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Evolving Authenticity in Henri Matisse's *The Swimming Pool*

Abstract

In 1952, Henri Matisse made the largest paper cut-out of his career, *The Swimming Pool*. Installed originally in the dining room of his apartment in Nice, the artwork was composed of blue paper cut-outs of swimmers and sea life attached to a white paper frieze, which in turn was attached to burlap-covered walls. After his death, the papers were removed from the walls and sent to Paris to be mounted. During the mounting process, decisions were made that affect the current appearance of the artwork, raising questions about Matisse's artistic intentions and the authenticity of components of the artwork. The papers were mounted onto new burlap on stretchers of arbitrary dimensions. It is also possible new white paper for the frieze was selected.

In 1975, The Museum of Modern Art acquired *The Swimming Pool*. By this time, the artwork had deteriorated, prompting a thorough investigation of its materials and manufacture, as well as subsequent treatment. Exhibited regularly until 1993, the artwork has since been in storage where it has deteriorated further.

In 2008, the possibility of reinstalling *The Swimming Pool* prompted a reexamination of its materials, manufacture, and condition. The culmination of this research is a treatment proposal, which takes into consideration altering the decisions that changed the original appearance of the artwork, simultaneously introducing challenging ethical questions.

As is the case with many modern and contemporary works of art, the conservation of Henri Matisse's paper cut-out, *The Swimming Pool*, is fraught with thorny practical and theoretical questions that have no ready answers. Matisse made *The Swimming Pool* for himself on the walls of his dining room in his apartment in Nice in 1952. On top of walls covered with burlap at his request, Matisse pinned a white paper frieze and blue paper cut-outs of swimmers and sea life. After his death in 1954, the papers were removed from the walls and sent to Paris to be mounted. During the mounting process, many decisions were made that affect the current appearance of the artwork. Most significantly, the papers were mounted onto new burlap on stretchers that have no correspondence to the original dimensions of the dining room.

In 1975, The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) acquired *The Swimming Pool*. By this time, the burlap had discolored and the papers had developed brown stains. After undertaking a thorough examination of the artwork's materials and manufacture, conservators at MoMA selectively treated it. From 1976 until 1993, *The Swimming Pool* was exhibited regularly. Since 1993, it has been in storage, where it has deteriorated further. The burlap has continued to discolor, and the brown stains have continued to form on the white papers. *The Swimming Pool* now is scheduled to be reinstalled in a custom-designed gallery space at MoMA. This prompted a reexamination of *The Swimming Pool's* history and manufacture and a proposal for its conservation treatment. The proposal calls for acts of bold intervention, the ethical implications of which are the focus of this paper.

Henri Matisse was born in 1869 in Le Cateau-Cambrésis in northern France (**Figures 1 and 2**). In 1938, sixty-nine years old and declining in health, he moved into the Hôtel Régina in Nice where he lived intermittently until his death. In 1941, Matisse underwent surgery for cancer, which left him a semi-invalid for the rest of his life. Restricted to a wheelchair, he took up a new mode of artmaking: the paper cut-out.



Figure 1 Henri Matisse, Hôtel Régina, Nice, c.1952. Photo published in: Cowart, et al., 1977, 284.

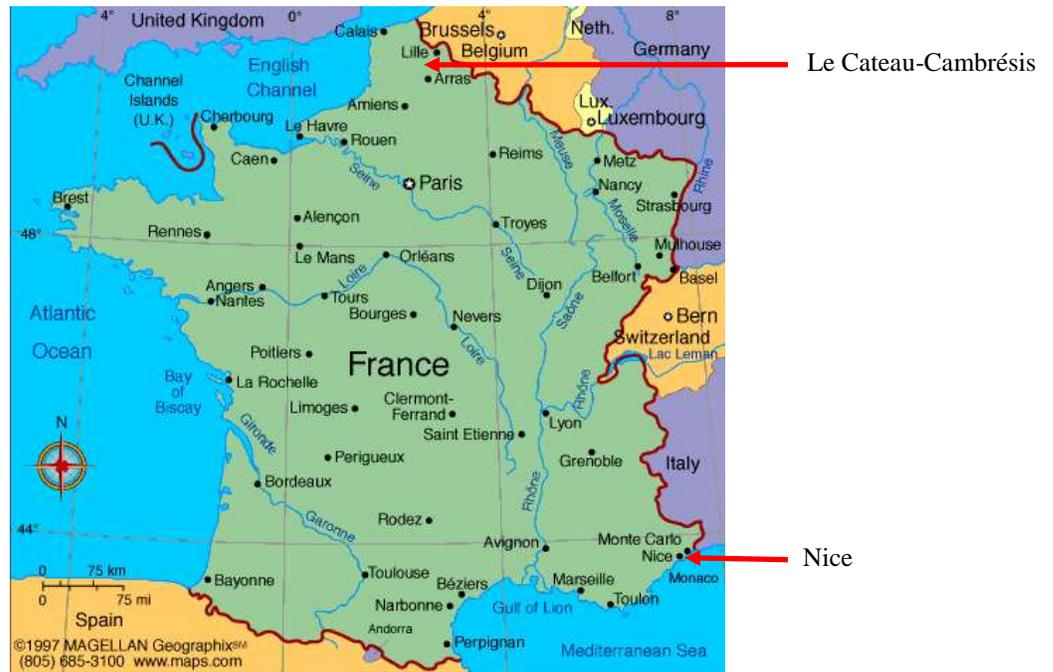


Figure 2 Map of France showing Le Cateau-Cambrésis, where Matisse was born, and Nice, where Matisse spent the last decades of his life.

