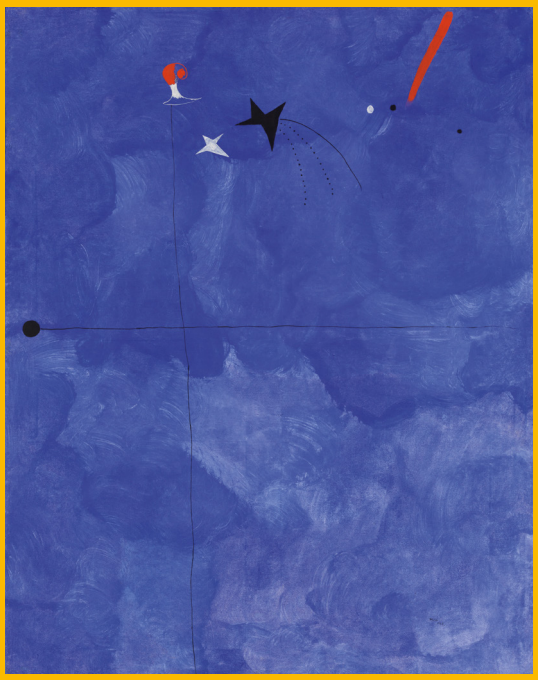


Joan Miró, Tête de paysan catalan, 1925 - Huile sur toile, 147 x 115cm - Stockholm, Moderna Museet © Stockholm, Moderna Museet - © Successió Miró / ADAGP Paris, 2024



Henri Matisse, Vue de Notre-Dame, 1914 - Huile sur toile, 147,3 x 94,3 cm - Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) New York © Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Firenze - © Succession Henri Matisse

MIRÓMATISSE

BEYOND IMAGES

MUSÉEMATISSE

EXHIBITION GUIDE

Fundació Joan Miró

Barcelona

28 JUNE > 29 SEPT. 2024

© Ville de Nice - JH - 06/2024

MIRÓMATISSE

BEYOND IMAGES

An exhibition presented from 28 June to 29 September 2024
In partnership with the Fundació Joan Miró, in Barcelona
Under the direction of Aymeric Jeudy, director of the Matisse museum Nice, and Marko Daniel, director of the Fundació Joan Miró

Curated by Rémi Labrusse (École des hautes études en sciences sociales)

"*Miró... yes, Miró... because he may well put any odd thing on his canvas... but if he has placed a red mark in a particular spot, you can be certain that it had to be there and nowhere else...*"

Henri Matisse to Louis Aragon, around 1942

"*You also know […] my admiration for Matisse, […] you being the son of a very great painter.*"

Joan Miró to Pierre Matisse, 1934

At first sight, the comparison between the two artists may seem surprising. They belong to different generations (Matisse was born in 1869 and Miró in 1893) and are generally associated with different artistic milieux (Fauvism in Matisse's case, Surrealism in Miró's). While underlining these differences, the exhibition shows the deep, lasting, and constructive relationships that exist between the two artists and their works. In both cases their creations are founded on a strong stand against the Western visual tradition. Their expanded practices of drawing and painting are driven by a form of concern which Matisse called "decorative" aesthetics and Miró "assassination of painting". If their paths converged and they admired each other, it is because they both felt their artistic approaches were like the two sides of the same coin.

FACE TO FACE

Long before Matisse and Miró met, links could spontaneously be drawn between their works. They share the same perception of the real world, rejecting equally the ideas of imitating appearances and abstraction. It is in 1917 that Miró sees an oil painting by Matisse for the first time, on the occasion of an exhibition of contemporary French art in Barcelona. Although quite critical of Matisse's works from the 1920s, he acknowledges the remarkable quality of the art he produced in the 1930s. Meanwhile Matisse is impressed by the "evolution" he has noticed in Miró's works, and finds in them a new inspiration for his own approach to painting.

IN CONTACT



Joan Miró and Henri Matisse at the Café Les Deux Magots, Paris, around 1936-1938

On this picture Miró and Matisse are looking in the same direction. It is as though they are drawn towards something invisible beyond the image. They met through Matisse's younger son, Pierre, in 1934. Their relationship, founded on mutual admiration, blossomed into a friendship that will last until Matisse's death, in 1954.

