



Chatting with Henri Matisse: The Lost 1941 Interview

Henri Matisse

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In 1941 the Swiss art critic Pierre Courthion interviewed Henri Matisse while the artist was in bed recovering from a serious operation. It was an extensive interview, seen at the time as a vital assessment of Matisse's career and set to be published by Albert Skira's then newly established Swiss press. After months of complicated discussions between Courthion and Matisse, and just weeks before the book was to come out—the artist even had approved the cover design—Matisse suddenly refused its publication. A typescript of the interview now resides in Courthion's papers at the Getty Research Institute.

This rich conversation, conducted during the Nazi occupation of France, is published for the first time in this volume, where it appears both in English translation and in the original French version. Matisse unravels memories of his youth and his life as a bohemian student in Gustave Moreau's atelier. He recounts his experience with collectors, including Albert C. Barnes. He discusses fame, writers, musicians, politicians, and, most fascinatingly, his travels. *Chatting with Henri Matisse*, introduced by Serge Guilbaut, contains a preface by Claude Duthuit, Matisse's grandson, and essays by Yve-Alain Bois and Laurence Bertrand Dorléac. The book includes unpublished correspondence and other original documents related to Courthion's interview and abounds with details about avant-garde life, tactics, and artistic creativity in the first half of the twentieth century.

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