At first, Matisse made small-scale cut-outs both as independent artworks and as maquettes for prints, textiles, glass, and ceramics.¹ It was not until late 1944 that he made *Composition*, his first large-scale cut-out that functioned as an independent artwork (**Figure 3**).²



Figure 3 Henri Matisse at his villa, Le Rêve, Vence, c.1944. *Composition* can be seen above the mirror. Photo published in: Cowart, et al., 1977, 116.

¹ Although Matisse cut and pinned or pasted papers as early as the 1930s in relation to the creation of artworks in other media, it was not until his recuperation from surgery in 1941–42 that he considered the cut-out medium seriously as an independent art form. Jack Cowart, et al., *Henri Matisse Paper Cut-Outs* (The St. Louis Art Museum and The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1977): 13–14.

² Cowart, et al., 117.

By 1952, Matisse was fully engaged with the medium and made the two largest paper cut-outs of his career, *The Parakeet and the Siren*, and *The Swimming Pool* (Figures 4 and 5).



Figure 4 Henri Matisse, *The Parakeet and the Siren*, 1952, 337 x 773 cm. (132 ¹¹/₁₆ x 304 ³/₈ in.), Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (A 25531). Photo accessed at: http://www.verenigingrembrandt.nl/upload/collection/581_vrwork.jpg.

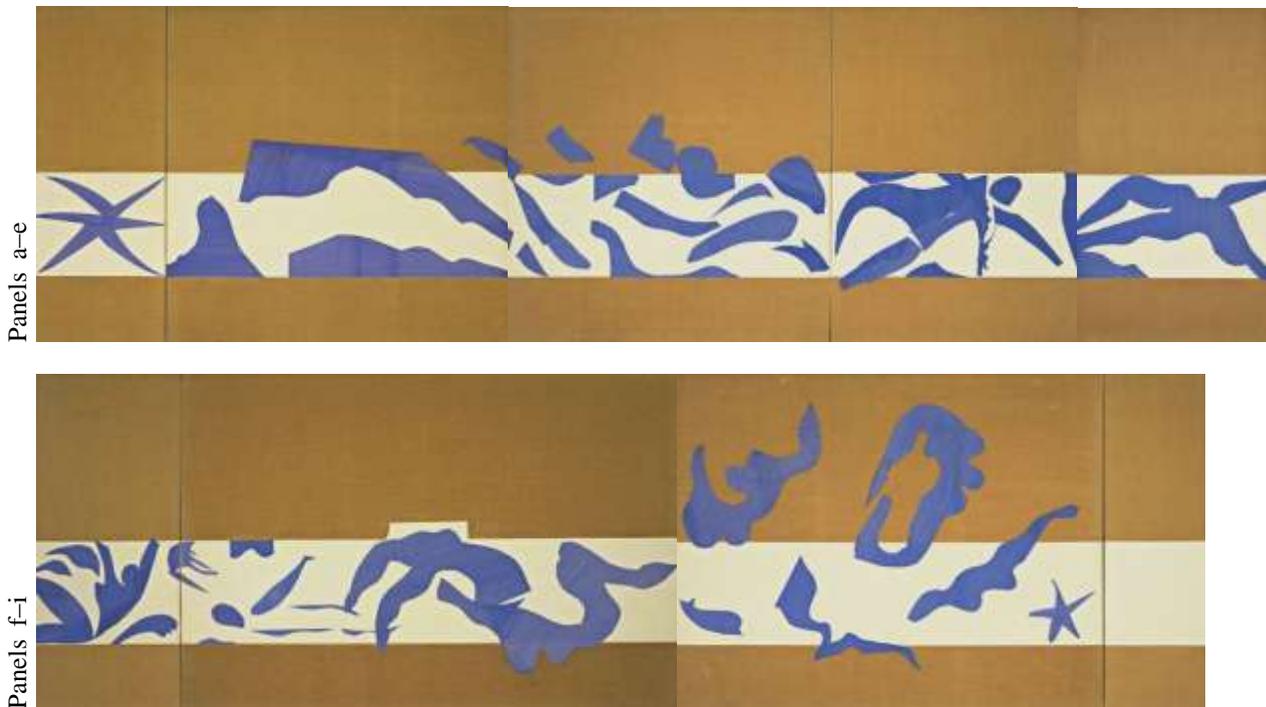


Figure 5 Henri Matisse, *The Swimming Pool*, 1952, 230 x 1,645 cm. (90 ¹/₂ x 647 ⁵/₈ in.), Museum of Modern Art, New York (302.1975 a-i). Photo accessed at: http://www.moma.org/collection/browse_results.php?object_id=79462.