NORD-SOUTH

Paris – the North – fascinated Miró, who used to live in Barcelona. Conversely, Catalonia – the South – is essential for Matisse during the Fauvist period: it's in Collioure, a small port in French Catalonia, that the latter lays the groundwork for this revolutionary new way of painting. He returns there regularly until 1914, drawn by the Mediterranean light and a rural simplicity which were also characteristic of Mont-roig, Miró's childhood home, a hundred kilometres south of Barcelona.

FAUVISM, ONLY MORE BRUTAL: MATISSE'S LESSON

In the 1930's, critics call for a resurgence of a "New Fauvism" seeing it as a necessary impetus to encourage young artists to paint with greater spontaneity. Matisse continues to be considered the leader and most astute theoretician of this movement. In one of his notebooks, around 1941, Miró writes: "These canvases should be 'fauve' in spirit, but in a poetic way. They should to some extent be reminiscent of Matisse's good paintings, but surpass them and be even more furiously 'fauves'." Calling upon this vital energy might have been for him, at that time, a means to confront war's atrocities.

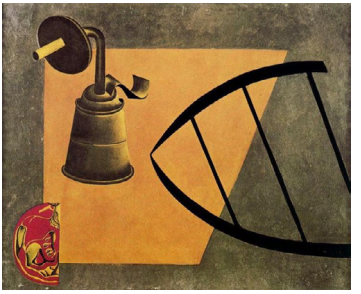
STARTING OVER WITH PAINTING: MIRÓ'S LESSON

At the end of the 1920s, Matisse goes through a pictorial crisis, despite his international fame and his commercial success. At the end of 1929, he writes to his daughter Marguerite: "I work a lot, but far removed from painting. I've got ready for it several times, but when I'm in front of the canvas, I am at a loss for ideas."

In 1930, he set off on a several-months trip to Oceania and the United States, during which he doesn't work as a kind of therapeutic break. On his return, he begins to work on a large architectural "decor", *Dance*, for the Albert Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, but still faces difficulties with painting. This is when Matisse makes Miró his preferred interlocutor: firstly, because the Catalan painter belonged to a "younger" generation and thus made it possible to gauge the potential "future" of Matisse's work; secondly, because Matisse considers he is "well versed in the use of bright colours". Thanks to his son Pierre, a New York gallery owner and Miró's representative, Matisse regularly saw the works of this painter and even kept a few of his paintings in his own home, between 1935 and 1945, to study and take inspiration from them.



Henri Matisse, *The Gourds*, 1915-1916, oil on canvas, 65,1 × 80,9 cm. Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York. Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund



Joan Miró, *Still Life II (The Carbid Lamp)*, 1922-1923, oil on canvas, 38,1 × 45,7 cm. MoMA, New York, bought 1939

ILLUSTRATING OR DECORATING?

For Matisse and Miró, the desire to go beyond images was also stimulated by the use of other forms of creation than painting. Books are one of them. For many years, both artists enjoyed a series of collaborations with the publishers of artists' books and passionately illustrated journals and poetry collections, thereby emphasising the decorative aspect of their art. Miró and Matisse considered their books to be true architectural constructions, created in particular thanks to the commissions of critic and publisher Tériade (Matisse's *Jazz*, in 1947, or Miró's books on the figure of *Ubu*, between 1966 and 1975).

DECORATING OR DECONSTRUCTING?

The relationship with the human figure is a crucial concern for both artists: on one hand, it is essential to stimulate their desire to create, far from the idea of abstraction; while, on the other hand, it risks to reduce the images they produced to the simple expression of fantasies. This was something of which the artists were conscious, and it is why they willingly disfigured their models, to the point of making them "monstrous", a term openly used by both artists. For them, it wasn't a question of representing the pre-existing beauty of a body, but rather about making the intensity of human relationships perceptible. Deconstructing the classical representations of the human figure is seen in Matisse's works as "decorative" and in Miró's as an "assassination".

SHARED CONNECTIONS

The bond between Matisse and Miró flourished due to the admiration they both received from those closest to them, men and women, such as Marguerite, the daughter of Henri Matisse, Teeny, the American wife of Pierre Matisse, or the art patron Marie Cuttoli, who commissioned tapestry cartoons from both artists in the 1930s. Many of their family and mutual friends brought them together: art critics and writers like Louis Aragon, André Breton, Georges Duthuit and Christian Zervos, etc.; or dealers like Pierre Matisse or Aimé Maeght. They all played an active role as intermediaries between the two artists, informing them of their respective productions and expressing their mutual admiration.

