HENRI MATISSE, TEXTILE ARTIST
COSTUMES DESIGNED FOR THE BALLETS RUSSES PRODUCTION OF *LE CHANT DU ROSSIGNOL*, 1919–1920

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To Marie Muelle and the anonymous fabricators of *Le Chant du Rossignol*

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Figure 5.43. Priest wearing the white chasuble in the chapel in Vence. 252

Chapter One: Introduction

The Costumes as Matisse's "Best Spokesman"

> *In the palace of the Emperor of China everyone is busy preparing for the reception of the nightingale. All the doors are wide open, and the draughts set myriads of bells tinkling. In the distance can be heard the song of the approaching nightingale. Hereupon the Emperor's suite enters and the nightingale sings. When her song is ended, enthusiasm breaks out. Suddenly messengers from the Emperor of Japan arrive bringing with them for their master a wonderful automatic nightingale which he is presenting to his powerful neighbour.*
>
> *The Japanese Maestro makes this curious automatic bird sing. The Emperor is taken ill, the real nightingale has fled, and the newcomer is driven out of the Palace. Distracted, the courtiers improvise with their arms a throne upon which to bear away the dying Monarch. They return to fetch the throne, and the Chamberlains throw open the curtains of the Emperor's room. Death is seen watching near his bed. Then the nightingale arrives and sings. She succeeds in enchanting Death, who, about to drive her off, gives in, strangling and carrying her away. The whole Court thinks the Emperor is dead, and a train of mourners arrive. These notice a movement of their master's hand, upon which he rises, completely cured. Everyone starts back enraptured by the miracle.*
>
> —Synopsis of *Le Chant du Rossignol (The Song of the Nightingale)* from the Souvenir Program, 1920

> *...I am fully aware that a painter's best spokesman is his work.*
>
> —Henri Matisse, "Notes of a Painter," 1908

This last quote[1]—repeated by Matisse throughout his long life—compels any scholar or art appreciator to reflect first on his work before venturing into the vast amount of literature that exists on a man who aptly carries the title of one of the most innovative and influential artists of the twentieth century. What his work reveals is a man who is not just a painter, but also a textile artist. No other works of art by Matisse illustrate this more clearly than his designs for the Ballets Russes production of *Le Chant du Rossignol* from 1919–20. At this midpoint in his artistic career, Matisse used his two main tools of creation—his paintbrush from his initial works on canvas, and scissors, which became

instrumental in his later years—to fabricate the costumes and scenery for this ballet based on a fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen (see app. A for the complete story, "The Nightingale"). This thesis will be the first scholarly project that uses a decorative arts perspective to reveal how textiles, as exemplified by these costumes, informed and shaped Matisse's artistic vision in *Le Chant du Rossignol* and other projects. This approach examines costume construction, design process, collaboration with production members, and the aesthetic results of these costumes to move beyond descriptive analysis to a deeper understanding of the central role textiles played in Matisse's career, specifically in his unique interpretation of traditional Chinese costumes in *Le Chant du Rossignol* within the context of early twentieth century Europe.

This introductory chapter will compare this thesis' decorative arts approach to current scholarship to establish the need for an analysis of Matisse's art as highly reliant on textiles. Although there is a plethora of literature on Matisse and the Ballets Russes as separate entities, the intersection of the two is infrequent and has resulted in mostly surface level explanation of the logistics involved in these collaborations. These sources will be reviewed as part of this section to showcase how they support or provide opportunities for the work in this thesis. The foundation for this thesis is firsthand analysis of seven costumes from the following institutions: the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC; the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, CT; and the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, TX.[2] These observations and discussions with museum staff will combine with analysis of original sketches, archival photographs, cast autobiographies, contemporary critical reviews, and Matisse's artist statements, interviews, and biographical information in conversation with the existing scholarship to compose the most complete portrait of *Le Chant du Rossignol* to date. No other project

has addressed all the costumes in the context of their stage design and Matisse's greater career. Thus, they have missed the wide-ranging impact of these designs on his more generally known and acknowledged fine art.

Although many sources will be explored to support this argument, the costumes present themselves as Matisse's "best spokesman." Their existence in collections, institutions, and museums[3] with varying interests from around the world attests to their universal popularity and appeal. When the founder of the Ballets Russes, Serge Diaghilev died in 1929, the enormous assortment of two decades worth of musical scores, sceneries, costumes, drawings, and photographs circulated among many participants who revived several of the ballets using these original materials. However, by 1951, with the dissolution of most of the post-Ballets Russes production companies, many of these objects ended up in far-from-archival conditions in a warehouse outside Paris. After spending nearly twenty years in this damp and dusty environment, they were acquired by Sotheby's London. Hosting three separate auctions in the years 1968, 1969, and 1973, live models from the Royal Ballet School in London donned the costumes (fig. 1.1) in front of their corresponding backdrops, if available.[4] Although not the original dancers, this "fashion show" provides the only existing color photograph of most of the costumes worn together for *Le Chant du Rossignol* (fig. 1.2).

