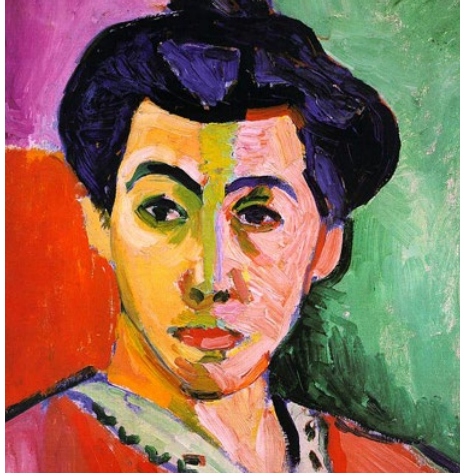


Henri Matisse

1869 - 1954



Henri Matisse was born in France and was the oldest son of a prosperous grain merchant. He initially studied law and worked as a court administrator. In 1889, he developed appendicitis. While he was recovering, his mother brought him some art supplies and he began painting. His father was very disappointed when Henri decided to become an artist.

At first, Matisse painted in a traditional style. In 1896, he visited his artist friend John Peter Russell in France, where he was introduced to Impressionism, and to the work of Van Gogh. Matisse changed his style completely.

Matisse bought lots of work by other artists that he admired – so much so that he went into debt, leading to the more sombre paintings that he produced in 1902. In 1906, Matisse met Pablo Picasso,

and they became lifelong friends, as well as rivals.

In 1941, Matisse had serious surgery and began using a wheelchair. At this time, he began creating large paper collages, with some help from assistants. He called his technique 'painting with scissors'. In 1952, he established a museum dedicated to his work, the Matisse Museum in Le Cateau. He died in 1954.