Matisse assembled *The Swimming Pool* on the walls of his dining room, a nearly square space with an entry door on one wall and a fireplace on the adjacent wall (**Figures 6 and 7**). Because of the artist's compromised health, the process of making the artwork was collaborative. Matisse made all of the conceptual decisions and cut the paper cut-outs. His assistants painted sheets of paper with gouache, which were stockpiled so Matisse could reach for a painted sheet at any time. They also helped pin the cut-outs to the walls.³ At some point, Matisse requested that the walls be lined with burlap. While it is unclear whether this was done expressly for *The Swimming Pool*, a letter written by Matisse's longtime assistant, Lydia Delectorskaya, reveals that later he greatly valued the aesthetic relationship between the beige burlap, the white paper frieze, and the blue paper cut-outs.⁴ In addition to being Matisse's longtime assistant, Delectorskaya acted informally as one of Matisse's representatives after his death.



Figure 6 One view of Matisse's dining room at the Hôtel Régina, Nice, c.1952. Over *The Swimming Pool's* burlap, Matisse positioned other artworks he made. At the very top above the fireplace is *The Snail*. In the corner, above and below the central frieze of *The Swimming Pool* are brush-and-ink drawings. Photo published in: Elderfield, *The Cut-Outs of Henri Matisse*, 1978, 118.

³ Lydia Delectorskaya, Letter to the Conservators at the Museum of Modern Art, 23 July 1976.

⁴ Anonymous, Memo on the "Decoration of *The Swimming Pool* by Henri Matisse," 1975.



Figure 7 Another view of *The Swimming Pool* in Matisse's dining room at the Hôtel Régina, Nice, c.1952. *Women and Monkeys* can be seen above the entryway. *Acrobats* and a preliminary drawing for *Rose Chasuble* can be seen through the entryway. Photo published in: Elderfield, *The Cut-Outs of Henri Matisse*, 1978, 119.

After the burlap was attached to the walls, Matisse's assistants pinned sheets of white Canson paper to them in the form of a frieze. They positioned the frieze just above the height of a person of average height or 5'6" tall.⁵ Reaching for a sheet of paper painted blue with Linel gouache, Matisse then cut a shape from the painted sheet with scissors. He famously likened this process to "drawing with scissors."⁶ Handing the cut-out to an assistant, Matisse instructed them where to place it on the wall. Often the forms were moved multiple times until he was satisfied with their position.⁷

After Matisse's death in 1954, his assistants traced the artwork's composition, loosely affixed the cut-outs to white paper with dots of glue, then sent the papers off to Paris to be mounted by the Parisian mounting house Lefebvre-Foinet. Mounting took place from 1955 to 1956.⁸ During that time, many decisions were made that affect the current appearance of the artwork. Nine stretchers were selected upon which to attach the burlap and papers. They are all 7'6 5/8" in

⁵ Lydia Delectorskaya, Letter to Antoinette King, 1977.

⁶ Cowart, et al., 49.

⁷ Lydia Delectorskaya, Letter to the Conservators at the Museum of Modern Art, 23 July 1976.

⁸ Anonymous, Memo on the "Decoration of *The Swimming Pool* by Henri Matisse," 1975.

height and of varying widths.⁹ When *The Swimming Pool* was installed in Matisse's dining room, its height was that of the walls minus the baseboard or approximately 11'9 ³/₄".¹⁰ (**Figure 8**).



Figure 8 The author standing next to Panel E in storage. Wearing boots and a hat, the author is approximately 5'6" tall, the height at which Matisse requested the white frieze. While the requested height can be achieved by mounting the panels higher on the walls, as Lefebvre-Foinet might have envisioned, that results in the introduction of a new material below the panels. Image by: E. Spaulding, 2009.

From documentary evidence, it is fairly clear how *The Swimming Pool* was mounted. Madame Matisse assisted Lefebvre-Foinet in selecting a new fabric upon which to mount the papers. Ultimately, she selected a burlap nearly identical to the original. Although she recognized that burlap was not the most stable material, she could not find a fabric of superior quality that resembled the original so closely.¹¹ Burlap is a woven cloth created typically from jute, hemp, or flax fibers. Exposure to light and ultraviolet radiation can cause it to yellow, darken, or become

⁹ Panels a–e: 230.1 x 847.8 cm. (7'6 ⁵/₈" x 27'9 ¹/₂"), Panels f–i: 230.1 x 796.1 cm. (7'6 ⁵/₈" x 26'1 ¹/₂"). Measurements obtained from: [moma.org](http://www.moma.org), 2009, accessed 6 Sept. 2009, http://www.moma.org/collection/browse_results.php?object_id=79462.

¹⁰ Measurements obtained from the plan of Matisse's dining room at the Hôtel Régina, Nice, housed at MoMA, and MoMA's measurements of *The Swimming Pool*'s panels.

¹¹ William Rubin, Letter to William Lieberman, 8 Oct. 1975.

acidic.¹² After attaching the burlap to stretchers lined with linen, the mounters affixed sheets of white Canson paper painted with a layer of white paint to the face of the burlap. They used an adhesive that consisted of rye flour, wheat flour, animal glue, and Venice turpentine.¹³ Venice turpentine is an exudation from larch trees and is a combination of resinous acids, terpenes, and resins. If prepared improperly, it can yellow and become brittle over time.¹⁴ This adhesive was used throughout the mounting process.

Although Matisse routinely painted his white papers with white paint to disguise any potential future discoloration, it is unclear whether the mounted white paper is the original white paper.¹⁵ Close examination of the sides of two mounted panels reveals that the white paper wraps around the sides of the panels (**Figures 9 and 10**). The fact that the white paper wraps around the sides of the panels instead of existing only on their faces suggests that larger sheets of paper were required. In other words, if one removed the white paper from all of the panels, linked them together edge to edge then compared them to the white paper used originally in the dining room, it is likely that they would exceed the original width. To make a more definitive assessment of the white paper, detailed measurements of the panels need to be made and compared to the dimensions of the dining room.

Finally, to attach the cut-outs to the panels, the mounters laid the tracing on top of the white paper and burlap, slipped the cut-out beneath the tracing, drew a pencil outline around the shape, then removed the tracing and the cut-out, applied mounting adhesive to the back of the cut-out, and placed it within the penciled outline. Lefebvre-Foinet designed this mounting protocol during Matisse's lifetime. According to documents, Matisse approved the protocol, though of course, he did not live to see the outcome of *The Swimming Pool's* mounting.¹⁶

¹² Ágnes Tímár-Balázs and Dinah Eastop, *Chemical Principles of Textile Conservation* (Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1998): 35.

¹³ Monsieur Foinet, Letter to Pierre Matisse, 19 Jan. 1973.

¹⁴ "Venice Turpentine," Cameo, 2009, accessed 21 Mar. 2009, <http://cameo.mfa.org/materials/record.asp?key=2170&subkey=9765&Search=Search&MaterialName=venice+turpentine&submit.x=0&submit.y=0>.

¹⁵ Lydia Delectorskaya, Letter to the Conservators at the Museum of Modern Art, 23 July 1976.

¹⁶ Anonymous, Memo on the "Decoration of *The Swimming Pool* by Henri Matisse," 1975.



Figure 9 Left side of Panel C. Image by E. Spaulding, 2008, courtesy of MoMA.



Figure 10 Left side of Panel G. Image by E. Spaulding, 2008, courtesy of MoMA.

From 1956 to 1975, *The Swimming Pool* was owned by a private collector. In 1975, MoMA acquired the artwork through the Pierre Matisse Gallery.¹⁷ By this time, it was no longer in pristine condition. The burlap, once beige, had turned orange-brown and hung slack on its stretchers (**Figures 11 and 12**). The adhesive used to adhere the papers was evident in certain locations (**Figure 13**). The white painted papers exhibited “irregular, roundish dark brown stains with darker centers,” possibly caused by contact with the acidic burlap and adhesive (**Figure 14**).¹⁸ The blue painted papers also exhibited these brown stains, though to a lesser degree (**Figure 15**). Additionally, they suffered from scratches and other abrasions.¹⁹ The blue cut-outs affixed directly to the burlap appeared mottled (**Figure 16**). This may have been due to the decoloration of the artificial ultramarine blue found in blue Linel gouache, which is particularly sensitive to acidity.²⁰

¹⁷ After a brief search through the Pierre Matisse Gallery Archives, housed at The Morgan Library & Museum, a transaction of *The Swimming Pool*'s sale was not found. However, they do have a compelling photograph of *The Swimming Pool* in Matisse's dining room at the Hôtel Régina, which reveals the edges of the papers more clearly than in other photographs seen by this author. This information may contribute to a better understanding of the originality of the mounted white paper frieze.

¹⁸ Cowart, et al., 275.

¹⁹ Cowart, et al., 275.

²⁰ Cowart, et al., 274.



Figure 11 A blue cut-out lifted from the burlap showing the degree to which the burlap darkened over time, 1977–78. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1977–78.

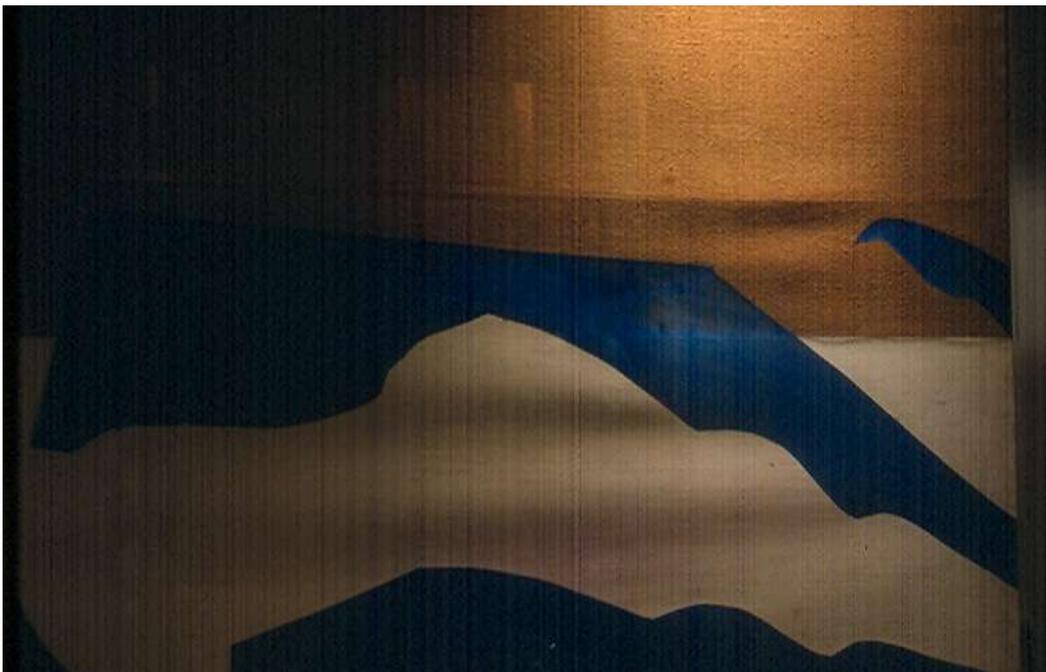


Figure 12 Panel B in raking light showing the slack burlap on its stretcher, 1984–85. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1984–85.

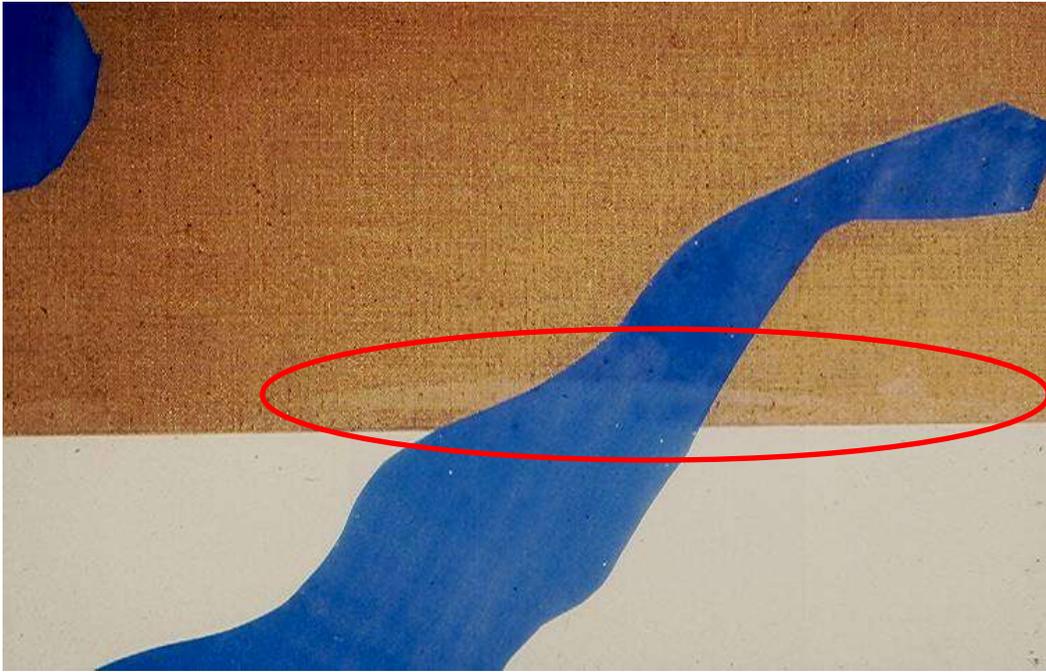


Figure 13 Mounting adhesive across one of the blue paper cut-outs and burlap, 1992. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1992.



Figure 14 Brown stains on the white painted paper, 1977–78. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1977–78.

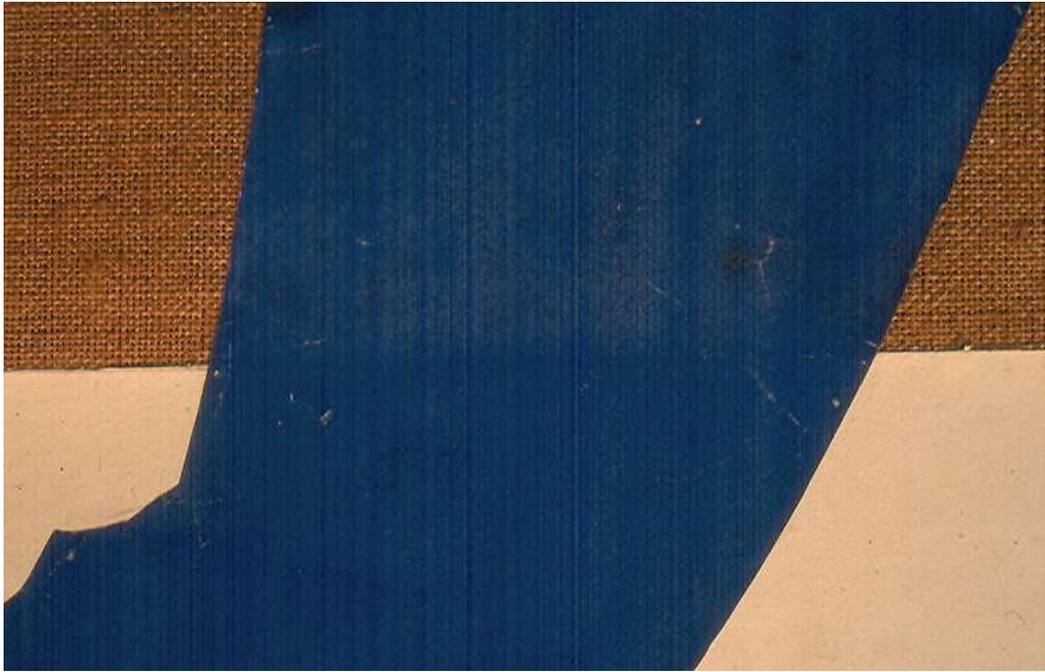


Figure 15 Brown stains on and mottled appearance of a blue paper cut-out affixed directly to the burlap, 1977–78. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1977–78.



Figure 16 Scratches and other forms of abrasion on a group of blue paper cut-outs, 1977–78. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1977–78.

From 1975 to 1976, Antoinette King, former senior conservator at MoMA, extensively studied the materials and manufacture of *The Swimming Pool* and selectively treated the artwork.²¹ Treatment included reducing the brown stains on the white papers by placing Fuller's earth on the stain, depositing acetone within the poultice, then after sufficient working time, removing the earth with a micro-spatula and a small vacuum (**Figure 17**). This protocol for reducing the brown stains was tested on the blue painted paper, but was deemed inappropriate. The impregnated poultice left a noticeable residue on the surface. The loose linen lining and the slack burlap were gently re-stretched. Finally, the scratches and other abrasions on the blue paper cut-outs were inpainted with gouache. King considered removing the papers from the burlap, lining them with a thin, strong paper to isolate them from the burlap, then re-adhering them. Both time and space constraints prohibited this.



Figure 17 Using Fuller's Earth and acetone to reduce the brown stains on the white painted papers. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1977–78.

²¹ King's research on and treatment of *The Swimming Pool* is included as a "Technical Appendix," in Cowart, et al., *Henri Matisse Paper Cut-Outs* (The St. Louis Art Museum and The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1977): 272–277.

After treatment, *The Swimming Pool* was exhibited regularly from the late 1970s until the early 1990s, both as part of MoMA's permanent collection and in temporary exhibitions. One exhibition of note is MoMA's 1992 Matisse retrospective. During that exhibition, the museum displayed *The Swimming Pool* closer to its original height, a subject they had been criticized for during their 1984 installation of the artwork (**Figures 18 and 19**). Since 1993, the artwork has been in storage.



Figure 18 *The Swimming Pool* being installed at MoMA, 1984. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1984.



Figure 19 *The Swimming Pool* installed in a gallery at MoMA as part of their Matisse retrospective, 1992. *Women and Monkeys* can be seen above the entryway. Image courtesy of MoMA, 1992.

Close examination of *The Swimming Pool* in 2008 revealed that many of the condition problems evident in the 1970s are still present, and some new problems have arisen. The burlap has continued to discolor and in some areas has discolored unevenly. However, the areas of burlap directly against the stretcher bars appear to have discolored less (**Figure 20**). It is possible the stretcher bars partially protected the fabric from oxidation. The degree to which the burlap has discolored is even more evident when compared to a sample of “unaged” burlap MoMA obtained from Lefebvre-Foinet during the 1970s (**Figures 21 and 22**). On the backs of certain panels are recently formed water stains (**Figure 23**). Finally, the burlap has continued to grow slack on its stretchers (**Figure 24**).

The white papers exhibit the most problematic alterations. The same irregularly shaped brown stains have continued to form (**Figure 25**). After treating the brown stains in the 1970s, King noted that solvent halos could be observed under ultraviolet illumination.²² The halos have now become more pronounced and are evident under normal illumination. The once-integrated inpainting on the blue paper cut-outs has also begun to appear inharmonious in certain areas.

²² Antoinette King, Condition Report on *The Swimming Pool*, 19 Jan. 1976.

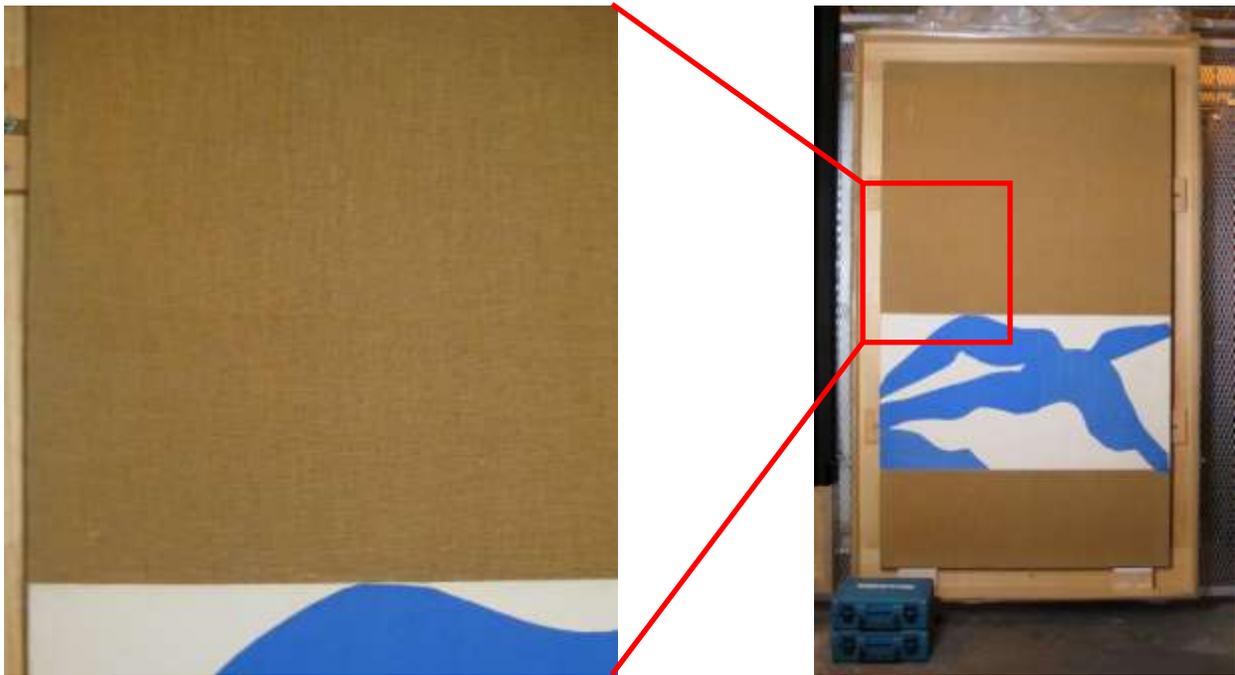


Figure 20 Detail of the uneven discoloring of the burlap along the left edge of Panel E, 2008. Image by E. Spaulding, 2008.



Figure 21 "Unaged" sample of burlap against *The Swimming Pool*'s aged burlap, 2008. Image by K. Buchberg, 2008, courtesy of MoMA.



Figure 22 Detail of the “unaged” sample of burlap against *The Swimming Pool*’s aged burlap, 2008. Image by K. Buchberg, 2008, courtesy of MoMA.



Figure 23 Water stains on the back of Panel A, 2008. Image by E.Spaulding, 2008, courtesy of MoMA.



Figure 24 Panel B in raking light showing the slack burlap on its stretcher, 2008. Image by E. Spaulding, 2008, courtesy of MoMA.



Figure 25 Brown stains and solvent halos on the white painted paper of Panel D, 2008. Image by K. Buchberg, 2008, courtesy of MoMA.

The Swimming Pool's current condition is clearly a complex combination of longstanding condition problems and a series of decisions that have changed the original appearance of the artwork. The scheduled reinstallation of the artwork in a custom-designed gallery space at MoMA has created the opportunity to treat *The Swimming Pool* on a variety of levels. The most comprehensive version of the treatment proposal calls for reformatting the artwork so that it is closer to its original dimensions and treating the papers. This would include the following:

1. Replacing the original stretchers with a framework that offers more overall support, such as honeycomb panels (**Figure 26**).
2. Replacing the original burlap with a fabric that is similar to the original in appearance, but does not possess any of its injurious properties. If such a fabric were able to be obtained, questions still exist, such as: Does one select a fabric that is closer to the original color of the burlap or the aged color? If one selects a fabric that is closer to the original color, would the fabric appear incongruous with the aged appearance of the papers? Also, what should be done with the original burlap? Should it somehow be displayed with the artwork or kept in storage?
3. Suction technology and solvents could be used to reduce the brown stains on the white painted papers. Suction technology has advanced since the artwork's last treatment in the 1970s, possibly allowing for greater reduction of the stains.
4. Finally, the inpainting that appears discordant with the artwork could be replaced with new color compensation.



Figure 26 Current stretcher system. Image by E.Spaulding, 2008, courtesy of MoMA.

Extensive testing on the artwork still needs to be performed to determine the feasibility of this treatment proposal. It is also possible that different versions of the proposal could be carried out. For example, only the stretcher system could be replaced with a new framework. However, if the proposal is executed in its most comprehensive form, *The Swimming Pool* has the potential to regain its original dimensions and the delicate balance between the beige fabric, the white paper frieze, and the blue paper cut-outs that Matisse valued so much. However, as custodians of artworks, how do we reconcile this level of intervention? When is it acceptable to undo the work of others, even if only temporarily, and replace original material? In its current state, *The Swimming Pool* clearly was assembled by many more people than just Matisse. How do we prioritize each participant's role? Ultimately, how authentic will the artwork be? These questions can be answered in part in three ways: by referring to letters that address Matisse's artistic intentions and describe the artwork's manufacture in further detail; by referring to the treatment of other Matisse paper cut-outs as references for how conservators have dealt with their complex conditions; and, by speaking with those involved in the artwork's manufacture, preservation, or who simply care deeply about it, such as, the Matisse Foundation, Lefebvre-Foinet, Antoinette King, and art historians.