Considering the inadequate storage circumstances for the costumes—conditions were listed between "very good" to "poor" and often "stained"—The Sotheby's Catalogue from 1972 outlines a surprisingly large number available for auction. The costumes, with their associated characters, from the Matisse-designed production included seven Mandarin costumes, six Chamberlain costumes, three Courtier costumes, seventeen Lady of the Court costumes, three Lady of the Court with flower motifs

costumes,[5] ten Mourner costumes, and six Warrior costumes, with no scenery or props listed. These costumes were secondary roles, and therefore, several copies were made of the same costume, although no exact numbers have been documented of the original amount. Of the four primary roles, only two of their costumes appeared in the catalogue: the *Real Nightingale* and the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor*.[6] This thesis will examine firsthand the *Costume for a Mourner* and *Costume for a Mandarin* located at the National Gallery of Art; the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted*, *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered*, *Costume for a Courtier*, and *Costume for a Chamberlain* from the Serge Lifar Collection at the Wadsworth Atheneum; and the one-of-a-kind *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* at the McNay. In addition to these costumes, primary accounts of the *Costume for a Warrior* by David Allen Plouffe from his 2008 thesis[7] along with archival photographs, sketches, and detailed descriptions from autobiographies of cast members, will encapsulate the full scope of the production. To date, no other publication has included all Matisse's designs and costumes together.

Plouffe's thesis, "Textiles in the Artwork of Henri Matisse: 1894 to 1940," is the most recent examination of the intersection of textiles and art in Matisse's work. Throughout his thesis, Plouffe witnesses the rise of textiles in Matisse's paintings, from their early displays under still lifes to their appearance on the human form. Largely viewing the textiles as a tool to flatten space, enliven color, and bring the decorative into his paintings, Plouffe does not mention the costumes Matisse created for the Ballets Russes until his final chapter. He describes two costumes from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art[8] to support his argument that they "acted as a catalyst for the artist's later paintings, of the mid-1920s thru the 1940s, in which a much more detailed and accurate

rendering of textiles as clothing can be witnessed."[9] Although he acknowledges that Matisse had an in-depth understanding of the properties of textiles, he sees the costume designs as a stepping-stone to be translated into the medium of oil paint—the ultimate goal. Written from a fine arts perspective, his primary concern is the depiction of textiles in the paintings, whereas this thesis looks at his textiles *as* the artwork and as a defining characteristic of his approach to making all of his art. He also declares that "[t]his was unlike anything Matisse had ever done,"[10] whereas Chapter Two of this thesis shows the progression of Matisse's work and interests that naturally led him to this collaboration in fabric and décor. By examining the design, construction process, and cohesive ensemble of these costumes within the framework of the scenery, musical accompaniment, and choreography, this thesis will surpass Plouffe's descriptive analysis of only two of many costumes to a deeper understanding of Matisse's interpretation of Chinese costume within his working philosophy.

Although the most pivotal analysis will come from primary investigation of the textiles, this thesis is also deeply indebted to the phenomenal research on the subject of Matisse. First and foremost of published works on the artist is Hilary Spurling's two-volume biography: *The Unknown Matisse: A Life of Henri Matisse, The Early Years, 1869–1908* from 2005,[11] followed two years later by *Matisse the Master: A Life of Henri Matisse, The Conquest of Colour, 1909–1954*.[12] Amazingly, this is considered the first biography of the artist.[13] Alfred Barr, one of the founders of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, wrote a thorough survey of Matisse to supplement a retrospective exhibition in 1951 while the artist was still alive.[14] However, both Matisse and his family largely rejected it, being suspicious of the author's motives owing to the artist's aversion

to interpretation of his artwork.[15] Although this thesis relies on some excerpts from Barr, Spurling's biography is the most recent and thorough examination of his life, providing an indispensable background to understanding the evolution of his art. Most artists' personal life—no matter how hard they may try to mask it—surfaces in their work. Matisse is an example of one whose story not only shimmers but shines through his creations. This autobiographical influence will be evident in discussions of his work throughout the course of this thesis.

Spurling's narrative evolves chronologically—as one would expect from a biography—and although these two volumes illuminate the role of textiles in his work, examinations of the objects are not thorough. For instance, the section on *Le Chant du Rossingol* composes only six of a total of 889 pages.[16] However, biographies—especially of people with a life as long (eighty-four years) and full as Matisse's—do not afford the space for in-depth analysis at every stage. Her acknowledgement of the influence of textiles in Matisse's life and art in this biography, however, lays amazing groundwork for her coinciding collaboration in the 2004 exhibition catalogue, *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams*.[17] For the first time, this compilation of essays by American and French art historians and curators presented Matisse's personal collection of textiles from his travels and the street stalls of Paris as pivotal to his paintings and cut-outs. Although this provided a phenomenal shift in focus from previous generations of art historical scholarship on Matisse, the end concern is still the paintings, with only brief mention of *Le Chant du Rossignol*'s costumes. However, his collection provides the first step in understanding Matisse as a textile artist and will be examined throughout this thesis.

While Spurling provides the biographical context, she states in the preface to her first volume, "This book is a biography, not a work of art history…"[18] Therefore, it is also important to look at the pertinent art historical interpretations of Matisse. This task was rather daunting in light of the aforementioned breadth of scholarship on the artist. However, Pierre Schneider's monolithic work simply titled *Matisse*[19] logically became prominent owing to his close relationship with Matisse's artist friends and family, namely his daughter Marguerite Duithuit who "was able to see the manuscript before she died."[20] Not only does this contact enhance one's understanding of the artist, but also Schneider's thematic approach to Matisse's production assists the elucidation of his overwhelming volume of work. By placing him in a larger context of contemporary art movements, philosophical debates, and historic events, Schneider marries beautiful reproductions of his work to not just a man, but also a time period. He also recognizes the important link between Matisse and his textiles, most notably in his chapter, "The Revelation of the Orient."[21] Matisse's work for the Ballets Russes again, like Spurling, only constitutes three of 740 pages and Schneider largely views these costumes as a stepping-stone for his later work in cut-outs and his commission for the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence, France.[22] Still, one of the most important contributions to the field of decorative arts by Schneider is his unabashed declaration of Matisse as a "true decorative artist,"[23] whereas in numerous other publications, this same idea is expressed, but with negative connotations. Even Spurling seeks to dispel the association of Matisse with the decorative arts,[24] whereas this thesis hopes to view this connection as one deserving of praise and not disparagement. Chapter Three of this thesis provides the battleground for Matisse's various labels in reference to the costumes.

