

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HENRI MATISSE'S MOST EXPERIMENTAL AND INVENTIVE WORKS EXPLORED  
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN GROUNDBREAKING EXHIBITION**

**MATISSE: RADICAL INVENTION, 1913–1917**

**Major Exhibition Premieres at the Art Institute of Chicago March 2010**

**Travels to The Museum of Modern Art, New York**

The Art Institute of Chicago and The Museum of Modern Art, New York (MoMA) have co-organized an ambitious exhibition that presents, for the first time, a seminal investigation of a pivotal point in the career of **Henri Matisse** (1869–1954), one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's greatest artists. ***Matisse:***



***Radical Invention, 1913–1917*** will premiere at the Art Institute March 20 through June 20, 2010, and then travel to **MoMA**, where it will be on view from July 18 through October 11, 2010. Nearly 120 of the artist's paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints from this five-year period will be presented, including the masterpieces *Bathers by a River* (1909–10, 1913, 1916–17) and *The Moroccans* (1915–16). This is the first exhibition devoted solely to the work of this important period in Matisse's career, thoroughly exploring his early working process as well as his revolutionary experimentation, or what he called his "methods of modern construction."

*Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913–1917* examines the period of Matisse’s production from his return to Paris from Morocco in 1913 to his departure for Nice in 1917. Though this period spans only five years, it represents a major turning point in Matisse’s career, the years when he developed his most demanding, experimental, and enigmatic works: paintings that are abstracted and rigorously purged of descriptive detail, geometric and sharply composed, and dominated by the colors black and gray. Previously considered to be responses to Cubism or World War I, or simply unrelated aberrations of the artist’s development, works from this period are here reassessed and presented as one of the most significant chapters of Matisse’s evolution as an artist.

A highlight of the exhibition is the Art Institute’s monumental painting, *Bathers by a River*. This painting has been the subject of extensive art-historical, archival, and scientific research that unlocks Matisse’s working methods. A painting that Matisse worked on repeatedly over a period of many years, *Bathers by a River* provides the key to the development of the artist’s revolutionary style of this time. The subject of study for four years, Art Institute curators and conservators wedded new archival information and new imaging technologies to uncover the history of this painting’s evolution and its surprising connections with other works, most significantly The Museum of Modern Art’s *The Moroccans* and *The Piano Lesson* (1916). MoMA has likewise engaged in an investigation of works in its collection, and, through this partnership, new information about Matisse’s experimental techniques.

Building on this research, *Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913–1917* showcases a wide range of Matisse’s paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints primarily from 1913 to 1917. Visitors will be able to experience the exhibition not only through such important paintings as *Interior with Goldfish Bowl* (1914) and *Portrait of Yvonne Landsberg* (1914), but also through closer looks at the artist’s sculptures known as *Back I, II, III, IV*, and his innovative etchings, engravings, and monotypes—dramatic prints that the artist made only during the 1913–17 period. Also included in the exhibition is a special presentation of Matisse’s little-known *Civil Prisoners of Bohain-en-Vermandois* series that demonstrates how the artist attempted to unite his art, life, and wartime concerns during these years.

*Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913–1917* explores the critical interplay of Matisse’s works and presents his great achievements as the product of this concentrated period of rigorous

experimentation. Supplemented by graphic didactic materials and texts as well as audiovisual presentations of the conservation research involved in the project, *Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913–1917* redefines our perception of this modern master and his art.

*Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913–1917* is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated catalogue published by the Art Institute and distributed by Yale University Press. It will be available early April 2010.

*Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913–1917* is curated by Stephanie D'Alessandro, Gary C. and Frances Comer Curator of Modern Art at the Art Institute of Chicago, and John Elderfield, Chief Curator Emeritus of Painting and Sculpture at The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Major funding for *Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913–1917* is generously provided by the Harris Family Foundation in memory of Bette and Neison Harris. Additional funding is provided by Emily Rauh Pulitzer. This project was partially funded by a grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism. Major funding for the exhibition catalogue is generously provided by The Aaron I. Fleischman Foundation. Additional support is provided by the Dedalus Foundation.

## **VISITOR INFORMATION**

### **TICKETS**

**Special dated, timed tickets to *Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913-1917* are NOT required.** Admission to the Art Institute includes all special exhibitions and coat check.

### **AUDIO TOUR**

An audio tour of the exhibition is available. Audio tours may be pre-purchased with any ticket or purchased at the exhibition entrance, Michigan Avenue lobby, or Griffin Court. The audio tour is free to visually impaired visitors, and a typescript of the audio tour is available for the hearing-impaired.

### **EXHIBITION HOURS**

***Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913-1917* will be on view:**

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 11:30 am–5:00 pm
- Friday: 11:30 am–8:00 pm
- Saturday and Sunday: 11:00 am–5:00 pm

## **NOTES**

- **Art Institute members-only viewing: the first hour of the exhibition daily (Monday--Friday, 10:30–11:30 am, and Saturday and Sunday, 10:00–11:00 am) and Thursday evenings, 5:00–8:00 pm**
- **Last entry to the exhibition is 45 minutes before closing time and there is no re-entry into the exhibition once a visitor has left the last gallery.**

**IMAGE:** Henri Matisse, *Bathers by a River* (1909–10, 1913, 1916–17). Oil on canvas 259.7 x 389.9 cm Charles H. and Mary F. S. Worcester Collection, the Art Institute of Chicago. © 2001 Succession H. Matisse, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

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### **MUSEUM HOURS**

10:30 am–5:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

10:30 am–8:00 pm Thursday

10:00 am–5:00 pm Saturday, Sunday

**TARGET FREE THURSDAY EVENINGS AFTER 5:00 pm**

### **SUMMER HOURS (from Memorial Day to Labor Day)**

10:30 am–5:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

10:30 am–9:00 pm Thursday, Friday

10:00 am–5:00 pm Saturday, Sunday

**TARGET FREE SUMMER EVENINGS THURSDAY AND FRIDAY AFTER 5:00 pm**

### **FREE FEBRUARY 1 TO 28**

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

### **ADMISSION**

Adults \$18.00 Includes all special exhibitions and coat check

Children 14 and over, students, and seniors \$12.00 Includes all special exhibitions and coat check

Chicago residents receive a \$2.00 discount with proof of residency

Children under 14 always free

Members always free

**Free Evenings are free to all. City of Chicago residents with Chicago Public Library cards can borrow a "Museum Passport" card from any library branch for free general admission to the nine members of Museums in the Park, including the Art Institute of Chicago.**

**The Art Institute of Chicago is a museum in Chicago's Grant Park, located across from Millennium Park. Visitors can enter the museum via the Michigan Avenue entrance or the Millennium Park entrance on Monroe Street.**