During *The Swimming Pool*'s conservation treatment in 1976, Matisse's longtime assistant, Lydia Delectorskaya sent Antoinette King notes on the general manufacture of Matisse's paper cut-outs to aid her in her conservation treatment.²³ In them, she describes Matisse's artistic intentions, the relative importance of Matisse's materials, and the priority of each participant's role in the manufacture of the cut-outs. For Matisse, the shape of his cut-outs, color, and composition were paramount. In fact, it was his interest in color, as well as his concern for the continuity of his works that prompted him to use Linel gouache, which he understood to be a stable material, and to paint many of the white papers in his cut-outs with white paint, to disguise any potential, future discoloration. While she does not address Matisse's specific attitude towards burlap as a material, she does note that the white paper is not sacred and can even be replaced if necessary, yet should only be replaced once to avoid excessive skinning of the cut-outs. Similarly, the physical elements of the artwork executed by those other than Matisse need not be held in the same regard as the elements Matisse made or the characteristics he found important. An example is the brushstrokes evident in the blue paper cut-outs. An assistant applied the gouache to the paper before Matisse cut out his shapes.

Complements to this letter are letters from Delectorskaya and Pierre, Matisse's son, to curators at MoMA. Written in the 1980s, both complain about the low height at which *The Swimming Pool* was being exhibited at MoMA. Delectorskaya even recalls how she knows the white frieze is too low because she was the one who placed it on the wall according to Matisse's instructions.²⁴ Pierre goes as far as to say that he would rather have *The Swimming Pool* withdrawn from exhibition until it can be displayed at its proper height.²⁵

The most compelling treatment of a Matisse paper cut-out to reference is that of *The Parakeet and the Siren* (**Figure 4**).²⁶ Matisse made this artwork in the same year as *The Swimming Pool*. Installed originally on the walls of his studio at the Hôtel Régina, the artwork later was mounted by Lefebvre-Foinet (**Figure 27**). While it is unknown what the dimensions of the studio were, it

²³ Lydia Delectorskaya, Letter to the Conservators at MoMA, 23 July 1976.

²⁴ Lydia Delectorskaya, Letter to Richard Oldenburg, 16 July 1984.

²⁵ Pierre Matisse, Letter to William Rubin, 11 Sept. 1985.

²⁶ The conservation treatment of *The Parakeet and the Siren* was stitched together from Antoinette King's summary of its treatment in her Technical Appendix (Cowart, et al., 277), and from several email correspondences with André van Oort during the spring of 2009.

is interesting to note that the current height of *The Parakeet and the Siren* is 11^{11/16}”, approximately the same height as the dining room’s walls, 11’9 3/4”. Assuming that the studio’s walls were the same height as the dining room’s suggests the artwork is close to its original height. Upon acquisition of the artwork in 1967, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam observed that the white background paper had discolored unevenly. The paper was Canson Lavis B. Attributing the discoloration to the inherent vice of the paper, the museum requested new, good quality paper to be manufactured. They affectionately referred to this paper as “Matisse paper.” Lefebvre-Foinet, in consultation with Lydia Delectorskaya, remounted the artwork with Matisse paper. By the 1970s, the white paper had discolored unevenly again. Extensive research suggested the animal glue used during the mounting process was the culprit. Thus, the artwork was remounted a second time with new Matisse paper using a starch adhesive. By the 1990s, the white paper had discolored yet again. Additional research concluded that there was an uneven distribution of iron in the paper, which had been aggravated by fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity, resulting in the white paper’s discoloration. The artwork was remounted a third time using Canson C paper. To date, *The Parakeet and the Siren* has not exhibited any new discoloration and is in stable condition.



Figure 27 *The Parakeet and the Siren*, Matisse’s studio, Hôtel Régina, Nice, c.1952. The artwork is unfinished in this photograph. Photo published in: Cowart, et al., 234.

Conversations with art historians, conservators, and others still need to occur. Many questions also still exist, especially concerning the originality of the white paper background and the details of *The Swimming Pool's* reinstallation. If the most comprehensive version of the treatment proposal is carried out, *The Swimming Pool* has the potential to regain elements of its original appearance and to become a more stable art object. However, those decisions do require a bold act of intervention and the introduction of new materials. As with any treatment, a balance must be struck between decisions. Ultimately, I would argue that this set of decisions would not render the artwork inauthentic. All that we know about Matisse's artistic intentions and the hierarchy in which Delectorskaya organized Matisse's materials and each participant's role in the artwork's manufacture support the idea that in the context of *The Swimming Pool*, authenticity cannot be thought of traditionally, but rather as evolving.

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