumier, Davies, Degas, Delacroix, Denis, Derain, Dufy, Friesz, Gauguin, Goya, Guillaumin, Guys, Ingres, Lautrec, Matisse, Millet, Monet, Picasso, Pissarro, Renoir, Seurat, Signac, Sisley, Utrillo, van Gogh, Vlaminck, and Vuillard.

The exhibition included 8 Matisses: 2 drawings and 6 paintings. In addition to the 4 Matisse paintings belonging to Kelekian recently shown at the Metropolitan—"Flowers in a Vase," "Window on the Garden" (The Green Pumpkin), "Interior" (The Window), and "Woman in an Armchair" (Lorette with a White Blouse)—there were 2 portraits, exhibited under the titles "Woman's Head" and "Granddaughter."

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[90] Kelekian to Quinn, January 20, 1922, cited in Zilczer 1982: 69. Quinn had written to Kelekian that it was "a great pity" that the collection had to be "dispersed... I sympathize with you... for I know something of the care and love that must be spent in the formation of such a modern collection" (Quinn to Kelekian, January 13, 1922, cited in Judith Zilczer, "John Quinn and Modern Art Collectors in America, 1913-1924," The American Art Journal 14, 3 [1982]: 71).

[91] Unsigned, "French Modernists' Art Readily Sold," New York Times, January 31, 1922: 13.

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Notwithstanding Quinn's claim that the Matisses were "not of the best," the collection included a major work by the artist: The Window.[92] Matisse attributed sufficient importance to the painting that soon after its completion he described and sketched it in a letter to Hans Purrmann. This large interior of nearly 4 by 5 feet, painted in Issy in spring 1916, combines a cubist grid composition (showing the influence of Juan Gris)[93] with radiant, translucent color—"green and white with some accents, blue for the forget-me-nots, red for the zigzag of the rug."[94] It assembles a range of motifs that the artist used repeatedly in 1916-1917: flattened shafts of light, a guéridon (pedestal table), a window with curtains and grillwork, a refracted view of a garden and tree trunk.

The auction was held in the grand ballroom of the Plaza Hotel, January 30 and 31, 1922. On the first night, The New York Times reported, "There was a good audience, which included many dealers and well-known people, but was, as a

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[92] Alfred Barr writes that the "years 1916-1917 were perhaps the greatest of Matisse's career as a painter" and that The Window is "among the works that can justly be called his masterpieces" (Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Matisse: His Art and His Public [New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951]: 181).

[93] In summer 1916 Gris visited Matisse and admired a related work, The Pink Marble Table (see fig. 3.23), about which he wrote to the dealer Léonce Rosenberg (letter of August 20, 1916, cited in Fourcade 1993: 120): "It's solid and tactile and much more human than other things he's done" ("C'est solide et sensible et beaucoup plus humain que d'autre choses qu'il a fait").

[94] Matisse to Purrmann, June 1, 1916, cited in Barr 1951: 190. Matisse's title for the painting was Intérieur (les myosotis) (Fourcade 1993, cat. no. 127).

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whole, of a different class from that brought out by the Plaza art sales. Greenwich Village was apparently well represented."

The reporter noted, with apparent consternation:

> A portrait of a woman in an armchair, No. 65 [Lorette with a White Blouse, fig. 37], by Henri Matisse, the modernist, a strong featured woman, with snaky black ringlets, in an orange chair against a green background, having the appearance of an exaggerated houri of some Eastern tale, but much less lovely[,] sold for $1,125, while the next picture, with a similar subject, a pretty young woman, seated, No. 66, by Mary Cassatt, American living in Paris, well known and well liked here, sold for only $1,000.... Another portrait by Matisse, No. 27 ["Granddaughter"], brought a burst of laughter when it was put up. It was a small picture, a little girl with red hair, a green-and-black frock, orange bow on her hair, painted against a brilliant green background. The portrait had many characteristics of the work of a child on her slate, but it started at $100 and went up to $300.[95]

For the second night of the sale, with larger and more important works on the block, Quinn was in attendance. He noted the results in a memorandum he sent to Roché.[96]

According to the Times, "There was generally spirited bidding, good prices and much interest. The gallery was filled, and as the night before, with an audience of a

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[95] "French Modernists' Art Readily Sold," New York Times, January 31, 1922: 13. Lorette with a White Blouse was sold to the Bourgeois Galleries; "Granddaughter" was sold to Arnold Genthe. In addition, two Matisse drawings were sold: "Head of a Young Girl," bought by Alfred Sides for $120, and "Female Figure in the Nude," bought by the Fearon Galleries for $160.

[96] Quinn to Roché, "Memorandum of prices of pictures sold on the second day of the Kelekian Sale," February 19, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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different type from that usually in attendance at picture sales."[97]

Belying the Times report, the sale, as Quinn had predicted, was far from successful. Many of the final prices were disappointments; in some cases, works were covertly bought back by Kelekian, by arrangement with New York dealers.

The most noteworthy Matisse sale of the auction was the purchase of The Window, for $2500, by the Detroit Institute of Arts. This was the first purchase by an American museum of a Matisse work, and only the second painting by the artist to enter an American public collection.[98] The Detroit Institute's acquisition preceded, by several months, the purchase by the Musée Luxembourg in Paris of its first Matisse painting, Odalisque in Red Culottes (fig. 3.8).[99]

The remaining Matisse sales of the auction were those of "Window on the Garden" (The Green Pumpkin), bought by the dealer Joseph Brummer for $1,100, "Flowers in a Vase," bought by Mrs. W. T. Bush for $625, and "Woman's Head," bought by Nathan J. Miller for $625.[100]

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[97] Unsigned, "Cézanne Leads the French Modernists," New York Times, February 1, 1922: 23.

[98] The first painting by Matisse to enter an American public collection was Terrace at St. Tropez (see fig. 1.68), given by Thomas Whittemore to Isabella Stewart Gardner, probably in 1912 (see above, 1.8: p. 179. The first works by Matisse to enter an American public collection were three drawings given to the Metropolitan Museum by Florence Blumenthal in 1910; see above, 1.8: pp. 124-126.

[99] Odalisque in Red Culottes was purchased from the Bernheim-Jeune exhibition of Matisse's recent work, held February 23-March 15, 1922.

[100] The collectors Nathan and Linda Miller were lifelong patrons of Max Weber, beginning in 1915, with their purchase of Weber's Interior of the

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Quinn, with his new willingness to exhibit his collection publicly, was having an impact on New York's cultural and artistic life. In March and April, he lent works to two exhibitions of contemporary art that focused on sculpture —the first, English; the second, French. Both exhibitions were held at the Sculptors' Gallery (director: Arthur B. Davies) on East 40th Street—"a room," Quinn informed Gwen John, "about 45 or 50 feet by about 25 feet, with artificial light, but very well arranged."[101] To "Seven English Modernists," held from March 2 to 22, his loans included 22 sculptures by Epstein, 6 sculptures by Gaudier-Bzerska, and paintings by Augustus John, Gwen John, J. D. Innes, and Wyndham Lewis. English works, however, no longer stirred him; he confessed to Roché: "I would be willing to part with all of them at about twenty-five cents on the dollar what I paid for them."[102]

To the "Exhibition of Contemporary French Art," held from March 24 to April 10, Quinn lent his recently acquired Matisse, The Painter and His Model and his favorite Matisse

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Fourth Dimension (1913, National Gallery, Washington). A complete report of the Kelekian sale is provided in "$254,870 Obtained for Modernist Art," American Art News 20, 17 (February 4, 1922): 6-7, and in the Times accounts of the two successive nights of the sale: "French Modernists' Art Readily Sold," New York Times, January 31, 1922: 13, and "Cézanne Leads the French Modernists," New York Times, February 1, 1922: 23.

[101] Quinn to Gwen John, April 11, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[102] Quinn to Roché, March 5, 1922. Quinn made an exception for Gwen John, a resident of Meudon, France, whose work he continued to collect. To her, he wrote: "By right, your work should have belonged with the French paintings which were to be exhibited the following month, but your things would have been too crowded there" (Quinn to Gwen John, April 11, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

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still life, Apples (see fig. 2.19), along with 15 sculptures by Brancusi and 10 by Duchamp-Villon, and paintings by Derain, Laurencin, Picasso, Rouault, and Segonzac.

Henry McBride wrote in The Dial:

> After so quiet a season on the part of our progressives that the safe and sane school were beginning to put on airs, the modernists have suddenly swooped in from nowhere and taken possession of the city. With a unanimity that is probably accidental, but which looks like a pre-arranged plan of attack, the biggest and most important showing of modern art since the Lexington Armory affair is now accessible to the public. In the Sculptor's Gallery there is a loan collection of French art mostly recruited from Mr. John Quinn's possessions.

McBride went on to mention concurrent exhibitions of contemporary American art.[103]

Quinn apprised his European correspondents of the Sculptors' Gallery exhibitions, sending Lady Gregory a copy of The Dial with McBride's article and a copy of Freeman with an article by Pach. In addition he sent exhibition catalogues to Roché, Gwen John, Ezra Pound and W. B. Yeats.[104]

Roché kept Quinn informed of developments in Paris. "Your letters," Quinn wrote to Roché, "have been most interesting, and even exciting, pleasant excitement… In a way our letters and cables are making a book of art history."[105]

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[103] Henry McBride, "Modern Art," The Dial, May 1922: 542.

[104] Quinn to Lady Gregory, May 11, 1922. Pach's article in Freeman, focusing on Duchamp-Villon, is dated April 12, 1922 (Quinn to Gwen John, Apr. 24, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL).

[105] Quinn to Roché, June 9, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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From Walter Pach, Quinn received an illustrated catalogue of Matisse's recent (February 23-March 15) show at Bernheim-Jeune. Two works caught Quinn's eye: one was an interior; the other, Odalisque in Red Culottes, had, unbeknownst to him, been bought by the French state. He cabled Roché: "PLEASE CABLE WHETHER NUMBER THIRTEEN INTERIOR AND FIFTEEN ODALISQUE BERNHEIM'S RECENT MATISSE EXHIBITION UNSOLD AND LOWEST CASH PRICES." In an explanatory letter, Quinn wrote that the catalogue contained "only some sixteen items, mostly small, but two of them... seemed to me to be very fine, and hence my request."[106]

Roché replied: "The Matisse you wanted to buy... "the woman on the couch" has been bought by the Musée du Luxembourg—the other one has been kept by Matisse himself, who has refused for it 3 times the amount stipulated in his contract.—By contract he has the right to keep 4 paintings a year: you see he has had the same taste as you."

Roché, always careful not to make a direct recommendation, hinted strongly that Quinn should purchase Tea in the Garden (fig. 3.9), a "beautiful" Matisse not in the recent exhibition, but available from Bernheim-Jeune. He warned Quinn that

> Matisse has doubled his prices for his next contract with Bernheim Jeunes and Georges Bernheim.—Hence his pictures will go up.
>
> I remind you the fine "tea in the garden"... which was 30.000 last year... is now 45.000. After a fight, short

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[106] Quinn to Roché, cable and letter, June 1, 1922.

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> and amiable, Epstein [sic, Paul Ebstein, director of Bernheim-Jeune] said he would leave it to you [i.e., hold it for you] for a short while at 40.000. You have certainly a photo of it in all your Matisse photos.

Aware that Quinn loathed Dr. Barnes, Roché added, as a further incentive, "I think Mr. Barnes, whom I do not know, thinks of buying it."[107]

Roché informed Quinn that 2 works from the recent show remained unsold, The White Slave (fig. 3.10) and "Young Girl in a Green Skirt," each at the "comparatively reasonable" price of 15,000 francs, "these prices good only for a month."[108]

Despite Roché's strong encouragement, Quinn refrained from buying Tea in the Garden. He instructed Roché to tell Bernheim-Jeune that he would buy The White Slave, but added: "I have decided not to go any further with Matisse at present."[109]

Apparently, Quinn wanted a Matisse odalisque in his collection, and unable to acquire Odalisque in Red Culottes,

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[107] In 1925, Tea in the Garden was purchased by Michael and Sarah Stein (Fourcade 1993: 416).

[108] Roché to Quinn, June 16, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL. The painting that Roché called "Young Girl in a Green Skirt" was probably cat. no. 20, Jeune fille à la mauresque, robe verte (1921, Colin Collection, New York); see Guy-Patrice and Michel Dauberville, Henri Matisse chez Bernheim-Jeune (Paris: Editions Bernheim-Jeune, 1995): 110, and Cowart 1986: 309.

[109] Quinn to Roché, June 28, 1922. According to Quinn's ledger, the painting was purchased in July 1922 for 15,000 francs ($1,194). Bernheim-Jeune's receipt is dated July 18, 1922 (Quinn Collection, NYPL). The painting is also known as the "Blue Odalisque" (Michel Hoog, Musée de l'Orangerie: Catalogue of the Jean Walter and Paul Guillaume Collection [Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1990]: 130).

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he purchased The White Slave in its place. Quinn's painting, in contrast to the intensely hued Luxembourg picture, is restrained and subtle in its color scheme. Whereas the reclining figure of Odalisque in Red Culottes is inward-looking, lost in thought, the white slave displays herself, meeting the viewer's gaze, as she stands, in contrapposto, at the juncture of two walls of white ceramic tile colored by reflected light.

Roché cabled Quinn, "FELICITATIONS WHITESLAVE,"[110] and Quinn, in the same letter in which he acknowledged the cable ("I am glad that you approve the purchase of the Matisse 'White Slave', which I think was one of the best in the exhibition"), expressed his thoughts on the legacy of his collection.

> Regarding the ultimate disposition of certain of my best French paintings and sculpture... I will perhaps give the works to the French government... to be kept together, as it sees fit, in the Luxembourg or in the Louvre. Do not get the impression that I mean to do that regarding my entire collection.... What I have in mind is a certain selection of French works that are of museum rank and importance, a selection perhaps to be made up by a committee, of which Arthur B. Davies, if he is living, would certainly be one. The rest of my things would be sold, the proceeds to go to my estate....
>
> ...I am not interested in the United States sufficiently to present a selection of French works to the Metropolitan Museum.... France always will be the center [of the] art world, I hope. American art politics "bore" me. I hate the puritanism of this country, its banality, its crudeness, the inanity of its ideas of speed, its lack of taste and the mechanization of life that is almost universal here....

---

[110] Roché to Quinn, June 30, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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> If I keep my health and can go on a few years longer here, I hope to able to get in a position where I can have a little country place near Paris where the best selection of my French things could be installed. But I hope that you and I will both live so that we can talk this matter over at some future time and strictly between ourselves.[111]

Bitterly pessimistic about the cultural state of America, Quinn was, as Judith Zilczer has observed, "an expatriate in spirit, if not in fact."[112] Yet European artists whom he had collected—among them Duchamp-Villon, Severini, Nevinson, and Lewis—celebrated as symbols of modernity the very qualities of speed and mechanization that he so disdained in American life.

Quinn's collecting activities in spring and summer 1922 were not confined to Matisse, as he informed Gwen John:

> I have been buying fairly heavily of art in Paris this spring. Confidentially: six Picassos and a small one; a large and important Derain at the third Kahnweiler sale; a Cezanne landscape from Vollard; a small Rousseau from Georges Bernheim, "l'Enfant a la Poupee [sic] de Carton", and another small Rousseau, "Le Dirigible [sic, Dirigeable]," from Bernheim Jeune; a Seurat landscape from Feneon; and a late Matisse, "White Slave", from Bernheim Jeune.
>
> All of those paintings are or shortly will be at Pottier's [the shipper] and if you would like to see them and would speak to Pottier I am sure he would be glad to show them to you. You can show him this part of my letter as his authority for showing them to you.[113]

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[111] Quinn to Roché, July 11, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[112] Zilczer 1978: 50.

[113] Quinn to Gwen John, July 12, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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Lady Gregory, envisioning a gallery of modern art in Dublin, solicited Quinn's views on the ideal inhabitants of such a collection. In his reply, Quinn cited a pantheon made up entirely of School-of-Paris artists:

> The men who are dead I should name in the following order: Cezanne, the greatest painter of modern times; Georges Seurat, a very good artist, worthy to stand with Cezanne and the greatest draughtsman and colorist since Ingres and not flashy enough to be taken up by the Jew dealers[114] and other dealers. Seurat was a much greater artist than Renoir. Next to Seurat, and as one of the three greatest, comes Henri Rousseau, who at his best is worthy also to stand with Cezanne, a naive mind, a pure mind, an artistic saint, a man who has had an enormous influence upon the great living ones, particularly upon Picasso, Derain and Braque.... Neither Van Gogh nor Gauguin is worthy to be mentioned with Rousseau or with Seurat....
>
> Of the living, I should name the four following in this order: Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Andre Derain, and Georges Braque. I believe that in years to come those four will be regarded as the leaders of today.
>
> In the second group I should put: Georges Rouault, in his way a man of genius, a sort of French Blake; Dunoyer deSegonzac, Raoul Dufy, and certainly Constantin Brancusi, the Roumanian sculptor, half-god, half-faun and a man of genius.[115]

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[114] Quinn, who fulminated against "Ku Klux critics" and "that brute Barnes," was himself capable of brutish behavior. Perhaps his most unappealing trait was his anti-Semitism, which permeates his correspondence. This prejudice is surprising, given his generally enlightened views, immigrant stock, and close ties to the Democratic Party. In spite of the ugliness and even the seeming paranoia of some of his diatribes against Jews (at times hinting of dark conspiracies), he had cordial relations with individual Jewish artists and dealers. He may have been only vaguely aware of who among his acquaintances were in fact Jewish. With no particular animus, he erroneously characterized Arensberg as Jewish. When he felt that a dealer was treating him unfairly, he tended to suspect that the dealer was Jewish; some of his most heated anti-Semitic tirades were directed against Sheeler, who was not. (Re the citation, "that brute Barnes": see Quinn to Roché, July 28, 1922, Quinn Collection, NYPL.)

[115] Quinn to Lady Gregory, July 17, 1922.

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In January 1923, Quinn learned from Halvorsen that Interior with Goldfish (see fig. 3.4) was still available. Halvorsen asked Quinn:

> Do you remember those magnificent Matisses that you saw at my place when you were in Paris?[116] I still have the larger of the two (Intérieur avec Poisson rouges).
>
> As Matisses are always increasing in value and as the exchange is now so advantageous, permit me to repeat my offer to you: if you wish to buy the picture, I can let you have it for 50,000 francs. I consider it the best of the "Intérieurs" of Matisse. I finally decided to keep it for myself, but now I am obliged to sell it [dans l'obligation de le vendre].[117]

Roché chimed in: "Halvorsen... seems now (confidential) eager to sell it in order to buy other things.... Georges Bernheim has another red fishes by Matisse, very extraordinary and typical, much less finished, for which he asks 30.000."[118] But Quinn once again resisted the charms of the Matisse goldfish.

When Matisse had his annual show of new work at Bernheim-Jeune, Roché brought to Quinn's attention the small Reclining

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[116] The other picture was "La Famille" (The Music Lesson, fig. 3.3), soon to be purchased by Barnes (see Jack Flam, in "Henri Matisse," Richard J. Wattenmaker, ed., Great French Paintings from the Barnes Collection [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993]: 310, who writes that Dr. Barnes purchased the painting in 1923).

[117] Halvorsen to Quinn, December 11, 1922 (received January 3, 1923), Quinn Collection, NYPL. The Quinn papers contain both the original letter in French and Pach's translation. I have followed Pach's translation, except for the last phrase as indicated above.

[118] Roché to Quinn, January 14, 1923 (received February 7). Quinn Collection, NYPL. Perhaps this was the MoMA 1912 version, then owned by Purrmann, who may have consigned it to Georges Bernheim.

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Nude on a Sofa (fig. 3.11).[119] In advance of the April 16 vernissage, Roché wrote to Quinn:

> I was invited yesterday by Ebstein (director at Bernheim Jeunes [sic]) to see the newly arrived Matisses.—Four of them. All small.—I have been impressed and charmed only by a femme couchée, nue, de face, sur un divan vert—oil, 55 x 45, prix 10,000 fr.—very simple, grave, beautiful, a grave beauty, parent [i.e., relative] in some distant way to... "The White Slave", which you have. I have begged Ebstein to send you a photo of it as soon as ready. Please cable decision. It is a humble convincing piece, nothing "grandiose" or "important."[120]

The mishaps that ensued demonstrate the difficulty of assembling a collection at long distance. In late May, Quinn wrote to Bernheim-Jeune:

> I received yesterday, by mail, the portfolio, on Japan paper, of the sixteen reproductions of the principal pictures from your exhibition of M. Henri Matisse...
>
> I got no photograph from you [of Reclining Nude on a Sofa]. Did you send me any such photographs that Ebstein had promised Roche would be sent? I have been unable to identify it in the portfolio...[121]

Ebstein replied: "The picture by Matisse that you mention we reserved for you for two weeks, but when no word from you arrived, it was put back on sale, and the same day by

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[119] Reclining Nude on a Sofa (1923) is illustrated in Cowart 1986: 209.

[120] Roché to Quinn, April 3, 1923 (received April 18), Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[121] Quinn to Bernheim-Jeune, May 29, 1923, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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'pure coincidence' it was sold to an American collector. I regret it very much."[122]

In July Roché informed Quinn that he had heard from the collector Jacques Doucet (owner of Picasso's Demoiselles d'Avignon) of "a big Matisse of the 'poissons rouges' série, unknown of the dealers, which is in a country castle and could probably be bought."[123] The painting in question was probably Goldfish and Palette (fig. 3.12).[124] Quinn did not buy the picture; despite Roché's best efforts Quinn would never acquire a painting of the goldfish series.

In April 1923, R. Bernheim, of Georges Bernheim's gallery, wrote to Quinn, enclosing a photograph of "a wonderful picture by Matisse which I have just bought. It measures 2.20 meters long and 1.80 meters high. It is therefore very important. I am asking 60,000 francs for it."[125] The

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[122] "Le tableau de Matisse dont vous me causez a été réservé pour vous pendant une quinzaine de jours, mais n'ayant aucune nouvelle il a été remis en vente et le jour même 'pure coincidence' il a été vendu pour l'Amérique. Je le regrette beaucoup…" (Paul Ebstein [Director of Bernheim-Jeune]: John Quinn, June 9, 1923, Quinn Collection, NYPL.)

[123] Roché to Quinn, July 12, 1923, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[124] The evidence, however, is contradictory. According to the provenance given in Fourcade 1993: 360, Doucet himself bought the picture in late 1923 from Léonce Rosenberg through Paul Guillaume; hence it is difficult to see how it could have been "unknown to the dealers."

[125] "Je vous envoie ci inclus la photo d'un merveilleux tableau de Matisse que je viens d'acheter. Il mesure 2 m 20 de largeur et 1 m 80 de hauteur, il est donc très important. J'en demande 60.000 francs." R. Bernheim: Quinn, April 7, 1923, Quinn Collection, NYPL. The Georges Bernheim gallery may have acquired the painting directly from Matisse, who bought the painting back from the dealer Léonce Rosenberg in 1916; see above, 2.6: p. 310, n. 4.

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painting was Variation on a Still Life by de Heem (see fig. 2.15), which Quinn would add to his collection by year's end.

In September Quinn was back in Paris. He made another round of visits to artists, dealers, and private collectors, accompanied by Roché and by Mrs. Foster. This time he missed Matisse, who, by late August, had already departed Issy for his winter residence on place Charles-Félix in Nice.

In early October, Quinn, staying at the Hôtel Carlton, wrote to Arthur B. Davies, who by happenstance was also in Paris:

> I should like very much to see you. I want to show you three of my purchases: (a) A beautiful grecco [sic] from Paul Rosenberg, one of the finest greccos that I have ever seen; (b) Cézanne's portrait of his father, a very noble thing, painted at the same time that Cézanne painted the Pieta and the Bather which [collector Alphonse] Kann has; (c) A beautiful large Matisse painted in 1913 [sic, 1915],—an interior with still lifes.[126] These last two are at the Gallery of Georges Bernheim, 40 rue La Boétie, and if I should miss you they will show them to you if you tell them you are my friend.[127]

In November, back in New York, Quinn wrote to Lady Gregory, giving an inventory of his purchases in Paris, citing in addition to the above, works by Rousseau, Picasso, and Brancusi: the purchases "will make me poor for a year but I could not resist them." The de Heem variation was "a great

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[126] Quinn purchased Matisse's Variation on a Still Life by de Heem from Georges Bernheim in October 1923 for 50,000 francs ($2,650). The painting arrived in New York on the S. S. La Savoie, November 26, 1923. Ledger, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[127] Quinn to Davies, October 2, 1923, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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Matisse, about eight feet long by about six feet high, a still life interior, fruit on table and bottles and bucket at end of table, mandolin at the other end. The most gorgeous Matisse of the kind ever painted. Matisse has gone off recently in his painting to sell sweet pink things. But this was of a great period and is one of the greatest things he ever did."[128]

Variation on a Still Life by de Heem is a reworking of a copy after de Heem made by Matisse in 1893 when he was a pupil in Moreau's studio.[129] Painted in autumn 1915, at the height of his friendship with Juan Gris, it is often considered the most cubist-influenced work in his oeuvre. It was the last painting by Matisse to enter the Quinn Collection.

At year's end 1923, Quinn was once again discussing the fate of his collection. Walter Pach and Joseph Brummer envisioned a museum of modern art, with Quinn supplying artworks, and the Bing brothers, partners in a New York real-estate firm, providing housing. Pach wrote to Quinn:

> I had a long talk with the Bings, going back over the things that passed between us from our first interview, just before your return from Europe. The proposition then was for a permanent museum of modern art, though I had said at the time that I had not the slightest idea what your intentions were regarding your collection, but that I knew that the suggestion had been made to you that you found an American Luxembourg. When I told you of my talk with Mr. Bing, you at once put an end to that

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[128] Quinn to Lady Gregory, November 15, 1923, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

[129] Matisse's La Desserte (after Jan Davidsz. de Heem) (1893, Cimiez) was owned by the artist until his death.

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> idea by saying that you were not going to give the collection and added "They don't mean to give the houses, do they?" When I spoke to Mr. Bing about that, he said… that it was his intention to raise funds for giving the houses. But he had in mind all the time a permanent gift to the public.… Both brothers said that they would be glad to make contributions to the fund.[130]

Quinn replied with a rebuff:

> …I would not think of joining any movement in which Bing and Bing had the "intention to raise funds for the houses".
>
> That being all that Bing and Bing ever intended to do… I think it was a piece of God damn impertinence for him to say to you that he "had in mind all the time a permanent gift to the public". In other words I would give pictures which cost me perhaps a half million dollars "as a permanent gift" and Bing and Bing would come along and carry out their intention "to raise funds for giving the houses". That would be a fine partnership.[131]

On February 25, 1924, the Joseph Brummer Gallery on East 57th Street presented the biggest New York exhibition of Matisse since the Montross show of 1915. The exhibition, which ran through March 22, consisted of 14 paintings, 6 drawings, 3 etchings, and 13 lithographs.

Unlike the Montross show, in which the works were for sale and had come directly from the artist via Walter Pach, the Brummer show consisted primarily of works from the Quinn

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[130] Pach to Quinn, December 3, 1923, Quinn Collection, NYPL. Pach added: "Matisse has cabled me 'We accept the offer of 20,000 Frs. for the Redons." Pach was selling Quinn some works by Redon on behalf of Matisse's mother's estate; see John Cauman, "Henri Matisse's Letters to Walter Pach," Archives of American Art Journal 31, 3 (1991): 10.

[131] Quinn to Pach, December 4, 1923, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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collection (in addition, some were lent by Pach and Arthur B. Davies). Of the 14 paintings, 13 were Quinn's, comprising his entire collection of pictures by Matisse; of the 6 drawings, 5 were Quinn's.[132] The exhibition, which included a recent series of lithographs (done in 1922 and 1923),[133] was in effect a mini-survey of the artist's work from 1907 to the present.

On the eve of the show's opening, Quinn informed Roché:

> Brummer wrote me in the latter part of last week and wanted me to lend some of my Matisses for an exhibition. ...When he came to my place it turned out that he had no Matisses to sell but that he was giving an exhibition of Matisses owned in this country. He said that Davies had one important and one rather unimportant one. I was unable to tell him what other Matisses there were here. He took the twelve Matisses that I have, and also the very large Matisse, the one of 1914 [sic, 1915, Variation on a Still Life by de Heem], of which I loaned you the photograph but which you have never seen. He is going to give it an entire wall.
>
> I think it will be an interesting show, although I regret to have my name featured in the matter.[134]

Davies' "important" Matisse was Standing Nude (1907, Tate Gallery, London), which he had purchased from de Zayas.

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[132] Quinn informed Roché that he had lent Brummer "five original drawings" and that Brummer had "got a lot of lithographs and etchings from Pach" (Quinn to Roché, March 14, 1924). Pach owned "a copy of each plate" from "a series of lithographs" that Matisse made in summer 1922 (Matisse to Pach, September 2, 1922, cited in Cauman 1991: 10). On the Davies loan, see n. 135, below.

[133] One of the lithographs in the exhibition was Grande liseuse (1923, Duthuit 437), which is illustrated in McBride's review in the New York Herald; see n. 138, below.

[134] Quinn to Roché, February 23, 1924, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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The only painting in the exhibition not from Quinn's collection, it is listed in the catalogue as no. 6, "Bather."[135]

Pach, writing to Quinn, was full of praise for the show and for Quinn's latest acquisition: "I have been in at Brummer's and I have seen the Matisses—whose effect is simply magnificent. The big still life is a wonderful thing: I shall have to see it several times before I can say how great it is."[136]

In his catalogue introduction, gallery director Joseph Brummer wrote with authority, having known Matisse since 1908, when he made several visits to the Matisse Academy. He referred to "two tendencies" in Matisse's art: adherence to nature, and "the freest interpretation of natural forms." In Matisse's recent work, Brummer wrote, "he is able to render a greater number of aspects of nature than he dealt with in earlier years, but he has sacrificed nothing of that ideal of art which has been affecting the contemporary world so strongly and is still so much his own."

Brummer quoted in translation key passages from "Notes of a Painter"—passages that others would later repeat to the point of tedium, but were then scarcely known in America (the essay would not be fully translated until 1931). These passages concern the artist's interest, above all, in the

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[135] Brummer Galleries 1924. Davies purchased Standing Nude sometime after June 2, 1919, when de Zayas acquired it from Bernheim-Jeune (Fourcade 1993: 204; see also Judith Zilczer, "Arthur B. Davies: The Artist as Patron," American Art Journal 19, 3 [1987]: 74, 77).

[136] Pach to Quinn, February 25, 1924, Quinn Collection, NYPL.

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human figure, and his "dream of an art of balance, of purity, of tranquillity, without disquieting or preoccupying subject… comparable to a friendly armchair."

Brummer explained the role of discipline in Matisse's teaching and in his work: "When Matisse wrote these words in 1908, he was teaching in the atelier which he resolved to make—and did make—the severest in Paris, as I know from my visits there. He has kept up and increased the close study which he demanded, and today, in his latest work (for a number of the lithographs here date from 1923) we see the result." Like other Matisse defenders before him, Brummer noted the artist's roots in classical tradition: "I can think back to the early days in Paris when the originality of Matisse seemed revolutionary, then to the time when I came to know the man, and understood better how deeply founded in the classics his art was, and what logic dictated each step that he took."[137]

In the New York Herald, Henry McBride celebrated Quinn's acquisition of the Variation on a Still Life by de Heem and credited Quinn with making Matisse's works available for public viewing:

> There is an Henri Matisse exhibition in the Joseph Brummer Galleries, most of the paintings in which have come from the private collection of Mr. John Quinn. This means that most of these pictures have already been commented upon in these columns—but, since Matisse exhibitions have been infrequent of late and the curiosity in regard to the artist augments, if anything, the event

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[137] Brummer Galleries, Henri Matisse (New York, 1924).

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> is a welcome one. It is made especially important by the inclusion of one of Mr. Quinn's recent purchases, an immense and magnificent still life, surely one of the masterpieces of modern art.
>
> ...Since the armistice Matisse has painted many large and impressive canvases, but as far as I can make out they do not seem to be lumbering up any dealer's showrooms. To see them at all upon this side of the water we have to rely upon the kindness of Mr. Quinn and the other amateurs; and our amateurs have to somewhat spry to compete with those other amateurs who live nearer the spot and who have become aggravatingly avid. Mr. Quinn, I am sure, owes his latest swell acquisition to his trip abroad last summer.
>
> It is a very robust piece of bravoura [sic]. Matisse is frequently referred to as the modern Rubens and this still life goes far toward justifying this association. As Mr. Brummer says, the composition, while clearly the work of one individual, contains something of all the important tendencies that the artists of our time have been working out. It contains subject enough to content those whose imaginations will not start except from a firm footing upon the earth and it reaches so far into the rhythms of design and the emotions of color that those who loathe the obvious are content also.[138]

More than one critic commented on the range of Matisse's styles visible in the exhibition. Margaret Breuning of the New York Evening Post noted that "this comprehensive exhibition shows the development of Matisse for about twenty years first entering on his Cézanne legacy, passing through Cubism down to the present moment with a group of beautiful lithographs, where his peculiar gift of line is particularly appar-

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[138] Henry McBride, "Matisse Masterpiece on Exhibition Here: Mr. Joseph [sic] Quinn Acquires Noteworthy Modern Work: Magnificent Still Life on Display at Brummer Galleries," New York Herald, March 2, 1924, section 7: 7.