The inclusion of Matisse's personal statements, especially his seminal written work "Notes of a Painter" from 1908, will act as important evidence. The artist's writings are well documented and he is known largely as "a compulsive letter writer."[25] Jack Flam, another prominent Matisse scholar, first introduced the world to his writings, transcripts, and interviews in 1973 with his book, *Matisse On Art*.[26] Twenty-two years later, he presented a revised edition[27] that encompassed all writings "published during Matisse's lifetime or were approved by him before his death."[28] Flam notes that although these statements include over fifty years of his personal theory, his views remain amazingly consistent.[29] This further solidifies the idea behind this thesis that the body of work presented via this Ballets Russes production encapsulates Matisse's aesthetic ideas and goals pre- and post-production. However, just as primary sources written by the artist are a veritable gold mine in art historical writing and research, they can also present certain problems. Flam warns the reader of some "constructed statements," particularly interviews with Tériade, which were a "collaborative effort in which the artist used the interviewer not only as someone who wrote down what he said, but also as someone who helped give form to his thoughts and ideas—performing that most accommodating of tasks by asking exactly the right questions and giving each response exactly the right weight and shape for the occasion at hand."[30] However, Matisse outlines his theories on creating art and what art should be, which, in turn, the costumes clearly demonstrate.

Although Matisse was the designer of the scenery and costumes for *Le Chant du Rossignol*, he was only one player in the larger entity of the Ballets Russes. Much like Matisse, the literature on the Ballets Russes and Diaghilev is enormous. Most publications follow a general format by progressing from the early life of Serge

Diaghilev to his collaborative arts journal, *Mir Iskusstva (World of Art)* from the late nineteenth century and continuing with essays on the famed dancer Vaslav Nijinsky and set designer Léon Bakst. Often, varying articles on influences from the Orient and highlights of key productions round out the discussion. When *Le Chant du Rossignol* is included, it is often about the logistics of the production within a wider scope of Diaghilev-commissioned modern artists like Pablo Picasso, André Derain, Georges Braques, Juan Gris, Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Giorgio de Chirico, and, of course, Henri Matisse. In a recent publication from 2009 to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the advent of the Ballets Russes,[31] *The Ballets Russes and the Art of Design,* Sarah Woodcock mentions the difficulty that some scholars face in moving "beyond the famous names of the designers to the ballets in which their work was only a part."[32] Therefore, what is often deemed most intriguing in the Ballets Russes scholarship are the circumstances that brought about these collaborations, rather than the actual art produced.

However, a few noteworthy works emerge in this sea of scholarship in regards to this thesis. An exhibition at the Israel Museum in 1991 and the accompanying forty-page exhibition catalogue, *Matisse at the Ballet: Le Chant du Rossignol*,[33] includes some rarely published photographs and sketches. The essay by V. Barsky—presented first in English and then in Hebrew—imparts existing scholarship on the ballet with connections between a couple of the costumes and Matisse's later works in cut-outs. The most helpful article about Matisse's particular involvement in this ballet was printed in *The Burlington Magazine* in 1997. In "Matisse's Second Visit to London and His Collaboration with the 'Ballets Russes,'"[34] Rémi Labrusse closely follows the progression of the design of the

production via Matisse's letters to his wife Amélie. Not only do these letters illuminate his fluctuating emotional state, but the author's inclusion of his costume, set, and prop sketches provide a more intimate portrait of his evolving thought processes. This thesis is in agreement with many of Labrusse's propositions, namely his declarations that "[t]he costumes as a whole reveal two very different stylistic strands: the first has an anecdotal, orientalising flavor… [and] the second is abstract and formal…"[35] and that they "project[ed] his personal ideas about decoration on a large three-dimensional scale and impos[ed] on stage design the same formal rigour he aimed for in his paintings."[36] However, this thesis will further these hypotheses with in-depth analysis of the formal qualities and content sources of the costumes. Chapter Three elucidates similarities between his textile design and his paintings, drawings, and sculptures, while Chapter Four investigates stylistic and theoretical influences from exotic landscapes, architecture, and decorative arts—particularly textiles—seen and accumulated during his travels and collection visits.

Alexander Schouvaloff elaborately chronicles each ballet as a separate chapter with the designer as the focus in *The Art of Ballets Russes: The Serge Lifar Collection of Theater Designs, Costumes, and Paintings at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut*. In the section on Matisse, not only is the background of his involvement with the ballet provided, but also some of the solutions he arrived at in designing for the stage.[37] Another standout essay, "Design and Choreography: Cross-Influences in the Theatrical Art of the Ballets Russes," appears in *The Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1909–1929*. Nancy Van Norman Baer looks specifically at the relationship between Matisse's costumes and the choreography—which is of ultimate

importance, since footage of the original production does not exist.[38] Given this lack of a visual merge between the design and the dance, it is also extremely helpful that the choreographer,[39] composer,[40] set designer,[41] and nearly all the principal dancers[42] wrote autobiographies that outline in great detail the summation of dance, music, and design for *Le Chant du Rossignol*. These primary sources will be used throughout this thesis to provide the context of social relationships, perceptions of Matisse's approach, and descriptions of the production in motion.

