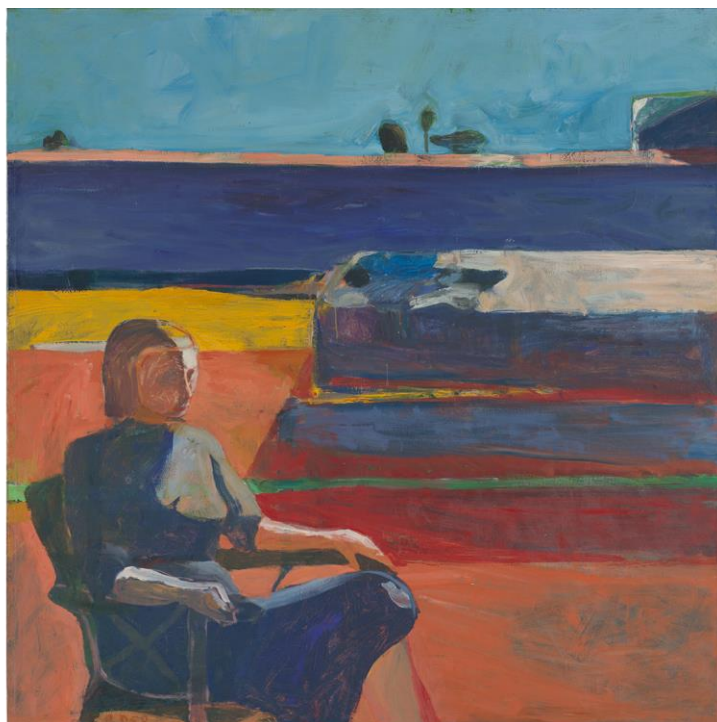


**SFMOMA PRESENTS THE FIRST EXHIBITION TO EXPLORE
THE INSPIRATION RICHARD DIEBENKORN FOUND IN HENRI MATISSE**

Landmark Exhibition Offers Unprecedented View of Both Artists



***Matisse/Diebenkorn*
March 11 through May 29, 2017**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (November 10, 2016)—The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) announces the first major exhibition to explore the profound inspiration California artist Richard Diebenkorn (1922–1993) discovered in the work of French modernist Henri Matisse (1869–1954). Co-organized with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and on view at SFMOMA from March 11 through May 29, 2017, this exhibition features approximately 100 objects—40 paintings and drawings by Matisse and 60 paintings and drawings by Diebenkorn—from museums and private collections throughout the U.S. and Europe. After its presentation at The BMA from October 23, 2016 through January 29, 2017, SFMOMA will be the only West Coast venue for the exhibition.

“*Matisse/Diebenkorn* is an incredible story of artistic inspiration, revealing how Diebenkorn’s enduring fascination with Matisse informed his own body of work in substantive and often surprising ways,” said Janet Bishop, Thomas Weisel Family Curator of Painting and Sculpture. “The exhibition casts new

light on two artists represented in depth in SFMOMA's holdings, and in fact several of the Matisse paintings now in our collection were among the very first paintings by the French artist that Diebenkorn ever saw."

Co-curated by Bishop and Katy Rothkopf, BMA Senior Curator of European Painting and Sculpture, *Matisse/Diebenkorn* follows the trajectory of Diebenkorn's career, illuminating how this influence evolved over time through different pairings and groupings of both artists' work, as well as a selection of Matisse books from Diebenkorn's personal library that will be included in the exhibition.

As a Stanford University art student in 1943, Diebenkorn first saw the work of Matisse at the Palo Alto home of Sarah Stein, one of the French painter's earliest champions. When he was stationed with the Marines on the East Coast in 1944, he studied great works by Matisse in museums including The Museum of Modern Art in New York, The National Gallery of Art and The Phillips Collection in Washington D.C., where he made repeat visits to see Matisse's *Studio, Quai Saint-Michel* (1916).

