

# 1 Summer in the Sun

Artists often leave their studios and travel to new places for inspiration. In the summer of 1905, Henri Matisse (1869–1954) left Paris for the French village of Collioure. Then a quiet fishing town, Collioure nestles between the Mediterranean Sea and the Pyrenees Mountains close to the Spanish border. The landscape and lifestyle there were very different from Paris. The brilliant light in the south of France, reflected off the sea, captivated Matisse.

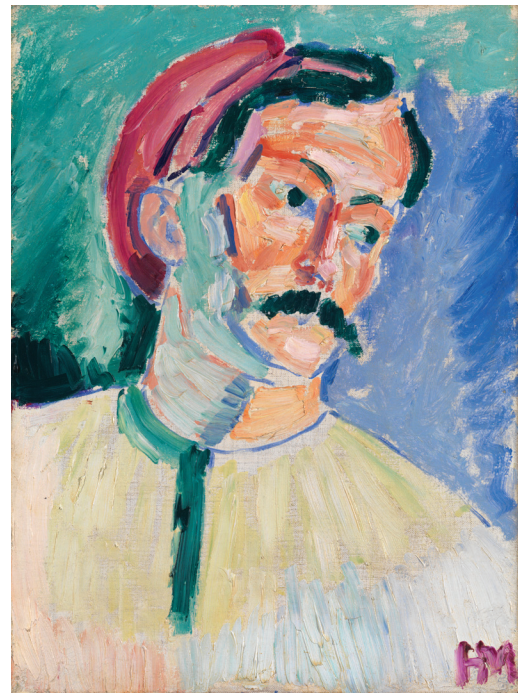
above: André Derain, *Portrait of Henri Matisse*, 1905, oil on canvas, Tate Gallery, London, Great Britain © ARS, NY. Photo credit: Tate, London / Art Resource, NY

right: Henri Matisse, *André Derain*, 1905, oil on canvas, Tate Gallery, London, Great Britain © Succession H. Matisse, Paris / ARS, NY. Photo credit: Tate, London / Art Resource, NY

**“We were always intoxicated with color, with words that speak of color, and with the sun that makes colors live.” André Derain**

# 2 Side by Side

After settling with his family in a hotel, Matisse invited his friend, the young painter André Derain (1880–1954), to join him in Collioure. Matisse and Derain worked every day, often painting side by side around the village. They sketched the boats in the harbor, the fish market, and the nearby Pyrenees. They even made pictures of each other. Using paints straight from the tube with little mixing of pigments, they applied vibrant—often unexpected—colors directly to their canvases. Their collaboration led to a new freedom in creating art: the use of color to express the feeling of a place.



# 3 The Wild Beasts

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

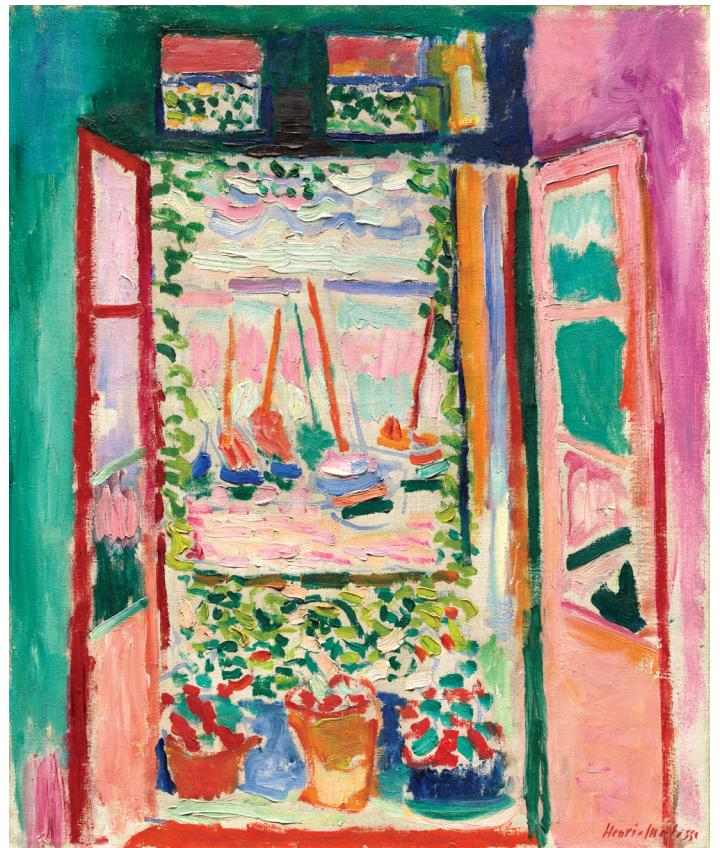
# 4 Two Views of Collioure

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

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

Turning from the sea in *Mountains at Collioure*, Derain painted the olive groves with the steep hills of the Pyrenees in the background. Notice how Derain used a variety of brushstrokes to paint this rugged landscape. Examine how the twisting red lines form the trunks of the olive trees. Derain's bold, separated stripes of blues, grays, and greens create a rhythmic pattern of leaves ready to wave in a breeze. Broad, sweeping strokes of color form the mountains rising behind the trees and reaching to the sky.

**"When I realized that every morning I would see this light again, I couldn't believe how lucky I was." Henri Matisse**



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

bottom: André Derain, *Mountains at Collioure*, 1905, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, John Hay Whitney Collection

try this



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

top right: Henri Matisse at work on a paper cut-out in his studio at the Hôtel Régina, early 1952, Nice-Cimiez. Hélène Adant (20th c.) © Copyright Photographic Archive. The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, U.S.A.

## Colorful Cut-Outs

Matisse enjoyed staying in warmer places during the winter months, and he liked to watch sunlight shimmering on the sea. After his summer with Derain, he returned to Collioure and vacationed at other seaports on the French coast of the Mediterranean Sea. He also visited Italy, North Africa, and Tahiti. *Beasts of the Sea* is a memory of his visit to the South Seas.

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

**What shapes do you recognize in *Beasts of the Sea*? Find shapes that remind you of**

playful fish

sinuous eels

floating seahorses

curvy coral

spiral shells

waving seaweed



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

### Create a colorful collage

Use colored papers, or like Matisse, make your own colored paper by painting entire sheets of white paper in one color. Paint on heavy cardstock so the paper doesn't curl as it dries. Next, find a theme for your work. Like Matisse, choose a view from your window or a memory from vacation. Use scissors to cut the paper into different shapes that remind you of that place. Arrange your cut-out shapes on a large piece of colored paper. Move the pieces around and experiment with layering until you are satisfied with the design, then glue your shapes in place.

While creating the cut-outs, Matisse hung them on the walls and ceiling of his apartment in Nice, France. “Thanks to my new art, I have a lush garden all around me. And I am never alone,” he said.