Since the combination of the arts of theater, ballet, literature, fine and decorative arts, and music are realized in *Le Chant du Rossignol*, it is also important that scholarship from these varying viewpoints be considered—something that has never been brought as fully together as in this thesis. In addition to the autobiographies of the major players in the production, this thesis will also utilize research by and discussions with curators, conservators, historians, and archivists from fields including music, dance, theater, fine arts, decorative arts, social history, and world cultures—notably John E. Vollmer, an internationally recognized scholar on Chinese costume within the context of its society. Additionally, an audio copy of the musical composition by Igor Stravinsky[43] is included with this thesis to better evoke the ballet in its entirety, since the visuals, movements, and sounds reflect and reverberate off one another. A look at contemporary criticism will round out the discussion, perception, and effectiveness of *Le Chant du Rossignol*. Not considered a particularly successful ballet, mostly owing to the choreography, its only saving grace is often cited as Matisse's designs (although he did not escape scrutiny from critics either).

The decorative arts approach of this thesis coupled with considerations of how these costumes fit within the context of material culture makes it unique in comparison to this existing scholarship. By considering not just the formal and static attributes of the costumes as they currently exist in archival storage but their original and dynamic integration into a set with props, choreographed movements, orchestral production, and live audiences, Matisse responded to a larger contemporary trend towards creating a total work of art (*Gesamtkunstwerk*) within the hugely popular vogue for Orientalism. These surrounding influences resonated with his theories of what art should be—and this included textiles, which were and remain often hidden from consideration in discussions of great works of art. In comparison to a fine arts perspective that often considers a work of art within the confined parameters of its physical shape and sole producer, this thesis shows how Matisse's designs for the Ballets Russes are exemplary solutions of how decorative and fine art can be integrated into a full expression in conversation within a collaborative group and social context.

In order to fully analyze Matisse's personal vision within the context of the era, the following chapters consider the three main influences on his designs: 1) the ultimate goal of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, 2) Matisse's consistent style derived from textile design as he works across various media, and 3) incorporation of the Orient—both the setting of the ballet and an obsession shared with Matisse and Western culture. First, Chapter Two will explore Matisse's early biography and the impact of the weaving village he grew up in, along with his affinity for music, dance, and theatrical productions. Highlighted in this section will be his early integration of textiles into his paintings and the ways in which they helped achieve his aesthetic goals. This background will "set the stage" for his natural progression into designing for the Ballets Russes. Contextual sources and

autobiographies will provide further information on Diaghilev, the founder of the Ballets Russes, and other important collaborators in the production. Details on the origins, conceptualization, and vision for *Le Chant du Rossignol* will situate Matisse within a larger movement towards the union of the arts.

The next two chapters will analyze specific costumes firsthand along with some of the stage designs. Chapter Three examines the formal aspects of the costumes, including their materials and techniques, to show the correlations with Matisse's creations in "fine" art. The driving aesthetics behind his work includes expressive use of color, capturing movement on canvas and in clay, and his increasing distillation and abstraction of form into flatness of decoration with the assistance of textile design. Chapter Four focuses on the content of the decoration and the possible Oriental sources he invoked. Not only did these styles largely influence the Ballets Russes and the larger context of European Orientalism, but Matisse also instilled his art with themes and designs from his travels to North Africa and visits to museums with Asian and African collections, particularly textiles. Comparisons will be made between traditional Chinese costumes—both its formal structure and its cultural significance—to demonstrate how Matisse fused his research of the arts of China with his overall personal and aesthetic vision; a first in research on this topic so far.

Lastly, the conclusion will synthesize the ways that his costume creations for *Le Chant du Rossignol* prepared him and continued to influence him throughout the remainder of his career. Aspects to be covered include his paintings of odalisques sheathed in abundant textiles in the 1920s; his 1930s *Dance* mural commission for Dr. Albert Barnes's Pennsylvanian residence and subsequent designs for a second Ballets Russes production, *Rouge et Noir* (1939); and finally, his late career cut-outs, silk-screen

and tapestry designs, and commission for the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence, particularly the chasubles. These later works exhibit Matisse's rise in popularity to the status of a "national treasure"[44] and reflect his work completed in 1919–20. Despite the often-negative press at the time of the production, one has to remember that Matisse and his art—like many artists and their work—were at first not accepted and often ridiculed in the press and art world. Some of his now famous works—considered the best of not just his career, but of the entire twentieth century—were initially condemned as "primitive, grotesque, diabolical, barbaric and cannibalistic."[45] Often these preliminary convictions meant, in hindsight, that he was on to something original and revolutionary, which will prove to be the case with these costumes from *Le Chant du Rossignol*. Spurling also notes in her biography, "[M]any key works for all practical purposes had gone missing… [due to] war, revolution and totalitarian dictatorship… [and] whole areas of Matisse's output remained virtually unknown… Matisse estimated as a time lag of fifty years was still in operation."[46] In the case of this thesis, it has taken over ninety years for these costumes to be acknowledged as Matisse's "best spokesman."