Diebenkorn's first truly immersive experience of Matisse's work occurred in Los Angeles in 1952, when he encountered such important Matisse paintings as *Goldfish and Palette* (1914) and *Interior at Nice* (1919 or 1920) in a traveling retrospective. Shortly after seeing this exhibition—a decade since his first experience of Matisse's work—Diebenkorn began to incorporate elements of the French painter's approach to painting into his own compositions, which is reflected in the brighter palette and new interest in structure evident in Diebenkorn's *Urbana No. 5 (Beachtown)* (1953) and *Urbana No. 6* (1953). The opening galleries of the exhibition feature outstanding works from Diebenkorn's Urbana and Berkeley periods (1953–1955) that demonstrate the significant impact of his early encounters with Matisse on his then predominantly abstract paintings.

Exceptional paintings and drawings on view from Diebenkorn's representational period (1955–1967) illustrate the artist's shift from abstraction towards identifiable subject matter—still lifes, interiors, city scenes and figural works—and will be presented with some of Matisse's own compositions that were of particular relevance. Pairings that reveal the importance of Matisse's example throughout this period include interiors such as Matisse's *Interior with Violin* (1918) with Diebenkorn's *Interior with Doorway* (1962); city scenes including Matisse's *Notre-Dame, A Late Afternoon* (1902) and Diebenkorn's *Ingleside* (1963); and Matisse's *Woman with a Hat* (1905) with Diebenkorn's *Seated Figure with Hat* (1967).

Throughout his later career, Diebenkorn continued to seek out Matisse's example, most notably during a trip to the Soviet Union in 1964, where he saw the extensive collections of works by Matisse in the State Hermitage Museum and the Pushkin Museum. This experience resulted in a number of canvases from the end of Diebenkorn's representational period that pay direct homage to the French artist, including *Recollections of a Visit to Leningrad* (1965) and *Large Still Life* (1966), which both feature the sort of ornate patterned wallpaper or textiles favored by Matisse. This trip was followed by a visit two years later to another Matisse retrospective in Los Angeles where he saw nearly 350 works by the French artist. *View of Notre Dame* (1914) and *French Window at Collioure* (1914), two highly significant, nearly abstract Matisse paintings that Diebenkorn saw in the Los Angeles retrospective will be included in the exhibition.

Diebenkorn moved to Southern California in 1966, and established a studio in the Ocean Park neighborhood of Santa Monica. Shortly thereafter, he returned to abstraction, producing the color- and light-filled abstract compositions for which he is best known, ranging from the transitional *Ocean*

Park #6 (1968), which retains vestiges of the human body, to the luminous *Ocean Park #79* (1975). Throughout this period as well, the impact Matisse had on Diebenkorn is evident in the color, geometric structure and evidence of process. *Matisse/Diebenkorn* will conclude with Ocean Park paintings from this period of Diebenkorn's career (1968–1980), juxtaposed with a selection of Matisse's most influential works including the 1914 canvases mentioned above, which Diebenkorn acknowledged as especially important to him, as well as other paintings that were part of Matisse's 1966 retrospective, such as *The Girl with Green Eyes* (1908).

Although they never met, both artists have a longstanding history in the Bay Area and deep connections to SFMOMA. Matisse's expressive paintings were first introduced to San Francisco shortly after the 1906 earthquake, shocking the arts community with their startling colors and brushwork. The French artist made one visit to San Francisco, in 1930, and his very first West Coast survey was held at SFMOMA in 1936, a year after the museum was founded. Matisse's work—specifically *Woman with a Hat* (1905), on view in the exhibition—has become a historical anchor of SFMOMA's painting and sculpture collection. Diebenkorn had deep personal and professional connections with the Bay Area, growing up in San Francisco's Ingleside Terrace neighborhood and graduating from Lowell High School; attending Stanford University, the University of California, Berkeley and the San Francisco Art Institute (then the California School of Fine Arts); and teaching at both the San Francisco Art Institute and the California College of the Arts. He visited SFMOMA for the first time in 1945, and exhibited his work here for the first time in 1946.

Continuing the exploration of artistic inspiration, an adjacent coda gallery will feature work by contemporary artists that relate to Matisse and Diebenkorn, including Rachel Harrison, Elizabeth Peyton and others.