CREATING SPACE: BEYOND IMAGES

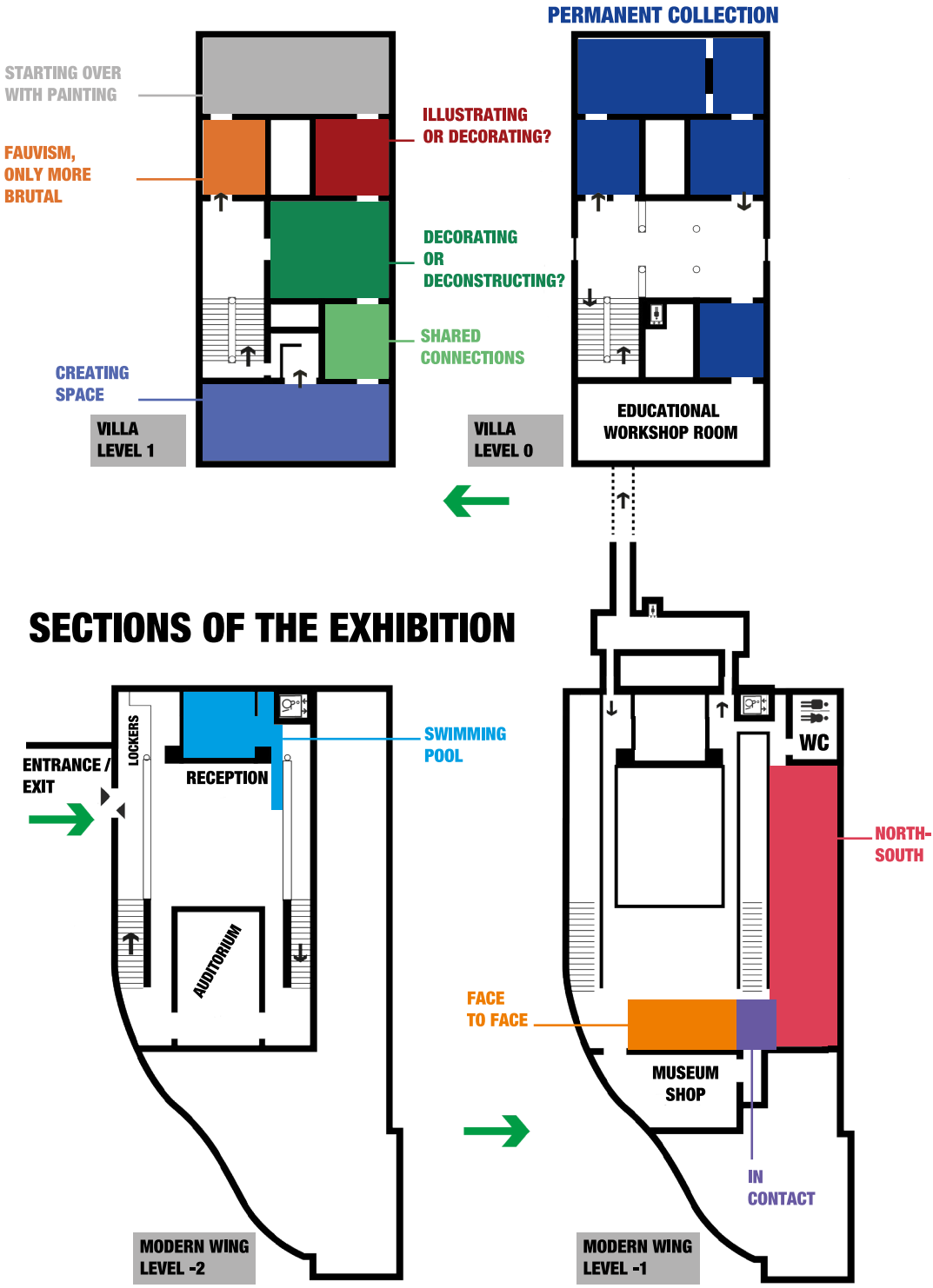
For Matisse as well as for Miró, the space created inside and around their images is in tension : the eye is drawn in by the intensity of the colours and the strength of the compositions, while the expansive power of these elements guides it beyond their boundaries. For both artists, one way of overcoming this tension was to think their creations in terms of architectural space. Towards the end of their lives, this would lead to the creation of the chapel of the Dominicans in Vence, realised by Matisse between 1947 and 1952, and certain monumental compositions by Miró – such as his stained-glass projects for the chapel of the property of pianist György Cziffra, in Senlis, in 1977.