Chapter Two

Where Matisse's Art Meets Textiles, Dance, Music, and Theater

> *A great designer is one whose set and costume designs transcend craft, and the craft is complex. He needs an encyclopedic knowledge of art, of architecture, of social history and a practical knowledge of how a set is built, how a costume is made, how materials "behave," how lighting works, how his whole effect will look on stage. A designer needs a knowledge of fashion, a great designer sets it. But he has to rely on other craftsmen—the scene painter, the costumier, all the other technicians—to interpret his designs, and so the compromise begins. The designer-craftsman gives accurate reproduction, imitation without invention. The designer-artist infuses his designs with his own imagination, and adds his own interpretation of the inner meaning of the text or the score to the outward expression, making the set and the costumes symbols for the characters and the scenes. There are many craftsmen-designers, very few designer-artists.*
>
> —Alexander Schouvaloff, *Set and Costume Designs for Ballet and Theater*, 1987

> *Expression, for me, does not reside in passion bursting from a human face or manifested by violent movement. The entire arrangement of my picture is expressive: the place occupied by the figures, the empty spaces around them, the proportions, all of that has its share.*
>
> —Henri Matisse, "Notes of a Painter," 1908

In the summer of 1919, the founder of the Ballets Russes, along with one of his most famed composers, Igor Stravinsky, knocked on the door of Issy-les Moulineaux, Matisse's home outside Paris. The proposition they brought with them encapsulated their host's theories and dreams of what art could and should be: a union of all the arts. In asking Matisse to design the costumes and scenery for the new versions of either *Schéhérazade* or *Le Chant du Rossignol*, Diaghilev not only enlisted a painter, but a man with a lifelong love of textiles, dance, music, and theater. After Stravinsky played both musical scores for Matisse, the designer opted for the latter and embarked on what would prove to be a natural progression in his work.[47] This chapter will explore Matisse's evolving interests in dance, music, theater, and especially textiles to posit that his

commission for the Ballets Russes was paramount to his career as a realization of the intersection of these passions. By providing the surrounding context of the Parisian art world in conjunction with the backdrop of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, this chapter will establish how Matisse's formative years placed him in a perfect position to excel in this commission. This background will also assist in the analysis of his designs and inspirations for the costumes that will proceed in the next two chapters.

Born on New Year's Eve of 1869 in a dilapidated weaver's cottage in Le Cateau-Cambrésis in the northern region of Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Henri Emile Benoît Matisse would absorb these early surroundings in his later work. This town, near the Franco-Flemish border, supplied the French court with the finest linens from the Middle Ages to the French Revolution. Matisse's grandfather and great-grandfather were weavers and, although his father had turned his back on this tradition to open a seed shop, the young Henri remained surrounded by weavers, hat-makers, embroiderers, furriers, tanners, and skin-merchants. Shortly after his birth, the Matisse family moved to the nearby town of Bohain-en-Vermandois, also noted for its illustrious textiles, particularly Jacquard-woven cashmere shawls. These mechanized looms were the beginning of increased industrialization to the region throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century. Many of Matisse's childhood memories include the gray skies of industry,[48] which he later sought to break free from with the brilliant palette of the Fauves.

Despite the somewhat negative associations with pollution that the Bohain textile mills conjured for the artist, their products instilled him with a sense of creative freedom and experimentation (see fig. 2.1 for examples of silk sample books from Bohain-en-Vermandois at the turn of the century). By the 1880s, the town catered to Parisian

department stores and haute couture salons (like Chanel), monopolizing the production of "handwoven velvets, watered and figured silks, merinos, grenadines, featherlight cashmeres and fancy French tweeds (*cheviottes fantaisies*) for winter and, for summer, sheer silk gauzes, diaphanous tulles, voiles and foulades in a fantastic profusion of decorative patterns, weaves and finishes."[49] This profusion of techniques and materials in his hometown provided Matisse with an early understanding of the way different fabrics lay and the potentials of pattern that later emerged in his paintings.[50] Even after journeying to places like the rugged coast of Brittany in the final years of the nineteenth century, Matisse was still enraptured by weavers, who often became some of his earliest models (fig. 2.2). Later, in 1903, during a difficult family scandal, Matisse returned to Bohain where he considered working as a textile colorist.[51]

In 1882, at the age of twelve, Matisse went to a standard secondary school in St-Quentin, a town not far from Bohain. St-Quentin was also famous for textiles, particularly lace. Predominantly used as curtains, these highly detailed pieces appeared alongside the luxurious fabrics from Bohain at the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1900, where both towns received the highest of honors and awards. Unlike the more creative environment of Bohain, Matisse's education in St-Quentin followed strict parameters. His drawing classes relied on a mastery of line and shape by copying antiquated plaster casts in keeping with the rigid academic standards of the École des Beaux-Arts that placed strict guidelines on art—which was deemed as only being painting and sculpture—for exhibition in the Parisian salons for two centuries, which Matisse continually rejected throughout his career. However, the school's primary goal was to train future weavers

and textile designers, which advanced his acquaintance with the particular physical qualities and patterning of fabrics.[52]

