Henri Matisse (1869-1954)
By: Emily DeSpain
General Info

- French Artist; draughtsman, printmaker, sculptor & painter
- Leading figure in modern art
- Known as one of the three seminal artists of the 20th Century
- Initially his art was labeled as Fauve, but later he was hailed as an upholder of classical tradition in French art
Early Life & Intro to Art

- New Years Eve Babyy! (1869)
- Studied law & worked as a court administrator in Paris (1887)
- Matisse first started painting when he was diagnosed with appendicitis and his mom bought him art supplies.
- “A kind of paradise” – Matisse
Intro to Art

- In 1891, Matisse returned to Paris to study art at the Academi Julian
  - * Studied under William-Adolphe Bouguereau & Gustave Moreau
- Admired work of the painter Chardin
- In 1896 Matisse exhibited five of his paintings in the salon of Societe Nationale des Beaux-Arts
Major Influences

- Worked with painter John Peter Russel; who introduced him to the style of Impressionism & the work of Van Gogh
- Impacted Matisse’s style dramatically- “Russel was my teacher, and Russel explained colour theory to me.”
- Other influences: Nicolas Poussin, Antoine Watteau, Edouard Manet & many more!
Henri Matisse - Early Art

Blue Pot and Lemon (1897)
Hermitage Museum,
St. Petersburg, Russia
Fruit and Coffeepot (1898)
Hermitage Museum
St. Petersburg, Russia
Henri Matisse - Early Art

Vase of Sunflowers (1898)
Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg Russia
Henri Matisse
-Early Art

Crockery on a Table (1900)
Hermitage Museum
St. Petersburg, Russia
Henri Matisse - Early Art

Luxembourg Gardens (1901)
Hermitage Museum
St. Petersburg, Russia
Dishes and fruit (1901)
Hermitage Museum
St. Petersburg, Russia
Henri Matisse
- Early Art

Vase, bottle and Fruit (1906)
Hermitage Museum,
St. Petersburg, Russia
Fauvism

- In 1905, Matisse and a group of artists known as “Fauves” exhibited together in a room at Salon d’Automne.
- The paintings expressed emotion with wild, often dissonant colours, without regard for the subject’s natural colors.
- "A pot of paint has been flung in the face of the public" from the critic Camille Mauclair

- Also bought by Gertrude & Leo Stein

A Woman With a Hat
La Danse
We’re the two best friends that anyone could have!

- Around 1904 Matisse met Pablo Picasso & the two became life-long friends as well as rivals & were often compared.
- One key difference between them is that Matisse drew and painted from nature, while Picasso was much more inclined to work from imagination.
After Paris

- In 1917 Matisse relocated to Cimiez on the French Riviera, a suburb of the city of Nice.
- He soon started to take a softer and more relaxed approach with his work.
- “Return to Order”
  – post WWI
Later Life

- In 1939 Matisse and his wife of 41 years separated.
- In 1941 he underwent surgery where a colostomy was performed.
- During this time period he started what he called “painting with scissors”
The Legacy

- In 1954 when Matisse was 84 he died of a heart attack.
- He was buried in the cemetery of the Monastere Notre Dame de Cimiez.
- Now, there are many museums and other art exhibits that exemplify the works of Matisse.
- Today, a Matisse painting can fetch as much as $17 million!