THE MATISSE MUSEUM IN NICE

In December 1917, Henri Matisse (1869-1954) discovered Nice for the first time, and this is where he will produce most of his work and live until his death in November 1954. The places where he has lived and worked have greatly influenced his creative process and are intrinsically connected to the different periods that have marked his career. After the Second World War, Matisse got involved in the creation of the Galerie des Ponchettes, the first museum of modern art in Nice, inaugurated in 1950. In 1953, he bequeathed the city of Nice the collection of works that is at the origin of the Matisse museum. After his death, his heirs made a number of further donations, and in agreement with the city, chose to set up the museum in the Villa des Arènes, a short distance away from the Master's studio-apartment at the Régina. After several years of work, the Matisse museum opened its doors on 5 January 1963.

Located on top of a hill, the Matisse museum is part of the vast heritage complex of Cimiez, the former Roman city of Cemenelum which became the central feature of Nice's development into a winter resort in the 19th and 20th centuries. The museum consists of the Villa des Arènes, a 17th century Genoese dwelling, which was revamped and extended with a new wing in 1993. The collection brings together 31 paintings, 454 drawings and engravings, 38 cut-outs, 57 sculptures and more than 130 objects from Matisse's personal collection which he and his heirs donated to the City of Nice. Most of these works and objects were directly brought from the artist's studio, giving the visitor access to the intimacy of his creative process.

The museum has a policy of regularly rotating its exceptional permanent collection, curating small themed displays and large temporary exhibitions to constantly bring fresh perspectives to Matisse's work.


PERMANENT COLLECTION
STARTING OVER WITH PAINTING
FAUVISM, ONLY MORE BRUTAL
ILLUSTRATING OR DECORATING?
DECORATING OR DECONSTRUCTING?
SHARED CONNECTIONS
CREATING SPACE
VILLA LEVEL 1
VILLA LEVEL 0
EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP ROOM
SECTIONS OF THE EXHIBITION
ENTRANCE / EXIT
LOCKERS
RECEPTION
SWIMMING POOL
AUDITORIUM
MODERN WING LEVEL -2
WC
NORTH-SOUTH
FACE TO FACE
MUSEUM SHOP
IN CONTACT
MODERN WING LEVEL -1

MATISSE MUSEUM

164, avenue des Arènes de Cimiez – Nice
+33 (0)4 93 81 08 08
musee.matisse@ville-nice.fr

Summer opening times:
Open every day from 10 am to 6 pm except Tuesdays

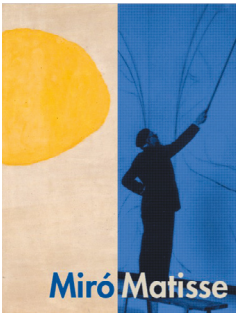
AROUND THE EXHIBITION "MIRÓMATISSE. BEYOND IMAGES"

Scan the QR code to discover the programme of visits, workshops and other activities and events organised in connection with the exhibition.

Activity booklet (for families)
Families are invited to pick up a free activity booklet designed for children aged 7 and over.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

MiróMatisse. Beyond Images
Published by the Fundació Miró, Barcelona, in partnership with the Matisse museum
Under the direction of Rémi Labrusse
Bilingual French-English book - 208 pages - 39 €



MUSEUM SHOP

Level -1 of the museum and online at arteum.com

AROUND THE MUSEUM

Henri Matisse's grave (in the monastery's cemetery)
Nice-Cimiez Archaeology Museum
"Jardin des Arènes" (a garden planted with centuries-old olive trees next to the Roman arena)
Cimiez Monastery and its garden

FOLLOW US AND SHARE YOUR VISIT!

@museematissenice
#museematissenice
#expositionmiromatisse

WEBSITE

www.musee-matisse-nice.org
Engage with our collection online and get access to exclusive content.

© Succession H. Matisse for Matisse's works
© Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris, 2024 for Miró's works
Photo credits: 1. Pierre Matisse / private collection
© reserved rights
2. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, 3. Digital Image
© The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by Art Resource, NY

MUSÉES DE NICE · HÔTEL BEAU RIVAGE · BEAU RIVAGE · #ILoveNICE · VILLE DE NICE