Pursuing personal passion apart from his schooling, Matisse created a toy theater at the age of fifteen to reenact the ancient eruption of Mount Vesuvius. By providing a blue backdrop for his theater maquette from wrapping paper complete with characters cut from cartoon strips,[53] Matisse foreshadowed his later work with the Ballets Russes that had a predominant blue hue with staging drafted in cut paper. The artist repeatedly returned to this cutout technique, which later became his signature working method. It also allowed for the flexibility of orchestrating numerous roles on a stage to achieve a cohesive whole. In addition to this theatrical desire, Matisse also learned to play violin as a young boy. Although he often fought with his father over practice and lessons, his passion for music grew as he matured and he often returned to playing in times of stress. Violins and violinists are common presences in his paintings (fig. 2.3) as he sometimes wondered how things would have turned out had he pursued music instead of art.[54]

Another difficulty between father and son was Matisse's chosen vocation as a painter. After studying law in Paris in the late 1880s, Matisse returned to St-Quentin where he worked as a law clerk.[55] While convalescing from appendicitis, he began painting, which eventually pulled him back to Paris in 1891, away from the monotony he suffered in an office environment. Not only did Matisse begin his lifelong career as a painter under the guidance of the Orientalist Symbolist painter Gustave Moreau, but he also commenced a collection near and dear to his heart: his textile collection. With the meager sums of money he made selling copies of masters from the Louvre and his minimal allowance from his father, Matisse haunted the secondhand vendors around the

Notre Dame Cathedral for bits of tapestry, embroidery, and printed fabrics. These pieces not only provided him with the familiarity of the northern textile towns from his boyhood, but also excited his palette as it shifted from the more somber tones of three-dimensional modeling of Dutch still life to a vibrancy and patterned flatness never seen before in the Parisian art world.

Prior to Matisse's bold use of color and flattened spaces in his artwork, Impressionism began this break with natural tones and realistic perspective at the end of the nineteenth century with the introduction of Japanese woodcut prints to Europe. In 1852, under the pressure of American Commodore Matthew Perry, Japan opened its ports after self-imposed isolation. This event ushered in exotic goods that would turn the existing art world upside down by expanding artists' perception and translation of reality into a new vocabulary that shifted from realism to an "impression" of what existed. In addition, the Aesthetics observed in Japanese design the way every object—clothing, furniture, wall hangings, food service, and architecture—in one's environment could be beautified and help achieve a coherent and visually pleasing lifestyle. Following on the heels of the Impressionists, Matisse also took notice of Japanese prints,[56] whose flat surfaces, tilted perspectives, and uncommon colors were not entirely foreign to textile designs he observed throughout his life. However, unlike the Impressionists' pastel palette, he moved beyond these soft hues to an even bolder brilliancy as transmitted by these tactile treasures. The museum for these textiles was his studio, which contained fabrics, carpets, and costumes in all shapes, sizes, origins, techniques, materials, and motifs. Especially on his later travels to Algeria, Morocco, and Tahiti, his souvenirs

continued to be fabrics that colored his world and played equal roles in the story of his paintings.[57]

Preceding the Impressionists and Aestheticists' revolutionary movements away from the inflexibility of the Beaux-Arts tradition, another movement towards the merger of the arts started as early as 1849 with Richard Wagner's essay, "The Art-Work of the Future." Seeking to breakdown the hierarchy of the arts that existed in the western hemisphere even before the Parisian salons with the advent of the Renaissance, Wagner ushered in a more Modernist mindset though his belief that

> The arts of Dance, of Tone, and Poetry… are so wondrous closely [sic] interlaced with one another, of fairest love and inclination, so mutually bound up in each other's life, of body and of spirit: that each of the three partners, unlinked from the united chain and bereft thus of her own life and motion, can only carry on an artificially inbreathed and borrowed life; —not giving forth her sacred ordinances, as in their trinity, but now receiving despotic rules for mechanical movement.[58]

To fully complement these three "sisters," the "plastic arts" of painting, decoration, and design completed this full circle with opera as the ultimate arena for this collaboration, termed *Gesamtkunstwerk* or "total work of art."[59] Several movements by the turn of the century—most notably the Arts & Crafts Movement, Art Nouveau, Jugendstil, Wiener Werkstätte, and Vienna Secession—sought to integrate the fine and applied arts along with theater and dance to challenge its audience to experience the art produced and not merely observe it.

Matisse witnessed these trends through contact with like-minded artists he met via his "lively interest in [the] fashion"[60] of contemporary Paris. His wife Amelié and daughter Marguerite were loyal customers of Germaine Bongard, the sister of the famous couturier Paul Poiret[61] (who later assisted Matisse with his costumes for *Le Chant du Rossingol*[62]). In addition to Madame Bongard's clothing boutique, she also painted and

hosted concerts, poetry readings, and exhibitions of local Modern artists, such as Picasso, Léger, Derain, Modigliani, and Matisse. He would periodically paint Marguerite wearing the costumier's latest designs creating a reciprocal relationship of influence between Bongard and himself. Her designs also prompted the painter to create his own fashionable accessories, most notably an Italian straw hat transformed into an eclectic bonnet trimmed with ostrich feathers and elegantly looped yards of ribbon (fig. 2.4),[63] just months before he accepted the Ballets Russes commission.