Exhibition Organization and Sponsorship

Matisse/Diebenkorn is co-organized by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and The Baltimore Museum of Art.

The Presenting Sponsor is the Evelyn D. Haas Exhibition Fund.

The Major Sponsors are Barbara and Gerson Bakar, Bank of America, Doris Fisher, The Henry Luce Foundation, Susan and Bill Oberndorf, and the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Generous support is provided by Gay-Lynn and Robert Blanding, Roberta and Steve Denning, Jean and James E. Douglas, Jr., Mary J. Elmore, Dana and Bob Emery, Concepción and Irwin Federman, John H. N. Fisher and Jennifer Caldwell, Patricia W. Fitzpatrick, Mary Jo and Dick Kovacevich Family, the Elaine McKeon Endowed Exhibition Fund, Deborah and Kenneth Novack, the Bernard and Barbro Osher Exhibition Fund, the Prospect Creek Foundation, Morgan and Tatem Read, Arun and Rummi Sarin, Lydia Shorenstein, Ken and Judy Siebel, Susan and Jim Swartz, Thomas W. Weisel and Janet Barnes, Bobbie and Mike Wilsey, Shannon and Dennis Wong and Kay Harrigan Woods. The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities and by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Additional support is provided by Dolly and George Chammas.

The exhibition is curated by Janet Bishop, Thomas Weisel Family Curator of Painting and Sculpture at

SFMOMA, and Katy Rothkopf, Senior Curator of European Painting and Sculpture at The BMA.

Exhibition Catalogue

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue that charts the evolution of Matisse's impact on Diebenkorn during the course of Diebenkorn's career. Essays by *Matisse/Diebenkorn* co-curators Janet Bishop, Thomas Weisel Family Curator of Painting and Sculpture at SFMOMA, and Katy Rothkopf, Senior Curator of European Painting and Sculpture at The BMA, are rounded out by an introduction by John Elderfield, Allen R. Adler, Class of 1967, Distinguished Curator and Lecturer at the Princeton University Art Museum and Chief Curator of Painting and Sculpture Emeritus at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, who has curated groundbreaking exhibitions on both artists; an essay on Diebenkorn's drawings by Jodi Roberts, Halperin Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University; and a bibliography documenting Diebenkorn's collection of books about Matisse. The catalogue is published by SFMOMA and The BMA in association with DelMonico Books/Prestel.

SFMOMA Hours and Admission

Open Friday–Tuesday 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and until 9 p.m. Thursday. Closed Wednesday. Public spaces open at 9:30 a.m.

Annual membership begins at \$100, and members enjoy free admission (with advanced reservations). Adult general admission to SFMOMA is \$25; admission for seniors 65 years and older is \$22; and admission for visitors ages 19 through 24 is \$19. The special exhibition *Matisse/Diebenkorn* has an additional surcharge for all visitors 19 years and over: \$6 weekdays, \$8 weekends. General Admission and special exhibitions for all visitors 18 years and younger is free.

Private guided tours and group discounts for *Matisse/Diebenkorn* are available through the SFMOMA Group Sales Department. Tours are one hour in length and are not included with museum admission. Tours must be booked at least two weeks in advance. For more information or to submit an inquiry, please visit sfmoma.org/groups.

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

151 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

SFMOMA is dedicated to making the art for our time a vital and meaningful part of public life. Founded in 1935 as the first West Coast museum devoted to modern and contemporary art, a thoroughly transformed SFMOMA, with triple the gallery space, an enhanced education center and new free public galleries, opened to the public on May 14, 2016.

Visit sfmoma.org or call 415.357.4000 for more information.

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Image credits:

Left: Henri Matisse, *The Blue Window*, 1913; oil on canvas; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund; © Succession H. Matisse / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Right: Richard Diebenkorn, *Woman on a Porch*, 1958; oil on canvas; New Orleans Museum of Art, museum purchase through the National Endowment for the Arts Matching Grant; © the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation