



After settling in Nice in southern France in 1921 Henri Matisse created in his paintings a private world of calm, repose, grace and ease, domesticating the sensual and decorative pastoral themes that had informed much of his important earlier work. He worked with a succession of favorite models, depicting a world inhabited almost entirely by women. "My models," he once said, "are the principal theme in my work. I depend entirely on my model, whom I observe at liberty, and I decide on the pose that best suits her nature."

Matisse's *Annelies, White Tulips and Anemones* in the Academy's collection is a prime example of these intimate themes and dates from late in the artist's career, having been painted in 1944 when he was 75, one of very few canvases which Matisse painted that year. In the early 1940s Matisse's world had been disturbed a series of events which no doubt interfered with his normally prodigious creativity. He was still recuperating from a serious operation in early 1941 which had

left him weakened and often confined to bed. In March 1943 the Allies began bombing near Nice, and Matisse was advised to move to Vence.

Though forced to leave his comfortable environment and drained of energy, Matisse nevertheless arranged a convenient working space in his bedroom. Marguette Bouvier's account of her visit to Matisse at Vence in October 1944 offers a candid glimpse of the artist. She mentions that Matisse always hung the paintings on which he was working on the wall facing his bed; the day of her visit there were seven paintings on the wall, in the center a portrait of a girl seated at a table between two bouquets of flowers — *Annelies, White Tulips and Anemones*.

The model, Annelies, a young girl from the region whom Matisse took as a student, sits serenely in a green chair wearing an orange blouse and gold necklace. She gazes intently out from between the flowers, captured in a moment of looking up from a book she has been reading. The delicate lavenders and creamy whites of the

anemones and tulips hold their own against the intensity of the blue-black of the table covering and the dark blue background in which Matisse scratched patterns with the end of his brush.

The sober color of *Annelies, White Tulips and Anemones*, compared to the more brilliant hues Matisse is famous for, perhaps hints at other events which no doubt weighed heavily on Matisse's mind at the time: in the spring of 1944 his wife and daughter, who had been working for the Resistance, were taken prisoner separately. Madame Matisse was sentenced to six months in prison, and the daughter was tortured by the Gestapo and put on a train headed for a concentration camp which was luckily prevented from reaching its destination by an Allied air attack. The Academy's painting, as well as the others from this period, betrays no sign of the turmoil of the outside war-torn world and of the disruption and anxiety it caused in Matisse's life. The viewer sees only the artist's on-going pursuit to create a world of beauty.

James Jensen

Honolulu Academy of Arts

Faces

Selected Works from the Galleries



Henri Matisse (1869-1954)

Gallery #1

ANNELIES, WHITE TULIPS AND ANEMONES, 1944

Oil on canvas

Gift of Friends of the Academy, 1946 (376.1)

In 1890, Henri Matisse, who was a lawyer at the time, took up painting while recovering from an illness. Deciding to dedicate himself completely to painting, he began formal studies in a succession of Paris academies and was admitted to the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1895. Matisse worked in several styles in his career; early works show the influence of Impressionism and Pointillism and, briefly, some Cubist elements, but he was less concerned with abstraction than with the effects of juxtaposing pure color. In 1905 Matisse became associated with the artists known as Fauves, or “wild beasts” (including Braque and Vlaminck, both of whom are represented in Academy Gallery #1), who at the time were experimenting with bold, pure color. Matisse rapidly became famous, and his works were exhibited in several major cities, including New York, Berlin, and Moscow.

After settling in Nice in 1921, Matisse’s paintings began to reflect a world of calm, repose and ease, inhabited almost exclusively by women. “I depend entirely on my model, whom I observe at liberty, and I decide on the pose that best suits her nature.” *Annelies, White Tulips and Anemones*, painted when the artist was seventy-five years old, shows his model and student, Annelies, seated at a table, and framed on either side by vases of white and lavender flowers. The artist has captured the girl, wearing an orange dress and a necklace of hearts, looking up from the book she has been reading. The colors in this painting are more subdued compared to the brilliant hues that characterize most of Matisse’s work. The painting does, however, exemplify the artist’s emphasis on two-dimensionality, careful placement of shapes and color and sense of decorative pattern.

HENRI MATISSE
France, 1869–1954

***Annelies, White Tulips, and
Anemones***, 1944
Oil on Canvas

Gift of the Friends of the Academy, 1946
(376.1)

In *Annelies, White Tulips, and Anemones*, Henri Matisse created a private world of calm, repose, grace, and ease, domesticating the sensual and decorative pastoral themes similar to his earlier paintings. He worked with a succession of favorite models to depict a world inhabited almost entirely by women. The model is Annelies, a young local girl whom Matisse took as a student and who is seated at a table between two bouquets of flowers. The sober colors of the painting, compared to the more brilliant hues for which he is famous, perhaps hint at disturbing events in Matisse's life: in spring, 1944, his wife and daughter, who had been working for the French Resistance, were taken prisoner by the Nazis. Aside from this color scheme, Matisse betrays no sign of the disruption and anxiety in his life; one sees only the artist's ongoing pursuit to create a world of beauty.

HENRI MATISSE

France, 1869–1954

***Annelies, White Tulips, and Anemones*, 1944**

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Friends of the Academy, 1946 (376.1)

In *Annelies, White Tulips, and Anemones*, Henri Matisse has fabricated a private world of calm, repose, grace, and ease, domesticating the sensual and decorative pastoral themes of his earlier paintings. To create these sumptuous interiors, Matisse worked with a succession of favorite models; in this case, the sitter is Annelies, a young woman whom Matisse took on as a student. The luxurious and safe haven Matisse imagines in this work bears no hint of the turmoil in his personal life at the time: in the spring of 1944, his wife and daughter, who had been working for the French Resistance, were taken prisoner by the Nazis.