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ent."[139] Virgil Barker, writing in Hamilton Easter Field's The Arts, acknowledged Matisse's versatility while admitting to a degree of ambivalence in his reaction to the artist:

> ...Whatever the nature of one's own private reaction to... [Matisse's] work, one is compelled to admit that here is a man who as at least attained a forceful personal utterance. The writer must confess to violent oscillations between likes and dislikes in passing from one work to another. It is a mark of power in an artist for his work to produce either intense approval or intense disapproval in the beholder; and as long as the same artist can produce both reactions in the same beholder, the artist may be sure of the beholder's unflagging interest. One's very inability to reach any stable general judgment on an artist is for the latter a certain source of strength; it will make one return to his work at every opportunity until the matter is settled.
>
> As concerns Matisse, this question may for some of us never be settled. He can be guilty of the most appalling performances, and can then make one forget them all for the time being with some more astounding success. Who else is there, for instance, who could paint a Still-Life to be measured in feet instead of inches and convince one that the thing simply had to be done on that scale? And such a piece of bravura as the Artist at Work [The Painter and His Model, see fig. 3.7] makes labored earnestness in painting appear pretty silly. The procession of picture exhibitions through a season fades very fast into a vague blur, but a Matisse show sticks in the mind. He is a true phenomenon—a characterization which discreetly leaves certain other points unsettled.[140]

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[139] Margaret Breuning, "Matisse Exhibition at the Brummer Gallery," New York Evening Post, March 8, 1924: 15.

[140] Virgil Barker, "Notes on the Exhibitions," The Arts 5, 4 (April) 1924: 207, 218-219. Barker did not elaborate on his claim that Matisse could "be guilty of the most appalling performances."

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In March 1924, Quinn added to his collection Henri Rousseau's Sleeping Gypsy (1897, MoMA). It was his last art purchase.

On July 28, at age fifty-four, Quinn died of liver cancer.

On August 2, Walter Pach wrote to Quinn's assistant Thomas Curtin: "To say that I am stunned by the news is almost less than true, for I can hardly believe it now... and it is a deep loss and grief to me. You know what it means to the artists—both those whose friend Mr. Quinn was in a personal way and those who simply had the encouragement of knowing that there was such an art lover in the world."[141]

Quinn left no provisions in his will for an "American Luxembourg," nor for a large bequest to the French museums; his sole gift to France was Seurat's Le Cirque (1890-1891), now in the Musée d'Orsay. The rest of the collection was to be disposed of by his executors for the benefit of the estate.

In January 1926, a memorial exhibition, organized by Joseph Brummer, was held at the Art Center in New York. All 13 of Quinn's Matisse paintings, plus 5 Matisse drawings and the bronze head of Pierre, were shown. In 1926 and 1927, Brummer supervised the gradual selling off of the Quinn collection in private sales and auctions. The first auction was held in October 1926 at the Hôtel Drouot, Paris. The second and final

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[141] Pach to Curtin (from St. Raphael, France), August 2, 1924, Quinn Collection, NYPL. Pach learned of Quinn's death from Constantin Brancusi.

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auction was held in February 1927 at the American Art Association, New York (Messrs. Parke and Bernet, auctioneers).[142] At the New York auction, Apples was sold to the dealer Valentine Dudensing and the bronze head of Pierre was sold to the Kraushaar Galleries.[143]

At the Paris auction, Michael Stein successfully bid for the Blue Nude, on behalf of his Baltimore friend Claribel Cone.[144]

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[142] The Quinn sales appear to have been a success. Following a final appraisal of the Quinn estate, a New York Times report (May 25, 1927: 38) appeared with the headline "Estate Gains $210,000 by Rise in Art Values"; this conclusion was based on sales figures of $378,000. Art News, however, reported that the estate realized about $700,000 from the collection ("Sale of the Quinn Collection is Completed," 25: 20, February 19, 1927: 1). Apparently by basing his computation on the lower figure, and estimating that Quinn paid about $500,000 for his collection, B. L. Reid claims that the estate took a loss of about $100,000. Zilczer, basing her figures on combined press accounts of private sales and two auctions, estimates the sales amount as more than $600,000, and concludes: "Reid's hypothesis... is not supported by the extant records" (Judith Zilczer, "The Dispersal of the John Quinn Collection," Archives of American Art Journal 19, 3 [1979]: 19, and 20, n. 25).

[143] Dudensing paid $1225 for Apples; the Kraushaar Galleries paid $350 for the bronze head of Pierre (American Art Association 1927, cat. nos. 126 and 689, respectively; on my copy, final prices are annotated. See also Zilczer 1978: 193). Quinn had paid $3200 and $134, respectively, for the works.

[144] Claribel Cone bought the Blue Nude for 120,760 francs on October 28, 1926 (Brenda Richardson, Dr Claribel and Miss Etta: The Cone Collection [Baltimore Museum of Art, 1985]: 176). At the Paris sale all of Quinn's Matisse paintings went to American collectors. Among other Matisse purchases from the Quinn estate in 1926 were Ferdinand Howald's of Large Cliff: The Eel (see fig. 3.1) and A. Conger Goodyear's of Music (Sketch) (see fig. 1.21). Goodyear purchased the painting in January for $1800; Quinn had paid $1100 for it. Howald purchased Large Cliff: The Eel via the Dudensing Gallery (Zilczer 1978: 116, 172). In addition, Earl Horter bought The Italian Woman, and Samuel S. White III bought Seated Nude, Back Turned (see figs. 2.18 and 3.2).

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3.3. Pierre Matisse Arrives in America, 1924-1925

By early 1925, Matisse had a new emissary in New York—his son Pierre. Matisse had facilitated the transatlantic move in order to boost Pierre's career in the art trade. In what was perhaps an unintended consequence, the move would prove beneficial to Matisse's own fortunes. Before long, Pierre would supplant Walter Pach as Matisse's primary stateside representative.

Pierre, at 24, had expert knowledge of his father's work, having spent a significant part of his childhood in his father's various studios. As Matisse's biographer Hilary Spurling has noted: "In the early years of the century, until Pierre was sent away to school, he and Marguerite were the children at home. They never lost their… unconditional commitment to their father's art."[1]

Prior to his departure for New York, Pierre had been an employee of the Hodebert Barbazanges Gallery in Paris. By contrast with the hidebound European gallery system, the New York art world was relatively open and fluid. Moreover, Matisse had numerous American associates who could be counted on to lend his son a helping hand.

In mid-November 1924, Matisse wrote to Pach:

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[1] Hilary Spurling, The Unknown Matisse (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998): 268. Elsewhere in the narrative (p. 336), Spurling adds: "Matisse's painting provided not only the context of Pierre's childhood but its meaning. Like Marguerite, he recognized in their father's work a source of cohesion and emotional stability for the whole family."

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> My son Pierre, who has been a seller at the Hodebert Barbazanges Gallery for the last year, is leaving for America on my advice and going to New York to find a position in a painting establishment, preferably a modern one.
>
> Although he is very satisfied with his position in Paris and well considered by his employer, I feel that he should travel while he is young and get acquainted with the active life of New York. The [Michael] Steins approve of it and they share my belief that if you allow it, he would benefit a great deal from your advice. That is why I am sending him to you. Could you please do whatever you can to help him? I am also thinking of writing to Brummer on this matter, but I don't have his address and I am thinking of sending you my letter so that you can forward it to him....
>
> My dear friend, I thank you for all that you can do for my son, who will find himself a bit off balance in a country where everything will be new to him except your kind acquaintance.

Some two weeks later, Matisse amended his letter:

> Mr. Michel Stein advises Pierre to wire you the name of the boat and the day of arrival, with the hope that you will do him the great favor of coming to meet him at the pier, if it is not too inconvenient for you. I will be very grateful. He expects to leave soon.[2]

Pierre landed in New York harbor on December 22. At the end of his first day in the city, he began a long letter to

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[2] Matisse to Pach, November 18 and December 5, 1924, in John Cauman, "Henri Matisse's Letters to Walter Pach," Archives of American Art Journal 31, 3 (1991): 11. According to Pierre Matisse, his father objected to his choice of profession. At age 85, Pierre told an interviewer, "My father didn't like it at all that I became an art dealer.... He thought it was a distasteful profession. In fact, he wanted me to change my name so that the name Matisse would not be associated with such a profession" (John Gruen, "Pierre Matisse, Master Dealer," Architectural Digest 43 (April 1986): 100). Whatever his misgivings about the profession of art dealer, Matisse helped his son resettle in America, in part so that Pierre could escape an infelicitous marriage.

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his father, written over several days, setting forth his initial observations and experiences in America:

> When I arrived in New York this morning, it was terribly cold. The boat was covered with ice. I couldn't see the port of New York, which is supposed to be very beautiful—there was too much fog. While waiting for my baggage, I met Pach. He was charming and he put his heart into helping me. First he found me a room on a lovely square: Washington Square, in the home of a French-Swiss woman... The room is fine, a bit narrow but with a high ceiling, in an old house—windows in new houses are half the size of ours. I had lunch with Pach. We went to the bank and then spent the day visiting art dealers. We began with a little dealer who shows modern American painters. Pach introduced me, which immediately gave me an interesting opportunity. He invited me to come back to see him. We didn't speak of my intentions, except that of remaining for some time in New York. From there we visited Montross, a very nice old fellow; he brought out the catalogue of your 1915 exhibition and showed me some of your prints and some Cézanne watercolors. He was very kind and he advised me to improve my English by taking free high school courses. He asked me what you thought about my selling pictures as a profession; and he invited me to come back. Then we went to see Fearon, the dealer who had presented the exhibition for which you had chosen some pictures[3]... The man at Fearon's gallery told me that he had spoken with you at Kelekian's place.... They invited me to return (to Fearon's) to talk... Then we went over to Brummer's, but he had just left....
>
> Tuesday 23 [December]

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[3] In December 1924, the Fearon Galleries, New York, presented a show of Matisse's recent work, selected by the artist. Henry McBride, reviewing the exhibition for The Dial, wrote: "Matisse ascends the social scale in New York...For the Fearon Galleries aim for the Duveen, Knoedler, Scott and Fowles standards and eschew the experimental. In other words, Matisse approaches being considered 'safe.' Well, it is high time" (Henry McBride, The Flow of Art: Essays and Criticisms of Henry McBride [New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1975]: 203-206). Ferdinand Howald (1846-1934), a Swiss-born mining engineer from Columbus, Ohio, bought two paintings from the Fearon exhibition: Lorette à la veste rouge (1916-1917, Columbus) and Roses (ca. 1923, Columbus).

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…I went to see Brummer.… He told me very simply and directly that business here is difficult. He spoke to me of the American mentality, which is very different from the French—that places here generally go to the young, but that it was necessary to buckle up and not give up too soon, that success is not always a question of hard work, but also of luck. Then he was obliged to leave me for a client, and his brother, whom I had met the day before, came to me and told me that they had no jobs. They have a gallery in which they present exhibitions; currently there are several Seurats— And I learned that picture dealing is difficult here because Americans do not buy for value but for an object that pleases them and consider the money that they have spent to be lost— In New York they never have money, but when they go to France they are prepared to spend thousands of dollars, which they love to spend, looking for paintings that they would pay no attention to here.… From the conversation it is clear that in order to do something here you have to stay for a rather long time, to get known or try to get into a circle of people, not just 6 months or a year and then return to France. He advised me to try Montross, a serious house directed by the old man, who was one of the first to be interested in the French moderns. I should also go to Durand-Ruel and Knoedler, after I redo the rounds by myself, and in the course of the conversation manage to say that I'm looking for work.…

Today I saw… a view of the American skyline. It's an impressive sight, of which they have no idea in Europe. It's a sort of City of Giants à la Wells. An extraordinary degree of activity prevails everywhere; time is money. In the subway or bus, the transit employees don't speak; they just put out their hands. Traffic is regulated and disciplined; the cars are silent. I went to the financial district. The streets resemble deep valleys at the bottom of which is the agitation of a trail of ants, silently coming and going without ever departing from their calm. America is the kingdom of deluxe automobiles. One person in seven owns an automobile.…

Tomorrow I'm going to see Pach, whom I've given on your behalf 2 lithographs that I brought and that he found very pleasing, especially the one of the model standing in the back of the room with a beautiful carpet in the foreground—The painting is now at Fearon's with the large still life with phonograph and my portrait

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holding Bidouille [Pierre's hobbyhorse]. The other lithograph is the seated odalisque in an armchair, with her arms raised, the position of the sculpture but she has just a mesh robe around her—

Excuse me if I can no longer classify my feelings. My head is swimming by these changes and by my trip. Later I will be freer to tell you better about the city.

Wednesday 24 December

I went to see Pach this afternoon— He spoke to me at length about the Quinn Collection, the sale of which he would eventually be involved with. He thought of putting me into this business, which would be important.[4] For the moment there is nothing to decide yet. We've got to wait. I told him of my visit to Brummer, whose brother advised me to go to one of the great New York department stores, which has a department of art and painting.. This idea surprised me, but when I spoke about it to Pach, he was not surprised, telling me that this could be useful to me, a director of one of the department stores having asked him for a man capable of directing this art service. He didn't hide from me the fact that it was rather different from what I had been doing because it was only about commercial painting, but in terms of interest quite excellent, if I could do the job— One must be a buyer of pictures and European curios. I have to try my luck, for it doesn't look easy. Everybody specializes in his own area, and it's rare to see partnerships or jobs like mine at Hodebert's. At least for the moment it's rare. I have been to see other dealers, who've been very welcoming but haven't offered me anything. For now I must not be discouraged and grab the first thing that falls my way....

You have no idea how alone I feel. To be suddenly so far away and in such an atmosphere of mistrust.[5]

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[4] Pierre, along with Pach and Brummer, would be closely involved with the Quinn sale.

[5] Pierre Matisse to Henri Matisse, December 22, 23, and 24, 1924, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York. For the original French, see endnote, below.

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Three days later Pierre reported to his father:

> I went to see the department store director I spoke to you about— I didn't get the job— Fortunately, for after I left, Pach and I saw a bookseller who has a small gallery and who suggested that I organize exhibitions…
>
> To start quickly and to have a quick result, he advised me to organize an exhibition of your lithographs, drawings, and watercolors, but not paintings, which we would save for later.… I wrote to Marguerite to put together some lithographs and etchings and to ask if you would add some drawings—"[6]

The bookseller was Erhard Weyhe, who had a shop on Lexington Avenue and 60th Street, with ironwork façade decoration by Rockwell Kent, and exhibition space on the second floor.

Pierre assembled the Weyhe exhibition with alacrity. "Drawings, Lithographs and Etchings by Henri Matisse," which opened on March 14 and ran through April 4, comprised 86 works, including 21 drawings, 33 lithographs,[7] and 32 etchings. Pach contributed the catalogue essay, "The Drawing of Henri Matisse." The essay linked the artist to the French classical tradition and characterized his prewar experimental

---

[6] "J'ai été voir ce directeur de grand magasin dont je t'ai parlé—Je ne fais pas l'affaire. Heureusement car en sortant j'ai été avec Pach voir un libraire qui tient une petite galerie et qui m'a conseillé de faire des expositions…

"Donc pour commencer rapidement et pour avoir un résultat rapide, il m'a conseillé de faire une exposition de tes oeuvres gravées lithographies, et d'avoir des dessins et aquarelles, pas de peintures que nous réservons pour plus tard.… J'ai écrit à Marguerite de préparer des lithos [et] eaux forts et de te demander si tu voulais y ajouter un lot de dessins—" (Pierre Matisse to Henri Matisse, December 27, 1924, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

[7] Among the lithographs in the exhibition were "Les Anémones" (1922, Duthuit #424), "La Vase de Fleurs" (1923, Duthuit #439), and "Le Col d'Organdi" (1923, Duthuit #428).

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period as a necessary precursor to his current work. Citing Poussin, Claude, and Ingres, Pach wrote:

> ...The Latin strain in French art has asserted its supremacy again and again: when Poussin and Claude sent home the teachings of Italy, when Ingres turned to the same classical source, and again to-day, when the rapid succession of schools is changing to a calmer, more harmonious type of activity.
>
> The turbulence of the period before the war was doubtless necessary. Every manifestation of that time testifies to its prodigious energy, and in art there were problems that called for the application of the full measure of that energy. No living man has contributed more to the resolving of those problems than Henri Matisse; at moments one is tempted to say no other has contributed so much. Out of the tangle of influences resulting from the immense bequests of the older generation, he has won an art which holds to the sense of solidity and weight demanded by our love of reality, and to the values of space and line and color which are the aesthetic guarantors of the truth of an artist's statement. And from the first his procedure has been characterized by the penetration, the incisiveness of the draftsman.... When the problems of art have been most complicated, his reply has been simplification...[8]

A laudatory review in the New York Times signaled yet again that Matisse had won critical acceptance in America. Matisse's graphic works, the reviewer proclaimed,

> establish him in the minds of Americans as a master of genius and of high, almost supreme, talent.
>
> ...The genius of Matisse—his sensitiveness—carries him buoyantly into widely separated regions, sends him plunging into the jungle to face the unseen beasts, or into some corner of a provincial field to find a single hardly discernible anemone.
>
> It would be impossible, of course, to follow the capricious path of this flitting genius if it were not

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[8] Pach, "The Drawing of Henri Matisse," in Weyhe Gallery 1925.

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> for an abundant talent supporting it. Abundant but imperiously modern...[9]

Soon after the Weyhe exhibition, Pierre made an arrangement with the Dudensing Gallery to present an Exhibition of Modern French Paintings, to be held in June. Also working for the gallery was Valentine Dudensing, the owner's son, who had befriended Pierre. This exhibition was conceived as the first of many.

In May, Pierre, back in France to gather pictures for the Dudensing show, was reunited with the Steins. He wrote to his father in Nice:

> Today mama and I visited the Steins, who seemed happy to see me and curious about my impressions of New York. Although they hadn't seen me for long time, they were excited when I told them how interested I was and how good I felt. Madame de Monzie[10] and Sarah were surprised by my English and at my pronunciation, which could not be more American, and I had the impression that for the first time I had a little of Madame Stein's attention. As for Michael, he was preoccupied with Leo, who had just arrived from Italy.[11]

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[9] Unsigned, "A Matisse Exhibition," New York Times Magazine, March 22, 1925: 17.

[10] Gabrielle de Monzie, née Colaço-Osorio, who, like Sarah, was a member of the Christian Science Church, joined the Stein household around 1922. In 1924 the Steins and Mme. de Monzie commissioned Le Corbusier to design the villa "Les Terrasses," in Vaucresson, in the Parisian suburbs near Versailles, which they would occupy upon its completion in 1928.

[11] "Aujourd'hui nous avons été, maman et moi, rendre visite aux Stein qui ont paru contents de me revoir et curieux de mes impressions sur New York. En dépit de leur éloignement ils buvaient du lait, lorsque je leur disais combien j'avais été intéressé et le bien que cela m'avait fait. Madame de Monzie et Sarah ont été bien surprises de mon anglais et [de] ma prononciation qui [est on] ne peut plus américaine et j'ai l'impression d'avoir retenu pour la première fois un peu de l'attention de Madame Stein. Quant à Michael, il était occupé avec Leo qui venait d'arriver

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At year's end 1925, Pierre brought exhibitions of Matisse's graphic works to Chicago, first at the Arts Club and then at the Albert Roullier Galleries.[12] There, he reported back to his father, he "found charming, active people, struggling for modern art."[13] He was bemused, however, by the demeanor of the "club ladies," whose ebullience was an unsettling contrast to the impassivity of the French:

> We opened the exhibition with a tea, and I'm afraid that what happened was similar to what happened in New York, where, if you recall, a niece of the Cone sisters wanted to give a tea at the Weyhe Gallery during your exhibition. The tea was a success and I wish you could have heard these ladies cooing, "Oh! Isn't it charming! Lovely! Exquisite!" For with women in America, it is

---

d'Italie" (Pierre Matisse to Henri Matisse, May 10, 1925, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York. The letter was written in Issy.)

[12] An exhibition of lithographs and drawings was held at the Arts Club from November 3 to 12. An exhibition of etchings, lithographs, and woodcuts was held at the Albert Roullier Art Galleries from December 1 to 22. The Roullier catalogue included Walter Pach's essay on Matisse's drawing, previously published in the Weyhe catalogue (Albert Rouillier Art Galleries, Catalogue of an Exhibition of Original Etchings and Lithographs by Henri Matisse [Chicago, 1925]).

[13] "J'ai trouvé là des personnes charmantes, actives, et luttant pour l'art moderne" (Pierre Matisse to Henri Matisse, November 26, 1925, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York). Despite the presence of people "struggling for modern art" in Chicago during the twenties, Henri Matisse did not have much impact on the burgeoning modern movement there. One reason was the absence in Chicago of a Matisse collection comparable to that of John Quinn, Albert Barnes, or Etta or Claribel Cone. Arthur Jerome Eddy's collection was strong in German expressionism, but did not contain a single Matisse. In her essay on Chicago modernism, Susan S. Weininger discusses the impact of Kandinsky and Marc, but evidently does not consider Matisse's influence significant enough to warrant mention (Weininger, "Modernism and Chicago Art: 1910-1940," in Sue Ann Prince, ed., The Old Guard and the Avant-Garde: Modernism in Chicago 1910-1940 [Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1990]: 59-75).

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always the greatest singer or painter or musician that they had ever heard in their life![14]

In Chicago, Pierre heard from Valentine Dudensing, who was starting his own gallery and was inviting Pierre to work with him. For the following six years, until Pierre founded his own gallery in autumn 1931, the two men would work together at 43 East 57th Street, where Joseph Brummer already had a gallery. Pierre would organize exhibitions and would spend about half of each year in Europe.

"Dudensing and I are wildly excited about our prospects," Pierre wrote to his father. "It's a critical moment for both of us."[14]

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[14] Pierre Matisse to Henri Matisse, November or December 1925, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York, cited in Russell 1999: 48.

Original French of Pierre Matisse to Henri Matisse, December 22, 23, and 24, 1924 (see above, n. 5):

"Je suis arrivé ce matin à New York par un froid terrible. Le bateau était couvert de glace. Je n'ai pu voir l'entrée de New York qui est parait-il très belle, il y avait trop de brouillard. J'ai trouvé Pach en attendant mes bagages. Il a été charmant et a mis du coeur à m'aider. Il m'a d'abord trouvé une chambre sur une jolie place: Washington Square chez une Suisse Française où j'y ai rencontré de Vauchier, une ancienne relation de Duthuit. Je paie 12 dollars par semaine ce qui fait 900 frs. par mois sans compter la nourriture que je dois prendre au restaurant 810

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[14] "On a ouvert [l'exposition] par un thé et j'avais bien peur que cela ne fasse comme à New York si tu te rappelles une nièce des Demoiselles Cone [qui avait] voulu faire un thé à la galerie Weyhe pendant ton exposition. C'était très réussi comme thé et j'aurais voulu que tu entendes ces Dames roucouler des oh! n'est-ce pas charmant! Délicieux! Exquis! … Car avec les femmes en Amérique, c'est toujours le plus grand chanteur ou peintre ou musicien qu'elles aient jamais entendu de leur vie!" (Pierre Matisse to Henri Matisse, November 26, 1925, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

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frs. par mois. La chambre est bien, un peu étroite mais haute de plafond, située dans une vieille maison alors que les maisons neuves n'ont ici pour fenêtres que la moitié de celles de chez nous. J'ai déjeuné avec lui et nous avons été à la banque puis fait la journée des marchands. Je lui avais raconté mes intentions durant le dîner. Nous avons commencé par un petit marchand qui expose des peintres américains modernes. Pach m'a présenté, ce qui m'a mis tout de suite sur un plan très intéressant. Il m'a invité à revenir le voir. Nous n'avons parlé d'aucune de mes intentions si ce n'est celle de rester quelque temps à New York— Puis de là nous avons été chez Montross qui m'a réuni le catalogue de l'exposition qu'il a fait de toi en 1915 un vieux bonhomme très sympathique qui a fait voir des gravures de toi et des aquarelles de Cézanne. Il a été très gentil et m'a donné le conseil de me perfectionner aux cours gratuits des lycées pour l'anglais. Il a demandé ce que tu pensais de mon métier de vendre des tableaux. Et il m'a encore engagé à revenir. Ensuite nous avons été chez Fearon celui qui a fait l'exposition pour laquelle tu as choisi des tableaux pour Heinel. L'homme chez Fearon m'a dit t'avoir causé chez Kelekian. … Ils m'ont encore invités à revenir causer avec eux… Ensuite nous avons été chez Brummer qui venait de sortir.…

"mardi 23

"…J'ai été voir Brummer.… Il m'a causé très simplement et n'a pas caché que les affaires ici étaient difficiles. Il m'a parlé de la mentalité américaine qui était très différente ici qu'en France— que les places étaient généralement aux jeunes mais qu'il fallait s'y atteler et ne pas abandonner trop tôt — que la réussite n'est pas toujours une question de dur travail [mais aussi de] chance. À ce moment il a été obligé de me quitter pour un client et son frère que j'avais vu la veille est venu avec moi et m'a dit que chez eux il y a avait pas de place.— Ils ont une galerie dans laquelle ils font des expositions, actuellement il y a quelques Seurat—et j'ai appris que le commerce des tableaux était une chose difficile ici car les américains n'achètent pas une valeur mais un objet qui leur plait et considèrent l'argent qu'ils y ont [dépensé] perdu—À New York ils n'ont jamais l'argent alors que lorsqu'ils vont en France ils ont prévu une dépense de milliers [de dollars] qu'ils aiment à dépenser eux-mêmes en recherchant les tableaux auxquels ne font plus attention ici. Mais il m'a cité le cas d'un allemand qui est venu s'installer pour vendre ici des gravures [et] dessins allemands et français et qui a un petit appartement [au] 15ème étage quelque [part et] dans lequel il réussit. De la conversation il ressort que pour faire quelque chose ici il faut y rester assez longtemps pour compter dans le nombre ou bien tâcher de rentrer quelque part et n'y rester que 6 mois ou 1 an et rentrer en France. Il m'a conseillé d'essayer chez Montross qui est une maison sérieuse dirigé par le vieux et qui a été un des premiers à s'occuper de modernes français—Il me faut aller également chez Durand-Ruel et Knoedler après je referai la tournée seul et dans la conversation je m'arrangerai pour dire ce que je cherche.…

"J'ai vu aujourd'hui… la vue d'ensemble des grattes-ciels américains. C'est une sensation formidable dont on n'a pas idée en Europe. C'est une espèce de Cité de Géants à la Wells. Il règne partout une activité extraordinaire; le temps c'est de l'argent. Dans le métro [ou] l'autobus, les employés ne parlent pas, ils tendent la main c'est tout.

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La circulation est réglée et disciplinée, les autos silencieuses. J'ai été dans le quartier de la finance. Les rues ressemblent à des gorges profondes au fond desquelles règne l'agitation d'une piste de fourmis qui vont et viennent silencieusement sans jamais se départir de leur flegme. L'Amérique est le royaume des autos de luxe. Une personne sur sept possède une auto....

Demain je vais voir Pach à qui j'ai donné de ta part 2 lithos que j'ai emportées et qu'il a trouvées très jolies surtout celle qui représente le modèle debout dans le fond de la pièce avec au premier plan un beau tapis—Le tableau est actuellement chez Fearon avec la grande nature morte du phonographe et mon portrait tenant Bidouille [?].L'autre lithographie est l'odalisque assise dans un fauteuil, bras relevés, position de la sculpture mais elle a juste une robe de voile autour d'elle—

"Excuse moi si je ne peux encore classer mes sensations. J'ai la cervelle tellement bouleversée par ce changement et ce voyage—Plus tard je serai plus libre pour mieux te parler de la ville.

"mercredi 24 décembre

"J'ai été voir Pach cet après-midi— Il m'a parlé longuement de la Collection Quinn dont il aurait éventuellement à s'occuper de la vente. Il pense me mettre dans cette affaire qui serait importante. Pour le moment il n'y a encore rien à décider. Il faut attendre. Je lui ai dit le résultat de ma visite chez Brummer. Le frère de ce dernier m'avait dit d'aller dans un des grands magasins de New York semblable au Louvre, qui a un rayon d'Art et de peinture. Cette idée m'avait étonnée mais lorsque j'en ai parlé à Pach il n'en a pas été étonné et m'a dit qu'à ce sujet [cela] pourrait m'être utile, un directeur d'un de ces grands magasins lui ayant demandé un homme capable de diriger ce service d'Art. Il ne m'a pas caché que c'était assez différent de ce que je faisais puisqu'il ne s'agit que de tableaux de commerce mais qu'en tant qu'intérêt c'était excellent, si je pouvais faire l'affaire—Il faut là un acheteur de tableaux en général de bibelots d'Europe. Je dois tenter ma chance, car ça n'a pas l'air facile. Tout le monde fait ses affaires soi-même et il est rare de voir des associés ou des places [comme] j'en avais chez Hodebert. Du moins pour le moment c'est rare. J'ai été [voir] d'autres marchands qui m'ont très bien accueilli mais ne m'ont rien proposé. Je ne dois pas me décourager pour le moment et prendre la première chose qui me tombera sous la main....

"Tu n'as pas idée comme on peut se trouver seul dans ma position— Si loin subitement et dans une atmosphère de défiance."

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3.4. The Cone Collection, 1922-1929

In 1922, after a lapse of a decade and a half, Etta and Claribel Cone returned to art collecting. Except for their acquisition of a Picasso drawing (and possibly a Patrick Bruce oil), they had not added to their art holdings since late 1905-early 1906, when, encouraged by their friends the Steins, they had purchased 20 works on paper by Picasso and one oil and 3 drawings by Matisse.[1]

The Cones and the Steins came from a similar economic and social milieu and German-Jewish background; but the Cone sisters, apart from their friendship with the Steins and Matisse, did not move in bohemian, literary, or artistic circles. Though they were in some ways unconventional, their mores were rooted in the Victorian era.

Claribel (b. 1864) was the older, dominant, and more worldly of the two. A medical doctor, she had never been a practitioner, but had led a distinguished career in teaching and research. Etta (b. 1870) was the domestic caregiver; she played the piano and had been a protégé of Leo Stein.

The Cones have often been depicted as contrasting personalities. Gertrude Stein wrote: "There were two of them,

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[1] In 1906 the Cone collection comprised, in addition to the 20 Picassos and 4 Matisses, "five Robinson paintings, a Barye bronze plaque, Japanese prints, one Tarkhoff oil… one lithograph each by Cézanne and Renoir, [and] two etchings by Manet" (Richardson 1985: 101). In early 1908, Etta Cone received through the mail, enclosed in a letter from Gertrude Stein, a gift from Picasso, a humorous self-portrait drawing inscribed "Bonjour Mlle Cone." A Bruce still life was added to the collection between 1913 and 1924 (Richardson 1985: 168-170).

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they were sisters, they were large women, they were rich, they were very different one from the other one…"[2] Matisse called them "two opposing characters… from the same family."[3] Brenda Wineapple notes that "while Etta craved companionship, Claribel preferred solitude."[4] Ellen Hirschland, a grandniece of the Cone sisters, writes that Claribel "was the extrovert who, with her imperious appearance and conduct, was the more conspicuous of the two sisters, but it was Etta who was always studying art and whose response was deeper and more personal." Claribel, as a scientist, "was oriented toward Germany… Etta spoke French fluently, albeit with an American accent, and preferred the French people and their way of life." Hirschland evokes the sisters' physical presence:

> The immediate impact on seeing them was one of stateliness and noble dignity. Claribel was the shorter and the heavier of the two, but as both grew portly, they resembled each other more. They had strong features and were handsome in an unromantic way. Etta's face was monumental and pensive, with a straight, rather severe mouth, a strong nose, and heavy black eyebrows…
>
> Claribel's appearance was majestic. She held her head aloft and seemed to radiate a kind of intangible superiority, dominating her surroundings.…[5]

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[2] Gertrude Stein, "Two Women" (ca. 1908-1912), reprinted in Richardson 1985: 27.

[3] Matisse to Simon Bussy, May 25, 1934, cited in John Richard Klein, "The Portraits and Self-Portraits of Henri Matisse" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1990): 286, and 311, n. 140. The date is a correction of that given in Schneider 1984: 416, n. 52; see below, n. 6.

[4] Brenda Wineapple, Sister Brother: Gertrude and Leo Stein (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1996): 120-121.

[5] Ellen Hirschland, "The Cone Sisters and the Stein Family," in Four Americans in Paris (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970): 78.

