

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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NEWLY DISCOVERED MATISSE DRAWINGS IN NATIONAL GALLERY SHOW

Washington, D.C., March 13, 1990 -- Two recently discovered drawings executed by Henri Matisse in Morocco have been added to the National Gallery exhibition, Matisse in Morocco: The Paintings and Drawings, 1912-1913, a USA/USSR Joint Project, director J. Carter Brown announced today. The two drawings, Calla Lilies (Arums), 1912/1913, and View from the Window, Tangier IV (Vue de la fenêtr^e, Tanger IV), 1912, are works of pen and ink on paper. This exhibition of Matisse's work from Morocco, the first since 1913 and the most comprehensive of its kind ever, will open Sunday, March 18, 1990.

"The new drawings have come to light as a result of the widespread search for this material conducted by the exhibition's curatorial team and members of the artist's family," said Mr. Brown. "Many of the drawings in the show were unknown to scholars before research for the exhibition began. Our excitement at these recent finds, coming just before the opening of the show, is consistent with the spirit surrounding this project from the beginning as similar discoveries were made over the last several years. The new drawings have added greatly to this exhibition and to Matisse scholarship."

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During two trips to Morocco in 1912 and 1913, Matisse completed 25 paintings. At the start of research for the show, only some dozen relevant drawings were known. The new discoveries bring the total now known to over 60. Many of the paintings were collected by the artist's two most important collectors, the Russians Ivan A. Morosov and Sergei I. Shchukin. They are now in the collections of The State Hermitage Museum in Leningrad and the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow. By contrast, the Moroccan drawings have remained in private hands, and for this reason are less known. Matisse in Morocco contains but two of the paintings and a selection of 47 drawings from this important period in the artist's career. Forty-four of the drawings, including the two newest discoveries, have never been exhibited before.

View from the Window, Tangier IV came to light as curators got in touch with relatives of the artist's Moroccan friends and acquaintances. View from the Window, Tangier IV was a gift to the proprietor of Matisse's lodging in Tangier, the Hôtel Villa de France.

Matisse frequently mentioned in his correspondence from Morocco the flowers he observed. Although flowers are the subject of several of his Moroccan paintings, Calla Lilies is only the second known Moroccan drawing of a floral subject. The discovery of the first, Calla Lily and Bindweed, 1912/1913, a work also in the show, led the exhibition curators and members of the Matisse family to continue a search for other flower drawings from this period, and Calla Lilies is a result of that effort.

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Matisse in Morocco will be at the National Gallery through June 3, 1990. It will travel to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, June 24 through September 4, 1990, the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, September 28 through November 20, 1990, and The State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, December 15, 1990 through February 15, 1991. The exhibition was organized by the National Gallery of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, and The State Hermitage Museum. Matisse in Morocco is made possible by a generous grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation and is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.