Like his sister and their European contemporaries, Poiret also sought to blur the lines between fashion and art, stating in his autobiography, "For I have always loved painters, and felt on an equal footing with them. It seems to me that we practice the same craft, and that they are my fellow workers."[64] Matisse and the eccentric couturier's paths crossed years before their Diaghilev-driven collaboration in 1919 for the ballet. In March 1914, both attended the same fancy dress ball, each donning a fantastic Orient-inspired costume symbolizing their overlapping passions for art, textiles, and distant lands and cultures. Two years later, two of Matisse's paintings hung in Poiret's gallery next to his couture house.[65] Poiret also was not a stranger to theater, especially that of the Ballets Russes. He not only designed theatrical costumes for famed Parisian actresses like Mistinguett and Sarah Bernhardt,[66] but his couture line made the Oriental spectacle associated with productions by Bakst accessible to the French elite.[67]

In his attempts to align the fine and decorative arts, Poiret hired the painter and printmaker Raoul Dufy to design fabrics for his Les Ateliers de Martine Company, which Matisse visited during the teens. Their experimentation with different colorways—a textile design process involving the exchange of colors within the same pattern (see fig.

2.5 for a fabric sample contemporary to *Le Chant du Rossignol* printed in three different color combinations)[68]—resurfaced in some of Matisse's textile-influenced paintings, most notably his *Harmony in Red* from 1908 (fig. 2.6). Originally dominated by green, Matisse changed his mind to orchestrating it as a *Harmony in Blue* before it reached its lasting impact in red. He wrote about this method in "Notes of a Painter":

> If upon a white canvas I set down some sensation of blue, of green, of red, each new stroke diminishes the importance of the preceding ones. Suppose I have to paint an interior: I have before me a cupboard: it gives me a sensation of vivid red, and I put down a red that satisfies me. A relation is established between this red and the white of the canvas. Let me put a green near the red, and make the floor yellow, and again there will be relationships between the green or yellow and the white of the canvas which will satisfy me.[69]

The inspiration for this wallpaper-cum-decorative-scheme was a piece of mid-nineteenth century French block printed fabric (fig. 2.7) that Matisse spotted from a bus and disembarked immediately to purchase. Known more commonly as the *Toile de Jouy,*[70] it was actually a white background with blue motifs. However, it repeatedly materializes in Matisse's paintings in different colorways. This freedom of interchanging colors amidst a static pattern shows that he not only painted textiles into his art, but he also designed like a textile artist, something he learned in his early days in Bohain.[71]

This integration of textiles was not only a familiar exercise reminiscent of his childhood, but also was a device used by one his greatest influences, the Postimpressionist Paul Cézanne.[72] Often highlighting textiles in his paintings, like *Vase of Flowers* from 1900/1903 (fig. 2.8), Cézanne invigorated the flowers on the tablecloth with fast moving and textured brushstrokes to make them appear as lively as the real flowers in the vase. The striped binding on the tablecloth and textile hanging in the background both engage and direct the eye around the work of art. Similarly, in Matisse's

painting completed two decades later, *Still Life with Apples on a Pink Tablecloth* (fig. 2.9), the textiles consume the composition in a lively display that thrusts the apples forward in defiance of gravity—in flattened Japanese woodblock style. This questions what is more important to the painting: the decorative pattern of the pink tablecloth with the vital blue and gold of the wallpaper or the still life of the pitcher and apples? Returning to the introductory quote of this chapter, Matisse acknowledged, "The entire arrangement of my picture is expressive: the place occupied by the figures, the empty spaces around them, the proportions, all of that has its share."[73] This statement illuminates his inclusion of all the arts in his paintings in Aesthetic fashion by the way he staged his works. For Matisse, the wallpaper is just as important as the apple; the costume as pertinent to the feeling of the piece as the model wearing it. They are the characters within his toy theater. According to Hilary Spurling, the integration of textiles into his paintings was his solution to saving him from the monotony of the Beaux-Arts system—that so many artists wished to be free from—by introducing a contentious rebel into his compositions and thus, ultimately upended traditions of three-dimensional space.[74]

These "tricks" that Matisse employed spoke to his first and most ardent supporter and collector, the Russian textile merchant, Sergei Shchukin. Not only did he buy many of Matisse's largely controversial paintings from 1906–14, but he also commissioned him, placing infinite trust in his style, talent, and execution. (Incidentally, Shchukin had expected a *Harmony in Blue* but completely understood the painter's urge to refashion the color scheme to red.[75]) This early bond between the French painter and Russian textile guru came not only from their complementary avant-garde personalities, but also from a shared affinity for the decorative qualities of textiles (see fig. 2.10 for a fabric

sample from I. V. Shchukin & Sons). Probably the most famous of Shchukin's commissions, the two decorative panels *Dance* (fig. 2.11) and *Music* (fig. 2.12), were executed in 1909–10 specifically for his palace in Moscow. The highly intense and explosive colors in flat stylized nude forms were too radical for the still-transitioning Parisian art world and Shchukin almost rejected them as well. Ultimately, he put aside his fears of their "primitive potency"[76] and recognized their importance as an initiation of a new style and similarity to the bold, flat tones of his own company (compare with fig. 2.10). After their installation in Moscow, Shchukin even defended them to his friends, including Alexandre Benois, a prominent player in the future Ballets Russes.[77]

As one of his first and most important commissions, this painted duet represents Matisse's other two loves in the arts. Spurling suggests that the violin player in *Music* acted as a pseudo-self portrait for Matisse, representing his eternal affinity for the instrument.[78] Musical metaphors also infiltrated his theories on art construction where

> each note is a part of the whole, so I wished each color to have a contributory value. A picture is the co-ordination of controlled rhythms, and it is thus that one can change a surface which appears red-green-blue-black for one which appears white-blue-red-green; it is the same picture, the same feeling presented differently, but the rhythms are changed.[79]