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Matisse was likewise impressed by both their appearance and their character:

> One of them [Claribel] is beautiful, a great beauty, noble and glorious, lovely hair with ample waves in the old style, contented and dominant, the other [Etta] with the majesty of a Queen of Israel, but with a less obvious beauty, with straight hair which... falls in beautiful lines like those of her face, but with a touching depth of expression, always submissive to her glorious sister, but attentive to everything.[6]

The two sisters had been separated during the war years. Claribel was living in Munich when hostilities broke out, and she remained in Germany throughout the war's duration. When, in spring 1921, she returned to the states, she discovered that she and Etta had become considerably richer: the family textile business had thrived during the war. Now 56, she did not attempt to resume her medical career.

The sisters and their unmarried brother Fred occupied four apartments in the Marlborough on Eutaw Place, Baltimore. Etta and Fred had adjoining apartments on the eighth floor; adjoining these was an unoccupied suite containing Claribel's belongings. Claribel had separate sleeping quarters on the sixth floor. Etta's place was the family hearth. The sisters were compulsive accumulators, and not just of art; their rooms were cluttered, in the Victorian manner, with furniture, rugs, textiles, jewelry, and bric-a-brac.

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[6] Matisse to Simon Bussy, May 25, 1934, cited in Klein 1990: 286, and 311, n. 140. Klein corrects the date, and makes some corrections to the translation, of the excerpt cited in Schneider 1984: 416, n. 52 (see above, n. 3).

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Although the Cones would acquire work by other modern masters—among them Renoir, van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne, and Picasso—it would be Matisse whose work they would collect in the greatest depth and number. Several factors militated in Matisse's favor. Their friendship with Michael and Sarah Stein inclined them toward Matisse; Michael would become, in Brenda Richardson's words, "almost a private dealer as far as the Cones were concerned."[7] Also influential would be their friendship with Matisse and his family—a friendship that, while cordial, would remain formal rather than intimate.

The most significant factor, of course, was the work itself. The Cones had an affinity for the traditional rather than the experimental aspect of Matisse's work. They favored paintings of domestic subjects, and of modest size and scale. Their collection would include only 4 paintings from Matisse's early avant-garde period 1904-1917; fully a third would date from the Nice period.

Neither Claribel nor Etta ever put her credo as a collector into writing.[8] As collectors, they present a sharp contrast to John Quinn. Whereas Quinn sought to bring together what he often called the "best" works—meaning those of major ambition—the Cones sought primarily to decorate their walls and to please themselves. Quinn became, however reluctantly, a public warrior in the battle for modern art; the Cones, though

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[7] Richardson 1985: 107.

[8] Both Claribel and Etta delivered public lectures on modern art, but these did not deal explicitly with the Cones' approach to collecting.

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known to European and American art dealers, were unknown to the greater public outside of Baltimore.

Etta and Claribel consulted with each other about their respective purchases, but they kept their collections separate. Some of their acquisitions were made separately, while some were undertaken together. It was often the case that Claribel's purchases were bolder than those of Etta. However, financial considerations, as well as esthetic ones, played a part in determining which sister would buy a particular work.

In summer 1922, the sisters returned to Europe. In Paris, they renewed their friendship with Michael and Sarah Stein. With Michael's encouragement, they began to use their ample funds to purchase modern art in earnest. They soon made up for lost time. In a three-month period their purchases included a painting by Vallotton; an etching by Renoir; 2 paintings by Sarah Stein; 1 painting, 1 drawing, and 2 graphics by Picasso;[9] and 6 paintings, 4 bronzes, and 22 graphics by Matisse.[10]

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[9] The Picasso painting was probably the Blue Period Woman with Bangs (1902). The drawing was a portrait of Claribel in the manner of Ingres, inscribed with the date "14-7-22." This date is in error, as Picasso was in Dinard, Britanny, throughout July 1922 (see Jane Fluegel's "Chronology" in William Rubin, ed., Pablo Picasso: A Retrospective, Museum of Modern Art [New York, 1980]: 223). In all likelihood, Picasso inadvertently dated the drawing July instead of June (Richardson 1985: 107-109; 158-9, n. 38).

[10] All the above items, except for the 6 Matisse paintings, are listed in a tariff declaration written in Etta's name by Michael Stein in November 1922. Regarding this omission, Brenda Richardson speculates: "It may be that Michael Stein, knowing that even customs officials recognized the name and value of Matisse by 1922 but would probably not be able to distinguish between a [Louis] Favre and a Matisse, consciously incorporated

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Of the 6 Matisse paintings, 2 were bought by Claribel. Woman in a Turban (fig. 3.13), purchased through Bernheim-Jeune, belongs to the series of portraits of Lorette that includes Quinn's Italian Woman (see fig. 2.18). Alfred Barr, noting the "frontal pose and severe demeanor" of the Cone picture, observes that it "recalls the austere simplicity" of Matisse's portraits of Sarah and Michael Stein.[11]

Through Georges Bernheim, Claribel purchased The Pewter Jug (fig. 3.14). Barr praises this work, with other still lifes of 1916-1917, as "among the most original and powerful in Matisse's career.... For sober dignity and grandeur of scale —not of size—they are unsurpassed in the work of Matisse or, for that matter, any of his contemporaries."[12]

Etta purchased 4 paintings at Bernheim-Jeune. Three were current works: 2 interiors with a single female figure, and a landscape with two women in repose, all of 1922. She also bought an Étretat landscape of 1920.[13]

Arguably the Cones' boldest purchases of summer 1922 were four small Matisse bronzes of the period 1905-1908, purchased

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the shipment's Matisse paintings under the category of '14 paintings by Favre'" (Richardson 1985: 158-9, n. 38).

[11] Barr 1951: 192.

[12] Barr 1951: 194. Clement Greenberg cites an earlier version of this still life (Hahnloser collection, Bern) in support of his claim that Matisse's "very best painting, perhaps, comes between 1914 and 1917" (Clement Greenberg, "Matisse in 1966," Boston Museum Bulletin 64, 336 [1966]: 67, 69); see above, 2.6, p. 330, n. 50.

[13] The 3 pictures of 1922 were: The Brown Dress; Girl Reading, Vase of Flowers; and Two Women in a Landscape, Vallée du Loup. The landscape of 1920 was Étretat, The Beach (Richardson 1985: 170).

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by the sisters together, directly from the artist.[14] The Cone collection would eventually assemble the largest private collection of Matisse sculpture in America.[15] Matisse's sculpture, unlike his painting, had never won acceptance by American critics—a circumstance that apparently deterred the sisters not a whit.

The Cones established a routine for their summers in Europe through 1925. Their Paris headquarters was the Hôtel Lutétia on the boulevard Raspail in Montparnasse (also frequenting the hotel would be William Carlos Williams, James Joyce, and Ernest Hemingway, but they would not be part of the Cones' world). The Cones often saw Michael and Sarah Stein; less often, Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas. They visited with Matisse (in the company of his son Pierre or his daughter Marguerite) on select, rather formal occasions. (Matisse, who lived most of the year in Nice, preferred Paris and Issy in summer.)

After a month or so of settling in and deciding on art purchases, Etta would tour Europe, usually accompanied by her traveling companion Nora Kaufman, while Claribel remained at

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[14] The four bronzes were: Head of a Child (Pierre Matisse) (1905, E155), Woman Leaning on Her Hands (1905, E73), Small Head with Comb (1908, M-F 27), and Small Crouching Nude without an Arm (1908, E127) (Richardson 1985: 182-183). E numbers refer to Albert Elsen, The Sculpture of Henri Matisse [New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1972].

[15] The catalogue of the Cone Collection of the Baltimore Museum lists 18 Matisse sculptures (Richardson 1985: 199). The Cones often bought multiples (such as bronzes and graphics) in pairs; the Cone Collection of the Weatherspoon Art Gallery of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, has duplicates of 6 of the sculptures (Richardson 1985: 183).

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the Lutétia. In Paris, Claribel would go on shopping excursions and make frequent visits to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs.

In summer 1923 the Cones undertook an intensive buying spree of Matisse. Between June and September they purchased 3 lithographs[16] and 10 or 11 oils, nearly all of the previous two years; the exceptions were one or two paintings of 1899.[17] Their acquisitions from 1920-1923 included 3 interiors with a single female figure, 1 interior with two figures, 2 still lifes, 2 odalisques, and 1 marine landscape.[18] The last item, Large Cliff: Fish (fig. 3.15), a view of the beach at Étretat,

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[16] "A list of some of Dr. Claribel's transactions while in Paris during the summer of 1923," cited in Barbara Pollack, The Collectors: Dr. Claribel and Miss Etta Cone [Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962]: 143-144, includes "3 Matisse lithos 900 francs."

[17] The still life Compote, Apples, and Oranges (1899) was purchased, probably by Claribel, at Bernheim-Jeune, along with 5 Matisse oils of 1921-1922, in June. La malade (1899), formerly owned by Leo Stein and probably bought from the artist, was in the Cone collection by 1923, but there is no documentation in the Cone archives of the date or circumstances of its acquisition (Richardson 1985: 173). Barbara Pollack claims (without citation, but probably based on an interview with Etta's traveling companion Nora Kaufman) that La malade was among the works purchased by Claribel and Etta in summer 1922 (Pollack 1962: 129).

[18] The Cones' acquisitions in summer 1923 of recent Matisse works (all but one acquired from Bernheim-Jeune) were: Young Woman at the Window, Sunset (1921) and Woman in Striped Pullover, Violin on the Table (1921-1922), probably purchased by Etta; Standing Girl, Green Dress, White Shawl (1921) purchased by Claribel and Etta; Violinist and Young Girl ("Divertissement") (1921), probably purchased by Etta; Anemones and Chinese Vase (1922), purchased by Claribel; Bouquet of Dahlias and White Book (1923), purchased by Etta; Standing Odalisque, Tambourine in her Right Hand (1922), probably purchased by Claribel; Standing Odalisque Reflected in a Mirror (1923) purchased by Etta from the artist; and Large Cliff: Fish (1920), purchased by Claribel and Etta. Taking note of the pattern inherent in Claribel's purchase of a still life and odalisque in June, followed by Etta's purchase of a still life and odalisque in September, Brenda Richardson observes: "Etta's choices often mirrored her older sister's after a few months' reflection" (Richardson 1985: 173).

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belongs to the same series as Large Cliff: The Eel, purchased by John Quinn in autumn 1920.[19]

In August, while Etta toured Italy, Claribel wrote to her of a visit with Matisse and his daughter:

> Mon. Matisse and Margot [Marguerite] have just left—they took tea with me—of this more anon—Now a quick telling of my yesterday's visit with the Matisses. When we were leaving Margot drew me aside with—in French—"You remember when we visited you—you offered me the use of that lovely rose shawl of yours. Now may I make so bold as to ask you to let father use it for a picture? We shall be in town tomorrow. May I use it?" "Yes" I said. "In the morning I have a French lesson—will you come in the afternoon? "At what time?" "As you will." "Three p.m.," she said. "Yes, come and take tea with me." She said her father would be with her—she would bring him along (not quite so informally however) and they came and I lent her the shawl—and she says her father will make a painting of her in the black velvet she wore the evening they spent with us—and that shawl and we all think it will be lovely. She was interested to know what I thought of the pictures her father brought back and which I preferred. He did only 4 large paintings 1 of which he will keep (the least important one) and 7 lovely lithographs. He wishes to show that he is not considering himself or Bernheim-Jeune first. Apropos of my remark to Sally [Sarah Stein] as to our having third or four choice, Sally says that is why he asked us out—rather complimentary was it not?[20]

Claribel was beginning to have doubts about Matisse's most recent work, couching her reservations in terms of concern over the sums of money they were spending. Referring to "Matisse's latest efforts," she wrote to Etta: "I like them but do not know if I can go further into my income this

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[19] See above, 3.2: 347-348.

[20] Claribel to Etta, summer 1923, cited in Pollack 1962: 150-151.

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year... Now how much can you afford—or how much are you interested to spend in Matisses?"[21]

For the remainder of the decade, the Cones continued to add Matisses to their collection, though not with the same intensity as in the summers of 1922 and 1923. In 1924 they acquired just one Matisse, the landscape Maintenon Viaduct (fig. 3.16), purchased in October from Bernheim-Jeune.[22]

On January 19, 1925, Claribel gave a lecture on Matisse at the Baltimore Museum, on the occasion of a loan exhibition of Modern French Art, to which she had Etta had lent works.[23] The museum, which had opened to the public two years earlier, was still housed in temporary quarters, at the Garrett Mansion on West Monument Street.

Claribel's presentation, which included slides,[24] reflected her conversations with Leo Stein and Matisse, and her familiarity with the writings of Matisse and Roger Fry,

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[21] Claribel to Etta, August 7, 1923, writing to Venice, from Paris (Hirschland archive, cited in Ellen B. Hirschland and Nancy H. Ramage, "Bucking the Tide: The Cone Sisters of Baltimore," Journal of the History of Collections 8, 1 (1996): 112, and 116, n. 69).

[22] The work was probably purchased by Claribel (Richardson 1985: 175).

[23] Other lenders to the exhibition included Walter Pach, the Société Anonyme, and the Brummer, Durand-Ruel, Fearon, and Kraushaar Galleries. I do not know which Matisse works were shown (News of the Baltimore Museum of Art 2: 1 [January 1925]).

[24] Claribel's lecture notes list the following slides: La Desserte (see fig. 4.9), Harmony in Red (see fig. 1.37), Self-Portrait (see fig. 1.14), Madras rouge (see fig. 1.17), The Pewter Jug (see fig. 3.14), Maintenon Viaduct (see fig. 3.16), Woman in a Turban (see fig. 3.13), among others (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

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among others.[25] Claribel told her audience that she "was speaking from the standpoint of the layman"[26] and had chosen Matisse for her topic because she knew Matisse personally and had "followed his course and development from his introduction to the public in the autumn salon about 20 years ago... up to the present time—when Matisse is regarded by many... as the greatest living painter." After reading a chronicle of his life, she stated: "His modern masters are Cézanne and Renoir."[27]

Excerpts of her remarks were published in the Baltimore Sun:

> Matisse is trying to communicate to us the emotion, sensation or idea he receives on looking at an object by presenting the equivalent of the emotion or idea on canvas...
>
> He presents the abstract. He is trying to produce a beautiful composition, pattern or design by taking a flat surface and then covering it with colored shapes adjusted harmoniously. His works essentially are decorative.
>
> He is trying to eliminate the unessential and give us in the simplest manner possible the significant in art. His works are eloquent of meaning....
>
> The old masters had the same problems to solve, but their methods were different. They had stories to tell, as witness the innumerable pictures dealing with Biblical subjects.
>
> Their task was representative and literary, while

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[25] Works consulted by Claribel, according to her notes, include those by Berenson, Fry (Vision and Design, 1920), Jan Gordon (Modern French Painters, 1923), Lewis Hind (The Post-Impressionists, 1911), Leon Kroll, Pach, and Purrmann ("From the Workshop of Henri Matisse," 1922) (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

[26] Notes in the hand of Etta Cone (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

[27] Notes in the hand of Claribel Cone (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

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> the "moderns" interest themselves exclusively with aesthetic and emotional values in art.[28]

In summer 1925, Claribel acquired, through Pierre Matisse, 2 major Nice-period paintings, the landscape Painter in the Olive Grove (fig. 3.17) and the interior Flowers and Parakeets (3.18).[29] She and Etta were also diversifying their collection with works by other artists. The Cones' most notable purchase of the summer was a Cézanne masterwork, Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from the Bibémus Quarry (ca. 1897), acquired by Claribel from Bernheim-Jeune, for the highest price either sister would pay for a piece in the collection.[30]

Michael Stein was advising the Cones on the expansion of their collection, while helping Gertrude to liquidate hers. In June he confided to Alice Toklas: "The Cones came last night & Sally at once got busy for Gertrude.... I... spoke to them about the Laurencin and they seemed interested."[31] A week later the Cones purchased from Gertrude the Marie Laurencin group portrait, Group of Artists (1908), a souvenir of Bateau-

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[28] Unsigned, "Dr. Claribel Cone Delivers Lecture on Matisse's Art," Baltimore Morning Sun, January 20, 1925. Although this appears to have been Claribel's first public art lecture, in early 1923 she had given a talk on Matisse and Cézanne to about 20 Baltimore art lovers in her home on Eutaw Place (A. R. L. Dohme to Claribel Cone, February 9, 1923 and February 20, 1923, Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

[29] Both paintings were purchased in Paris on July 6, 1925 (Richardson 1985: 175).

[30] Cézanne's Sainte-Victoire landscape and Matisse's Blue Nude (acquired the following year) would be the two gems of the Cone collection. Claribel paid 410,000 francs ($18,860) for the Cézanne (Richardson 1985: 175).

[31] Michael Stein to Alice Toklas, June 6, [1925], Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas Papers, YCAL, cited in Hirschland and Ramage 1996: 109, and 115, n. 44.

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Lavoir days, depicting Picasso, Fernande Olivier, Apollinaire, and Laurencin. In July they bought from Gertrude a Picasso bronze Mask (1905) and an African figurine.[32]

In New York, in January 1926, Pierre Matisse was helping the Quinn executors sell off the estate. He wrote to his parents in glowing terms of the exhibition of the Quinn collection at the Art Center on East 56th Street, where Variation on a Still Life by de Heem (fig. 2.15) occupied a central position. (From the perspective of today, it seems surprising that this relatively dry work was accorded more esteem than the smaller but more powerful Blue Nude.)[33] Pierre expressed the hope that he might persuade the Cone sisters to buy the cubist-influenced still life:

> Part of the Quinn Collection is being shown. It is being sold through the intermediary of Brummer. Places of honor have been given to Seurat's Le Cirque, to your large still life after David de Heem and to a large painting by Picasso. You are in the center, in an honored position between Laurencin and Segonzac on one side, and Gauguin and Rousseau (the lion looking at a reclining Arab woman in the desert) on the other....
>
> The effect when one enters is impressive: the still life radiates throughout the room. One can see the wall on which it hangs from the first story, looking

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[32] Richardson 1985: 175.

[33] The Quinn memorial exhibition included Quinn's entire collection of 13 Matisse paintings, as well as 5 drawings and Quinn's sole sculpture, Bronze Head of a Boy (Pierre Matisse). Among the paintings in the exhibition, in addition to the Blue Nude and the Variation on a Still Life by de Heem, were Girl with Flowers; Hat with Roses; Italian Woman; Large Cliff: The Eel; Music (Sketch); Purple Cyclamen; Seated Nude, Back Turned; Still Life with Melon; The Artist and His Model; and White Slave; see Art Center, The John Quinn Collection of Paintings, Water Colors, Drawings & Sculpture (New York: Pidgeon Hill Press, 1926): 11, and 68-74.

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> out on the opposite wall; the effect is magnificent. He [Brummer] is asking $10,000, which comes to 250,000 frs. It is a splendid painting. The colors remain as fresh as when you painted the canvas. It was a shock to see it again. The Seurat is pale beside it, the Segonzac black, the Gauguin flat, and the Picasso and the Derain two gouaches…
>
> Also exhibited, in another room, is Stein's reclining woman [The Blue Nude], for which he [Brummer] is asking $3500, which is not expensive; I believe we could get a better price, but the subject is difficult for America. I am going to find the Cones to try to get them to buy the large still life, but I doubt that will succeed.[34]

"Pierre made a trip to Baltimore to see Dr. Claribel and Miss Etta," the Cones' biographer Barbara Pollack reports, probably based on an interview with Pierre Matisse:

> He found the sisters nervous, indecisive, less than happy to be approached to buy a painting. People were always approaching them to buy laces, books, all sorts of objets d'art. Matisse thanked them for the tour

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[34] "Une partie de la collection Quinn est exposée. Elle est vendue par l'intermédiaire de Brummer dans l'exposition. Les places d'honneur sont données au Cirque de Seurat, à ta grande nature morte d'après David de Heem et à une grande toile de Picasso. Tu es au milieu possédant la véritable place entre Laurencin et Segonzac d'un côté, un Gauguin et Rousseau (le lion regardant une arabe couchée dans le désert) de l'autre.…

"L'effet quand on arrive est formidable et ta nature morte rayonne dans toute la salle. On peut voir le mur sur lequel elle est placée du premier étage qui s'ouvre sur le côté opposé de la salle, l'effet est magnifique. Il en demande 10,000 $ ce qui fait 250,000 frs. Elle est splendide. Les couleurs sont restées aussi fraîches que lorsque tu as peint la toile. Ça m'a fait un coup de la revoir. Le Seurat est pâle à coté, le Segonzac noir, le Gauguin plat, et le Picasso et le Derain deux gouaches…

"Il y a aussi exposé dans un autre salle la femme couchée de Stein dont il demande 3500 $ ce qui n'est pas cher et je crois qu'on pourrait l'avoir meilleur marché, seulement le sujet est difficile pour l'Amérique. Je vais aller trouver les Cone pour leur faire acheter la grande nature morte, mais je doute que cela réussisse" (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, January 9, 1926, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

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> of their apartments, where some of his father's most beautiful paintings hung, each frame hugging the next.[35]

The Cones did not like being pressured. In making purchases they preferred to arrive at decisions on their own, in the presence of the artworks. Furthermore, Variation on a Still Life by de Heem was not to their taste: it was too large and too cubistic.[36] Nor was Pierre able to induce them to buy the Blue Nude, even though, at $3500, it was being offered at a relatively modest price.

Soon after his return from Baltimore, Pierre reported triumphantly to his parents that he had sold the de Heem still life:

> Some good news! I sold, to a lady from Chicago,[37] Papa's large still life and a large Rousseau; both paintings belonged to the Quinn Collection. Brummer, who was in charge of the liquidation of the collection, was very nice to me and let me earn 2000 dollars. The lady is the wife of the American composer Carpenter; she is the president of the club where I did the exhibition of drawings and watercolors. These two paintings are being shown at the "Arts Club," and later, when the museum, or rather its director, becomes less backward, they will be hung there permanently.[38]

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[35] Pollack 1962: 188.

[36] The Cones avoided cubist Picassos, concentrating on Blue, Rose, and neo-classical works; one exception is the proto-cubist watercolor Study for Nude with Drapery (1907), acquired by Etta in 1936; like the contemporaneous Blue Nude, it had belonged to Leo and Gertrude Stein.

[37] The "lady from Chicago" was Mrs. John Alden Carpenter (John Elderfield, Matisse in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art [New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1978]: 206).

[38] "Une bonne nouvelle! J'ai vendu à une dame de Chicago la grande nature morte de papa et un grand Rousseau[,] ces deux tableaux appartenaient à la collection Quinn. Brummer, chargé de la liquidation de la collection, a

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In summer 1926, because of Claribel's deteriorating health, the Cones modified their travel arrangements. Their home base, instead of Paris, would now be Lausanne, where Claribel would remain while Etta traveled. In Lausanne, at Paul Vallotton's gallery, Claribel made a purchase characteristic of the Cones' taste: The Music Lesson (fig. 3.19), a Nice-period interior featuring two women seated on a divan, with a violin and sheet music.[39]

On October 28—with Michael Stein bidding on her behalf at the Quinn auction in the Hôtel Drouot, Paris—Claribel made a far more audacious purchase. In the intervening nine months since Pierre's visit to Baltimore, the sisters had changed their minds about the Blue Nude and now decided they wanted to buy it. This was a departure for them, for the Blue Nude was unlike anything they owned: no work in their possession made such a frontal assault on the western pictorial tradition. Two factors weighed in its favor: it would fill a gap in the collection, which had few works from Matisse's early, radical phase; and it was a fond reminder of prewar days in Paris, when it had adorned a wall of Leo and Gertrude's atelier.

été très gentil [avec] moi et m'a permis de gagner 2000 dollars. La dame est la femme du compositeur américain Carpenter, elle est la présidente du Club où j'ai fait l'exposition de dessins et d'aquarelles. Ces deux tableaux sont exposés au 'Arts Club' et plus tard lorsque le musée ou plutôt son directeur sera moins retardataire ils seront accrochés définitivement" (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, January 27, 1926, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

[39] The Music Lesson was purchased in August (Richardson 1985: 176).

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At the auction, Pierre Matisse, finding himself in the awkward position of competing with Michael Stein for the Blue Nude, graciously dropped out of the bidding. Two days later he reported to his father:

> The sale of the Quinn Collection has taken place. The femme bleue, formerly in the [Alphonse] Kann collection, went for 101,000 francs plus expenses; it was bought by Mr. Stein for the Misses Cone. Last winter I had offered the painting for half the price—They heeded the advice of Mr. Stein and paid dearly for it.[40]

In December, Michael Stein sent word from Paris: Matisse was pleased that the Cones had acquired the Blue Nude (which he had not seen for years) and had agreed to add his signature to the painting, heretofore unsigned. "Matisse was most nice about the 'femme bleue,'" Michael wrote to Etta. "He said he would be very happy to see it again when he comes up [from Nice] and will then sign it."[41]

The Blue Nude, a keystone of twentieth-century art whose previous owners had included Leo and Gertrude Stein, Walter and Louise Arensberg, and John Quinn, would now be housed in Claribel Cone's rooms at the Marlborough.

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[40] "La vente de la collection Quinn a eu lieu. La femme bleue qui était chez Kann a fait 101,000 frs plus les frais acheté par Mr Stein pour les Mlles Cone. Je leur avais proposé le tableau l'hiver dernier pour la moitié. Elles ont attendu l'avis de Mr Stein et l'ont payé plus cher" Pierre Matisse to Henri Matisse: October 30, 1926, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York. The final price of the painting was 120,760 francs (Richardson 1985: 176).

[41] Michael Stein to Etta Cone, December 8, 1926, YCAL (photocopy in Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

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In the remaining years of the decade, the Cones expanded their interests to encompass other European modernists (among them Cross, Derain, Marquet, Pissarro, Redon, Rodin, Signac, Sisley, van Gogh, and Vlaminck), and acquired an additional 3 paintings by Matisse. Although Claribel would speak acerbically about the artist's latest efforts—writing to Etta in August 1927 that "Matisse has seen the heyday of his virility and I fear is toppling downward"[42]—she continued to buy his work; in fact, all 3 paintings acquired by the Cones from 1927 to 1929 were purchased in Claribel's name. These were: Still Life with Peaches (ca. 1898), purchased in 1927, and Nude with Spanish Comb (1919) and Festival of Flowers (1922), purchased in 1928.[43] The last and finest of these acquisitions, Festival of Flowers (fig. 3.20), rendered with a rapid, impressionist touch, belongs to a series of 5 similar compositions on the same subject: two women (the model Henriette and Matisse's daughter Marguerite) on a balcony overlooking a milling crowd on the Promenade des Anglais, Nice.

In the late twenties the Cones purchased 4 Matisse bronzes; these included a second cast of Head of a Child (Pierre Matisse), and 2 casts of Head of a Young Girl (Marguerite) (1906). Their boldest purchase was Reclining Nude

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[42] Claribel to Etta, August 18, 1927, written in Lausanne (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

[43] Still Life with Peaches was purchased in September 1927, and Nude with Spanish Comb was purchased in June 1928, both from Bernheim-Jeune; Festival of Flowers was bought from the artist in October 1928 (Richardson 1985: 179-180).

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III (1929, fig. 3.21),[44] the final work in the artist's series of sculpted reclining nudes (the first of which had been done in conjunction with the Blue Nude). As of 1929, no work in the collection, other than the Blue Nude, was comparably radical in its anatomical distortions.

Claribel and Etta were concerned about the fate of their collections, and were reluctant to bequeath them to Baltimore, in view of the city's backwardness with regard to modern art. In 1929 Claribel drafted a will, declaring that her collection should go to Etta upon her death, with the hope that "if the spirit of appreciation of modern art in Baltimore should improve,"[45] Etta would will both collections to the Baltimore Museum (as a second choice, they would go to the Metropolitan Museum in New York), with the ultimate disposition of the collections being left to Etta's discretion.

In March Claribel delivered a lecture on modern art at the Woman's Club of Roland Park. As in her lecture on Matisse of four years earlier, she discussed art in formalist terms, contrasting "traditional" and "modernistic" art. In addition, she imparted the idea that art reflects a Zeitgeist, or "spirit of the age"[46]:

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[44] The 2 casts of Head of a Young Girl (Marguerite?) (E157) were purchased by Etta in October 1929 (one was a gift for Sarah Stein). Head of a Child (Pierre Matisse) and Reclining Nude III were probably purchased by Etta, probably in autumn 1929. All four casts were purchased from the artist (Richardson 1985: 182).

[45] Pollack 1962: 193.

[46] Cf. Matisse, "Notes of a Painter": "All artists bear the imprint of their time, but the great artists are those in whom this is most

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> Traditional art is representative and more or less complex.... It's literary and it tells a story, whereas the art of today, the so-called modernistic art, is expressionistic, pictorial, decorative and simple. It accentuates the aesthetic features of a picture—design, color, line, form and space. It deals with the essentials, with the significant. The traditional art is concrete, whereas the modernistic art is apt to be abstract and emotional. Most people have been brought up on the art of yesterday, so it's hard to unlearn what one has been used to.
>
> Art is the reflection of the spirit of the age in which we live. When people ask why art is so difficult, I say it is because we have been brought up on the art of yesterday. Yet, the art of yesterday and the art of today are closely allied.[47]

In Lausanne that summer, Claribel addressed a letter—never mailed—to Etta, who was traveling. "Last night I had a pain in my heart," Claribel wrote, "the first one I have ever had. This morning my pulse omitted a beat on several occasions—for that reason—and in view of the fact that I have reached the age at which the eldest members of our family die I am writing this letter to say good-bye..."[48]

At summer's end, on September 20, 1929, Claribel Cone died of pneumonia, two months' short of her 65th birthday. Among the expressions of condolence Etta received was a note

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profoundly marked" (Jack Flam, ed., Matisse on Art, second ed. [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995]: 43). Roger Benjamin comments: "Here Matisse shares the convictions of Baudelaire and Courbet, but more particularly those of the Positivist aesthetician Hippolyte Taine..." (Roger Benjamin, Matisse's "Notes of a Painter": Criticism, Theory, and Context, 1891-1908 [Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987]: 170).

[47] Mildred Kahler Geare, "Clubwomen Learn Difference Between Old and Modern Art," Baltimore Sun, March 29, 1929.

[48] Claribel to Etta, summer 1929, cited in Pollack 1962: 193.

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from Matisse, conveying his "shock in learning by a letter from my family of your misfortune. I am thinking of your great sorrow, knowing your attachment to Dr. Cone and being able to imagine how much her rich and distinguished character could have enhanced the quality of your days."[49]

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[49] "Permettez-moi de vous dire ma douloureuse surprise en apprenant par une lettre des miens votre malheur. Je pense à votre immense chagrin connaissant votre attachement au docteur Cone et devinant combien ce caractère riche et distingué pourrait augmenter la valeur des jours"; Matisse to Etta Cone, October 16, 1929. The letter was written in Nice and sent to Etta at the Hôtel Lutétia in Paris (Cone Papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

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3.5. The Barnes Collection, 1920-1929

Albert C. Barnes of Philadelphia was a collector on a grand scale. In the quality and ambition of the Matisses he acquired, he outshined the Cone sisters; in the quantity of his Matisses, he surpassed John Quinn. Unlike Quinn, Barnes was a reformer who entered the public fray with zeal and believed passionately in art education for the common man; yet he would make his collection nearly inaccessible to the general public.

As his biographer Howard Greenfeld has noted, Barnes was "a maze of… contradictions."[1] An authoritarian who professed democratic ideals, he was a sensitive and intelligent connoisseur who launched crude, vituperative attacks on those he deemed supporters of the establishment that had shunned him. His targets—not limited to foes of modern art—included art historians, museum officials, and fellow collectors.

A New Yorker profile of the 1920s depicts Barnes as a man of "strength and inexhaustible nervous energy."

> He has broad shoulders, stands an inch or two short of six feet, and weighs about a hundred and ninety pounds. His square determined jaw, large head, and piercing blue eyes, which take in everything about him with quick, suspicious glances, top off a solid beefiness that would suggest an Irish police captain if it were not for that seething, restless energy. Dr. Barnes' personality is ostentatiously aggressive and when he gives an opinion on art, literature, or character he speaks with a deci-

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[1] Howard Greenfeld, The Devil and Dr. Barnes (New York: Viking, 1987): 3.

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sive finality which excludes any possible difference of opinion.[2]

Barnes, like the Cone sisters, had been greatly affected by the esthetic ideas and collecting practices of Leo Stein. Following Stein, Barnes built a collection that had at its core the art of Renoir, Cézanne, Picasso, and Matisse.[3]

The Parisian gallery owner Paul Guillaume, who, starting in the early 1920s, served as Barnes' intermediary with dealers and artists in Paris, was instrumental in building the collection. While increasing Barnes' holdings in Renoir, Cézanne, Picasso, and Matisse,[4] he broadened his client's taste to embrace African art and the work of artists such as Kisling, Modigliani, Soutine, and Utrillo.[5]

Guillaume (b. 1891), short, dapper, and mustachioed, somewhat resembled Charles Chaplin. Twenty years Barnes' junior, he had been virtually a child prodigy of the art

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[2] A. H. Shaw, "De Medici in Merion," The New Yorker, September 22, 1928: 29.

[3] Following Stein, and in common with the Cones, Barnes never fully embraced the cubist style. In 1916 he attacked cubism in print (Albert C. Barnes, "Cubism: Requiescat in Pace," Arts and Decoration [January 1916]: 121-124). Although he acquired paintings by Picasso and Braque of 1907-1909, he did not collect their hermetic works of 1910-12, their collages, or their synthetic cubist paintings.

[4] Guillaume's own collection, now housed in the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris, contains 10 Matisses, all of the Nice period (see Hoog 1990).

[5] Henri-Pierre Roché, who performed a role for John Quinn comparable to Guillaume's for Barnes, delighted in stoking his client's rivalry with Barnes. On January 24, 1923, Roché wrote to Quinn from Paris: "Barnes has bought many things, mostly second rate… and he is getting more unpopular here. Only Paul Guillaume seems to be getting [on] temporarily very well with him. I never see him." On November 17, 1923, Roché wrote to Quinn: "Guillaume has said… 'Perhaps Mr. Quinn has not come to see me because he knows I am working for Mr. Barnes?'" (Quinn Collection, NYPL).

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world. When he opened his gallery in 1914, he was already a dealer of African tribal art,[6] a protégé of Apollinaire, and a friend of Max Jacob and Picasso. In 1918 he presented a two-man show of Picasso and Matisse.[7]

Barnes and Guillaume may have met as early as 1914, when, according to Max Jacob, Barnes sought shelter from the rain in Guillaume's gallery.[8] But their close association began in winter 1921-1922, while Barnes was in Paris on a buying spree.[9]

In the course of the year 1922, Barnes acquired two major paintings by Matisse. In August, on a return visit to Paris, he purchased from Guillaume Three Sisters with "Pink Marble Table" (1917, fig. 3.22) for 22,500 francs.[10]

This painting is one of a series of portraits of the model Lorette (who is seated at left, leaning against the rectangular back of a chair and turning to face the viewer). (It incorporates, as a painting-within-a-painting, fig. 3.23, Pink Marble Table depicted in the background behind the two

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[6] Paul Guillaume and (Matisse's former pupil) Joseph Brummer were the first Parisian dealers of African art. An exhibition at the 291 Gallery in New York of 18 African sculptures, held November-December 1914, was made up entirely of loans from Guillaume.

[7] The Picasso-Matisse exhibition was held January 23-February 15, 1918 (Colette Giraudon, Paul Guillaume et les Peintres du XXe Siècle [Paris: Bibliothèque des Arts, 1993a]: 41, 43).

[8] Giraudon 1993a: 80.

[9] Barnes' correspondence with Guillaume began in January 1922. I thank Christa Clarke for this information.

[10] Jack Flam, "Henri Matisse," in Wattenmaker 1993: 309.

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leftward figures.) In format it is a vertical rectangle, approximately 6 x 3 feet. Barnes did not yet know that it was the right wing of a triptych (he would eventually reunite all three panels). An eclectic painting, it combines multiple influences—notably Manet, Byzantine mosaics, and Japanese prints. A transitional work, it occupies an intermediate position between the austere abstraction of the wartime compositions and the sensual naturalism of the Nice period.

On December 1, Barnes heard interesting news from Charles Sheeler, manager of the De Zayas Gallery: Matisse's Bonheur de vivre of 1905-06 (see fig. 1.2) was available for sale in Paris and could be acquired for him by de Zayas. Barnes demurred, promptly writing to Guillaume:

> I just heard this morning of a very important Matisse for sale in Paris—but I don't know where. It is the Bonheur de Vie which Leo Stein formerly owned and probably belongs to Lund. It is a large canvas of a number of nudes dancing in a circle. I would buy it if the price is right—say about fifty thousand (50,000) francs.[11]

Guillaume had already sent word to Barnes of the painting's availability. In a letter of November 21, which crossed Barnes' letter in the mail, he wrote:

> I received an inquiry for someone in America about the large MATISSE "La Joie de vivre", which in fact belongs to the Lund collection. I sold this painting to Lund for about 25,000. Today he is asking 50 for it. I don't think it would interest you at this price, but I don't know if it was for you that this inquiry was made. If

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[11] Barnes to Guillaume, December 1, 1923, Barnes Foundation archives.

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> it was not made for you, would you mind if I were to sell it?[12]

Barnes had no qualms about the price tag. On December 3, he wrote to Guillaume:

> I received your letter of 21 Novembre about Lund's Matisse "joie de vivre" and I cabled you to buy it for me at fifty thousand (50,000) francs. I enclose Paris cheque for the amount plus commission. Keep the painting until I arrive in Paris, via S. S. "Berengeria", on December 19th.[13]

On December 10, Guillaume cabled Barnes: "BOUGHT MATISSE BONHEUR VIVRE FORTYFIVE THOUSAND."[14]

Like Three Sisters, the Bonheur de vivre is eclectic, merging influences as diverse as Cézanne, art nouveau, the Arcadian tradition, and Paleolithic cave painting. It is, like Three Sisters, a transitional work, a summing-up of themes of

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[12] "Quelqu'un me demande pour l'Amérique le grand MATISSE "La Joie de vivre", qui justement est dans la collection Lund; j'ai dû vendre ce tableau à Lund 25,000. Il en demande 50 aujourd'hui. ne pense pas qu'il vous intéresse à ce prix. Je ne sais pas d'ailleurs si c'est pour vous que cette demande m'a été faite. Si ce n'est pas pour vous cela vous gêne-t-il que je le vende?" (Guillaume to Barnes, November 21, 1922, Barnes Foundation archives). Barnes always wrote to Guillaume in English; Guillaume always wrote to Barnes in French.

[13] Barnes to Guillaume, December 3, 1923, Barnes Foundation archives. Barnes added: "I am quite sure the inquiry you say you had was for me… [De Zayas] is very persistent, in spite of the fact that I never bought anything from him." Barnes' enmity for de Zayas went back to 1916, when he and de Zayas crossed swords in print on the subject of cubism (see Barnes 1916, and Marius de Zayas, How, When, and Why Modern Art Came to New York, ed. Francis M. Naumann [Cambridge: MIT Press], 1996). More recently, Barnes resented de Zayas's dealings with his rival Quinn.

[14] "ACHETE MATISSE BONHEUR VIVRE QUARANTECINQ MILLE" (Guillaume to Barnes, December 10, 1923, cited in Jack Flam, "Henri Matisse," Wattenmaker 1993: 306).

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the fauve period 1905-1906, which anticipates the decorative compositions of 1907-1913.[15]

In January 1923, Barnes made public his plans to place his collection under the auspices of an educational Foundation. He arranged for simultaneous announcements in Hamilton Easter Field's magazine The Arts and in Guillaume's house publication Les Arts à Paris.

Forbes Watson, in The Arts, reported that the Foundation would constitute "at last, a public museum of modern art"; that Paul Cret would be the architect;[16] and that the collection had begun to have an impact on artists and art collectors:

> Eight or ten years ago, rumors began to circulate about a wonderful collection of modern pictures that was in process of formation "somewhere near Philadelphia."...
>
> A visit to Dr. Barnes' house made news among the artists. As usual, in such cases, the interest began among the artists and gradually spread to all circles which concern themselves with such matters. The existence of the Barnes collection came to known everywhere, by word of mouth from one artist to another, from one artist's followers to another group of followers. Old established collectors, who thought they had done the last thing in collecting by gathering expensive if not always interesting "old masters," began to question

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[15] For example, the ring of dancers in the center anticipates the New York and St. Petersburg Dance panels; the standing and crouching figures at far left, Le Luxe; the embracing women at left, Music (Sketch); and the reclining nude at center right, the Blue Nude.

[16] The Frenchman Paul Philippe Cret, professor of architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, designed the Foundation's buildings in a simplified French Renaissance style. With Barnes, Samuel S. White III, Earl Horter, Leopold Stokowski, and Arthur B. Carles, Cret belonged to the small community of modern-art supporters in Philadelphia.

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> themselves. The collection of modern paintings, which, being modern, must of course be inferior, was beginning to be taken more seriously than their own collections. Had they perhaps made a mistake in putting themselves in the hands of "experts" instead of responding to a genuine impulse and collecting the great men who had interpreted the life of which they were a part?...
>
> Dr. Barnes' house became a point of pilgrimage... And to-day people all over the world are interested...[17]

Les Arts à Paris reported that the aims of the Foundation were "to promulgate the appreciation of art by the people generally, by means of having works of art available for them to see," and "to establish in the colleges and universities of America courses based on the psychology of aesthetics." It was also announced that Paul Guillaume had been named Foreign Secretary of the Foundation.[18]

In the March New Republic, Barnes wrote about the Foundation's curriculum, explaining that it was based on the philosophical pragmatism of William James and John Dewey, and that it had evolved from seminars he had organized for workers at his factory. He gave an inventory of his collection, which contained, as of early 1923, only 12 Matisses:

> The corner stones of the collection of paintings are more than one hundred examples by Renoir and about fifty by Cézanne, with numerous paintings by Daumier, Manet, Sisley, Puvis de Chavannes, Van Gogh, Gauguin and other

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[17] Forbes Watson, "The Barnes Foundation: Part I." The Arts (January 1923): 9, 13.

[18] Colin D'Arbois, "La Barnes foundation," Les Arts à Paris (January 1923): 2, 4. Although the article appeared in French, the statement of the Foundation's aims ("son but") was, curiously, written in English.

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> men of the end of the nineteenth century. Of the present century Frenchmen, there are represented Picasso, with twenty-two examples, Matisse with twelve, and among the younger generation represented are Modigliani, Utrillo, Soutine, Kisling, Derain, Pascin, Lipchitz,... Laurencin and other painters and sculptors of that independent group. There are more than a hundred paintings by the Americans...[19]

In Philadelphia, from April 11 to May 9, 1923, the Pennsylvania Academy presented an exhibition of 75 of Barnes' recent purchases, under the title "Contemporary European Paintings and Sculpture."[20] (A somewhat different version of this exhibition had been on view at Guillaume's gallery in Paris in January-February.)[21] Matisse was represented by Bonheur de vivre and 3 other works: Three Sisters (listed in the catalogue as "Oriental"), "Flower Piece," and "Nude." Also represented were Picasso and Derain, as well as De Chirico, Kisling, Laurencin, Lipchitz, Pascin, Segonzac, Soutine, Utrillo, and Zadkine.

Barnes wrote the catalogue essay, a reasoned plea to the public to be receptive to the new and unfamiliar in art. He used the analogy of the public's gradual acceptance of new

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[19] Albert C. Barnes, "The Barnes Foundation," The New Republic 34 (March 14, 1923): 65-66. Barnes added the dubious claim: "No dealer, expert, or similar person has been consulted in the choice of any of the works in the collection."

[20] The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, with Arthur B. Carles on its faculty, was a more progressive institution than its sister academy, the National Academy of Design in New York. Carles was instrumental in organizing this and other exhibitions of modern art at the Academy in the 1920s; see below, n. 24.

[21] The Paris exhibition had included some 50 works, among them those by Daumier, the Impressionists, and van Gogh (Giraudon 1993a: 90).

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music, in a city that, thanks in part to the presence of Leopold Stokowski, was relatively sophisticated in its musical tastes.[22] He claimed that the artists on display were continuing the great traditions of the past, for "old art and new art are the same in fundamental principles."[23]

It was not Philadelphia's first exposure to modernism, nor was it Barnes' first encounter with the insularity and conservatism of Philadelphians.[24] Barnes was nonetheless unprepared for the hostile response the show engendered.

"It is as if the room were infested with some infectious scourge," wrote Dorothy Grafly of the North American. Grafly trivialized Arthur B. Carles' formalist defense of Matisse and used the example of Matisse to bludgeon the younger artists for ostensibly carrying Matisse's principles to extremes. She reported that Carles "said recently that the large figure

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[22] Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977) became director of the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1912. He transformed it into a world-class ensemble and introduced modern composers into its repertoire. He wrote the catalogue essay for the 1920 exhibition of modern art at the Philadelphia Academy; see below, n. 24.

[23] Albert Barnes, "Introduction" to Catalogue of an Exhibition of Contemporary European Paintings and Sculpture, April 11-May 9, 1923, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia: 7. This catalogue is on microfilm in the Pennsylvania Academy papers, Archives of American Art.

[24] "The First Exhibition of Advanced Modern Art," organized by Morton Schamberg and H. Lyman Säyen, was held at the James McClees Gallery in Philadelphia in 1916. In 1920, Arthur B. Carles and others organized an "Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Representative Modern Masters" at the Philadelphia Academy (including 19 Matisses, most of them lent by Stieglitz and de Zayas). An attack on the exhibition by a group of physicians resulted in a public battle with Barnes; see Greenfeld: 90-92. In 1921, the Academy presented an "Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings Showing the Later Tendencies in Art," modeled after the Forum Exhibition of 1916, comprising the work of modern American artists.

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distortion by Matisse [Bonheur de vivre] was one of the finest modern canvases he had ever seen. It possesses, according to Mr. Carles, a marvelous arrangement of colors—of blues, purples, greens, reds. The figures? Oh, yes—they are human figures, but they mean nothing. One must appreciate the rhythm, the color." But, Grafly charged, other (unnamed) artists had forsaken Matisse's "clean" color for muddiness: "The vivid colors used by Matisse, clean in themselves, are in the hands of others deteriorating, rotting, becoming muddied with filth which the 'passion' of the modernist communicates to his palette."[25]

C. H. Bonte of the Philadelphia Inquirer singled out Soutine and Modigliani for derision, while being somewhat more receptive to the more established Matisse and Picasso. "Matisse," he wrote, "is represented by an undistinguished, even for him... floral still-life, and more importantly by one of the largest pictures in the exhibition [Bonheur de vivre], a composition in which groups of curiously drawn and strangely-painted nudes are engaged in various antic sports. In a vague way Matisse here does not seem very far removed from Botticelli. His three women with a chair [Three Sisters]

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[25] Dorothy Grafly, "Old Portraiture Praised, Modernists' Art Decried," The North American, April 15, 1923: 6, in clippings file, Pennsylvania Academy papers, Archives of American Art. Three exhibition were held simultaneously at the Academy: Barnes' collection, modern Japanese art, and the Peale family of American portraitists. Hostile critics compared the modernists unfavorably with the Peales.

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is also striking and by no means without a certain charmful appeal."[26]

Negative reviews of the exhibition also appeared in the Record and in the Public Ledger.[27]

The Pennsylvania Academy show would be the last public exhibition of Barnes' collection in his lifetime. Howard Greenfeld writes: "He had been hurt and stunned by the ignorance and insensitivity of the men and women who called themselves art critics, and he never forgave them. For the rest of his life he closed his gallery to most of these so-called experts. There were a few exceptions, but as a rule even those art historians and critics who could understand and intelligently appreciate and profit from an examination of the masterpieces he brought to Merion were prevented from seeing them.[28]

Barnes continued to accumulate Matisses of major ambition and quality. By year's end 1923, he had acquired The Music Lesson (1917, see fig. 3.3), a group portrait of the Matisse

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[26] C. H. Bonte, "Simple Artistry versus Chaotic," The Philadelphia Inquirer, April 15, 1923, clippings file, Pennsylvania Academy papers, Archives of American Art.

[27] Francis Z. Ziegler, in the Record, commented, "It is hard to see why the Academy should sponsor such trash." Edith W. Powell, of the Public Ledger, who had been a friend and ally of Barnes, attacked Soutine, prompting Barnes to send her a scurrilous letter (see Greenfeld 1987: 94-96, and William Schack, Art and Argyrol [New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1960]: 128-131).

[28] Greenfeld 1987: 96.

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family.[29] A pendant to the Piano Lesson (1916, MoMA) with echoes of the Painter's Family (1911, St. Petersburg), it is a work that invites biographical interpretation, presaging a new phase in the artist's life and art.[30]

In January 1925, Barnes bought eight Matisses, all through Paul Guillaume. These included two Matisses formerly of the Michael and Sarah Stein collection: Madras Rouge (see fig. 1.6), which had scandalized America at the Armory Show, and the Cézanne-influenced Blue Still Life (see fig. 1.16). He also purchased Seated Riffian (fig. 3.24), painted during the artist's visit to Morocco in late 1912-early 1913; Three Sisters with Negro Sculpture (fig. 3.25), later reconstituted as the left wing of the Three Sisters triptych; and the recent Nice painting, Reclining Nude (fig. 3.26). This last had served as the frontispiece to the catalogue of Matisse's 1924 exhibition at Bernheim-Jeune.[31]

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[29] The bill of sale was lost; see Jack Flam, "Henri Matisse," in Wattenmaker 1993: 310. Barnes later reminded Guillaume: "I bought The Music Lesson so cheap… because it was too big for an amateur" (Barnes to Guillaume, October 6, 1926, Barnes Foundation archives). Quinn had been offered the painting at Halvorsen's in 1920 but had passed it up; see above, 3.2: pp. 354-355.

[30] See Flam 1986: 452-454, and Jack Flam, "Henri Matisse," in Wattenmaker 1993: 258-261.

[31] The paintings were bought for the following prices: Madras Rouge, Blue Still Life, and Seated Riffian, 70,000 francs each; Three Sisters with Negro Sculpture, 80,000 francs; and Reclining Nude, 10,000 francs (the first four had belonged to Tetzen-Lund). Barnes also purchased 3 additional Matisses: an interior, at 30,000 francs; a still life, at 14,000 francs; and a landscape, at 10,000 francs (Barnes Foundation archives).

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In 1925, the year the Foundation opened its doors to students, Barnes published The Art in Painting, a book that presents his esthetic theory and, in an idiosyncratic manner, applies its principles to western art. It is an accomplished and well-organized, though dry and pedantic, work.

Barnes trained his students to "see" a work of art according to an objective, quasi-scientific method, analyzing the work in terms of its formal components—which he termed "plastic values"—while disregarding such issues as iconography and social history. The main flaw of Barnes' system, which has strengths as well as obvious limitations, was in its application: Barnes resolutely insisted that his way was the only way, and that no other approach could be taught at his Foundation.

In his chapter on Matisse, Barnes notes that Matisse's work "is a continuation of the Cézanne tradition that the fundamental plastic value is design."[32] In Matisse, however, by comparison with Cézanne, there is "a greater direct reliance on color relations."[33]

> Matisse may be summed up by saying that above all other painters he represents the interest in the interplay of color-forms for their own sake. This interest… necessitates far-reaching distortions of every plastic element, including renunciation of color-values used naturalistically. The basic principle of his art is that of rhythmic contrasts, and especially color-contrasts, but these are

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[32] Albert C. Barnes, The Art in Painting. Merion: Barnes Foundation Press, 1925: 316

[33] Barnes 1925: 321.

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> ballasted and heightened by effects of line, space, and mass.... He is bold and original in his choice and combination of colors, and is unsurpassed in his single-mindedness and consistency in subordinating all other effects to the realization of forms that are a successful fusion of all the plastic elements through the medium of color. These forms have been made steadily more structural throughout the course of his painting, so that the element of mere decoration has progressively given place to the aspect of form. In this sense Matisse represents interest in pure design carried to its highest degree.

The "interest in pure design," according to Barnes, is the source of Matisse's limitations as well as his strengths:

> It is inevitable that Matisse should have to pay for this form by a loss of sensuous charm and content of deep, universal human values. It comes much nearer being a tour de force than the forms of the really great men of the past. Compared with that of either Renoir or Cézanne his form is weaker because it holds in solution fewer values. He has not the artistic importance of the greatest painters...

Barnes concludes, nevertheless, that Matisse, in his "use of all the plastic means to create a strong and distinctly personal effect... is by far the most important painter of our age."[34]

In an Appendix, Barnes analyzes individual pictures from his collection, among them Le Bonheur de vivre and The Music Lesson. Barnes characterizes Music Lesson as an "extraordinarily compact composition, a balanced unity of high order."[35] His analysis of this group portrait of

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[34] Barnes 1925: 323-324.

[35] Barnes 1925: 507.

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Matisse's family reveals the flaws in his method. In an oddly disembodied description, he evokes the artist's use of rhythm, line, light, form, and space, yet does not mention that the painting depicts human figures.

Barnes illustrates the text with three Matisse paintings: Bonheur de vivre, Music Lesson, and Reclining Nude. The two inspired touches in the book, vis-à-vis Matisse, are cross-cultural visual comparisons, juxtapositions of illustrations of Reclining Nude with a Hindu sculpture, and of Music Lesson with a Persian miniature.[36]

Reviewing Art in Painting for the New Republic, Leo Stein found no fault with Barnes' system of formal analysis, itself indebted to Stein's influence. In an otherwise favorable review, Stein took issue with the way Barnes injected his own opinions into his analyses of paintings:

> Mr. Barnes is not satisfied to help the student approach all art intelligently; he also insists on telling the student what of good and bad he ought to find in the different works that are studied.... [Valuations] are offered in a manner that implies an objective descriptive character similar to that of the analyses. In fact, however, their character is entirely different. The analyses have general significance. They are specific applications of a general method that is in its essence descriptive. The valuations are not....
>
> I believe that there is in this a serious defect of method.[37]

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[36] Barnes 1925: 318-320.

[37] Leo Stein, "The Art in Painting," The New Republic 46, 574 (December 2, 1925): 56.

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Barnes regarded his friend's criticism as betrayal. A breach in their friendship followed, lasting several years.[38]

Alfred H. Barr, Jr., a 24-year-old art history instructor at Princeton, published a critique of Barnes' book in Saturday Review. Although Barr was sympathetic both to modernism and to a formalist approach, he was critical of Barnes' doctrinaire formalism.

"This is an important book," Barr began, "because it presents a systematic and confident statement of what is central in the modern attitude toward painting. Its five hundred pages are the expression of an energetic critic, of an experimenter in the education of art-appreciation, and of the owner of the finest collection of modern paintings in America."

> The word "plastic" is the battle-cry of Mr. Barnes's challenging dialectic....
>
> ...But even if it were possible, would it be wise to emphasize plastic values to the exclusion of subject-matter, historical and biographical backgrounds, archeological problems, stylistic differentiation, literary association, and all the ancillary baggage which is customarily presented in a book on painting or in a college art course? So far as education is concerned, some carefully devised compromise is the obvious solution. But as extreme as it may appear, Mr. Barnes's position is temporarily very powerful.... In the light of history and

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[38] In the April 1926 issue of the Journal of the Barnes Foundation, Barnes answered Stein with a personal attack, characterizing Stein's criticism as "a perfect example of the aesthetics of the ivory tower" which was "inefficacious practically, not because it is too fine for the real world, but because it is too feeble... It explains why the book on aesthetics which, fifteen years ago, Mr. Stein announced as forthcoming, has never materialized" (cited in Greenfeld 1987: 111). Stein's ABC of Aesthetics would be published in 1927.

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> experience neither fashion is final, though at present the latter is crescent.

After aptly observing that The Art in Painting "is as ponderous as any textbook," Barr mused wryly about the consequences of Barnes' extreme position:

> Mr. Barnes' position is epitomized by a page where side by side are reproduced an Entombment by Titian and a still-life by Cézanne. Below we read: "The design in these paintings is very similar, showing irrelevancy of subject matter to plastic value." But what price plastic value! Do we, after all, profit largely by reducing Titian's noble tragedy to the terms of apples upon a crinkly napkin? Mr. Barnes will yet drive us to re-reading Ruskin...[39]

By 1926 the Foundation's holdings of Matisse paintings numbered 26,[40] with works from the artist's major periods well represented. The collection included the Interior with Goldfish (1912, see fig. 3.4)—whose pendant, Goldfish and Sculpture (see fig. 1.73) had been in the Armory Show—the cubist-influenced Still Life with Plaster Bust (1916, fig. 3.27), and the Manet-influenced Still Life with Lemon (1916. fig. 3.28). From the fauve period were sketches for Bonheur de vivre and Madras Rouge (both of 1905); and Seated Nude, Standing Figure, and the still life Pitcher of Flowers (all

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[39] Alfred H. Barr, Jr., "Plastic Values," Saturday Review of Literature, July 24, 1926: 948. A quarter of a century later, Barnes, still nursing a grudge over Barr's quip, "What price plastic value," refused to cooperate with Barr in the preparation of Matisse: His Art and His Public; see Barr, Letter to the Editor, Art News 51, 4 (July-August), 1952: 6.

[40] "List of Paintings in the Barnes Foundation," 1926, Barnes Foundation archives.

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of 1906).[41] From the Nice period were Blue Villa (1918), a rendering of architecture in landscape that evoked Cézanne's watercolors; Woman Reading at a Dressing Table (1919), a seated figure in a light-infused room before an open window; and Reclining Figure in Lavender in a Landscape (1920 or 1921), a portrait of Marguerite.[42]

Barnes passed up some opportunities, too. On September 14, Guillaume informed Barnes of his plan to organize a special exhibition of just two paintings—one, "a very large and sumptuous painting, rather abstract, depicting four figures by a river" (Bathers by a River [Art Institute of Chicago, 1916]); the second, Piano Lesson (1916, MoMA), "which is a little more abstract and geometric than your 'Music Lesson.'"[43]

The following week Guillaume added: "I've completed my arrangement with Matisse.... I'm asking high prices, 500

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[41] The study for Bonheur de vivre, approximately 4 x 7 inches, indicates the rhythms and color areas of the picture. The smaller version of Madras Rouge was one of 4 works by Matisse brought to America by Sarah Stein in 1906; see above, 1.4: p. 24. Seated Nude and Standing Figure each depict a female figure out-of-doors, the latter in a kimono. Mme. Matisse posed for the pictures, both of which were painted in Collioure.

[42] Also in the 1926 inventory (see above, n. 40) were the early works Small Jug (1898) and Houses at Fenouillet (1898-9), several small Nice-period paintings, and an ink drawing of a Collioure landscape (1905 or 1906).

[43] "J'ai revu Matisse et je suis en train de faire une petite affaire avec lui—il y a chez lui depuis dix ou douze ans un très grand et somptueux tableau assez abstrait, représentant quatre personnages au bord d'une rivière. Je voudrais l'acheter et quelques autres de cette époque dont une 'Leçon de piano' un peu plus abstraite, plus géométrique que votre 'leçon de musique'" (Guillaume to Barnes, September 14, 1926, Barnes Foundation archives).

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[thousand francs] for the piano lesson and maybe 700 [thousand francs] for bathers by a river.... They've already caused a sensation, even before the opening of the exhibition.... Georges Duthuit will give a lecture on Matisse at my gallery. A reading will be given of your book's Matisse chapter." He informed Barnes of the Quinn sale in Paris: "There's going to be an auction of the remaining paintings from the Quinn Collection. It will be held soon at the Hotel Druout; I'll send you the catalogue tomorrow.[44]

Barnes replied: "I doubt if the rest of the Quinn collection is very important. He had a great many bad paintings bought at the time when any arriviste who could use a brush succeeded in selling stupid and meaningless pictures."[45]

Belying Barnes' dismissive remarks, the Quinn sale included such major Matisses as Blue Nude and Music (Sketch), both of 1907, and the Italian Woman of 1916 (see figs. 1.20. 1.21, and 2.18); all three of these works would go to American

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[44] "J'ai terminé cet arrangement avec MATISSE....Je demande des prix très élevés de ces tableaux 500 [mille] pour la leçon de piano et peut-être 700 [mille] pour les demoiselles à la rivière.... Ils font déjà sensation avant même l'ouverture de l'exposition.... Georges DUTHUIT fera chez moi une conférence sur Matisse. Lecture sera donnée de votre chapitre sur MATISSE dans votre livre.

"On va faire une vente des tableaux qui reste de la collection QUINN. Elle aura lieu à l'Hôtel Druout prochainement; je vous expédierai le catalogue demain" (Guillaume to Barnes, September 23, 1926, Barnes Foundation archives).

[45] Barnes to Guillaume, October 2, 1926 (Barnes Foundation archives).

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collectors.[46] Barnes had allowed his resentment of Quinn to override his interests as a collector.

Nor would Barnes buy Bathers by a River or Piano Lesson, each of which he considered too big for his available wall space and too expensive for his budget. On October 6 he wrote to Guillaume: "The photographs of your new Matisses arrived at this very moment. They look like very important ones and one of them is the largest Matisse I ever heard of. The two large ones should go into a public museum and I fear that you will have trouble in selling them to a private collector."[47]

Barnes predicted correctly. On October 25 Guillaume reported: "The Matisse exhibition is over; I didn't sell the two paintings; but am happy to keep them. In my home they will look magnificent."[48]

In 1928 the Barnes-Guillaume relationship came to an abrupt end, a consequence of Guillaume's overreaching and Barnes' peevishness. Barnes had decided to buy a house for each of his associates at the Foundation, in the environs of Merion. Guillaume, as Foreign Secretary, requested comparable benefits in Paris. Barnes initially agreed, but when he saw the lavish town house that Guillaume was renting at 20, avenue

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[46] See above, 3.2: p. 396, n. 144.

[47] Barnes to Guillaume, October 6, 1926 (Barnes Foundation archives).

[48] "Exposition Matisse terminée; pas vendu les deux tableaux; mais suis aussi content de les garder. Quand [dans] ma maison ils seront d'un effet magnifique" (Guillaume to Barnes, October 25, 1926, Barnes Foundation archives).

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de Messine, which Guillaume wanted him to purchase and to have restored by Adolf Loos, he told Guillaume to find a less expensive site. Undeterred, Guillaume stated his intention to sell artworks he held in reserve in order to buy the townhouse, and asked Barnes to pay half the cost. Despite Barnes' warnings, Guillaume proceeded to buy the building. As a consequence, Barnes severed his relationship with Guillaume, henceforth banishing him from the Foundation and returning his letters unopened.[49] No further mention of Barnes or his Foundation would appear in the pages of Guillaume's Les Arts à Paris.

Forbes Watson's proclamation about the Barnes Foundation—"At last, a public museum of modern art"—was premature. Nor did the Quinn collection become the core of an "American Luxembourg," as Walter Pach and Joseph Brummer had hoped.[50] But a permanent American institution to house and support modern art, as envisioned by Walter Pach, Arthur B. Davies, and others, was about to become reality.

In New York, in May 1929, Abbie Aldrich Rockefeller, Lillie P. Bliss, and Mary Quinn Sullivan met for lunch at Mrs. Rockefeller's West 54th Street townhouse to make plans for a

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[49] Giraudon 1993a: 93-98.

[50] See above, 3.2: pp. 388-389, n. 130.

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such an institution.[51] All three had been guided as collectors by Davies, who had died the previous October.[52]

The three ladies had as their luncheon guest A. Conger Goodyear, a former trustee of the Albright Gallery in Buffalo, whom they enlisted to be founding chairman.[53] In August, on the advice of Professor Paul Sachs of the Fogg Art Institute at Harvard,[54] the founders appointed Alfred Barr as museum director.[55]

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[51] Abby Aldrich Rockefeller was Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Mary Quinn Sullivan, wife of John Quinn's friend Cornelius J. Sullivan, was not related to John Quinn.

[52] Miss Bliss owned Matisse's Interior with a Violin Case (see fig. 4.6) and Young Woman in a Green Dress (1921, Colin Collection, New York). Both works went to the Museum of Modern Art as part of the Bliss bequest in 1934; the Museum would de-accession the latter work in 1944 (Cowart 1986: 290, 309). Mrs. Rockefeller owned the Matisse drawing "Girl in Feathered Hat," purchased from the Kraushaar Gallery in 1928 (Kert 1993: 254), the bronze La Serpentine (see fig. 1.61), purchased from the Davies estate auction in April 1929 (Perlman 1998: 366), "one small painting… and a number of his prints" (see letter to de Lorey, below).

[53] Goodyear was the owner of Matisse's Music (Sketch) (see fig. 1.21), purchased at the Quinn auction in 1926.

[54] Paul Sachs, through his "museum course" at Harvard, trained a generation of future museum directors and curators, Alfred Barr among them. In 1928, three of his undergraduate students—John Walker III, Lincoln Kirstein, and Edward M. M. Warburg—founded the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art, to which Sachs and Barr were advisors. In November 1929 the Society presented a loan exhibition, "Derain, Matisse, Picasso," which included eight oils, one drawing, and 3 lithographs by Matisse. See Nicholas Fox Weber, Patron Saints: Five Rebels Who Opened America to a New Art 1928-1943 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992): 1-132.

[55] Dwight Macdonald described Barr: "Shy, frail, low of voice, and scholarly of mien, the austerity of his beak-nosed, bespectacled face relieved only by the kind of secret smile one sees on archaic Greek statues or on the carefully locked features of a psychoanalyst…" (Dwight Macdonald, "Profiles: Action on West Fifty-Third Street [Alfred Barr]: I," The New Yorker, December 12, 1953: 49).

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On August 26, Mrs. Rockefeller wrote to her friend Eustache de Lorey[56]:

> I took the liberty of suggesting to Mr. Conger Goodyear that he look you up when he is in Paris. During the spring a small group of New York people got together and took a first step toward a museum of modern art in New York. Mr. Goodyear is the Chairman of the Committee and is in Europe hoping to enlist the interest and sympathy of European collectors, as we shall be obliged to borrow pictures for our first exhibitions the first two years.
>
> I told Mr. Goodyear that you were deeply interested in modern painting and that I knew you would be glad to give him advice as to where he might find some of the best pictures. My husband is not at all interested in modern painting so that I have to go into it myself in a very modest way and unfortunately I have one small painting and one drawing by Matisse and a number of his prints. Please tell him [Matisse] the only reason I have not more is my inability to acquire them.[57]

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[56] De Lorey, a French art historian and arts administrator, was characterized by Margaret Scolari Barr as a "distinguished though unassuming gentleman" with whom Mrs. Rockefeller liked to chat about contemporary art (Margaret Scolari-Barr, "Our Campaigns," The New Criterion 6, Special Issue [Summer 1987]: 26).

[57] Abby Aldrich Rockefeller to Eustache de Lorey, August 26, 1929, cited in Bernice Kert, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller: The Woman in the Family (New York: Random House, 1993): 262-263, and 495, n. 27.

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Matisse and America, 1905-1933

by

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Volume II

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Chapter 4. Matisse and America, 1930-1933

4.1. Introduction

As a consequence of the Great Depression, the American market for Matisse declined even as his audience was growing. During the early thirties, Matisse increasingly relied on two institutions—the Barnes Foundation in Merion and the Museum of Modern Art in New York—and on two collectors: Albert Barnes and Etta Cone.

In November 1929, 10 days after the stock-market crash, the Museum of Modern Art opened its doors. Under Alfred Barr's leadership, the Modern helped to expand the audience for Matisse's work. The Museum's exhibitions of the early thirties featuring Matisse were "Painting in Paris" (1930), the Lillie Bliss memorial exhibition (1931), and the Matisse retrospective (1931), the Museum's first show devoted to a single artist. Barr was the most influential Matisse supporter of the early thirties, and his retrospective and catalogue shaped Matisse scholarship for a generation.

Matisse, throughout his career, sought to maintain a reputation not only as a leading modernist but as an upholder of tradition. At the time of his retrospective, Matisse was challenged from within modernist ranks, when Stieglitz disciple Paul Rosenfeld attacked the Nice-period paintings as "decadent."

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In 1933, Matisse entered the fray, differentiating his own work from the politically engaged art of the time. Responding to a controversy involving a mural by Diego Rivera in Rockefeller Center, Matisse criticized "propaganda art."

While Matisse's reputation rested in large part on the Nice-period paintings of the twenties, his work was undergoing a shift in direction. Other than The Yellow Dress, completed in 1931, he produced no easel paintings from 1930 to 1933. His chief preoccupation was the dance mural for the Barnes Foundation, executed in a simplified, monumental style and composed with the aid of a cut-paper technique. Two versions were produced; because the first was begun according to incorrect measurements, a second was constructed. His other project, an illustrated book of Mallarmé's poetry, was also rendered in a pared-down, simplified style. Both The Yellow Dress and the maquette for the Mallarmé illustrations were purchased by Etta Cone.

Matisse himself was one of his own most effective advocates. In the course of 4 visits in 4 years, Matisse became a public figure in America. Frequently interviewed, he issued informal but carefully worded public statements. His son Pierre, who opened his own gallery in 1931, continued to look after his stateside interests.

Among Matisse's supporters in print were Henry McBride of the Sun and the Dial, Edward Alden Jewell of the New York Times, Meyer Schapiro of Columbia University, and Albert Barnes, who in 1933 published the Art of Henri-Matisse. In the

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same year, Gertrude Stein's Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas was published.

Matisse's installation of the Barnes mural in May 1933 put a close to a chapter of his life. Gertrude Stein's memoir, containing her account of the purchase of The Woman with the Hat (1905) which began this study, brings the story full circle.

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4.2. Matisse in America, 1930-1931

For much of the year 1930, Henri Matisse was in transit. Of his four excursions to America, three took place in 1930 (the third concluded in early 1931). Consequently, for most of the year he was on hiatus from sustained work.[1]

In the preceding year 1929, Matisse's painting had taken a shift in direction. The Yellow Dress (fig. 4.1)[2] was begun in tandem with The Yellow Hat (fig. 4.2). The two paintings depict the same model in similar pose and attire, the former in the illusionistic manner of the Nice period, the latter in a flattened, abstract style.[3]

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[1] Recent research on Matisse's sculptural output for 1930 indicates that it was smaller than previously believed. Elsen ascribes 3 sculptures to that year: Tiari, Venus in a Shell, and Back IV. Elderfield, however, gives the dates "1930 or 1931" to Tiari and Venus in a Shell, and "ca. 1931" to Back IV, apparently concluding that it was unlikely Matisse could have completed all 3 works in a year in which he did so much traveling (see Albert Elsen, The Sculpture of Henri Matisse [New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1972]: 170-174, 192-203, and John Elderfield, Henri Matisse: A Retrospective [New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1992]: 297, 368, and 369).

[2] The Yellow Dress was finally completed after the artist's return from America in 1931. In October 1930, Matisse (between visits #1 and #2) told the interviewer E. Tériade: "During my trip... I often thought of the work I had left unfinished [The Yellow Dress]. I might even say that I thought of it constantly. Returning to Nice for a month this summer, I went back to the painting and worked on it every day. Then I left again for America. And during the crossing I realized what I had to do... I am anxious to get back to it today" (Jack Flam, ed. Matisse on Art, second ed. [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995]: 88, and 276, n. 2).

[3] Matisse had returned to an earlier practice of pictorial pairing, employed in such works as Young Sailor I and II of 1906 (see figs. 1.11 and 1.12), and the two views of Notre Dame Cathedral of 1914, in which the first version was relatively naturalistic, the second more abstract.

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At the outset of 1930, Matisse was in a state of restlessness and uncertainty. Never before had he undertaken such extensive travel. He was planning two visits to the United States: for the first, he would cross the country by train en route to Tahiti; for the second, he would go to Pittsburgh to serve on the Carnegie International jury.

Whatever his uncertainties, Matisse had reason to be optimistic. His service on the Carnegie jury, a body that had honored him with first prize in 1927,[4] could only confirm his position as the preeminent modernist in the eyes of Americans. He hoped that the visit to Tahiti would be restorative, bringing him in contact with new natural motifs while reuniting him with the spirit of Gauguin. A shift to Gauguin—from Renoir, Monet, and Manet—suggests a yearning for a more synthetic vision.

Matisse's trip to America held the promise of being a return to his past, reuniting him with paintings of the Stein years, such as Blue Nude (at Etta Cone's apartment in Baltimore) and Bonheur de vivre and Madras rouge (at the Barnes Foundation in Merion) (see figs. 1.20, 1.2, and 1.6). Initially, Matisse thought of America as a way station en route to Tahiti; but America made a deeper impression on him than he had anticipated.

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[4] Of Matisse's triumph at the 1927 Carnegie International, Forbes Watson had written: "No painter in our epoch has been attacked more vituperatively than Matisse and I think it is very pleasant to realize that while still vigorous he has been able to enjoy the rich fruits of complete victory" (Forbes Watson, "The Carnegie International," The Arts 12, 5 [November 1927]: 260.) See n. 5, below.

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Even before his arrival in New York, Matisse was heralded as a visiting dignitary. "Matisse is Coming," announced the January 15 Art Digest above a photograph of the artist:

> Henri Matisse, who, without doubt, is the world's leading "modernist," has been appointed a juror for next fall's Carnegie International (the 29th). He is coming over here, and he is going to be given receptions, and be interviewed, and he is going to be an "event." It will be remembered that his "Still Life" was awarded first prize at the 26th Carnegie International,[5] which was the first official award Matisse had ever received.
>
> Carnegie Institute sent THE ART DIGEST a photograph of Matisse which is herewith reproduced. He looks like a statesman or an author, and not in the least like the hated "wild beast" whom Alfred Stieglitz introduced to America nearly two decades before he established his present "American Place"...[6]
>
> ...For all his virile appearance, Matisse is an elderly person. He was born in 1869, and that makes him sixty....
>
> As soon as Matisse was awarded first prize at Carnegie, a story was printed that he had renounced modernism in an address to his pupils. He cabled back: "In the first place, I have no pupils. I live alone, not tutoring anybody. Secondly, though I am considered a modernist, I have never abandoned the traditions of painting."[7]

Matisse's arrival was announced in Art News:

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[5] The painting, Compotier et vase de fleurs (1925, location unknown) is illustrated in Massimo Carrà, Tout l'oeuvre peint de Matisse: 1904-1928 (Paris: Flammarion, 1982): fig. 432, and in John O'Brian, Ruthless Hedonism: Matisse's American Reception (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999): 24.

[6] In fact, Stieglitz had introduced Matisse more than two decades before he opened An American Place. Matisse first showed at 291 in April 1908; An American Place opened in December 1929. (Stieglitz had a second establishment, the Intimate Gallery, from December 1925 to May 1929).

[7] Unsigned, "Matisse is Coming," Art Digest 4, 8 (January 15, 1930): 18.

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> Among the passengers on the Ile de France, which docked on March 4th, was Henri Matisse, who will remain at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in New York for a few days. The famous artist is on a trip around the world, to last five months. From New York he will go to San Francisco and thence to Tahiti, where he expects to rest and perhaps paint for two months. He plans to return to the United States in September to attend the International Exhibition of the Carnegie Institute at Pittsburgh, where he will be one of the judges.[8]

As his son Pierre had been, Henri Matisse was dazzled by his first sight of the New York skyline. When his ship pulled into the harbor, he later recalled, he saw "this gold and black block in the night, reflected in the water," and "was in complete ecstasy. Someone near me on the boat said: It's a spangled dress, which helped to arrive at my own image. New York seemed to me like a gold nugget." He recalled the liberating sensation of expansiveness that he felt on the streets of New York by day:

> The proportions of the street and the height of the buildings give a sensation of space. One breathes better there than in narrow old streets. One has an impression of amplitude in which the order gives you a feeling of security. You can think very comfortably in a New York street, which has become practically impossible in our Parisian muddle....
>
> The skyscrapers are not at all what you would imagine from photographs. The sky begins after the tenth story, because the stonework is already eaten up by the light. The light and its reflections take the materiality from the building. Seen from the street, the skyscraper gives us the sensation of a gradation of tone from the base to the top. The gradation of a tone which evaporates in the sky, taking on the softness of the

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[8] Unsigned, "Matisse Stops in New York en Route to Tahiti," Art News 28, 23 (March 8, 1930): 12.

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> celestial matter with which it mixes, gives the passer-by a feeling of lightness that is completely unexpected by the European visitor. This lightening, which corresponds to a feeling of release, is quite beneficial in counterbalancing the overwhelming hyperactivity of the city.
>
> The modern buildings, mostly white, are often traversed from base to top with great brilliant aluminum moldings which render the proportions comprehensible at a glance, without distorting them, like a mirror of water. Thus we can associate this size with that which is already familiar to us, and the skyscraper fits into our scheme of palpable objects, with human proportions. This no doubt enlarges our space.[9]

At the end of his first day in New York, Matisse wrote to his wife:

> If I were not in the habit of seeing my decisions through, I would go no farther than New York, for what I find here is really and truly a new world: it's great and majestic like the sea—and on top of that one senses the human effort behind it.... What you have here is the grandeur of space and order.
>
> ... I was ready to see this.
>
> My journey is just right like this—on my way to see idle primitives. I've started out seeing active primitives—two extremes.
>
> Where do we fit in? That's the question.[10]

---

[9] "Entretien avec Tériade," in Flam 1995: 90-91. The original interview was published in L'Intransigeant, October 20 and 27, 1930.

[10] Henri Matisse to Amélie Matisse, March 5, 1930, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in Pierre Schneider, Matisse, trans. Michael Taylor and Bridget Strevens Romer (New York: Rizzoli, 1984): 606. Matisse's impressions of New York were not entirely favorable: Broadway was "absolutely infernal and hideous... the only place I've seen in New York I can't bear"; Harlem was a "black hell where Americans go in search of their paradise." The Havemeyer Collection (at the Metropolitan Museum) drew a mixed review: "some extraordinary Monets, as well as three Cézannes, some Degas, Renoirs and Courbets, and several questionable Rembrandts" (Henri Matisse to Amélie Matisse, March 6, 1930, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in Schneider 1984: 607).

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Matisse met with the press at the Valentine (formerly Valentine Dudensing) Gallery, where his son was partner and his paintings decorated the walls. Stimulated by the pace and scale of the city, he held forth on a favorite theme—that art should be of its time:

> Every art is a reflection of the time in which it was produced, it is the logical result of its own surroundings....
>
> When I sailed up the bay and saw the sky line of New York, when I went up to the top of the Woolworth Building and got a glimpse of the city, I felt that all of these things must of necessity influence the painters. Here is a different civilization from that of Europe. I have seen any number of photographs of New York and countless cinema pictures, but no one can grasp its majestic grandeur until one sees it. Its vastness is beyond all comprehension. The avenues... seem to go on to infinity, while the tremendous buildings are awe inspiring.
>
> Now compare conditions such as these with those of fifty or a hundred or more years ago, and you will understand why such an apparently radical change has come over painting. It is the age in which we live which differs more from preceding ages than the painting of today does from that which has gone before....
>
> A few days ago... I was in Paris; in a few more days I shall be in the South Sea Islands. Think of that and compare it with the period when a journey from France to Italy was a matter of months. Overhead men are flying about, on the streets they are rushing around in autos, the wheels of industry are humming all about. Is it any wonder that these things are reflected in what is being painted?
>
> Swiftness and celerity are the dominating characteristics of the day and they must find their expression in its art. But though this is a mechanical age, that does not imply that emotion must be absent in... modern painting, sculpture or music. Indeed, it means, if anything, that there must be more emotion, and the

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> artist of today, surrounded by machines, must have more emotion to express.[11]

Rejuvenated by his first few days in America, Matisse wrote to his wife: "Since arriving in New York, I feel twenty years younger."[12]

As Matisse crossed the United States by train, his letters home were an exuberant travelogue. En route to San Francisco, where he would board the Tahiti on March 21, he visited Chicago, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles.[13] In San Francisco he visited Harriet Levy[14] and the California School of Fine Arts,[15] and was guest of honor at a banquet of Bay Area artists at the studio of sculptor Ralph Stackpole. No doubt

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[11] S. J. Woolf, "Matisse Offers Key to Modern Art," New York Times Magazine, March 16, 1930: 3, 18; the article includes a portrait drawing of Matisse by Woolf. Matisse was also interviewed by a writer for Saturday Night; see "Individualities," Saturday Night 10, 26 (March 29, 1930): 5.

[12] Henri Matisse to Amélie Matisse, March 7, 1930, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in Schneider 1984: 607.

[13] On the Chicago Art Institute: "It's a magnificent museum, very fine Douanier Rousseaus, stunning Monets and Renoirs..."; on the city of Chicago: "Immense, immense... if I were thirty, this is where I would come to work.... There's so much drive in everything"; on the desert: "The light is dazzling"; on Los Angeles: "a very beautiful city...an immense Côte d'Azur." Henri Matisse to Amélie Matisse, March 9-14, 1930, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in Schneider 1984: 607.

[14] Harriet Levy was a Matisse collector and a Stein family friend; see above, 1.8: p. 148.

[15] A gushing report by Aline Kistler of the San Francisco Chronicle (reprinted in Art Digest) describes Matisse's visit to the California School of Fine Arts: "As Matisse went from one studio to the next the school seemed to take on new significance as seen through" the eyes of "the genial Frenchman who marveled at the light and beauty of this California School in comparison with the cramped quarters and makeshift studios of the Paris Schools..." Aline Kistler, "Matisse Approves," Art Digest 4, 14 (April 15, 1930): 26.

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Matisse enjoyed being lionized; but he regretted spending so much time away from his studio.[16]

Matisse spent nearly three months in the South Seas,[17] departed in mid-June, and returned to France via the Panama Canal, bypassing the United States. After spending August in Nice, he was back in New York in September.

Matisse's Carnegie Institute hosts had invited him for a two-week traveling itinerary, from September 19 to October 1. He would extend his trip by an extra ten days and leave the second week in October.

The second trip received the most press coverage of the four American visits. Matisse was a colorful figure and, as usual, quotable. "An American artist should express America," he told Louis Sherwin of the New York Evening Post, in an interview reprinted in other publications.[18] When a New York

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[16] Two incidents suggest that Matisse missed painting. Kistler (see n. 15, above) reported: "What seemed to interest him most of all was his visit to the school storeroom, where he examined the paints used by the students. He fondled the tubes of fresh color, unscrewing the caps and sampling each.... His hands went from one tube to the next, feeling its smooth surface, identifying its substance..." Kistler, "Matisse Approves," Art Digest 4, 14 (April 15, 1930): 26. Annette Rosenshine later recalled: "Upon his [Matisse's] arrival in San Francisco I had sent him a box of gay multi-colored spring flowers, knowing they would delight him. His regret, he told me, was his lack of time to paint them...." (Annette Rosenshine, "Life's Not a Paragraph" [Typescript, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1964]: 120-1).

[17] For a discussion of Matisse's South Sea experience and its effect on the late cut-outs, see Jack Flam, Matisse: The Dance, National Gallery of Art (Washington: 1993): 15-16.

[18] Louis Sherwin, "This Is Matisse Himself, In Person," New York Evening Post, excerpted in the Baltimore Sun, ca. September-October 1930, (Scrapbook, Cone papers, BMA), and in "Study Art in America," Literary Digest, October 18, 1930. The Digest's article was accompanied by a photograph of the artist in overcoat and muffler, above the caption: "'A

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Times reporter elicited his comments on the current situation in art, Matisse was circumspect.

> Asked about the probability of a return of present-day artists to "tradition," he listened intently while the interpreter translated the question and replied:
>
> "Tradition is a thing so large that every painter can find enough room in it to develop."[19]

Matisse was the subject of Time Magazine's cover story, in which the artist was described in Time's characteristic prose:

> Until last March grizzle-chinned, wrinkle-browed Henri Matisse had never felt it necessary to visit the U. S. Even then he did not stay long but rushed abruptly across the country on his way to Tahiti. He returned three weeks ago to perform his duties in Pittsburgh and have fun in a Manhattan round of dinners, receptions, studio teas. Reporters, hostesses found him silent behind his whiskers, only occasionally willing to act the oracle.[20]

After two days of official duties in Pittsburgh,[21] Matisse had a busy public schedule in New York, Washington, and Philadelphia. Whatever the intent of his hosts, for Matisse the main attraction was the Barnes Foundation.

Complete Frenchman'/But Henri Matisse says there is more respect for art in America than in France."

[19] Unsigned, "Urges Our Artists to Paint in America," New York Times, Sunday, September 21, 1930.

[20] "Carnegie Show," Time 6, 16 (October 20, 1930): 48-50. Below the cover photo of Matisse the caption reads: "Henri Matisse/... told the U.S. not to be ashamed of itself."

[21] The jury awarded first prize to Picasso for a portrait of Olga Picasso (1923, private collection).

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It is not surprising that Matisse was eager to meet Dr. Barnes and visit the Foundation. Barnes continued to be an active buyer of his paintings. The Foundation was the greatest repository in America of Matisse and was, in addition, rich in Renoir and Cézanne, two artists who were important to Matisse.

For his part, Barnes was keen on a meeting for two reasons (in addition to wanting the prestige that Matisse's presence would bring): Barnes wanted to take his measure personally in connection with a full-length study of Matisse he was writing, and Barnes planned to commission Matisse to paint a mural for the lunettes of the main hall of the Foundation.

The meeting of Barnes and Matisse on September 27, 1930 would be the first of a series of encounters between the two men over the next three years.[22] In retrospect, it was the high point of their relationship. Matisse, favorably impressed by both Barnes and the Foundation, agreed to consider the mural project.

In October, shortly after his return to Paris, Matisse told an interviewer:

> One of the most striking things in America is the Barnes Collection, which is exhibited in a spirit very beneficial for the formation of American artists. There the old master paintings are put beside the modern ones, a Douanier Rousseau next to a Primitive, and this

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[22] For detailed accounts of Matisse's first visit to the Foundation, see Howard Greenfeld, The Devil and Dr. Barnes (New York: Viking, 1987): 159-161, and Flam 1993: 16-19.

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> bringing together helps students understand a lot of things that the academics don't teach.[23]

On October 19, Matisse visited Sarah and Michael Stein at their villa "Les Terrasses" in Vaucresson. He talked with them about his impressions of America and about their mutual friends the Cone sisters. He spoke warmly of Claribel, who had died the previous year, and of his intention to do a memorial drawing of her.[24]

In late October Barnes was in Paris at the Hôtel Mirabeau. From Paris galleries he purchased 4 Nice-period Matisses.[25]

Barnes met with Matisse to discuss the mural commission. By mid-November Matisse was making studies in small format for the project.

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[23] "Entretien avec Tériade" in Flam 1995: 92.

[24] In an October letter to Etta Cone, Sarah Stein wrote: "Mr. Matisse spoke much of America which interests him immensely.… we spoke at length of you and Claribel.… He has such a real understanding of you, Etta dear, and such true appreciation of dear Claribel." And in a letter to Etta the following January, Sarah added: "When we had that nice talk the last time he [Matisse] was here, he spoke of doing a drawing of dear Claribel…" Sarah and Michael Stein to Etta Cone, October 20, 1930 (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art) and January 2, 1931 (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art, cited in Brenda Richardson, Dr Claribel and Miss Etta: The Cone Collection, Baltimore Museum of Art, 1985: 124). Although the letters bear the signatures "Sally Anne" and "Mike," they are written in Sarah's hand.

[25] From Bernheim-Jeune, Barnes purchased a portrait of Marguerite entitled Girl in Black on a Balcony (1918), and Seated Odalisque (1922). From the Galerie Georges Petit he purchased French Window at Nice (1919), and "Nude" (Invoice, Bernheim-Jeune to Barnes, October 31, 1930, and Paul Ebstein [of Bernheim-Jeune] to Barnes, November 19, 1930, Barnes Foundation archives).

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In Baltimore Etta Cone received a note from Marguerite Duthuit:

> My father has asked me to say how sorry he is that circumstances prevented him from doing a portrait of Dr. Claribel Cone. He thinks it would be possible, thanks to his very lively memory of her, to do a drawing which, while not a portrait, would be the expression of his memory of her personality. He asks that you, Miss Cone, collect all possible photos of Claribel Cone so that he can choose from among them when he comes to you in Baltimore in December.[26]

On December 15, Matisse was back in New York harbor. The two main items on his itinerary were visits to Merion and Baltimore. In Merion he would examine the mural site and discuss financial terms with Barnes. In Baltimore he would visit with Etta Cone, see the Cone collection, and gather photographs for the memorial drawing of Claribel. Matisse was met at the pier by Barnes' friend John Dewey, who ushered him to Merion the same day.

The next morning, December 16, the Baltimore Sun announced Matisse's imminent arrival, reporting erroneously that the artist "was coming to Baltimore to paint scenes of the city's streets."[27] On December 17, a Sun editorial predicted that Matisse's presence in the city would be "a break for Baltimore."

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[26] Marguerite Duthuit to Etta Cone, November 1930, cited in Barbara Pollack, The Collectors: Dr. Claribel and Miss Etta Cone (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962): 219.

[27] Unsigned, "Henri Matisse Will Paint Scenes from City's Streets," Baltimore Sun, December 16, 1930.

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> Indeed, it is the city's first opportunity in a long, long while to escape out of the hands of the adorning and adoring etchers into the canvases of a serious artist. We doubt that anything Baltimorean ever has been recorded by an artist of such importance and genius...
>
> It is clear that such a visit—if it comes to pass—will affect the city. Matisse is already splendidly represented here in the Cone Collection, recently exhibited at the Museum of Art,[28] but it cannot be said that he is a definitely popular painter in local circles. His impressive presence here, however, could be counted on to alter much of the nonchalant allegiance to the Munich school.... And the effect on the professional artists and art students should be electric....
>
> Of course, M. Henri Matisse might change his mind.... But we very sincerely hope that he does not. He will bring so many admirable and desirable things here besides his paint box.[29]

On the same morning that the Sun printed the editorial, Matisse arrived in Baltimore, a guest of Etta Cone. Marguerite Duthuit would later write to Etta: "My father was very touched by your reception of him and enchanted with the moments spent with you—he has told us about it in great detail. He was a bit unhappy because he had so little leisure time."[30] Etta Cone's desk calendar for the two days December 17-18 reads as follows:

> December 17, 1930
> Morning: 11:45 Mons. Henri Matisse arrives
> Afternoon: Lunch with Mons. Matisse

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[28] A memorial exhibition in honor of Claribel Cone had been held at the Baltimore Museum in April (while Matisse was in the South Seas). It included 27 paintings and 10 sculptures by Matisse, all from the Cone Collection.

[29] "Cultural Rumor," Editorial, Baltimore Sun, December 17, 1930.

[30] Marguerite Duthuit to Etta Cone, February 1931, Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art.

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Evening: Philharmonic—Mons. Matisse as guest
December 18, 1930
Morning: 10:42—Mons. Matisse left for New York[31]

During Matisse's visit he and Etta discussed his projected memorial drawing of Claribel, for which Etta had gathered photographs. He also asked for and received her consent to lend paintings from her collection to his forthcoming retrospective at the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris.[32]

The Sun's art critic, A. D. Emmart, conducted an interview with Matisse in one of Etta's "picture-crowded rooms against a background of his own paintings and bronzes." The Sun's headline writers, perhaps to give the impression that they had something new to report, gave the interview the following (unintentionally humorous) title: "Matisse Disclaims Prophetic Knowledge of Future of Art." (Matisse, with customary prudence, had answered, "But I am not a prophet" to a question about the future of painting.)

Matisse's message, as contained in the article, had been consistent since his arrival in America:

> America impresses M. Matisse. Its extensiveness, its variety and the quality of its light. He thinks, moreover, that it promises to develop a school of painting of its own but he believes that now this is still in process of development and little therefore can be said of it. But he feels American painters should

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[31] Cited in Pollack 1962: 217.

[32] Marguerite Duthuit to Etta Cone, February 1931: "The exhibition which my father talked to you about and for which he asked you to lend some paintings will take place in June" (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

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> deal with America. They may study abroad and take what they can from Europe. It is in America, finally, and out of America that they must make their pictures.[33]

In fact, Matisse had displayed little knowledge of, or curiosity about, current American art. Nor had his schedule allowed him much contact with American artists. As Nancy Boas aptly observes, Matisse's "visit was treated more as a social event for a visiting dignitary than as an opportunity to learn from the master"[34]—or, one might add, as an opportunity for the master to learn about American art and artists.

On the morning of December 18, Matisse left Baltimore for New York. That evening he was to be guest of honor at a dinner given by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller at her townhouse on West 54th Street.

Mrs. Rockefeller had asked Alfred Barr's advice on the guest list. Barr had replied:

> I have been thinking over some of the people for your Matisse dinner. I still feel that Mr. Crowninshield[35] could perhaps give you the best advice. Gay, young people who speak French would probably please Matisse.
>
> [Several] names occur, not all gay, not all young: Henry McBride who, of course, knows Matisse; Jere

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[33] A. D. Emmart, "Matisse Disclaims Prophetic Knowledge of Future of Art," Baltimore Sun, December 18, 1930.

[34] Nancy Boas, The Society of Six: California Colorists (San Francisco: Bedford Arts, 1988): 201, n. 9. Boas is referring to Matisse's visit to San Francisco, but her characterization applies equally well to his entire American sojourn.

[35] Frank Crowninshield, editor of Vanity Fair and collector of modern art, was a founding trustee of the Museum of Modern Art.

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> Abbott[36]... who speaks adequate and occasionally voluble French and [is] interested in Matisse... You will perhaps consult Mr. Goodyear about the advisability of having the Dales.[37]...
>
> I hope these suggestions are of some use. I will send all further names when they occur to me. I regret to say that Mrs. Barr and myself will be unable to come...[38]

Monroe Wheeler later recalled that he had advised Mrs. Rockefeller to invite "tall, beautiful blonde girls."[39] In a letter to her son Laurence, Mrs. Rockefeller wrote: "You can suggest anyone you like as long as she is good-looking, as I am told that Matisse very much likes pretty girls."[40] Among the guests were Mary French (later Mrs. Laurence Rockefeller), Betsy Clark (daughter of Stephen Clark)[41], and Eliza Bliss (niece of Lillie Bliss).

Matisse remembered Mrs. Rockefeller's dinner:

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[36] Barr's friend Jere Abbott was associate director of the Museum of Modern Art.

[37] Maud and Chester Dale were collectors; Chester Dale was a trustee of the Museum of Modern Art and part owner of the Galeries Georges Petit, Paris. Dale, who died in 1962, bequeathed most of his Matisses to the National Gallery in Washington; for identifications of the works, see Margrit Hahnloser-Ingold, "Collecting Matisses of the 1920s in the 1920s," in Jack Cowart and Dominique Fourcade, Henri Matisse: The Early Years in Nice: 1916-1930, National Gallery of Art (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1986): 255, and 273, n. 55.

[38] Alfred Barr to Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, December 5, 1930, Barr papers, Archives of American Art, cited in Bernice Kert, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller: The Woman in the Family (New York: Random House, 1993): 302-303, and 498, n. 17.

[39] Kert 1993: 303, and 498, n. 18. Monroe Wheeler, a poet and independent publisher then headquartered in Paris, was later director of publications for the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

[40] Abby Aldrich Rockefeller to Laurence Rockefeller, December 9, 1930, cited in Kert 1993: 303, and 498, n. 19.

[41] The collector Stephen Clark was a trustee of the Museum of Modern Art.

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When I was invited, I was asked whom I would like to dine with.... I replied prudently, "With friends of modern art." There were at this dinner [Stephen] Clark's daughter, and some extraordinary young women, tall, magnificent, with the Rockefeller daughters.[42] [Eustache] de Lorey was there... [Mrs. Rockefeller] later asked him, "What did Matisse say about my dinner party?" "He was very pleased." "You know, he asked to dine with friends of modern art, and I preferred to have him dine with the most beautiful young women in New York."...

We got up from the table and we looked at the vitrines in the walls. There were pedestals with Chinese porcelain against black grounds. It is Rockefeller's great hobby. They were very expensive pieces—very beautiful, very well displayed. I said to myself: I've got to compliment his collection. I went up to him and praised the collection... I knew that he did not like modern painting. Then I added: "It's extraordinary! I can see that you like modern painting." And I saw people pulling back little by little around him.

They were fleeing the explosion.

He replied: "Oh! Never. This is very designed, and modern painting is not designed. "Oh, yes," I said, "in modern painting there is design. It is in the proportions. And I have no doubt that one day you will change your opinion."[43]

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[42] Abby Aldrich Rockefeller and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. had just one daughter: Abby (Babs), b. 1903 (d. 1976).

[43] "Lorsqu'on vous invite, on vous demande avec qui vous voulez manger.... Prudemment j'avais répondu: 'Avec des amis de l'art moderne.' Il y a eu à ce dîner la fille de Clark et des jeunes filles extraordinaires, grandes, magnifiques, avec des filles de Rockefeller. Il y avait de Lorey.... On lui a demandé ensuite: 'Qu'est-ce que M. Matisse a dit de ma réception?' 'Il était très content.' 'Vous savez, il m'avait demandé de le faire dîner avec des amis de l'art moderne, et j'ai préféré le faire dîner avec les plus belles jeunes filles de New York.'...

"On se lève de table. Et l'on peut contempler des vitrines dans les murs. Il y a là des socles avec des porcelaines de Chine se détachant sur fond noir. C'est la grande marotte de Rockefeller. Ce sont des pièces très chères. C'est très beau. Cela ressort très bien. Je me dis: il faut lui faire des compliments sur sa collection. Je m'approche et je le félicite sur cette collection... Je savais qu'il n'aimait pas la peinture moderne. Alors j'ajoute: 'C'est extraordinaire! On voit que vous devez aimer la peinture moderne.' Et j'aperçois des gens qui se retirent peu à

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Frank Crowninshield later recalled Matisse good-humoredly attempting to convince Rockefeller

> that the men who had created the incredibly beautiful green, yellow, red, and black porcelains that were all about us were really in pursuit of exactly the same esthetic goals as those to which Matisse had personally dedicated himself.
>
> He tried, too, to convince him that Braque, Juan Gris, and Picasso... had merely followed the decorative designs and emotive experiences of the Persians... that, in short, there was no such thing as modern art, or ancient art, or art of the middle ages; that the youngest and liveliest art today was that of Egypt, China, and Greece, whereas the deadest art imaginable was that of the hack painters who now flourish in so many of our academies of art.
>
> But the philanthropist, who had listened very politely, regretted quite as politely, and in the most polished French, that he must still appear adamant. Then, with an engaging burst of confidence, he added that Mr. Matisse must not altogether despair, because though he might still seem to be stone, he suspected that Mrs. Rockefeller, thanks to her very special gifts of persuasion, would eventually wear him down...[44]

The next day, December 19, Matisse was back in Merion. On the following day, December 20, Barnes drafted a contract for the mural commission, calling for 3 payments of $10,000, the first to be paid immediately.

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peu d'autour de lui.

"Ils fuyaient l'explosion!

"Il m'a répondu: 'Oh! jamais. Ceci est très dessiné, et la peinture moderne n'est pas dessinée.' 'Si,' ai-je dit, 'dans la peinture moderne il y a du dessin. Il est dans les proportions. Et je ne doute pas qu'un jour vous changerez d'avis'" (Interview with Matisse by Pierre Courthion, 1931, Special Collections, Getty Center, Santa Monica, California).

[44] Raymond B. Fosdick, John D. Rockefeller Jr.: A Portrait (New York: Harper, 1956): 329, cited in Kert 1993: 303-304, and 498, n. 21.

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Barnes, with Matisse's participation, arranged to have a paper template traced from the part of the wall where the mural was to be placed. Matisse would bring the template back to Nice, to ensure that the painting would be constructed with the correct dimensions.

"Everything s going well," Matisse reported to his wife. "I have already done a drawn sketch in front of the surface to be decorated. I am full of strength and enthusiasm." In the same letter Matisse added, in remarks that presaged future difficulties: "Barnes is very nice. We have several points in common, but I am less brutal."[45]

Matisse spent Christmas in Merion, dining alone with Barnes and his wife Laura. The next day he wrote to Mme. Matisse: "I am full of hope and zeal... I have seen the plan of the figures on the panel itself and I have decided on the colors. I think that this will not be difficult for me because I feel that my year of rest has resulted in great progress in terms of clarity of mind."[46]

In the course of his fortnight in Merion of December 1930, Matisse, accompanied by Barnes, visited Samuel S. White III and his wife Vera McIntire White in Ardmore, Pennsylvania. Among Philadelphia-area collectors the Whites were second in importance only to Barnes, with modern French and American

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[45] Henri Matisse to Amélie Matisse, December 22, 1930, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in Flam 1993: 21-22, and 80, n. 35 and n. 38.

[46] Henri Matisse to Amélie Matisse, December 26, 1930, Archives Matisse, Paris, cited in Flam 1993: 22, and 80, n. 41.

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works, as well as art and objects from Asia, the Near East, and Africa. In 1930 they owned 3 Nice-period Matisses: Seated Nude, Back Turned (see fig. 3.2), Interior at Nice (1919), and the still life Histoires juives (1924).[47]

While Matisse was in Merion, he informed Barnes that the two "Three Sisters" panels, which Barnes was hanging separately, were part of a triptych, and he reconstructed the triptych from memory with a pencil sketch. On New Year's day 1931, Matisse, returning to New York by train, realized that in his pencil sketch he had transposed the left and center panels of the Three Sisters triptych. When he got to New York he promptly wrote to Barnes, correcting himself, adding, "Let me repeat to you that I would be very pleased if you could reunite these three things which work badly when apart."[48] (In February, Barnes would have his chance; he would buy the center Three Sisters panel, under circumstances that would

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[47] The White collection was bequeathed to the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1966; it included 6 Matisse oils and a bronze (see below, n. 50). Samuel S. White III (1876?-1952) was an industrialist whose position in the family business, S. S. White Dental Manufacturers, required him to travel worldwide; his wife Vera was a painter. See Henry G. Gardiner, ed., "The Samuel S. White, 3rd, and Vera White Collection" (Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin 43, 296 and 297 [January-March and April-June 1968]): entire issue; and Margrit Hahnloser-Ingold, "Collecting Matisses of the 1920s in the 1920s," in Cowart 1986: 250, and 272, n. 38. A 1931 letter from Matisse to the Whites documenting his visit in 1930 is cited in Gardiner 1968: 78.

[48] "Laissez moi vous répéter que je serai si content que vous puissiez réunir ces trois choses qui vivent mal séparément" (Matisse to Barnes, Plaza Hotel, New York, January 1, 1931, cited by Jack Flam in "Henri Matisse," Richard J. Wattenmaker, ed., Great French Paintings from the Barnes Collection [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993]: 310, n. 9.).

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result in mutual enmity between Barnes and an official of the Philadelphia Museum).[49]

As Matisse prepared to return to France, Joseph Brummer was about to present an exhibition of 46 Matisse sculptures, which would subsequently travel to Chicago.[50] On January 2, the eve of his departure, Matisse submitted to a final interview with the press. The reporter, Ralph Flint of Art News, gave him an elaborate sendoff, saluting his adeptness in public relations and his business acumen as much as his skill as an artist:

> Henri-Matisse is the modern painter par excellence.... He is the man of the moment, the idol of the collectors and the students.... He is as completely simple and direct as his painting, as keen to essential values, as vivid in his contacts. Of all the leaders of the School of Paris movement, he is probably the one best fitted to enter into the spirit of modern America.
>
> ...He openly declares himself in love with New York, with its lithe, free expression, its unsullied zest for life, its mounting, towering sense of accomplishment.... He starts back on the Europa with as princely an expression of American good will and appreciation as could fall to the lot of any man, thrcugh the commission that Dr. Barnes of the Barnes Foundation at Merion, Pennsylvania, has given him....
>
> Having started life as a lawyer has undoubtedly

---

[49] On February 25, 1931, Barnes purchased the center Three Sisters panel from the Valentine Gallery for $15,000. Six days earlier, on February 19, R. Sturgis Ingersoll of the Philadelphia Museum had enlisted Barnes' help in acquiring the picture for the museum. Barnes had written to Ingersoll from New York on February 21: "I like it so much that if you do not buy it I shall get it for our collection within the next few days." When Ingersoll was unable to raise the money by the 24th, Barnes bought it right out from under him (Barnes Foundation archives).

[50] Samuel S. White III purchased Standing Nude with Arms Raised over Her Head (1906) from the exhibition, which ran from January 5 to February 7, 1931, in New York. It is illustrated in Elsen 1972: 68.

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> helped Matisse to surround his art with a distinguished rationality that enables him to play his hand with wisdom and skill. Today he can calmly face the most audacious offers for his canvases without a tremor.... If he were not such a level headed person such success would have proved disastrous. Instead of which he smilingly salutes his responsive public with a most charming ease and familiarity, content to let them know how pleasant it all is and how very much he enjoys doing what has brought them such delight.
>
> Matisse's sculpture... is to be shown at the Brummer Galleries the first week of the New Year, some forty examples in all. This exhibition will doubtless be one of the rallying points of the town, as any event concerning Matisse brings out the crowds. It will be a sort of bon voyage gesture from the French master...[51]

On the train from Cherbourg to Paris, Matisse met the young American painter George L. K. Morris, who recorded the encounter in his journal.[52] In the course of their conversation, Matisse asked Morris

> if he ever knew the American painter Patrick Henry Bruce, who had been among his pupils. I've never met him—I've seen a little of his work and I've found it rather dry

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[51] Ralph Flint, "Matisse Gives Interview on Eve of Sailing" (Art News, January 3, 1931): 1, 4.

[52] George L. K. Morris (1905-1975), later a founder of the American Abstract Artists, was born in New York and studied at the Art Students League. In 1929 he studied with Fernand Léger and Amadée Ozenfant in Paris. His reminiscence, "A Brief Encounter with Matisse," Life Magazine, August 28, 1970: 44-45, was reprinted in Jack Flam, ed., Matisse: A Retrospective (New York: Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, 1988): 263-266. It is rare among journalistic accounts of Matisse in that it captures Matisse's wry sense of humor—in part because Matisse was unaware that he was speaking for posterity. For example: "Matisse discourses on the baneful influences of teachers. With his former twinkle he adds that it's better to study with Léger than with Picasso; if one studied with Picasso, one would imitate not only Picasso but all the people Picasso imitates" (Morris 1970: 45).

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> [Morris replies]. "That doesn't make any difference," Matisse snaps.[53]

As William Agee and Barbara Rose have concluded:

> The originality of his [Bruce's] contribution has led us to believe that... he ultimately influenced Matisse, his former teacher. For although he learned from Matisse the fundamentals of color usage, including black and white, Bruce's new interpretation of the refined pastel harmonies of pale blues and pinks antedates Matisse's studies for the Barnes Collection murals, in which the juxtaposition of pink and blue is used to such exquisite effect. That Bruce was on Matisse's mind when he was planning the murals for Dr. Barnes is documented by the recollections of George L. K. Morris...[54]

Supporting Agee and Rose's argument—that Bruce influenced the color scheme of the Barnes mural—is the fact that Matisse, at the time he brought up the subject of Bruce in conversation with Morris, had only recently "decided on the colors" of the mural, as he had informed his wife less than two weeks before.[55]

In comparison with the Barnes mural (fig. 4.3), see, for example, Bruce's Still Life (Transverse Beams) (fig. 4.4), an architectural painting of matte, unmodulated color, with juxtapositions of pink and blue close to those ultimately employed by Matisse.[56]

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[53] Morris 1970: 45.

[54] William C. Agee and Barbara Rose, Patrick Henry Bruce: American Modernist (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1979): 3-4

[55] Henri Matisse to Amélie Matisse, December 26, 1930; see above, n. 46.

[56] In 1920, Henri-Pierre Roché had tried to interest John Quinn in collecting Bruce's work; Quinn had declined, in part because of its "architectural" quality; see above, 3.2: 355-356. There is no evidence

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Two decades earlier Matisse had painted a panel for the Moscow home of his patron Shchukin, using the theme of the dance (see fig. 1.58). In Merion he would adapt this theme to the architectural limitations imposed by the site. In the course of transforming the intense, saturated colors of the Shchukin panel to the pastel hues of the Barnes mural, he may well have looked for a precedent in the works of his former pupil Patrick Bruce.

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that Matisse was familiar with this particular painting by Bruce. It does, however, employ a color scheme that was characteristic of many of Bruce's paintings of the twenties; see Agee and Rose 1979.

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4.3. Matisse at the Modern, 1930-1932

In early 1930, thanks to the newly founded Museum of Modern Art, Matisse was a presence in New York even before his March 4th arrival on the Ile de France. The Museum was temporarily housed on the twelfth floor of the Heckscher Building on Fifth Avenue and 57th Street. Margaret Scolari (Mrs. Alfred) Barr later recalled: "It was the most exciting place.... We were just a few, always together, and everything went at a mad pace.... Later on, everything got big and compartmentalized, and it wasn't so much fun. Not like the Heckscher days, when Alfred would jump up from his desk, where he was dictating the last pages of a catalogue for a new show, hang a wall of pictures, and then come back and finish the catalogue."[1]

From January 19 through March 2, the Museum presented "Painting in Paris from American Collections," an exhibition of 99 works of art by 26 artists.[2] Matisse was represented by 11 paintings, including loans from Clark, Goodyear, and Etta Cone. Among the Matisses were Goodyear's Music (Sketch) (see fig. 1.21), whose previous owners had included Leo Stein and

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[1] Barr met Margaret Scolari at the opening of the Modern's first exhibition in November 1929; they were married in May 1930. Scolari Barr, never a paid employee of the Museum, "used to help out unofficially" (Dwight Macdonald, "Profiles: Action on West Fifty-Third Street [Alfred Barr] II," New Yorker, December 19, 1953: 36.)

[2] "Painting in Paris" was the Modern's third exhibition, following "Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, and van Gogh" and "Paintings by Nineteen Living Americans," both of November 1929.

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John Quinn; Clark's White Plumes (1919, fig. 4.5), a portrait of the model Antoinette in a plumed hat; and Etta Cone's interior Flowers and Parakeets (see fig. 1.18).

Alfred Barr wrote the catalogue essay, a lucid overview of "the varied panorama of painting in Paris," from the fauves to the cubists to the Surrealists. Matisse, Barr explained, emerged in 1905 as one of the fauves,

> a gallant company of serious enthusiasts for the violent, the bold, and the astonishing. It is they who first made important use of the discoveries of Gauguin and van Gogh and first felt, though scarcely understood, Cézanne's power. For them also a whole world of primitive and barbaric art became a treasure of stimulating suggestion. The aesthetic qualities of Medieval mosaics and glass and woodcuts, near eastern painting and pottery, negro sculpture, Coptic textiles, children's drawings were revealed to them and through them to a reluctant but now grateful world....
>
> During the last twenty years the group of wild young rebels has grown to middle age.... But both Derain and Matisse have continued to grow... the latter more steadily and with far greater originality.[3]

The reviews were generally favorable, an exception being the reliably conservative Royal Cortissoz of the Herald Tribune, who lamented the repudiation of "the ancient sanctions of art."[4] Henry McBride, a reliable booster of the Modern from its outset, overstated the case when he wrote in

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[3] Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Painting in Paris from American Collections (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1930a: 12-13).

[4] Also in the negative column was the critic for the American, who wrote that Matisse and Picasso "show to the full how thin is their art, how empty they are of ideas or anything like originality or charm" (Russell Lynes, Good Old Modern: An Intimate Portrait of the Museum of Modern Art [New York: Atheneum, 1973]: 72).

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the Sun that Painting in Paris was "even more important than the Armory Show. That was promise; this is fulfillment... Time itself is the chooser and the results of the choosing are now in evidence in the rooms of the Heckscher Building."[5] The New Yorker's critic praised the exhibition as "the latest five-star edition of breath-taking achievement... It is a show you could see daily without regretting a moment spent among the Derains, Braques, Picassos, Matisses, Dufys, and Segonzacs."[6]

Painting in Paris drew over 58,000 visitors—they would be the biggest crowds of any show of the Modern's first three years (including Matisse's 1931 retrospective). The exhibition's run was extended by 2 weeks.[7]

Meanwhile, in Berlin, from February 15 to March 19, the dealer Justin Thannhauser presented a Matisse retrospective, comprising 265 works, including more than 80 paintings, some 20 bronzes, and more than 150 works on paper. It was the first of 4 Matisse retrospectives in 1930 and 1931, marking a period of international recognition for the artist (still to come: Paris, Basel, and New York).

Matisse figured again in a small but important exhibition held at the Modern from May 17 to September 27, 1931. This was the memorial exhibition for Lillie Bliss, who

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[5] Lynes 1973: 72

[6] M. P., "The Art Galleries," The New Yorker, February 1, 1930.

[7] Painting in Paris, originally scheduled to close February 16, extended its run to March 2; see Barr 1930a, following the title page: "Because of large attendance the exhibition will remain open until March 2."

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had died in March. It included her promised gifts to the Museum. "It virtually represents the start of the museum as such," noted Henry McBride in the Sun, "for hitherto it has been a place of loan exhibitions."[8]

Miss Bliss's bequest, which comprised (among others) Cézanne, Seurat, Gauguin, and Matisse, would be the core of the Museum's permanent collection.[9] The Matisses were a selection of prints and 2 oils, notably Interior with a Violin Case, painted in winter 1918-1919 (fig. 4.6). Of this painting John Elderfield writes: "The function of the window is... reversed from what it was before. Instead of carrying the eye from interior to exterior space... it brings the light of the exterior into the room.... As so often happens in Matisse's paintings of interiors, the artist himself is absent. Even his surrogate image, the violin, is missing from its sea-blue case..."[10]

A Matisse show had been under consideration from the Museum's inception. The founders had briefly contemplated such a show for the first season: in spring 1929 Conger Goodyear had drafted a memo proposing that there were "enough first-

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[8] McBride, "Museum of Modern Art: Pictures by Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, Matisse and Arthur B. Davies," New York Sun, May 15, 1931: 12.

[9] Miss Bliss's conditional bequest, which depended on the Museum's raising enough money to be viable, became official in 1934.

[10] John Elderfield, Matisse in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1978): 120. The other Matisse oil in the Bliss bequest, Young Woman in a Green Dress Leaning at the Window (1921, Colin Collection), would be sold at auction by the Museum in 1944.

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class works by Matisse in this country... to make a first-class exhibition."[11] By spring 1931, Alfred Barr was planning a more ambitious project: a full-scale Matisse retrospective for the following autumn (the Museum's third season). It would feature works from European as well as American collections, and its exhibition catalogue would be a model of scholarship.

While Barr was laboring tirelessly and disinterestedly on behalf of modern art, Pierre Matisse was struggling to advance his own and his father's interests in the art trade. He was severing his ties to Dudensing and preparing to go into business on his own (with America in the midst of economic crisis, it was an inauspicious time to launch a gallery). He was also helping stateside with the Paris Matisse retrospective being planned for June at the Galerie Georges Petit; the show's organizers were Josse Bernheim, Gaston Bernheim de Villers, and Étienne Bignou.

In March, Bignou, having come to the states to line up lenders to the Paris exhibition, was using Pierre as liaison to American collectors. Pierre reported to his parents:

> I went with Bignou to see Miss Cone and [Philadelphia collector] Samuel White. We ourselves brought back Miss Cone's paintings, which are—
> 1. La Femme en fleur [Girl Reading, Vase of Flowers, 1922]
> 2. La Nature morte au pot d'étain [fig. 3.14]
> 3. Les Poissons sur la plage d'Étretat [fig. 3.15]
> 4. Le Carnaval de Nice [fig. 3.20]
>
> The still life, of which we have very few of this period, is a magnificent painting. So, too, is the

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[11] Lynes 1973: 52.

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painting of fish the most beautiful of its series. As for the Carnival, Bignou says that it is the most beautiful painting of the series and that we could not have better. From White we have the large still life Histoires juives [1924, Philadelphia] and the Nu de dos [fig. 3.2]. From Mme. Lewisohn we have the still life from the dining room [The Pink Tablecloth, 1925, private collection], Laurette [Lorette in a White Blouse, 1916-1917],[12] and the nude in an armchair by the window, the same subject as Miss Cone's painting, but in my opinion fuller, more unusual in its color. We will be visiting Clark next Thursday. We wrote to Mrs. Rockefeller for her paintings. She will be in Arizona until the end of the month, but I think we will have her painting.[13]

The following week, Pierre had more news:

I learned since my last letter that Miss Bliss's painting "l'intérieur au [à la boîte à] violon" was left to the Modern Museum—as well as "la robe verte"—We won't be able to have these paintings for the exhibition.[14] I've just learned that Mrs. Rockefeller refused to lend the two paintings that you sold her, saying that she only just got them and that she couldn't

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[12] See above, 3.2., p. 360, n. 65.

[13] "J'ai été avec Bignou voir Miss Cone et Samuel White. Nous avons rapporté nous-mêmes les tableaux de Miss Cone qui sont—
"1. La Femme en fleur
"2. La Nature morte au pot d'étain
"3. Les Poissons sur la plage d'Étretat
"4. Le Carnaval de Nice
"La nature morte est un tableau magnifique dont nous avons très peu pour ainsi dire [aucun] de cette époque. La toile de poissons est aussi la plus belle dans la série. Pour le carnaval Bignou dit que c'est le tableau le plus beau de la série et que nous ne pouvions avoir mieux. Chez White nous avons la grande nature morte Histoires juives, le Nu de dos. Chez Mme. Lewisohn nous avons la nature morte de la salle à manger. Laurette et le nu dans un fauteuil près de la fenêtre, même sujet que celui de Miss Cone mais à mon avis plus plein, plus rare de couleurs. Nous allons chez Clark jeudi prochain. Nous avons écrit à Mrs. Rockefeller pour ses tableaux. Elle est jusqu'à la fin du mois en Arizona, mais je pense que nous aurons son tableau" (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, March 25, 1931, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

[14] See above, n. 10.

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bear to be separated from them for such a long time. But she will lend a little head of "Lorette au turban," painted on a panel of 1 or 2.

Clark is lending the four paintings requested
"Les Crevettes" [1920, Everhart Museum, Scranton]
"La pianiste jaune"
"Le Bouddha" [The Hindu Pose, 1923, private collection]
"Le Torse ancien"

and we have also asked for the painting of Henriette painting with her husband posing.[15]

I rented in the Fuller Building.. right next door to Brummer, a two-room office-gallery for next October. It's on the 17th floor with a good northern light. From one side, my windows look out onto Central Park, from the other, onto Ritz Tower.[16]

In late May, Pierre wrote to his parents with some satisfaction that he had sold Carmelina (fig. 4.7) to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (it would be shown in the Paris and New York retrospectives): "I sold to the Boston Museum

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[15] The Three O'Clock Session, 1924 (Private Collection, New York). In Cowart 1987: 318, cat. 132, the man posing is identified as the model Henriette's brother.

[16] "J'ai appris depuis ma dernière lettre que le tableau de Miss Bliss 'l'intérieur au violon' a été légué au Musée Moderne—ainsi que 'la robe verte.' Nous ne pourrons avoir ses tableaux pour l'exposition. Je viens d'apprendre que Mrs. Rockefeller a refusé de prêter les deux tableaux que tu lui as vendus, en disant qu'elle venait seulement de les recevoir et elle ne pouvait pas s'en séparer si longtemps. Mais elle prêtera une petite tête de 'Lorette au turban' peinte sur panneau de 1 ou 2.

Clark me prête les quatre tableaux demandés
'Les Crevettes'
'La pianiste jaune'
'Le Bouddha'
'Le Torse ancien'

et nous avons demandé par dessus le marché le tableau d'Henriette peignant avec son père posant.

J'ai loué dans le Fuller Building.. juste à coté de Brummer—un office-gallery de deux pièces pour octobre prochain—c'est au 17ème étage avec une bonne lumière au nord—mes fenêtres donnent d'un coté sur Central Park[,] de l'autre sur Ritz Tower" (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, April 3, 1931, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

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the painting of the seated model made in 1904 at the quai St. Michel... Though the profit was modest, it was nevertheless much appreciated."[17]

In spring and summer 1931 an American contingent drifted into Paris for the Matisse retrospective at the Galerie Georges Petit. Alfred Barr and Margaret Scolari Barr arrived a couple of weeks in advance of the opening—there, Scolari Barr noted in her diary, "to prepare the Matisse exhibition planned for November."[18] (Barr did not speak French, and his wife, who was fluent in several languages, acted as interpreter.)

Albert Barnes was in Paris with his collaborator Violette de Mazia. He would take 1,000 pages of notes in front of the pictures, in preparation for the book on Matisse they were writing. He would pay Matisse the second installment on the mural and add 5 Matisses to his collection.[19]

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[17] "J'ai vendu au musée de Boston la toile du modèle assis fait en 1904 au quai St. Michel... Bien que les bénéfices [soient] restreints[,] ils n'en étaient pas moins très appréciés" (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, May 30, 1931, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

[18] Margaret Scolari Barr, "Our Campaigns," The New Criterion Special Issue (Summer 1987): 26.

[19] Barnes to Dewey, November 6, 1931: "Last spring we started a systematic study of our Matisses to incorporate in a book. A windfall was his show in Paris—150 of his pictures exhibited for over six weeks. I came back with 1,000 typewritten pages of analytical notes made in front of the Paris pictures...

"I brought back from Europe 5 Matisses, 1 Renoir, 7 early Chinese paintings, 1 Japanese 16th Century, 1 Korean 16th Century, and about 40 Japanese prints—and a marvelous early Corot portrait, bought from his hard-up granddaughter" (Barnes Foundation archives).

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Also in town was Henry McBride, who told an interviewer from the New York Herald's Paris edition, "Matisse's work has been highly appreciated in America for several years.... We have had several interesting exhibitions of his paintings in New York recently, but the show which is being prepared at the Georges Petit Gallery will reveal the progress and development of his work from the very beginning. Nothing like it has been shown before. It is unusual for a living artist to have such an exhibition." Mrs. John Anderson, critic for the New York Evening Post, told the same interviewer, "Matisse is surely the greatest colorist of his day.... He gets magnificent effects by putting colors together which hitherto have been considered inharmonious."[20]

McBride, Mrs. Anderson, and Helen Appleton Read, critic for the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, were "special delegates" of their respective newspapers at a dinner given in Matisse's honor at the Galerie Georges Petit on opening night, June 16.[21] A photograph of the occasion shows Matisse in black tie, at the center of the banquet table, his paintings adorning the walls (fig. 4.8). Maud Dale sits beside him; Henry McBride is opposite him; among others present are Chester Dale, Valentine Dudensing, Pierre Matisse, and Marguerite Duthuit.[22]

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[20] [Unsigned], "Leading U. S. Critics Arrive for Matisse Show Opening," New York Herald, Paris, June 13, 1931.

[21] Seymour de Ricci, "Henri Matisse Honored at Dinner Opening Exposition of His Works," New York Herald, Paris, June 17, 1931.

[22] See Margrit Hahnloser-Ingold, "Collecting Matisses of the 1920s in the 1920s," in Cowart 1987: 234, 270.

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A reporter for the Paris Herald noted that the guests enjoyed a "concert of old and new French music, carefully selected by Matisse himself, starting with Couperin, Rameau and Lulli and terminating with Debussy, Erik Satie and the Groupe des Six." The reporter described the exhibition and its setting:

> Built in the early seventies, the Galerie Georges Petit had remained unaltered for more than half a century. The new owners of this world-famous hall have modernized the setting without unduly changing the aspect of so familiar a landmark and the new architect, M. Lurcat, has skilfully replaced time-worn hangings by light-colored walls, pale canvas and unstained wood.
>
> As the first significant artistic manifestation, the new management has arranged for a highly important "one-man show." For the first time, the French public will have the opportunity to judge in its full magnitude the artistic work of Henri Matisse....
>
> The exhibition contains nearly 150 paintings, together with as many drawings and lithographs. They have been tastefully hung by the artist himself...[23]
>
> Boston has sent the "Carmelina," Grenoble a very pleasing interior, the Luxembourg a well-known still-life piece. Other paintings have been loaned by the Museums of Munich and Bremen.
>
> Among American private collectors, may be mentioned: Chester Dale, Stephen C. Clark, Adolf Lewisohn and his son, Samuel Lewisohn,[24] of New York; Mr. [Conger] Goodyear, of Buffalo; Samuel S. White, of Philadelphia; and Miss Etta Cone, of Baltimore.
>
> ...Nor was I surprised to meet yesterday morning in the Georges Petit Gallery the great Philadelphia collector, Dr. Barnes (who owns himself some 40 Matisse

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[23] The Paris Herald of two days earlier reported: "Matisse himself is in charge of hanging the pictures, which will not be arranged according to date, but in the way the artist wants them to appear" (Unsigned, "Matisse Show Will Open to the Public Wednesday," June 15, 1931).

[24] Father and son collectors Adolph and Samuel Lewisohn lived in a townhouse on 88th Street and Fifth Avenue; for the contents of their Matisse collection, see Hahnloser-Ingold, "Collecting Matisses of the 1920s in the 1920s," in Cowart 1986: 273, n. 57. Samuel Lewisohn was a trustee of the Museum of Modern Art.

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paintings), expounding to his friends and pupils some of the artistic problems solved in Matisse's paintings. For Dr. Barnes rightly believes that no amount of work from reproductions is anything like as instructive as a direct and unbiased study of the painter's own originals.[25]

McBride sent a gossipy letter to Gertrude Stein, who had been estranged from Matisse since the war:

I saw Picasso last night at the Matisse vernissage... Matisse's vernissage was very mondaine [fashionable]. All sorts of picturesque specimens. I had dinner with Matisse preceding the party and he was most amiable and kind as usual. They say in America he is getting 6,000,000 francs for his Dr Barnes decoration. Even allowing for exaggerations he seems to be getting well paid.[26]

Scolari Barr wrote in her diary:

...An impressive Matisse retrospective opens... Matisse is there with his daughter, Marguerite. He is quite healthy and most agreeable in manner....

Matisse has recently returned from Tahiti. When A. [Alfred] inquires what had prompted such a long journey, Matisse replies that he had wanted to see the light of the Marquesas Islands, so vividly rendered by Gauguin. However, Matisse observes, the natives seem to have lost some of their primitive freshness even since F. W. Murnau went there (1929) to direct his film Tabu.

A. [Alfred] and M. [Margaret] go often to the Galerie Georges Petit. Invariably Albert Barnes is there lecturing to a group of students from the United States. They sit in a circle on folding stools; the French eye the group with merriment. No university professor would be allowed to hold forth day after day to a large group

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[25] Seymour de Ricci, "Henri Matisse Honored at Dinner Opening Exposition of His Works," New York Herald, Paris, June 17, 1931.

[26] Henry McBride to Gertrude Stein, Wednesday, [June 17, 1931], Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL, reprinted in Donald Gallup, ed., The Flowers of Friendship: Letters Written to Gertrude Stein (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953): 252.

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> in a gallery where the public is charged a stiff price of admission, but Barnes is an active and wealthy collector and Bignou cannot deny him the privilege.[27]

In mid-July, with the Paris exhibition in its waning days, Matisse returned to Nice, where he resumed work on the Barnes mural in a rented studio, a vacant garage on the rue Désiré-Niel. In early August he received Edward Dreibelbies, a teacher from the Foundation sent by Barnes to assure that there was adequate canvas on the panels for folding back behind the stretchers. (All three overlooked the fact that the dimensions with which Matisse was working were incorrect.)

Matisse was also at work on another project: a commission by the Swiss publisher Albert Skira to illustrate the poems of Mallarmé. It would be Matisse's first illustrated book.

From August 9 to September 15, a Matisse retrospective was held at the Kunsthalle in Basel. With a total of 127 works, it was smaller than the Paris exhibition, from which it retained some paintings. In addition, it included paintings from German and Swiss collections, prints from the Stuttgart Museum, and 15 bronzes (the Paris exhibition had included only one sculpture).

Following the close of the Basel show, work began in earnest on assembling the New York exhibition. On September 29, Barr wrote to Etta Cone:

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[27] Scolari Barr 1987: 26-27.

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> I am now able to tell you the exact list of pictures that we should like to borrow from Baltimore in addition, of course, to the three which are coming to us from France via Knoedler:
>
> "Still Life" (Chardin period) [Still Life with Peaches, 1898]
>
> "View of Seine" 1896 [The Dam at Pont Neuf]
>
> "Viaduct" [fig. 3.16]
>
> "Woman with Turban" [fig. 3.13]
>
> "Olive Trees" [fig. 3.17]
>
> "Seated Odalisque" [1926]...
>
> I think we shall want three bronzes:
>
> 1. "Le Serf" [fig. 1.61]
>
> 2. The large seated nude with hands clasped behind back of head [1923-1925] (both of these are in Doctor Claribel's apartment)
>
> 3. "Blue Nude" bronze [fig. 2.13] (in your apartment)...
>
> 'I am enclosing a second list of the pictures and sculptures. Could you mark on this the dates which you have on the list which you were unable to find when we there, and return it to us? We have no other means of knowing the exact dates which are important for our catalogues.[28]

The exhibition would include 14 works from the Cone collection: 9 paintings and 5 bronzes.[29] It would also have loans from Stephen Clark, Frank Crowninshield, Chester Dale, Conger Goodyear, Samuel Lewisohn, and Abby Aldrich Rockefeller—all Museum of Modern Art trustees—as well as from Belle Greene, Scofield Thayer, and Erhard Weyhe of New York, Earl Horter and Samuel S. White of Philadelphia, and Harriet Levy of San

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[28] Alfred Barr to Etta Cone, September 29, 1931 (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

[29] The Museum of Modern Art to Etta Cone, receipt dated November 2, 1931 and signed "Alfred H. Barr, Jr." (Cone papers, Baltimore Museum of Art).

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Francisco, among other American and European collectors.[30] Notably absent from the list of lenders was the American with the greatest Matisse collection—Albert C. Barnes.

The Matisse retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, which ran from November 3 to December 6, 1931, comprised 78 paintings, 38 drawings, 36 prints, and 11 sculptures. It was smaller but more balanced than the retrospectives in Berlin, Paris and Basel. Half of the paintings in the exhibition were painted before 1917, in contrast to the Paris show, in which two-thirds were of the Nice period, "so commercially important at the time," Barr later remarked.[31]

Barr seems to have planned the show as a corrective to the Paris exhibition. It was a curator's show rather than a dealer's show, designed to present an argument—unstated—rather than with an eye to the market. Barr's intent was to present the development of Matisse's style in relation to modernism, as Barr had been defining it in his teaching, writing, and exhibitions. Barr illustrated his introduction to the catalogue with canonical Matisse paintings unavailable to the exhibition: Bonheur de vivre from Merion and Music and Dance from Moscow (now in St. Petersburg) (see figs. 1.2, 1.57, and 1.58). The catalogue reproduced a selection of works

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[30] See Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Henri-Matisse: Retrospective Exhibition (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1931b): 5-6. The New York galleries Marie Harriman, Knoedler, Kraushaar, Montross, and Valentine also lent works.

[31] Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Matisse: His Art and His Public (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951): 221.

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in the exhibition, in various media, from different stages of Matisse's artistic growth.

The show included such early works as La Desserte (fig. 4.9), Carmelina (see fig. 4.7), La Liseuse (Marguerite) (fig. 4.10), Young Sailor II (see fig. 1.12), Blue Nude (see fig. 1.20), Music (Sketch) (see fig. 1.21), Bathers with a Turtle (fig. 4.11),[32] Goldfish and Sculpture (see fig. 1.74),[33] Nasturtiums with "Dance" I (fig. 4.12),[34] Woman on a High Stool (see fig. 2.7), Interior with a Goldfish Bowl (see fig. 2.6), White and Pink Head (fig. 4.13),[35] The Italian Woman (see fig. 2.18), Les Coloquintes (fig. 4.14), The Moroccans (fig. 4.15),[36] Studio, quai St. Michel (fig. 4.16),[37] and The Window (see fig. 3.6). There was but one fauve landscape in the exhibition, a study for Bonheur de vivre.[38]

Barr's exhibition catalogue set the standard for Matisse scholarship. (It would be the prototype for his monumental study Matisse: His Art and His Public, published two decades later by the Museum of Modern Art.) The text includes: Barr's introduction, an account of Matisse's life and work; brief chronologies of the life and of the work; a

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[32] Then owned by the Folkwang Museum in Essen.

[33] Then owned by Hans Purrmann.

[34] Lent by Scofield Thayer's Dial Collection, then on deposit at the Worcester Art Museum.

[35] Then owned by Matisse.

[36] Then owned by Matisse.

[37] Then owned by George Tennant, London .

[38] Then owned by Bernheim-Jeune.

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bibliography; and Margaret Scolari Barr's translation of "Notes of a Painter" (the first complete translation of Matisse's essay into English).

The exhibition was a critical and popular success.[39] Henry McBride's review was a tip of the hat to Alfred Barr. "French Modernist Shown Here More Effectively Than in Paris," read the headline in the New York Sun.

> The Matisse exhibition in the Museum of Modern Art is about 50 per cent better than the much-discussed Matisse exhibition in Paris last summer. It is not so big but it is better. This result is as astonishing as it is gratifying. It shows among other things, that if we did not produce the artist we at least know better how to appreciate him.

McBride compared the hanging of the two shows, casting his lot with Barr, and adding that "the outstanding pictures of the Paris show are here shown more effectively."[40] (Barr promptly sent a thank-you letter to the critic: "I was quite overwhelmed by your review of the Matisse Exhibition. It was certainly most generous of you to write with such enthusiasm.")[41]

Edward Alden Jewell of the New York Times characterized the show as "a superb Matisse exhibition, providing a brilliantly comprehensive picture of the artist's career from

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[39] Pierre Matisse informed his parents that the exhibition drew more than 36,000 visitors (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, December 21, 1931, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York.)

[40] Henry McBride, "The Museum of Modern Art Gives a Matisse Exhibition with Special Success," New York Sun, November 7, 1931.

[41] Barr to McBride, November 10. 1931, Barr papers, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

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1894 to the present... The canvases now on display have been chosen with the utmost care and with a fine appreciation of the artist's esthetic philosophy."[42] Jewell praised the exhibition catalogue as "surely one of the most splendidly complete and interesting catalogues ever put together."[43]

Royal Cortissoz of the New York Herald Tribune sounded a dissenting note:

> One of the prime exhibits here is the reputation of Matisse. His is a formidable name to conjure with. He has had the best press of any French artist since Rodin, with the possible exception of Picasso....A dispassionate point of view is essential nowhere more decisively than among the drawings. A favorite assertion of the disciples is couched in the form of a question: "Of course you will admit that Matisse is a great draftsman?" For our own part we decline to admit it....
>
> ...Though he has talent [as a painter] he has not enough of it, or, at any rate he has failed to subject what he possesses to adequate training...He might profitably have stayed a little longer in the atelier of Bouguereau.[44]

Pierre Matisse considered the exhibition a great success, and he admired and respected Barr's achievement. He wrote to his parents:

> The exhibition is a success and all my predictions of last spring have come true. What had to be avoided was avoided.
>
> Barr did his best and truly succeeded beyond my

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[42] Edward Alden Jewell, "A Superb Matisse Exhibition," New York Times, November 3, 1931.

[43] Edward Alden Jewell, "Matisse Exhibition Opens at the Museum of Modern Art," New York Times, November 8, 1931: 12.

[44] Royal Cortissoz, "The Ideas and Art of Henri Matisse," New York Herald Tribune, November 8, 1931: Sec. 7.

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hopes. The hanging was very successful and there was almost nothing I would change. Everyone is dazzled by the catalogue, and people say that they have never seen an exhibition like it or a catalogue so well done. The critics, led by McBride, write that the exhibition is superior to the one in Paris and that the choice and presentation of paintings is superior as well. And they are delighted that the artist is better understood and appreciated in New York than in Paris, that the exhibition serves him without overwhelming him. It's true! When you see this exhibition, you're more impressed than by the one in Paris, where there were too many paintings, and most of all—I should have been more insistent—I regret that they didn't put Guillaume's large paintings[45] in the large room....

Obviously, Bignou and Keller[46] prefer the Paris exhibition.

Barr has truly done his best. He was very kind... He truly deserves a drawing from you dedicated to him, for he was well intentioned and could not have done a better job.

His catalogue was done with great care, and except for a few small errors, it is perfect.[47]

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[45] Guillaume's "large paintings" were Bathers by a River (1909-1916, Chicago) and Piano Lesson (1916, MoMA).

[46] After Barnes' break with Paul Guillaume in 1928, Georges Keller had replaced him as Barnes' European representative. In 1932 Keller and Bignou would become partners at the Étienne Bignou gallery, Paris.

[47] "L'exposition est un succès et toutes mes prévisions du printemps dernier se sont réalisées. Celles qu'il fallait éviter, ont été évitées.

"Barr a fait de son mieux et a vraiment réussi comme je ne l'espérais pas—L'accrochage a été très réussi et je n'ai presque rien eu à changer—Le catalogue fait l'émerveillement de tout le monde et l'on [proclame] que l'on a jamais vu pareille exposition ni catalogue aussi bien fait. Les critiques avec McBride en tête écrivent que l'exposition est supérieure à celle de Paris et que le choix et la présentation des tableaux en est supérieure également. Et ils sont enchantés que l'on soit [plus] compréhensif et [que l'on] apprécie mieux l'artiste à New York qu'à Paris en lui faisant une exposition qui le serve sans l'écraser—Le fait est vrai! En voyant cette exposition on en reçoit une chose beaucoup plus grande qu'à Paris[,] on a eu le tort de mettre trop de tableaux—et surtout—je regrette maintenant de n'a pas avoir assez insisté—de ne pas avoir mis les grands tableaux de Guillaume dans la grande salle....

"Il est évident que Bignou et Keller préfèrent l'exposition à Paris.

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A dissent came from an unexpected quarter. Paul Rosenfeld, a Stieglitz disciple who had written for Seven Arts and The Dial, attacked Matisse in the pages of the Nation magazine. Rosenfeld condemned Matisse's recent work as "decadent":

> The show of the works of Henri Matisse bespangling the walls of the museum in the Heckscher Building excites a curiosity, a suspense, not at all concerned with Henri Matisse. The quality and motive of his pretty paintings themselves are fairly evident, and quite uninteresting. What remains a problem, if only for the reason that it appears unfathomable, is the aim of the directors of the young institution....
>
> ...The few early nudes, and the better of the decorative war-time canvases... are compromised by the mass of decadent recent painting.[48] The total effect is melancholy... Matisse is surely very sober and very aware and a French gentleman in the flower of his age. Still the fact of his decadence as an artist is lamentably clear.... Matisse now appears very near the level of those who understand the function of art as the reproduction of pretty objects. His color juxtapositions are still brilliant; his sense of the decorative qualities of the nude, delightful. But the color is shallow, the composition facile, the purely pictorial values almost negligible. The attraction of these pictures is ultimately the magnetism of luxury... a spirit half of bourgeois complacency, half of ennui, breathes from them.

"Barr a vraiment fait de son mieux. Il a été très gentil... Il a vraiment mérité que tu lui donnes un dessin dédicacé car la personne la mieux intentionnée n'aurait pas [pu] mieux faire.

"Son catalogue est très travaillé[,] à part quelques petites erreurs[,] il est parfait" (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, November 12, 1931, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York). Several of the dates in the catalogue are incorrect.

[48] The charge of decadence had been leveled at Matisse before: in 1912, conservative critic Arthur Hoeber characterized Matisse's sculpture show at 291 as "decadent, unhealthy, certainly unreal, like some dreadful nightmare"; see above, 1.8: p. 169.

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Rosenfeld faulted the exhibition's organizers for failing to borrow Matisses from the Soviet government: despite "difficulties," the "obstacles... were not necessarily unnegotiable."

> A representation of the sturdier, living futuristic Matisse in the Museum of Modern Art would have affirmed modern art by exhibiting some of its achievements in the great tradition. In affirming the great tradition, the museum would both have educated its public by giving it a criterion, and encouraged the younger artists who have taken up the tradition where Matisse at least has left it hanging.

In conclusion, Rosenfeld demanded to know:

> To what end, this display? If the museum is interested in art, why does it not show the work of a creative artist? If it could not get the prime Matisse, why did it not have a show of Bracque [sic] or Marin or O'Keeffe...?[49]

Rosenfeld, in effect, condemned Matisse as an apostate who had betrayed the modernist cause and the spirit of "291." (Edmund Wilson wrote of Rosenfeld as critic: "It was difficult, if not impossible, to persuade him to pay attention to any American painter who was not a protégé of Stieglitz', and if Stieglitz had excommunicated a refractory or competitive disciple, Paul, following the official directive, would

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[49] Paul Rosenfeld, "Matisse, Without Purpose," The Nation 133, 3465 (December 2, 1931).

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condemn him, not merely as an artist but as a reprobate who had somehow committed an unpardonable immoral treason.")[50]

Matisse and the Museum were defended by a young art historian from Columbia University, Meyer Schapiro. In a letter to the Nation, Schapiro characterized Rosenfeld's review as "petulant and irresponsible." Schapiro paraphrased Rosenfeld's argument:

> The earlier Matisse, i. e., the Matisse presented to America by Mr. Stieglitz and Mr. Rosenfeld, was a good painter, but since the war "the fact of his decadence as an artist is lamentably clear."

(Schapiro mistakenly believed that Rosenfeld had a role in presenting Matisse to America. In fact, Rosenfeld was associated with Stieglitz only after the war.)

Schapiro suggested that the Museum could hardly be blamed for its inability to borrow works from the Soviet government or from Barnes:

> Now the prime, pre-bourgeois Matisse seems to be in Moscow and in the very private Barnes Foundation. Mr. Barnes would lend nothing, although he visited the exhibition with a secretary to dictate aesthetic analyses for a probable book on the subject.[51] Without inquiring into the Soviet policy and the exact nature of the museum's efforts, Mr. Rosenfeld has accused the latter of laxity...

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[50] Edmund Wilson, "Paul Rosenfeld: Three Phases," cited in Richard Whelan, Alfred Stieglitz: A Biography (Boston: Little, Brown, 1995): 394, and 608, n. 14.

[51] In "Matisse and Impressionism" (see below, n. 53), Schapiro wrote that the absent pictures from the Barnes Foundation and from Moscow were "regrettable lacunae." When Schapiro sent Barnes a copy of the article, Barnes rebuffed him rudely (Albert Barnes to Meyer Schapiro, February 26, 1932, Barnes Foundation archives).

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Schapiro did not immediately come to the defense of the Nice period paintings, but observed wryly that the exhibition was balanced: of the 78 paintings, 39 were "of the Rosenfeld period" and 39 were "of the bourgeois decadence."[52]

Perhaps the sparring with Rosenfeld stimulated Schapiro to reconsider the Nice period in the light of Matisse's whole body of work. Schapiro reviewed the exhibition in an article titled "Matisse and Impressionism," published in Androcles, a Columbia college broadside. Looking for continuities, rather than discontinuities, between the early and the later phases of Matisse's career, Schapiro found a common thread in the relationship between the artist and Impressionism.

"In hanging the paintings of Matisse in a chronological order," Schapiro wrote,

> the directors of the Museum of Modern Art have offered us a spectacle of development which is of the greatest interest. We see within the works of a single man the radical transformation of art in the last thirty years, and we see it in the very man who was most effective in it. It has the character of a revolution, in fact two revolutions—the first in the sudden turn from an impressionistic style to an abstract, decorative manner, which overthrew an almost millenary tradition of European naturalism, the second, towards 1917, in the return to naturalism…
>
> His development at first seems purely circular insofar as Matisse returns to the natural objects of his early days after an interval of about fifteen years of abstract painting. But this is to misunderstand the essential contribution of Matisse to modern art. The newer works differ from Impressionism in the close-knit design and color perceived in objects.… Matisse has…

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[52] Meyer Schapiro, "Mr. Rosenfeld and Matisse," Letter to the Editor, The Nation 133, 3469 (December 30, 1931): 725.

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> carried the art of painting from a style primarily naturalistic, without a pervasive or deeply expressive form, to a similar naturalism galvanized and controlled by aesthetic sensibility.

In a complex and subtle argument, Schapiro demonstrated that Matisse's "abstract, decorative manner" was itself influenced by Impressionism:

> If the concept of abstract design was stated in terms of an antithesis to Impressionism, the leap from an apparent impressionistic realism to a theory of abstract design was easy precisely because the subject-matter of Impressionism was already aesthetic.... Already for the impressionists the meaning of a picture pertained to its whole and was primarily aesthetic. Now the expressive quality of Matisse, which we recognize in both the style and content of his pictures, is present in Impressionism....
>
> But apart from subject-matter, even the formal aspects of his abstract manner are inconceivable without Impressionism. ...The flatness of the field or its decomposition into surface patterns, the inconsistent, indefinite space, the deformed contours, the peculiarly fragmentary piecing of things at the edges of the picture, the diagonal viewpoint, the bright, arbitrary color of objects, unlike their known local color, constitute within the abstract style of Matisse an impressionist matrix.[53]

The final stop of the round of Matisse retrospectives of 1930-1931 was at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island, where a smaller version of the New York show was presented from December 14 to 28. It comprised 38 paintings "representing all phases of his artistic

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[53] Meyer Schapiro, "Matisse and Impressionism," Androcles 1, 1 (February 1932): 21-35.

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evolution," as well as 45 drawings and prints. The School's bulletin reported that

> The artist's son, Mr. Pierre Matisse, not only lent some thirteen of the paintings owned by his father together with a large number of drawings, but also came to Providence to hang the exhibition... Furthermore, the exhibition would not have been possible without the great help given by Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director, and the members of the staff of the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

The bulletin proclaimed the exhibition an "outstanding success."[54] The same issue contained eulogies of the recently deceased former president of the School of Design, Eliza Radeke. No mention, however, was made of the fact that Mrs. Radeke had been the sole buyer of Matisse at the Armory Show of 1913.[55]

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[54] J. N. [John Nicholas] Brown, "Matisse Exhibition," Bulletin of the Rhode Island School of Design 20, 1 (January 1932): 3-5. Lectures on Matisse were given at the gallery by Dorothy Adlow, Edward M. M. Warburg, and Lincoln Kirstein. On January 2, 1932, Pierre wrote to his parents that the exhibition "was well attended and the three lectures were a remarkable success" ("L'exposition de Providence a très bien marché, les trois conférences ont eu un succès remarquable"). In another respect, however, it was not a success: there were no sales. On April 23, 1932, Pierre wrote to his parents that it "went well, and had it not been for the economic crisis, it would have done good business" ("L'exposition de Providence s'est bien passé et si ce n'était pas la crise il y aurait eu pas mal d'affaires"); Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York.

[55] The purchase was of a drawing, Four Studies of a Nude. See above, 2.2: 214-215.

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4.4. Matisse and America, 1932-1933

The 18-month period from early 1932 to mid-1933 was a time of stress and anxiety for Henri Matisse. He began the year 1932 with a January meeting in Paris with Albert Barnes, in the course of which the two men compared dimensions of the mural Barnes had commissioned. In early February Matisse, having detected a discrepancy, cabled Barnes in Merion, alerting him to a potential problem.

Until Matisse's recent, alarming concern that he might have been using incorrect measurements, he had considered the project—on which he had been working for more than a year—to be near completion. On February 9, the New York Times, below the headline "Matisse Finishing Mural for America," announced that the mural, which the artist expected "to be recognized as his greatest canvas," would be "exhibited for ten days at the Georges Petit Galleries to give the French an opportunity to inspect it before it leaves the country."

Matisse's fears were realized on February 22, when he read a cable from Barnes that began: "YOU HAVE MADE AN ENORMOUS ERROR."[1] Barnes, confirming that Matisse had been working from the wrong measurements, offered to come to Paris with the mural's paper template, which, unlike the architect's

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[1] "AVEZ FAIT ERREUR ENORME," Barnes to Matisse, February 9, 1933, cited in Flam 1993: 83, n. 91.

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blueprint, was correct.[2] Matisse promptly replied: "MY DEEPEST APOLOGIES [STOP] AS NEW COMPOSITION IS NECESSARY I AM FINISHING PRESENT PANELS ALMOST FINISHED AND BEGINNING OVER ON NEW CANVASES [STOP] SEND TEMPLATE [STOP] NO NEED TO COME..."[3]

The discrepancy in measurements concerned the width of the pendentives between the lunettes: actually about a meter, not the half-meter that Matisse had believed. As Alfred Barr has noted, a less conscientious artist, rather than starting over with new canvases, would have "made a few minor adjustments and passed on to some less tedious undertaking."[4]

The mural, which Matisse referred to in correspondence as the "decoration," has as its theme the dance. Matisse later recalled:

> I had conceived La Danse long before, and I had put it in La Joie de Vivre, then in my first big La Danse composition. But, this time, when I wanted to make sketches on 3 canvases of one metre, I couldn't get it. Finally, I took 3 canvases of 5 metres, the very dimensions of the panels, and one day, armed with charcoal on the end of a bamboo stick, I set out to draw the whole thing at one go. It was already there, in me, like a rhythm which carried me along... But once the drawing [was] finished, when I came to colour it, I had to change all the prearranged forms. I had to fill the whole thing, and give a whole that would remain architectural. On the other hand, I had to be closely allied to the masonry, so that the lines should hold their own against the enormous, projecting blocks of the down-curving arches, and even

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[2] Matisse had brought the template to Nice in January 1931 but had subsequently returned it to Merion.

[3] Matisse to Barnes, February 9, 1933, cited in Flam 1993: 47, and 83, n. 92.

[4] Barr 1951: 243.

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> more important, that the lines should hold their own with sufficient vitality to accord with each other. To... obtain something alive and singing, I could only proceed by groping my way, continually modifying my panels in colours and in black.[5]

Matisse developed a technique of composing the decoration with cut pieces of colored paper; in the final stage of composition, he planned to remove the papers and apply paint in their place. This method allowed him to work full scale, while making rapid changes that would have been more difficult with pigment or charcoal alone. (In the 1940s and 1950s, he would employ the paper-cutout technique as an independent medium.)

Matisse kept his cut-paper technique a closely guarded secret. Pierre knew about it but was instructed to keep Barnes in the dark, in part because the artist had accepted $20,000 for a painting that, until the final stage of the project, would, in effect, be nonexistent.

Pierre made several visits to Merion, at times accompanied by his wife, the former Alexandra Sattler of Cincinatti (known as Teeny), whom he had married in 1929. He was acting both as his father's emissary and, in a vain effort to sell paintings to the collector, on his own behalf. (Barnes preferred to buy through Keller and Bignou in Paris.)

Despite Matisse's cablegram that there was "no need" for Barnes to come to Paris, the willful Barnes was determined to

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[5] Interview of Matisse by Gaston Diehl, published in Les Arts et les Lettres, Paris, April 9, 1946, translated in Raymond Escholier, Matisse: A Portrait of the Artist and the Man, trans. Geraldine and H. M. Colville (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960): 193.

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come anyway. Georges Keller, who would accompany Barnes on the transatlantic journey, dropped by Pierre's gallery to tell Pierre the bad news of his father's error.

Pierre, worried about his father's health, feared that Barnes' anxiety about the decoration would compound his father's stress. Barnes, if cornered, could be "brutal"—a word used by both father and son in reference to the collector. Pierre surmised that Barnes was concerned about the fate of the first version of the decoration. On February 26 Pierre wrote to his parents:

> When Keller come to say good-bye, he gave me the news about the wrong measurements of the decoration. What a shock. All that work has to begin all over again! I have of course said nothing about the means by which Papa works, I mean the cut papers.[6] Barnes is leaving by boat today, and of course Keller is with him. Barnes is said to be terribly distressed by the news. He said to Keller last Sunday that it was the great tragedy of his life. Keller is wondering what will happen to the present decoration, which was so near to completion. The question must be preoccupying Barnes also. If he wants to buy it, as well as the new version that Papa has to begin all over again, be sure to ask the right price. Don't... set the price... too high. And don't let Keller and Bignou get too involved in this whole question. Also, please don't forget that Barnes repeats himself all over town and never gets anything quite right....
>
> On thinking it over, I think that Barnes will never be able to endure the idea that his is not the only decoration by Matisse on that subject. Yet he cannot ask the artist to destroy the first version. You simply must

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[6] "Keller venu faire ses adieux m'apprend la nouvelle de la fausse mesure dans la décoration. Quel coup. Tout ce travail à recommencer! Je n'ai naturellement rien dit de la façon dont papa travaille, j'entends les découpages de papiers" (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, [February 26, 1932], Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

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> make Barnes keep his mouth shut about whatever is decided between you....[7]

On March 3 Pierre wrote home to confirm that Barnes (whom he had seen off at the boat) was "in a great state of agitation as to what would become of the first version."

> He is afraid that when he gets the second version people will say that the first is the better of the two. Nor does he want to lose the amazing bargain that he got when you and he settled for $30,000 for the first one.
>
> Even so, it would not surprise me if he has thought it all out and already has a proposition in mind. He went on and on about the "responsibility of the artist," and the benefits that will come your way when his book on your work comes out. He also went on and on about how much he had done for you and all the trouble that your mistake has caused him.
>
> I'm afraid he may take a brutal line in what he calls his "rights" in this matter. He may think that we shall hold him up to ransom if he wants to buy both versions.... All things considered, therefore, it would be better not to press him too hard if it comes to fixing a price.[8]

On March 4 Matisse and Barnes met in Paris. Matisse gave Barnes a gouache copy of the current state of the decoration. They agreed that Matisse would begin a second mural; no decision was made about what would happen to the first. Matisse reported to Pierre that the meeting had not gone badly. Pierre replied:

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[7] Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, [February 26, 1932], Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York, cited in John Russell, Matisse: Father & Son (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999): 65.

[8] Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, March 3, 1932, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York, cited in Russell 1999: 66.

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> I admit that I was waiting anxiously and impatiently for the details of your interview with Barnes. He's a strange man in spite of all his good qualities. I'm pleased with the result, especially to know that Papa is in such good health that he can resist so well a shock that would have sent another reeling. I send my best wishes for his health and for his work.
>
> Barnes, in spite of his faults, remains a serious man, who knows exactly what he wants, who owes nothing to anyone and who can... at everyone [Pierre's ellipsis]. He is brutal, the brutality of the American businessman. But he has one great fault: he talks too much, he repeats to everyone what is said to him. It's important never to forget this...[9]

By summer Matisse had put the first 3 panels aside and had begun work on a second set of 3 panels for the Dance decoration.[10]

In autumn 1932 Skira published the Poésies of Stéphane Mallarmé with 29 etchings by Matisse. The Mallarmé book had been undertaken contemporaneously with the Barnes decoration, with which it shares common traits, especially Arcadian

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[9] "J'avoue que j'attendais avec impatience et anxiété les détails sur l'entrevue avec Barnes. C'est un homme bizarre malgré toutes les vrais qualités qu'il possède. Je suis heureux du résultat et surtout de savoir papa en si bonne santé et de le voir résister si bien à un choc qui aurait suffit à jeter par terre tout autre homme. Je fais des voeux pour sa santé et son travail.

"...Barnes malgré ses défauts reste un homme sérieux, qui sait parfaitement ce qu'il veut, qui s'est rendu indépendant et "qui..." tout le monde. Il est brutal, la brutalité de l'homme d'affaires américain. Mais il a un plus grand défaut, il parle trop, il raconte tout ce qu'on lui dit. Il ne faut jamais l'oublier..." (Pierre Matisse to Henri and Amélie Matisse, March 22, 1932, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

[10] As Jack Flam points out, the "first" version of the Barnes mural (now in the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris) was actually completed after the installation of the "second" version in Merion. These designations refer to the order in which they were begun, not completed; see Flam 1995: 281, n. 5.

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imagery, linear simplicity, and physical limitations imposed by the respective media—in one case, an architectural space; in the other, the format of a printed page.

Matisse characterized his contribution to the Mallarmé book as

> etchings, done in an even, very thin line, without hatching, so that the printed page is left almost as white as it was before printing.... The recto pages carrying the full-page illustrations were placed opposite facing verso pages that carry the text... The problem was then to balance the two pages—one white, with the etching, the other comparatively black, with the type.[11]

Working as "decorator," rather than "illustrator," Matisse sought to find "a plastic equivalent of the poem."[12]

> It is pleasurable to watch a good poet transport the imagination of another kind of artist, enabling him to create his own alternative to poetry. The plastic artist, to make the most of his gift, must be careful not to adhere too slavishly to the text. On the contrary, he must work freely, his own sensibility enriched through contact with the poet he is to illustrate. After concluding these illustrations of the poems of Mallarmé, I would like to simply state: "This is the work I have done after having read Mallarmé with pleasure."[13]

From December 3 to 30, the Marie Harriman Gallery on East 57th Street, New York, presented an exhibition of the Mallarmé etchings, which included "the original sketches for

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[11] Matisse, "How I Made My Books," 1946, in Flam 1995: 166-167.

[12] Escholier 1960: 129.

[13] Adelyn Breeskin, "Swans by Matisse," American Magazine of Art 28, 10 (October 1935): 622.

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the plates, the rejected drawings, the etchings with remarques which identify the various stages of the artist's proofs, and the final etchings as they appear in the book."[14] In addition, the gallery, as sole American agent for the limited-edition book, offered copies for sale at prices ranging from $400 to $1200.

The exhibition at the Marie Harriman Gallery partially coincided with Matisse drawing exhibitions at the Pierre Matisse and Valentine galleries.[15] Art News reported that "this celebration of Henri-Matisse at Marie Harriman's, together with the current display of his pencil drawings at Pierre Matisse's gallery a few doors west and at Valentine Dudensing's a few steps east, makes this particular segment of East Fifty-seventh Street take on a gala look as far as this artist is concerned."

The Art News report characterized Matisse's exhibition at Marie Harriman's as part of a continuing rivalry with Picasso. (Picasso's etchings based on Ovid's Metamorphoses, also published by Skira, had been exhibited at the gallery in 1931.) Picasso was declared the victor in this round:

> As to the plates that Matisse has contributed to this new Skira volume, I am not at all sure that they

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[14] Press release for the exhibition "Poésies de Stéphane Mallarmé, Eaux-Fortes Originales de Henri-Matisse," Marie Harriman Gallery, NYPL prints division, Archives of American Art.

[15] From November 22 to December 17, the Pierre Matisse Gallery exhibited the drawings selected by Henri Matisse for the 1920 publication Cinquante dessins. A drawing exhibition at the Valentine Gallery was held from December 9 to January 4.

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are anything out of the ordinary. He has liberally adopted the single-line style of etching that Picasso used so effectively in the Ovid plates, and in many cases has followed the Picasso formula when it comes to grouping figures. The Matisse line is naturally more sinuous, more supple, and in these Mallarmé images he has maintained a steady flow and quality of line, but I do not think they stand up beside the best of his pencil drawings or lithographs. They have a sort of ironed out look, and in many cases have been simplified to a point verging on vacuity.

…Since Picasso has been making sly references to Matisse's checkerboard diapering and sinuous outlines in certain of his latest canvases, it is no more than fair that Matisse should return the compliment by producing a companion piece to the Ovid very much in the Picasso manner. A fair exchange has never been considered robbery, and the well-known rivalry between these two outstanding men of the School of Paris is thus taken on into the field of illustration.[16]

Edward Alden Jewell of the New York Times wrote:

Matisse's humor is subtle and refreshing, while imagination, always held in check, can evolve surprising and sometimes striking arabesques.… Not infrequently Matisse may strike one as rather deliberately willful and capricious, but at its best his line can sing serenely in tune with the harmonious new dissonance.

There are drawings, too, which studied in conjunction with the finished etchings, add to a spectator's enjoyment. In several instances it is possible thus to watch an artist's idea in process of development from the more naturalistic to the uncompromisingly stylized.[17]

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[16] Unsigned, "Exhibitions in New York," Art News 31, 11 (December 10, 1932): 5.

[17] Edward Alden Jewell, "Art in Review," New York Times, December 3, 1932.

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It was announced at the opening, Jewell reported, that "the entire collection... has been bought, as a unit, by Miss Etta Cone of Baltimore." Etta purchased the maquette of the Mallarmé project from Matisse via Marguerite Duthuit.[18]

The announcement did not help sales at Marie Harriman's Gallery. In February 1933 Matisse informed Pierre: "Marie Harriman wrote to Skira that the Mallarmé exhibition was a great moral success for her gallery but that she sold nothing."[19]

It was Matisse's fate that, as a consequence of the Great Depression, at the very time he was winning public acceptance in America, his sales dried up. Etta Cone was his most reliable American customer. On excursions to Paris, she continued to buy his work, usually via Marguerite. (In 1930 and 1931 she had bought 7 Matisse bronzes, and earlier in 1932 she bought The Yellow Dress [see fig. 4.1].)[20]

Etta's purchase of the maquette of the Mallarmé project comprised 61 drawn sheets, etchings, copperplates, and proof copies of the book—250 items in all.[21] As Brenda Richardson

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[18] Richardson 1985: 188. In March 1933 Etta would buy the maquette for 140,000 francs.

[19] "Marie Harriman a écrit à Skira que l'exposition Mallarmé avait été un gros succès moral pour sa galerie mais qu'elle n'avait rien vendu" (Henri Matisse to Pierre Matisse, February 2, 1933, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York).

[20] The sculptures are itemized in Richardson 1985: 183 and 186. The Yellow Dress was purchased in summer or autumn 1932, from Matisse via Marguerite Duthuit, probably for 200,000 francs; see Richardson 1985: 186.

[21] Fisher 1995: 5; Richardson 1985: 188. See below, n. 22.

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observes, "It was an extraordinary commitment on her part to a landmark work by Matisse, a commitment made all the more striking for its impracticality as an exhibition piece.... The Mallarmé material was in fact so copious and so impractical for private ownership that Etta immediately deposited the material on loan to the... Baltimore Museum... where it remained until its formal accession... in 1950."[22]

In early 1933 Scribner's published The Art of Henri-Matisse by Albert C. Barnes and Violette de Mazia,[23] "a work of 464 pages, of which 223 comprise the text; 135 contain the 151 black-and-white illustrations; and the rest present a biographical sketch of Matisse, analyses of a score of his most important paintings, catalog data on all the works of art mentioned, and a detailed index."[24] Barnes dedicated the book to Leo Stein, "who was the first to recognize the genius of Matisse and who, more than twenty years ago, inspired the study which has culminated in this book."[25]

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[22] Richardson 1985: 127, and 160, n. 56; the Mallarmé material is itemized on pp. 160-161, n. 56.

[23] Henry Hart, who was Scribner's liaison to Barnes while the book was in preparation, writes that "the philosophical and aesthetic sections represented his (Barnes') own thinking.. The detailed analyses of individual examples of Matisse's work were the result of his own reactions and the research of Miss de Mazia" (Henry Hart, Dr. Barnes of Merion [New York: Farrar, Straus and Company, 1963]: 128). Though de Mazia is credited as co-author, the judgments are those of Barnes alone; accordingly, in my discussion of the book, I have considered the author to be Barnes, rather than Barnes and de Mazia.

[24] Hart 1963: 128.

[25] Albert C. Barnes and Violette de Mazia, The Art of Henri-Matisse (Merion: Barnes Foundation Press, 1933): v. When Barnes sent Stein a copy of the book nearly two years later (Barnes explained that the delay

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In The Art of Henri-Matisse Barnes subjects Matisse's achievement to extended formal analysis, employing the methodology that he introduced in The Art in Painting. He benefited from having written the earlier book, both its original edition of 1925 and its second edition of 1928, for the book on Matisse is better written and less doctrinaire than its predecessor. As in the previous book, Barnes concludes that Matisse is the greatest living painter: superior to his contemporaries Picasso, Derain, and Soutine, but not so great as Cézanne, Renoir, Rembrandt, Giotto, or the Venetian masters. What prevents Matisse from attaining the highest rank, according to Barnes, is the primacy of "decoration" over "expression" in his work, and the consequent lack of emotional and psychological depth.

An important value of Barnes' book is its comprehensive nature: a substantial number of paintings and some graphic works (but no sculptures) are reproduced and analyzed. Furthermore, it continues the practice of cross-cultural visual comparisons, previously used in The Art in Painting,

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had been due to his difficulty in finding Stein's address in Settignano), Stein replied: "I read it with interest. It seems to me much better written than your first book—the style is more elastic and agreeable.... Your treatment of Matisse seems to me very fair. Of course your intimate acquaintance with him dates from a very different period from mine. The last time I talked with him about his pictures was in the winter of '13-'14. I met him on one of the bridges on the Seine.... He asked me to come and see the picture which he was working on... the interior with the goldfish [see fig. 2.6]. On that occasion he said to me what he had so often said before—that he had hoped there would come a time when he could paint directly and freely, but this latest picture was as painful an effort, and had to be done and redone as often, as all that preceded.... I'm sorry it was not practicable for you to illustrate your book with colored plates" (Stein to Barnes, October 30, 1934, in Stein 1950: 147).

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and now extended to include examples from Egyptian, Byzantine, tribal African, early Italian, and Japanese cultures, among others.

Both the main text, which discusses the visual characteristics of Matisse's work in general, and the appendix, which contains formal analyses of specific works, make for tedious, laborious reading. Such was the chief complaint of the book's critics. The art historian Anthony Blunt wrote in the Spectator that "its massiveness, its gloomy binding which make it look like a nineteenth-century treatise on birth control, its pretentious chapter headings would repel any but the most serious-minded devotee of modern painting."[26] Print Collector's Quarterly (like the Spectator, a British publication) concluded: "Our opinion cannot be disguised that this is one of the driest books ever composed about a living artist."[27]

Other critics, such as Edward Alden Jewell of the New York Times, found redeeming qualities: "This book on Matisse begins somewhat dubiously, with a far-flung psychological treatise; but readers are urged not to become discouraged at the start, for before long the study gets down to business

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[26] Anthony Blunt, "Henri Matisse," The Spectator 150, 5,477 (June 16, 1933): 873-874. Blunt erred, though, when he criticized Barnes for claiming that "Matisse has at one time or another made use of every great nineteenth-century artist, of Japanese prints, of Persian miniatures and tiles, of Coptic textiles, of Roman mosaics, of Hindu and Negro sculpture and of many other models. This may possibly be true, but one cannot help wondering whether they have not sometimes mistaken accidental similarity for deliberate borrowing." In this regard Barnes was better informed than Blunt.

[27] Unsigned, Print Collector's Quarterly 20, 2 (April 1933): 86.

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and, if unnecessarily detailed and often pretty repetitious, the analysis can prove very much worth while.... The book, if overwritten, is full of meat."[28] The critic for Art Digest declared: "The book is indicative of much research, carried on in the scientific manner for which Dr. Barnes is noted, mingled with great admiration and appreciation of the subject, as well as philosophical insight, for which, as a rare personality, Dr. Barnes is to be esteemed."[29]

Conservative critics used Barnes' book as a means to bludgeon Matisse. Thomas Craven wrote in the New York Herald Tribune: "The Barnes method... is peculiarly adapted to the art of Matisse, which is essentially a studio art. Since the Frenchman is largely concerned with the art of the past; since life has but faintly touched him; his American backers are forced to dwell almost exclusively on the sources he has plundered. But they do not seem to realize that a painter may be a profound student of traditions and yet be a very minor

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[28] Edward Alden Jewell, "New Books on Art," New York Times Book Review, February 26, 1933: 11.

[29] Unsigned, "The News and Opinions of Books on Art," Art Digest 7, 9 (February 1, 1933): 23.

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artist. Nor do they realize that an artist's excessive use of traditional practices is an indication of weakness."[30]

Craven's attack on Matisse was echoed by a reviewer in Apollo: "The authors take great pains to emphasize... that Matisse... borrows themes... from tapestries, mosaics, tiles, rugs, flags, wall-paper, gowns, upholstery and what not, though why the treatment of a rug or a mosaic should be deemed right and appropriate to a painted picture is not clear, unless we are intended to stand on it. Upon these Matisse bases his slender improvisations.... What significance is there beyond poverty of ideas manifested in these borrowed plumes, distorted, shorn, reduced and attenuated, and made still more unacceptable by rudimentary and slovenly workmanship?"[31]

In January 1933 Barnes returned to Europe. He and Matisse had a brief rendezvous in Majorca, abbreviated as a consequence of the artist's illness and exhaustion. Then, toward the end of the month, he visited Matisse in Nice, where he viewed the decoration for the first time.

Matisse had been apprehensive about the visit, particularly as the mural existed only as a composition in cut paper.

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[30] Thomas Craven's review in the Herald Tribune of Barnes' book on Matisse was excerpted in "Challenging Matisse," Art Digest, March 15, 1933: 11, reprinted in Flam 1988: 295. Cf. Craven's Men of Art (Craven 1931: 497), in which the author dismisses Matisse as "a light talent, an ornamentalist whose designs are more applicable to silks, cretonnes and ceramics than to pictorial space." See also Barr 1951: 223, in which Alfred Barr compares Craven's xenophobic and anti-Semitic comments on Matisse, as expressed in Modern Art (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1934: 160-176) to Hitler's attacks on modern artists.

[31] H. G. F., "Book Reviews," Apollo 17, 102 (June 1933): 275-276.

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Until the moment Barnes saw the mural, he had known nothing of Matisse's novel technique. Matisse was relieved by his patron's favorable reaction.

"He saw the decoration, and he liked it," Matisse wrote to Pierre on February 12.

> He even urged me to leave it as it is. No painting is ever finished, he said, but this one had been taken far enough. In spite of that, I'm going on with it, but for a few days at the most.…
>
> He also brought me his book about me. Have you seen it? It should bring a lot of favorable attention in America. I have not read the text, but I have an idea what it's like. I'm sure that it is influenced by Leo Stein. It's dedicated to Leo by the way, whom Barnes describes as his "initiator." I said, "How could you do that?… Sarah Stein is the only person in that family who has any feeling for art."[32]

Despite Matisse's avowal to finish the decoration in "a few days," it would be more than 2 months before the work was complete. In late April he wrote to Pierre that he and the decoration would arrive in New York harbor on May 11.

> I can't wait to see it installed above the clear glass doors, just as I had always intended it to be. It will function as the sky above the foliage that visitors can see through the doors when they look across from the loggia on the second floor.[33]

Matisse was in Merion on Friday, May 12; installation began the following day. Later, replying to an interviewer

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[32] Henri Matisse to Pierre Matisse, February 12, 1933, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York, cited in Russell 1999: 71.

[33] Henri Matisse to Pierre Matisse, April 23, 1933, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York, cited in Russell 1999: 75.

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who had asked if everything had gone as expected, Matisse said, "J'étais ravi [I was delighted]. I reached Merion on a Friday and all was installed by Monday."[34] In truth, the four days surrounding the mural's installation were fraught with tension; the anxieties and overwork of nearly three years came to a head.

Before his arrival, Matisse had made three requests concerning the wall below the loggia. He had asked that the frosted glass in the French doors be replaced by clear glass—as he had written to Pierre, he wanted the mural to "function as the sky above the foliage." He had asked that the two large and distracting paintings between the French doors—his own Seated Riffian (see fig. 3.24) and Picasso's Composition: The Peasants (1906)—be moved to another location. And he had asked that the sculpted frieze below the pendentives be removed. All of these requests had been disregarded.

On Saturday Matisse began stretching the first canvas, in defiance of Barnes' expressed wish that the job be done by the Foundation's handyman. After two hours of work, he collapsed in nervous exhaustion. Barnes would write to Pierre that his father had suffered a "mild heart attack," but that after some whiskey and rest, "was all right in an hour or two." Barnes brought in a heart specialist who "said that your father is in need of absolute rest… There is no immediate cause for alarm but when a man reaches your father's age it is

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[34] Dorothy Dudley, "The Matisse Fresco in Merion, Pennsylvania," Hound and Horn 7, 2 (January-March 1934): 303; reprinted in Flam 1995: 112.

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necessary for him to readjust his life to changed conditions which advancing years bring on."[35]

On Sunday Matisse had recovered, and the installation resumed under his supervision. When it was complete, he regarded his creation with satisfaction and relief. Three days later he wrote to his friend the painter Simon Bussy:

> It is a splendid thing which one can have no idea of without having seen it—since the whole arched ceiling radiates out—and this effect even extends down to the ground. I am extremely tired but very pleased. Having seen the picture in place—I now feel disconnected from it. I feel it has become part of the building—and I no longer think of the work that has gone into it, the past; it has acquired its own personality... Seeing the picture again was a real birth, relieving me of the labor and pain that led up to it.[36]

Matisse later told an interviewer:

> As soon as I saw the decoration in place I felt that it was detached absolutely from myself, and that it took on a meaning quite different from what it had had in my studio, where it was only a painted canvas. There in the Barnes Foundation it became a rigid thing, heavy as stone, and one that seemed to have been spontaneously created at the same time with the building.

Matisse added:

> Barnes said, "One would call the place a cathedral now. Your painting is like the rose window of a cathedral."[37]

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[35] Albert Barnes to Pierre Matisse, May 15, 1933, Pierre Matisse archives, Morgan Library, New York, cited in Flam 1993: 61, and 85, n. 136 and 137.

[36] Henri Matisse to Simon Bussy, May 17, 1933, cited in Greenfeld 1987: 169-170.

[37] Dudley 1934: 112-113.

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Although Barnes did not say so publicly, there is reason to believe that he was disappointed by the decoration. "Barnes was never completely satisfied with it, but he never told the artist so," writes Henry Hart, for whom Barnes' widow Laura was a source.[38] Regarding Barnes and the mural, John Russell observes: "There was something withheld, something grudging, and something devious about whatever he said to Henri Matisse on the subject."[39]

Matisse, in letters to his family, expressed his disenchantment with Barnes. To a reporter from the New York World-Telegram, he said, in remarks that reflected his recent experience in Merion: "When a painting is finished, it's like a new born child, and the artist himself must have time for understanding. How then, do you expect an amateur to understand that which an artist does not yet comprehend?"[40]

On May 16 Matisse returned to New York. A few days later, accompanied by John Dewey, he dropped in unannounced at Stieglitz's gallery An American Place on Madison Avenue; Abraham Walkowitz was presiding. Stieglitz, who had not seen Matisse since summer 1911, was away, having left town to escort his wife Georgia O'Keeffe to Lake George; never before had he missed a day at the gallery. Later, he was disappointed to

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[38] Hart 1963: 120.

[39] Russell 1999: 76.

[40] "Matisse Speaks," Editorial, Art News 31, 36 (June 3, 1933): 8. The editorial includes excerpts from recent interviews with Matisse in the New York World-Telegram and the New York Evening Post.

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have missed Matisse but amused to learn that the artist had invited him to visit in Nice, under the assumption that he, like other dealers, made annual trips to Europe.[41]

Another visit was to the Museum of Modern Art. Matisse had missed his own 1931 retrospective, which had been scheduled between American trips. Currently on view was a pre-Columbian show entitled "American Sources of Modern Art," which so moved him that he wrote an endorsement, later published in the Museum's Bulletin:

> In the beginning of the twentieth century, modern artists, as they sought a new organization of their paintings in order to emphasize the various elements of construction, were greatly impressed by the geometric, nearly always symmetrical, qualities that they observed in Mexican and Central American figurines. The Trocadéro Museum in Paris has a very beautiful collection of carved stone pieces (representing people, gods, and animals) as well as casts of the most important originals from the American continent.
>
> This exhibition, organized by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, gives the American public the opportunity to learn the importance of these artistic treasures from vanished civilizations, of which constant excavations give us beautiful testimony each day.[42]

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[41] See Whelan 1995: 547, and Sue Davidson Lowe, Stieglitz: A Memoir/ Biography (London: Quartet/Or! Books, 1983): 326.

[42] "Au début du Xxe siècle les artistes modernes dans leurs recherches d'une nouvelle organisation de leur tableaux et afin d'en mettre en évidence les différents éléments de construction ont été vivement impressionnés par la disposition géométrique et presque toujours symétrique que l'on remarque dans les figures de l'art du Mexique et de l'Amérique Centrale. Le Musée du Trocadéro à Paris possède une très belle collection de pierres (personnages, dieux, animaux) complétée par les moulages de pièces les plus importantes restées sur le continent américain.

"L'exposition organisée par le Musée d'Art Moderne de New York offre au public américain l'occasion de réaliser l'importance des richesses artistiques des civilisations disparues et dont les fouilles constantes

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While Matisse was in New York, a heated controversy concerning public art was in progress. Diego Rivera had been commissioned to paint a mural in the lobby of the RCA building in Rockefeller Center. His inclusion of a figure of Lenin had been deemed unacceptable by the Rockefeller family. When he refused to remove the figure, work was halted, and the mural was boarded up.[43] Artists and intellectuals protested; marchers picketed Rockefeller Center.

As it happened, in November 1932 Matisse had been invited to paint a mural in Rockefeller Center on a side wall flanking Rivera's. He had declined, on two grounds: he was occupied with the Barnes commission, and he considered the site, so bustling and public, to be inappropriate for the reflective state of mind his paintings require.[44]

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nous rendent chaque jours les beaux témoignages" (Henri Matisse, in Museum of Modern Art Bulletin 1, 1 [June 1933]: 4).

[43] On February 9, 1934, Rivera's Rockefeller Center mural was destroyed. Rivera later painted a modified version of the mural at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City. He included Lenin and added figures of Trotsky, Marx—and John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

[44] See Barr 1951: 220-221, and 546, n. 9. Barr's information came from the architect Raymond Hood, who had invited Matisse to take part in the project. On January 6, 1933, Matisse wrote to Abby Aldrich Rockefeller: "For a long time I wished to express my regrets at not accepting the offer made to me by Mr. Hood... I was happy... to assure him that it would give me the greatest pleasure to execute the work you have requested if the architects assign me a place in sympathy with my painting, and accord the time necessary for the execution of a work which would fully satisfy me" (cited in Kert 1993: 355, and 502, n. 19). Hood also sought unsuccessfully to commission Picasso to paint a mural at the site. Murals now in place are by the British artist Frank Brangwyn and the Spanish artist José Maria Sert.

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On May 24, on the eve of sailing, Matisse met with the press at Pierre's gallery. Asked by a Herald Tribune reporter for a comment on the Rivera controversy, he replied:

> Propaganda has no place in art. Art should rise above politics, the realities of one little epoch. Art is an escape from reality. Of course, the affair of Rivera is none of my business, but I do not agree with M. Rivera, if he is quoted correctly, that every art must have its political viewpoint.
>
> There was a time for that, back in the Middle Ages. Then there were no newspapers and theater and so forth, and images painted or engraved were the chief source of expression and entertainment. Art can afford to rise above this now, and naturally its public is somewhat smaller.[45]

To a reporter from the World-Telegram, he said:

> Politics are temporary; they pass. Art lives on forever. I do not believe in propaganda art. It is not necessary for the artist to associate himself with the class struggle or for him to seek to interpret it.[46]

On May 25, Matisse left America for the last time. Back in Nice in early June, he was physically and emotionally drained. In July, vacationing in nearby Cap Ferrat, he fell ill with kidney stones and returned to Nice to convalesce.

While Matisse was recuperating, Etta Cone came to visit, accompanied by her sister-in-law, niece, and nephew. On July 22 she wrote to her brother Fred:

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[45] Unsigned, "Rivera's Views on Art Wrong, Matisse Thinks," New York Herald Tribune, May 25, 1933.

[46] "Matisse Speaks," Editorial, Art News 31, 36 (June 3, 1933): 8; see above, n. 40.

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> ...We found, after going out to Cap Ferrat, where Matisse was summering, that an illness made him return to Nice ten days ago. His wife was expecting to hear from me and insisted (over the phone) that I come to see her husband who was in bed but convalescing.
>
> My visit was a joy. One of the first things he said was: "When I am able to work the first thing I shall do is make the drawing of Dr. Cone,"[47] then he said, "I have a surprise for you," and presently I turned and there sat the model in the yellow taffeta dress with the large yellow hat on, just in front of the window—the exact reproduction of my latest painting [The Yellow Dress, fig. 4.1]. His bedroom (which is his atelier when he is well) was the scene of this picture. Needless to say, I was thrilled.
>
> Well, Mons. Matisse would not listen to my plan to leave Nice the next morning (today) for as he explained Marguerite would arrive demain and she would show me the original decoration for the Barnes Foundation....
>
> ...Since writing the first page Madame Duthuit appeared on the scene and we... had a very good lunch at the hotel. Then Raymond [the chauffeur] took us to the studio where we saw the original design for the Barnes' salon. It is a wonderful production and Laura [Etta's sister-in-law] and the children got great pleasure from seeing it.

Etta's nephew Edward Cone later recalled:

> The mural—like the one at the Barnes Museum, a composition of huge dancing nudes, but stronger and less graceful—made a tremendous impression on all of us. Aunt Etta said simply, "Je suis comblée [I'm thrilled]," and that expressed what we all felt. So it was with a real sense of the honor that was bestowed on us that we paid our call on the master and his wife.
>
> The apartment, with its red tile floors and sunny windows, was familiar from many paintings. Mme. Matisse, kind and motherly, greeted us warmly and plied us with tea until her husband was ready for us. He proved to be most genial, talking volubly about his recent kidney

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[47] In Paris, in July 1934, Matisse fulfilled the commission, presenting 10 portrait drawings to Etta Cone—4 of Claribel; 6 of Etta—as a gift; see Richardson 1985: 188.

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> stones, the climates of France and North Carolina, and his hopes that the mural we had just seen might one day rest in a specially built Cone Museum. The doctor arrived and we had to leave, Aunt Etta's spirits only slightly dampened by the realization that even if she could some day afford the expense of granting Matisse's wish, she would probably lack the energy for such an undertaking.[48]

Once Matisse recovered, he went back to work on the "first" Dance mural (fig. 4.17), completing it by November 1933 (although it is signed and dated 1932). This version (now at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris) has the same color scheme as the Barnes mural, but contains 6, rather than 8 dancers; it is more architectonic and less illusionistic, and bears more of the imprint of the paper-cutout technique, than does the Barnes version. Matisse compared the two versions:

> The second is not a simple copy of the first; for, because these different pendentives required me to compose with architectural masses more than twice the size, I had to change my composition. I even produced a work with a different spirit: the first [Paris version] is warlike, the second [Merion version] Dionysian...[49]

It was perhaps wise for all concerned that Etta Cone did not heed Matisse's mischievous suggestion that she purchase the mural for Baltimore; the proximity to Merion would surely have enraged Barnes. Moreover, its monumental character was out of keeping with the general tenor of her collection,

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[48] Edward T Cone, "The Miss Etta Cones, the Steins, and M'sieu Matisse: A Memoir," American Scholar 42 (1973): 455.

[49] Henri Matisse to Alexander Romm, January 19, 1934, in Flam 1995: 115.

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which despite the anomaly of the Blue Nude (see fig. 1.20), was intimate and domestic.[50]

Matisse retained the studio at rue Désiré-Niel through year's end, and in December Barnes brought a group of students from the Foundation to see the mural. All the while, Matisse maintained the fiction that it had been completed the previous year.

Barnes' Art of Henri-Matisse was not the only book appearing in 1933 that touched on the topic of Matisse in American collections. Gertrude Stein's memoir The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas was released over the summer. In advance of publication it had been serialized in the Atlantic Monthly. On August 22, nine days before Harcourt Brace's official publication date, its first printing of 5,400 copies was sold out. A literary guild version became available to its subscribers in September. Gertrude, who for years had difficulty getting her recondite prose published, had written a best seller.

Henry McBride, long a champion of Gertrude's writing, sent her a congratulatory letter: "It was apparent, with the

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[50] Etta Cone died in 1949, willing her collection to the city of Baltimore and the Baltimore Museum of Art. Her sister Claribel had recommended that such a bequest be conditional upon an improvement in the city's "spirit of appreciation of modern art" (see above, 3.4, p. 427). While there is little indication of such an improvement on the part the city's collectors and public, the "spirit of appreciation" was evident at the Baltimore Museum, particularly in the person of its director, Adelyn Breeskin. Etta entrusted works of art to Breeskin's care at the museum and authorized her to make art purchases on her behalf in New York; see Richardson 1985: 147, and 162, n. 56. Breeskin was the author of an essay on Matisse's illustrated book of Mallarmé; see Breeskin 1935.

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very first chapter in the Atlantic, that the book was doomed to be a best seller. (Doomed, is my word for it, not yours. I don't like giving you up to the general public and sharing you and Alice with about a million others). The most unlikely people came to me with praises on their lips."

McBride added maliciously: "An individual not so highly pleased, however, was the great Henri Matisse, with whom I lunched about that time." (In May 1933, when McBride and Matisse met for lunch in New York, the Atlantic Monthly's first installment of the Autobiography had recently appeared on newsstands.) "I tried to tell him," McBride confided to Gertrude, "that the recital of your frank and jovial relationship to artists would be a bonne réclame [good publicity] in America, but he shuddered."[51]

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[51] Henry McBride to Gertrude Stein, October 27, 1933, Gertrude Stein Collection, YCAL, reprinted in Gallup 1953, 270-271. Cf. Gertrude Stein, Everybody's Autobiography (New York: Vintage Books, 1937): 32: "Henry McBride wrote to me that he had seen Matisse in New York, he said all the painters should be delighted because I had revivified them at a moment when everybody was not thinking about painting. Henry McBride wrote that as he said those words Matisse shuddered."

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Afterword

Primarily for reasons beyond his control (the Second World War and the state of his health), Matisse never again visited the United States.[1] Nonetheless, he continued to leave his mark on American cultural life after 1933.

In the early thirties, many American artists were steeped in Social Realism and Regionalism; few—two exceptions being Milton Avery and Hans Hofmann—believed that Matisse had much of value to say to them.

A few years later, the situation began to change. The critic Clement Greenberg, who championed both Matisse and abstract expressionism, later recalled: "Abstract art was the main issue among the painters I knew in the late thirties. Radical politics was on many people's minds, but for these particular artists Social Realism was as dead as the American Scene."

The bridge between Matisse and painters later known as abstract expressionists was Hofmann, who, at his school on Eighth Street, instructed his students on the lessons of Matisse (as Matisse, three decades earlier, had taught his students the lessons of Cézanne). In an oft-quoted statement, Greenberg claimed that "you could learn more about Matisse's

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[1] In October 1940 Matisse declined an invitation to teach at Mills College in California. He had written to Pierre on an earlier occasion: "If everyone who has any value leaves France, what remains of France?" (September 1, 1940, cited in Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Matisse: His Art and His Public [New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951]: 256; see also John Russell, Matisse: Father & Son (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999: 195).

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color from Hofmann than from Matisse himself."[2] The "influence of Matisse" was "pervasive":

> to this influence (as well as to Hofmann), artists as different as Pollock and Rothko were indebted for that loosening up of the painted surface which was to be the most immediate common trait of the new American painting. The same influence was largely responsible, moreover, for the specifically "abstract expressionist" version of the big picture; Matisse's huge Bathers by a River,... now in the Chicago Art Institute, hung for a long time in the lobby of the Valentine Gallery, where I myself saw it often enough to feel able to copy it by heart.[3]

Greenberg wrote of Matisse's enormous influence on such artists as Pollock, Rothko, Newman, Still, Gottlieb, and Motherwell:

> What was assimilated was not only Matisse's color, but also his touch.... how Matisse laid on and stroked varying thinnesses of paint so that the white ground breathed as well as showed through. There was, of course, more to Matisse's influence on American Abstract Expressionism than his touch. There was also... his very approach to easel-painting.... Picasso's pictures tend to close in on themselves, no matter what, Matisse's to open out, no matter what. It's as though Matisse... tried to wrench easel-painting away from every one of its sources except wall-painting.... [It's] as though Matisse... felt, that in

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[2] In the sentence that followed, Greenberg elucidated this paradox: "Among the things most disappointing to many of us in the new French painting that came here right after the war was precisely its color, in which we saw even Matisse's example being used to enfeeble personal expression." In other words, thanks to Hofmann, American painters understood Matisse better than their French contemporaries did; see below, n. 3.

[3] Clement Greenberg, "The Late Thirties in New York" in Clement Greenberg, Art and Culture: Critical Essays (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961): 230-235. This was a revised version of a longer essay that originally appeared in the Summer 1957 issue of Art News under the title "New York Painting Only Yesterday"; see John O'Brian, ed., Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press), 1986 and 1993, vol. 4: 19-26.

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> order to expand the range of easel-painting, he had to... make it centrifugal in organization instead of centripetal.[4]

Like Matisse, Greenberg was committed to both modernity and tradition. In giving the abstract expressionists the imprimatur of Matisse, whom he dubbed "the greatest painter of our time,"[5] he was linking those artists to the grand tradition. In emphasizing the continuity of abstract expressionism with the art of the past, he stood in contrast to such critics as Harold Rosenberg and Alan Kaprow, who wrote of the style's rupture with the past. He would exclude from his definition of modernism the neo-dadaist heirs of Duchamp, such as Rauschenberg and Johns.

On West 53rd Street, Alfred Barr preached a more ecumenical brand of modernism, embracing dada and Surrealism as well as Matisse, Picasso, and abstract art.[6] After the Second World War, Barr continued to exhibit Matisse at the Modern and resumed research on the monumental study Matisse:

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[4] Clement Greenberg, "Influences of Matisse," Henri Matisse. New York: Acquavella Galleries, 1973: [unpaginated]; reprinted in Art International 17, 9 (1973): 28-29.

[5] Cited in John O'Brian, Ruthless Hedonism: Matisse's American Reception (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999): 173; see Clement Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of the Jane Street Group and Rufino Tamayo," in O'Brian 1986 and 1993, vol. 2: 134 (originally published in The Nation, February 22, 1947).

[6] In Chicago, Daniel Catton Rich became the director of the Art Institute in 1938. Like Barr, he had been trained at Harvard in the twenties (he had studied with Paul Sachs's colleague, Edward Forbes). In 1953, during Catton Rich's tenure, the Art Institute acquired its most important Matisse, Bathers by a River (1916). See John W. Smith, "The Nervous Profession: Daniel Catton Rich and the Art Institute of Chicago, 1927-1958" (Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies 19, 1 [1993]): 58-79.

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His Art and His Public (which would appear in tandem with the Matisse retrospective of 1951-1952). Meanwhile, with the help of loyal patrons (many of them Trustees), he was assembling for the Museum a world-class permanent collection of Matisse in all media.[7]

Matisse was widely exhibited in America in the forties and fifties, in both solo and group exhibitions. In New York one could see his work at the Pierre Matisse, Marie Harriman, Bignou, and Paul Rosenberg Galleries, among others. As Matisse's eightieth birthday approached, two major American retrospectives were planned. The first and larger of the two, organized by Henry Clifford in collaboration with the artist, was held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in April-May 1948.[8]

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[7] Paintings acquired by the Modern include: Bather (1909) and Les Coloquintes (see fig. 4.14), gifts from Abby Aldrich Rockefeller in 1935; The Piano Lesson (1916) and The Red Studio (see fig. 1.72) purchased in 1946 and 1949, respectively, with help from the Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund; The Moroccans (see fig. 4.15), a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Marx in 1955; Goldfish and Sculpture (see fig. 1.73), a gift from Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney in 1955; The Pink Marble Table (see fig. 3.24), purchased in 1956, with help from the Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund; Music (Sketch) (see fig. 1.21), a gift from A. Conger Goodyear in 1962; Dance I (1909), a gift from Nelson Rockefeller in 1963; and Woman on a High Stool (see fig. 2.7), Goldfish and Palette (see fig. 3.13), and Variation on a Still Life by de Heem (see fig. 2.15), gifts from Florene M. Schoenborn and Samuel A. Marx in 1964. See John Elderfield, Matisse in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1978), and Dominique Fourcade and Isabelle Monod-Fontaine, Henri Matisse 1904-1917 (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1993).

[8] Matisse expressed his concerns about the reaction of American artists to his work in a letter to Clifford, which was published in the exhibition catalogue (and reprinted, in abridged form, in the catalogue of the 1966 Retrospective at UCLA). "I am afraid that the young, seeing in my work only the apparent facility and negligence in the drawing, will use this as an excuse for dispensing with certain efforts which I believe necessary" (Henry Clifford, Henri Matisse: Retrospective Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, and Sculpture, Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1948: 15; see also UCLA Art Council and Art Galleries, Henri Matisse [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966]: 7, and Jack Flam, ed., Matisse on Art, second

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The second, curated by Alfred Barr, was held at the Modern in New York from November 1951 to January 1952, after which it traveled, in somewhat altered form, to Cleveland, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Portland.[9]

In the late forties Matisse was at once a modern master with a body of canonical work and a contemporary artist turning out works of power and originality, comparable to those of his innovative period 1907-1913. Reviewing a Matisse exhibition at Pierre Matisse's gallery in 1949, Greenberg spoke for many when he wrote: "We ought... to rejoice occasionally that we live in the same [age] as Matisse, and that we have been able, as his contemporaries, to watch his development on the spot."[10]

The 1949 Matisse exhibition at Pierre's gallery comprised paintings of 1947-8 (including Large Red Interior, 1948, MNAM) and 10 cut-outs (their first public showing).[11] Cut-outs were also shown at the 1951-1952 retrospective at the

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ed. [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995]: 181-183.) Matisse had expressed similar concerns about his influence on young artists at the time of the Matisse Academy; see above, 1.7: pp. 80-81.

[9] Retrospectives were also held in Lucerne (1949), Nice (1950), Paris (1950), and Tokyo (1951).

[10] Clement Greenberg, "Review of an Exhibition of Henri Matisse," in O'Brian 1986 and 1993, vol. 2: 294 (originally published in The Nation, March 5, 1949).

[11] Exhibitions of Jazz and other cut-outs in stencil or silk-screen form were shown before 1949, at the Philadelphia retrospective, and at other venues; see Jack Cowart, Jack Flam, Dominique Fourcade, and John Hallmark Neff, Henri Matisse Paper Cut-Outs (St. Louis Art Museum and Detroit Institute of Arts, 1977): 286.

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Modern.[12] In 1961 (seven years after the artist's death), the Museum presented "The Last Works of Henri Matisse: Large Cut Gouaches" (comprising some 40 works), which curator Monroe Wheeler called "a sequel" to the 1951-1952 retrospective.[13]

The first posthumous Matisse retrospective in America was held in 1966 in Los Angeles (and subsequently traveled to Chicago and Boston).[14] Reviewing the exhibition for Artforum, Nancy Marmer observed how relevant Matisse was to the hard-edge and color-field painters of the 1960s. Marmer noted that in the years following the Modern's 1961 exhibition of cutouts, Matisse "has surely been the only School of Paris artist from the 'heroic' period of modernism whose reputation has actually soared among young artists, for whom the last gouaches decoupees have had the remarkable virtue of seeming truly contemporary."

> Furthermore, some of the chief radical characteristics of his earlier works—flat pattern, simplification, audaciously brilliant color—are currently as much in fashion again in post-Abstract Expressionist America as the artistic stance assumed by Matisse: a willed and temperate sensualism, cool intellectual control, and a fierce professionalism....

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[12] The Modern's retrospective included The Thousand and One Nights (1950, Pittsburgh), Beasts of the Sea (1950, Washington), and cut-outs related to the Vence Chapel (1948-1951); see Andrew Carnduff Ritchie and Monroe Wheeler, Henri Matisse (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951): 10, 12.

[13] Monroe Wheeler, The Last Works of Henri Matisse: Large Cut Gouaches (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1961): 7. The exhibition was held at the Modern in October-December 1961; it subsequently traveled to Chicago and San Francisco.

[14] The exhibition, shown at the UCLA Art Galleries in January-February 1966, was organized by Frederick S. Wight and comprised more than 300 works.

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> Not only do many of the "new abstractionists" share Matisse's tough-minded estheticism and serious vision of "decoration," but a good many have learned from his particular use of flat, open form on flat ground as well; such painters as Youngerman, Krushenick, Olitski, Noland, Dzubas, Held, Feeley, and Kelly dispose sensuous areas of flat color on flat ground with the conviction that such formal arrangements "in a decorative manner" have at least potentially expressive qualities, and more than a few of those mentioned would seem to owe specific debts of inspiration to both the colors and flat forms of the decoupages.[15]

Included in the 1966 retrospective were two paintings never before seen in America, both of 1914: View of Notre Dame (MoMA) and Open Window, Collioure (MNAM). They are austere in composition, restrained in color, and among the most nearly abstract of Matisse's works until the period of the late cut-outs.

These two paintings made a notable impression on the west-coast painter Richard Diebenkorn, who had wavered in recent years between representation and abstraction, and who had long been an admirer of Matisse. In 1967 Diebenkorn returned to abstraction, launching his Ocean Park series, for which Matisse's paintings of 1914 were a direct inspiration.[16]

That American painters of the 1960s could continue to draw sustenance from Matisse is testimony not only to Matisse's resilience as an artist but also to those firm and

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[15] Nancy Marmer, "Matisse and the Strategy of Decoration," Artforum 4, 7 (March 1966): 29, 32.

[16] See Gerald Nordland, Richard Diebenkorn (New York: Rizzoli, 1987): 144-148, and Jack Flam, Richard Diebenkorn: Ocean Park, Gagosian Gallery (New York: Rizzoli, 1992): 12-16, 32 ff.

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complex ties between Matisse and the United States, going back to the early years of the century, which remained unbroken through a depression and two world wars.

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