"Annalies, White Tulips and Anemones" #376.1
Gift of Friends of the Academy (1946)
Oil on canvas; H 23 7/8"; W 28 3/4"

GAL 1

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Henri Matisse (French)
(1869-1954)
1944
Gallery I



Artist: Henri Matisse began a career in law before dedicating himself completely to painting. While recovering from an illness in 1890, Matisse began his study of painting. He studied at the Ecole Quentin de Latour learning academic fundamentals. He attended the Academie Julian in Paris (1891), which was under the direction of Bouguereau, and the Ecole des Arts Decoratif. In 1895, Gustave Moreau admitted Matisse to his studio at the Ecole des Beaux Arts without requiring him to pass an entrance examination. After Moreau's death, Matisse entered the Academie Carriere. Matisse progressively directed his researches toward an increasing emphasis on color. In 1896, Matisse met Pissarro and became strongly interested in Impressionism. Later he became interested in Pointillism, and in 1904, he spent the summer at Saint Tropez with Signac and Henri Edmond Cross, two divisionists. Matisse executed several paintings in this style, but was less interested in abstraction than with the effects of juxtaposing pure colors. By 1905 he had given up Pointillism. His paintings were marked by broad areas of bold, pure color. He exhibited at the Salon d'Automne in 1905 with other artists who were experimenting along similar lines, including Braque, Vlaminck and Rouault; they made up the "cage of wild beasts," the Fauves. By 1909 Matisse's fame was world-wide and his works were exhibited in several major cities, including New York, Moscow and Berlin. In 1925 Matisse was awarded first prize at the Carnegie International Exhibition in Pittsburg, and during World War he became a member of the Emergency Rescue Committee. In the course of his career, Matisse undertook many projects, including the design of ballet settings and costumes, book illustration, decoration of the Barnes Foundation, and construction of the small Chapelle du Rosaire.

Subject: Painting of a young woman seated in a green chair behind a table, covered by a dark-blue, striped cloth. On top of the table are two brown vases of tulips, a grey vase of pink and purple flowers, and an open book. The young woman faces front and wears a gold heart necklace and rust colored V-neck blouse with long sleeves. The color of the blouse turns greyish towards the ruffled cuffs. The background is royal blue with criss-crossed pattern.

Medium and Technique: Oil on canvas, pigment diluted and thinly applied. Canvas remains untouched in certain areas, and pigment has been scratched off in others.

Style: Matisse worked in several styles over the course of his career. His early paintings reflect the influence of the Impressionists and Pointillists, and some paintings, dating about 1912, manifest certain Cubist elements. However, his primary interest lay in the expressive qualities of color, which can be seen in his depiction of "Annalies, White Tulips and Anemones." This painting exemplifies Matisse's style in its strong two-dimensionality, emphasis on placement of shapes and color and sense of decorative pattern.

Instructional Aids:

- Compare and contrast with Gauguin's painting "Two Nudes on a Tahitian Beach."
- Block out some of the colors and determine how this affects the painting.
- Discuss space and its significance or lack of significance in this painting.
- Contrast with Monet's "Waterlilies" for technique and speed of execution.

Henri Matisse
1869–1954, France

Annelies, White Tulips and Anemones, 1944

Oil on canvas

23-7/8 x 28-3/4 in. (60.6 x 73.0 cm)

Gift of the Friends of the Academy, 1946 (376.1)

After settling in Nice in 1921, Henri Matisse created in his paintings a private world of calm, repose, grace, and ease, domesticating the sensual and decorative pastoral themes that had informed much of his earlier work. He relied on a succession of favorite models to depict a world inhabited almost entirely by women. "My models," he once said, "are the principal theme in my work. I depend entirely on my model, whom I observe at liberty, and I decide on the pose that best suits her nature."

This painting, a prime example of these intimate themes, dates from 1944, when the artist was seventy-five years old. In the early 1940s Matisse's life had been disturbed by a series of events that no doubt interfered with his normally prodigious creativity. He was still recuperating from a serious operation in early 1941, which had left him weakened and often confined to bed. In March 1943 the Allies began bombing near Nice, and Matisse was advised to move to Vence. Although forced to leave his comfortable environment and drained of energy, Matisse nevertheless arranged a convenient working space in his bedroom. Marguette Bouvier, who visited Matisse at Vence in October 1944, mentioned that he hung paintings on which he was working on the wall facing his bed. On the day of her visit there were seven paintings on the wall, in the center a portrait of a girl seated at a table between two bouquets of flowers—*Annelies, White Tulips and Anemones*.

The model, Annelies, a young local girl whom Matisse took as a student, gazes intently from between the flowers, looking up from a book she has been reading. The flowers' delicate lavender and creamy whites are luminous against the dark table covering and background, in which Matisse scratched patterns with the end of his brush.

The sober colors of the work, compared with the more brilliant hues for which Matisse is famous, perhaps hint at disturbing events in Matisse's life: in spring 1944 his wife and daughter, who had been working for the French Resistance, were taken prisoner by the Nazis. Madame Matisse spent time in prison, and their daughter was tortured by the Gestapo. This painting, as well as the others from this period, betrays no sign of the turmoil of the war-torn world nor of the disruption and anxiety it caused in Matisse's life. One sees only the artist's ongoing pursuit to create a world of beauty.