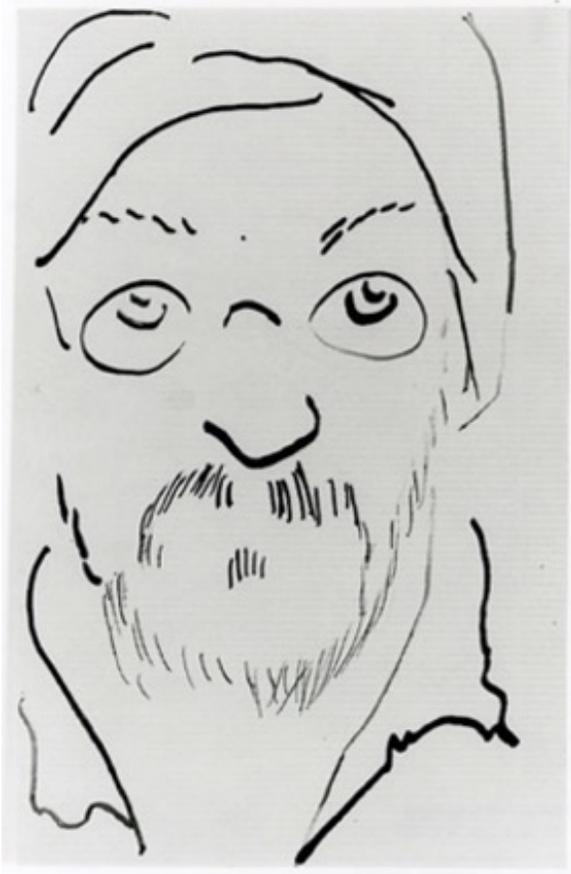


# HENRI MATISSE

## *Matisse in Black and White*

CURATED BY PAUL B. FRANKLIN  
NOVEMBER 12–DECEMBER 19, 2020  
297 TENTH AVENUE



A carefully orchestrated and highly focused survey, *Matisse in Black and White* will explore Henri Matisse's ongoing relationship with black and white across a variety of media, including painting, sculpture, drawing, various types of prints (drypoints, monotypes, lithographs, linocuts), and illustrated books. Comprising some twenty-five rigorously selected artworks, the exhibition aims to facilitate what one might term "slow looking," a fundamental principle that informed and nourished Matisse throughout his long career as an artist.

A non-commercial exhibition, *Matisse in Black and White* will feature artworks with exceptional provenances from both public and private collections, including that of the Matisse family. Honoring Matisse's lofty position in the history of twentieth-century art, *Matisse in Black and White* also will present visitors with a rare opportunity to evaluate firsthand the continued relevance of his unique aesthetic project, confirming—one hundred and fifty years after his birth—that he remains not only a singular genius with color and but also an unparalleled virtuoso with black and white.

Despite his hallowed status as one of the greatest modern masters of color, Matisse heavily relied on both black and white in the development of his signature style. Throughout his prodigious oeuvre, these two “non-colors” (technically known as achromatic colors) occupied pride of place, as exemplified in the rigor and fluidity of his line. Moreover, in some of his most iconic masterpieces—including, among others, *Goldfish and Palette* (1914–15) or the interior decoration of the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence (1948–52)—the stunning visual effects that Matisse achieved by juxtaposing diverse hues were counterbalanced with blacks and whites. The latter function as indispensable structural elements that undergird the compositions. Regarding his working method, Matisse avowed in 1946: “When I didn’t know what color to put down, I put down black. Black is a force: I used black as ballast to simplify the construction.”

In emphasizing individual contemplation and extended reflection, *Matisse in Black and White* will highlight Matisse’s assertion that an artist’s “best spokesman is his work,” while also documenting his personal approach to the creative process, which he succinctly summarized as follows: “My destination is always the same, but I work out a different route to get there.”

#### ABOUT THE CURATOR

Paul B. Franklin earned his doctorate in art history from Harvard University. Based in Paris, he is an independent scholar and an internationally recognized authority on Marcel Duchamp. From 2000 to 2016, he was the editor in chief of the scholarly journal *Étant donné Marcel Duchamp*, the most highly regarded publication devoted to the artist and his work. He also worked for many years with Duchamp’s heirs managing the artist’s estate. Paul B. Franklin has lectured and published widely on Duchamp. Some of his most recent publications include “Marcel Duchamp, ses maîtres et ses pirouettes autour de la peinture,” which was the lead essay in the catalogue of the exhibition *Marcel Duchamp: la peinture, même* (24 September 2014–5 January 2015) organized at the Centre Pompidou in Paris; the book *The Artist and His Critic Stripped Bare*, a bilingual edition of the correspondence of Duchamp and Robert Lebel, which the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles published in 2016; and ““Can one make works that are not “of art”?: Marcel Duchamp’s *Bottle Rack* in the catalogue of the exhibition *Marcel Duchamp: Porte-bouteilles* (14 October 2016–14 January 2017) organized at the Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac in Paris. More recently, Paul B. Franklin curated the exhibition *Brancusi & Duchamp: The Art of Dialogue* (20 September–22 December 2018) at Kasmin, for which he also wrote the accompanying catalogue. In May 2019, he was elected to the Kungliga Akademien för de fria konsterna (Royal Academy of Fine Arts) in Sweden.

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Image: Henri Matisse, *Autoportrait au bonnet* (*Self-Portrait with Cap*), 1916, ink on paper, 8 1/4 x 5 1/4 inches, 21 x 13.3 cm. © 2020 Succession H. Matisse / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York