

Henri Matisse, *Nude in Armchair and Foliage Nice*, november 1930. Oil on canvas, 72,5 x 60,5 cm, gift of Madame Matisse, 1960. Musée Matisse Nice

MUSÉEMATISSE

MUSEUM GUIDE

OCTOBER 2025 > JANUARY 2026

MUSÉES DE NICE

HÔTEL BEAU RIVAGE ★★★★

#ILoveNICE

VILLE DE NICE

THE MUSÉE MATISSE NICE: STORY OF A COLLECTION

In December 1917, Henri Matisse discovers Nice for the first time. It is here that he produces most of his work and lives until his death in 1954. The places where he 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, alongside other leading artists and figures from the museum world, Henri Matisse puts his fame at the service of the Union Méditerranéenne pour l'Art Moderne (the Mediterranean Union for Modern Art), founded in 1946. He personally gets involved in the creation of the Galerie des Ponchettes, the first museum of modern art in Nice, inaugurated in 1950 with a major retrospective of his work. He also plays an active role in promoting modern art on the Côte d'Azur.

The Matisse Museum opens its doors on 5 January 1963. It is located in the heart of Cimiez's hill, the former Roman city of Cemenelum which was a central feature of Nice's development into a winter resort in the 19th and 20th centuries, and housed in the Villa des Arènes, a 17th century Genoese dwelling, that was revamped and extended with a new wing in 1993.

The Matisse museum's collection —one of the most significant for both its breadth and diversity— owes its existence to the generosity of Henri Matisse and his family. In 1953, a year before his death, the artist donates a group of works to the City of Nice, forming the core of the collection of today's monographic museum, including the iconic *Still Life with Pomegranates* (1947). His wife, Amélie, adds to this collection in 1960, bequeathing works including paintings and nearly one hundred drawings. His children and heirs further enhance the collection with the donation of sculptures, engravings, illustrated books, cut-outs such as *Blue Nude IV* (1952) and objects from Matisse's personal collection.

The collection brings together 32 paintings, 455 drawings and engravings, 38 cut-outs, 57 sculptures and more than 130 objects from Matisse's personal collection. Most of these works and objects come directly from the artist's studio, giving the visitor an insight into the intimacy of his creative process. The museum has a policy of regularly rotating its exceptional permanent collection, curating focused thematic displays and major temporary exhibitions to constantly provide fresh perspectives on Matisse's work.



Henri Matisse, *Still Life with Pomegranates*, Vence, 1947. Oil on canvas, 80.5 x 60 cm, gift of Henri Matisse, 1953, Musée Matisse Nice



Henri Matisse, *Study of Agave,* c. 1905. Pencil on paper, Musée Matisse Nice

NEW ACQUISITION

HENRI MATISSE. THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS – DRAWING THE PASSION

CURATED BY
YVE-ALAIN BOIS, ASSISTED BY ALIX AGRET

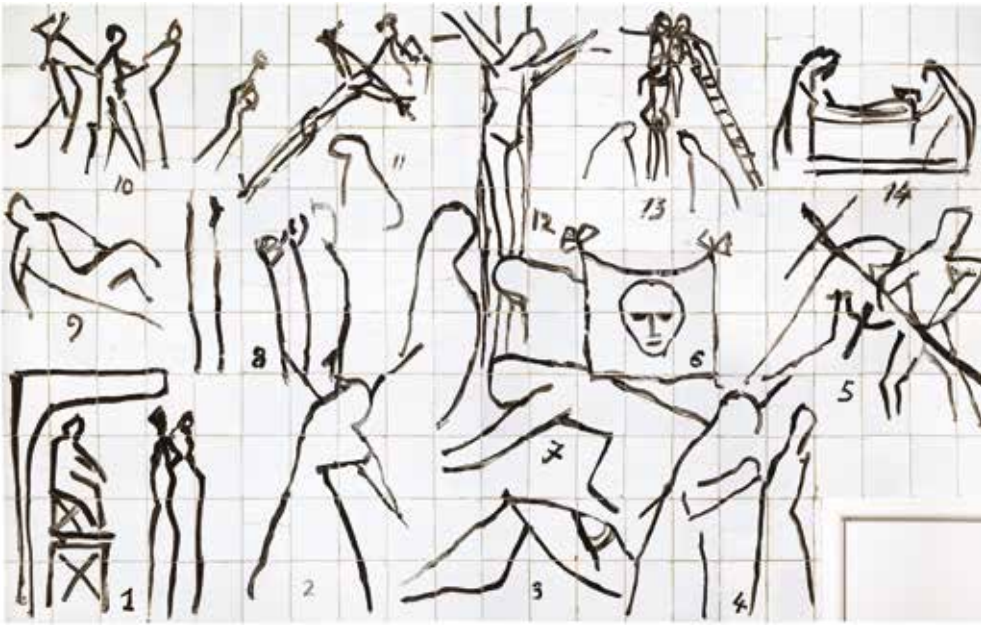
« I know some of them—good friends even!—
reproach it for being too simple, too hasty.
But didn't they understand that I treated this in
an allusive manner, that it is intentionally
an *emblematic representation*? It's like
a road sign, a *totality of signs*. »
Henri Matisse to André Verdet

This exhibition examines the genesis of the *Stations of the Cross* created by Matisse for the Chapel of the Rosary, in Vence, from 1948 to 1952. Although substantial literature exists on the Chapel and its stained-glass windows, it tends to offer only limited insight into the *Stations of the Cross* which has received very few scholarly studies. Three groups of drawings—those held by the Musée Matisse Nice, those in the collection of the Chapel of the Rosary, and those held by private collectors—complemented by archival material, document the evolution of the project, from the initial concept to its final realization.

Matisse depicted the *Stations of the Cross* in 14 stations, following the sequence established in 1761 by the theologian Alphonsus de Liguori. Drawing inspiration from religious works by Giotto, Fouquet, Rubens, Mantegna, and Dürer, among others, he realised his drawings on a single ceramic panel, in what he called himself a "graffiti style". To him, the Stations of the Cross represent "a drama in which everything is interconnected".

This exhibition is organised in partnership with the Baltimore Museum of Art.

BALTIMORE
MUSEUM OF
ART



Henri Matisse, *The Stations of the Cross*, Chapel of the Rosary, 1951
Black enamel brushwork on ceramic panel



Henri Matisse, *Study for the 13th station after Rubens (Jesus is taken down from the cross and given back to his mother)*, 1948
Pencil and brush on paper, 26.4 × 20.2 cm
Private collection



Interior view of the Chapel of the Rosary, Vence

MUSÉE MATISSE

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

Open every day except Tuesdays
• from 10am to 6pm from 1 April to 31 October
• from 10am to 5pm from 1 November to 31 March

MUSEUM SHOP

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



CATALOGUE (ENGLISH OR FRENCH VERSION)

Henri Matisse. The Stations of the Cross
Published by Musée Matisse Nice & Bernard Chauveau Édition
Under the direction of Yve-Alain Bois
192 pages, 32€

DIGITAL GUIDE

Unlock some exclusive insights and engaging content on the permanent collection and the exhibition "Henri Matisse. The Stations of the Cross – Drawing the Passion" thanks to the Musée Matisse Nice's digital guide made possible By Bloomberg Connects.

1. Please use your headphones;
2. Download the Bloomberg Connects app for free;
3. Search for "Musée Matisse" in the app;
4. Select the content you'd like to explore and start your visit.

Bloomberg Connects

EATING AND DRINKING

Kiosque des Arènes in the museum's garden
(a garden planted with centuries-old olive trees next to the Roman arena)

AROUND THE MUSEUM

Cimiez's monastery, cemetery and garden
Matisse's grave (in the monastery's cemetery)
Nice-Cimiez Archaeology Museum

TO VISIT THE CHAPEL OF THE ROSARY IN VENCE

466, avenue Henri Matisse - Vence
chapellematisse.com
Open Tuesday to Saturday, from 10am to 11:30am and from 2pm to 5:30pm (4:30pm from 1 November to the end of February)
Discover the Musée Matisse Nice's off-site exhibition at the Chapel of the Rosary: "Saint Dominic, 'a pillar'" (from 5 September 2025 to 4 July 2026).

FOLLOW US!

@museematissenice
#museematissenice
#matissechemindecroix

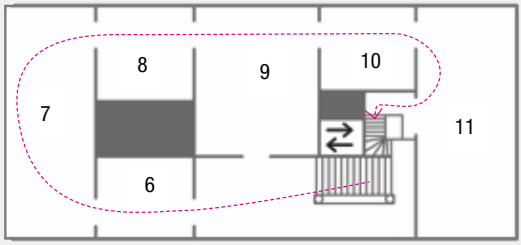
MUSÉEMATISSE
Nom du réseau : Musee_Matisse
Mot de passe : VisiteursMusee

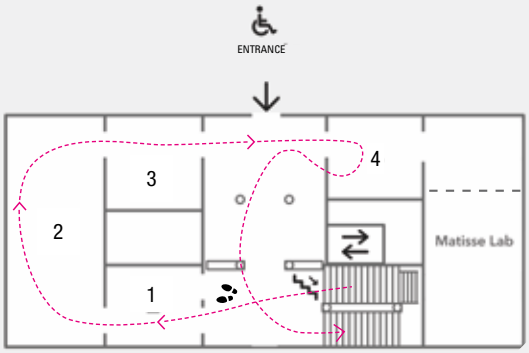
© Ville de Nice - SF- 09/2025 - Photo credits: © François Fernandez © Private collection

SECTIONS OF THE EXHIBITION

LEVEL 1 /

HENRI MATISSE. THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS – DRAWING THE PASSION



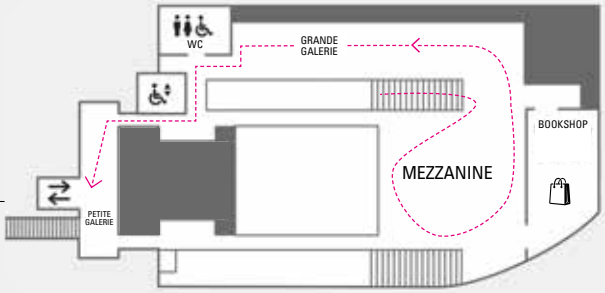


LEVEL 0 /

THE MUSEE MATISSE NICE COLLECTION CONTINUES

LEVEL -1 /

THE MUSEE MATISSE NICE COLLECTION CONTINUES



LEVEL -2 /

THE MUSEE MATISSE NICE COLLECTION

