

Henri Matisse (1869-1954)

(Fauve Artist)

Where/when was he born....?

Matisse was born in Le Cateau-Cambrésis in northern France in 1869. His early life was spent working as a lawyer. When Henri Matisse was 21 years old, he became seriously ill. During his recovery, Matisse started painting and discovered his love for art.

Who is he - what did he do...?

In 1892, Matisse gave up his career as a lawyer, and became a full time artist. He attended art classes at the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, and dabbled in different styles.

He then was influenced by the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painters Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Paul Signac. He was one of the first painters to take an interest in “primitive” art - such as African art. Matisse became the leading artist of the art movement called **FAUVISM**.

His main works are....?

Matisse is best known for his still life paintings, figure paintings of women and paintings of interiors with views from windows. Many of these paintings are set in the South of France and make use of bright colour, flat shapes and patterns.

What materials did he use.....?

Matisse is mainly known for using **oil paint**. Around the year 1905, he finally found **his own style characterised by daring, bright colours executed in a broad brush stroke- this style became known as FAUVISM*see help sheet for more information** **Fauve** is a French word that translates as “wild beast” - and this was linked to the vivid colour schemes he used.

Matisse gave up the style of the Impressionists and **established his own style, with his use of flat, brilliant colour and line.** **Matisse also loved using pattern, and pattern within objects.**

In 1941, after surgery for cancer, Matisse had to give up painting - instead **he created paper cut-outs in the same vivid, strong colours and daring compositions known from his paintings.** He had an assistant and could work lying in bed or sitting comfortably in an armchair. Matisse died in 1954 in Nice, Southern France.