



## Henri Matisse



**Henri Matisse** (December 31, 1869 – November 3, 1954) was a French artist, noted for his use of color and his fluid, brilliant and original draughtsmanship. As a draughtsman, printmaker, and sculptor, but principally as a painter, Matisse is one of the best-known artists of the twentieth century. Although he was initially labeled as a Fauve (wild beast), by the 1920s, he was increasingly hailed as an upholder of the classical tradition in French painting. His mastery of the expressive language of color and drawing is apparent, in a body of work spanning over a half-century, and won him recognition as a leading figure in modern art. In his 80s he became ill and could no longer stand up to paint. He began to make art with paper and scissors while in his wheelchair. He created many paper collages, which were called Cut Outs. The KidsArt Fairs Art Project Plans are based on this technique.

Born Henri-Émile-Benoît Matisse in France he was the first son of parents who owned a seed business. He first started painting in 1889, when his mother brought him art supplies during a period of convalescence following an attack of appendicitis. He discovered "a kind of paradise" as he later described it. He decided to become an artist, deeply disappointing his father. In 1891 he went to Paris to study art and initially he painted still-lives and landscapes in the traditional Flemish style. In 1897 the painter John Peter Russell introduced him to impressionism and to the work of Van Gogh. Matisse's style changed completely, and he would later say "Russell was my teacher, and Russell explained color theory to me."

With the model Caroline Joblau, he had a daughter, Marguerite, born in 1894. In 1898 he married Amélie Noellie Parayre; the two raised Marguerite together and had two sons, Jean (born 1899) and Pierre (born 1900). Marguerite often served as a model for Matisse.

**Fauvism** - In 1905 several artists exhibited paintings with wild, often dissonant colors to express emotions, without regard for the subject's natural colors. Matisse showed *Open Window* and *Woman with the Hat* at the Salon. The artists were soon called *Fauves* (wild beasts) and Fauvism was born. Matisse was recognized as one of its leaders. The decline of the Fauvist movement, after 1906, did nothing to affect the rise of Matisse.