(Written in 1935, this statement could also apply to his experimentations in *Harmony in Red* from twenty-five years earlier.[80]) In these ways, his knowledge of textile design and integration of musical composition and choreographic movement assisted him in achieving a harmony in *Music* and *Dance* of distilled figures produced in three flat colors of repeated pattern. The members of the first group are scattered meditatively throughout the vibrant ground, while the latter evokes a sense of movement. Matisse described his firsthand influence for *Dance* forty years after its completion and eventual recognition:

> I like dance very much. Dance is an extraordinary thing: life and rhythm. It's easy for me to live with dance. When I had to compose a dance for Moscow, I had just been to the Moulin de la Galette on Sunday afternoon. And I watched the dancing. I especially watched the farandole. Often, in the middle or at the end of a session there was a farandole. This farandole was very gay. The dancers hold each other by the hand, they run across the room, and they wind around the people who are milling about . . . And all that to a bouncing tune. An atmosphere I knew very well. When I had a composition to do, I returned to the Moulin de la Galette to see the farandole again. Back at home I composed my dance on a canvas of four meters, singing the same tune I had heard at the Moulin de la Galette, so that the entire composition and all the dancers are in harmony and dance to the same rhythm. … I saw more in the dance: expressive movements, rhythmic movements, music that I like. This dance was in me, I didn't need to warm myself up: I proceeded with elements that were already alive.[81]

Matisse joined the canvases' themes by swaying and singing as he painted, uniting these three art forms of dance, music, and visual art into two-dimensional space. As stated in the first paragraph of this chapter, Matisse selected *Le Chant du Rossignol* after hearing the musical score. Perhaps he envisioned the ways the music and dance would interact with the costumes and scenery having had these early experiences.

Around the same time as this commission for Shchukin, the Ballets Russes debuted in Paris in 1909, which held Matisse in awe.[82] Its dramatic costuming and scenery transported audiences to faraway lands and, for Matisse, reflected his concurrent experiments with the human form and its fabricated environment. With more funds owing to his increased notoriety and patronage during this time, he was able to consistently hire models for his stage settings. These women provided yet another surface for textiles to create pattern and shape through color. Donning costumes from different cultures, Matisse's interest in the "orient"[83] became even more recognizable. Bringing back shawls from his trip to Spain in 1911, he commenced on costuming his models in his studio (fig. 2.13). This juxtaposition of flesh against patterned fabric not only evoked foreign lands, but also began his lifelong interest and struggle between realistic

depictions and decorative surfaces.[84] In *Oriental Rugs* (fig. 2.14), the textile on the far right becomes the model with its animated draping as it lounges atop other exotic carpets. As Rosamond Bernier, a later friend of Matisse, reminiscences, "The painting, not the person, made the vibration."[85]

While Matisse struggled through his initial years as an artist starving for new expressions alongside his varied artist friends in France, Serge Diaghilev too sought communion with creative peers in Russia. Born just over two years after Matisse, he too traveled to a large city, St. Petersburg, with intentions of studying law in 1890, only to be pulled away by the "world of art" at the age of 18.[86] After failed attempts as a musician, he was able to cultivate his love of art through three different means: painting, collecting, and writing. Soon, his circle of friends included the painters Konstantin Somov and Alexandre Benois, the musician Walter Nouvel, and an art student named Lev Rosenberg, later to be known as Léon Bakst. Together they merged their love of music, literature, culture, and art into the journal *Mir Iskusstva (World of Art)* in the final year of the nineteenth century (fig. 2.15). Through its essays and illustrations (including a reproduction of one of Matisse's paintings that he borrowed from Shchukin in 1904[87]), the group not only brought the vibrant art of Europe to Russia, but it also found a respected place for Russia in the art world. Vladimir Polunin, the scene-painter of the Ballets Russes (including the production of *Le Chant du Rossignol*), remembered the impact of *Mir Iskusstva* on Russian society:

> [I]n the course of six years, [*Mir Iskusstva*] gave a new direction to the public taste, bringing new life to Russian art. . . . This magazine had for us Russians another important meaning: it led, for the first time, to our closer acquaintance with the artistic achievements of Europe about which we had desultory notions, often of a negative character. And this bilateral work of his [Diaghilev's] soon

> placed him in the first rank of cultured workers for the advancement of Russian art.[88]

In addition to the articles and artwork, the ensemble that produced *Mir Iskusstva* expanded to present concerts and art exhibitions, furthering the reciprocal love affair between Russia and Europe. Diaghilev's circle of influence also increased to include Leo Tolstoy, Claude Debussy, Igor Stravinsky, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Aubrey Beardsley, and Oscar Wilde in the early years of the twentieth century.[89]

After the dissolution of the magazine in 1905, Diaghilev became a frequent presence in Paris, staging concerts and operas and premiering a collection of Russian art at the Salon d'Automne of 1906.[90] In selecting artwork, he believed it should not serve political propaganda purposes but rather, should reflect an artist's natural expression and evoke a "higher reality beyond the world of tawdry appearances."[91] However, his introduction of ballet to the French public would have the most lasting impact. At this time, ballet was not the revered form of dance as it is seen today. Rather, in Russia, it conjured allusions of drawn-out plots with inaccurate historical costumes and flimsy sets. In both Russia and France, ballet was often seen as a voyeuristic perversion of older men. In spite of this, a young choreographer from Russia, Michel Fokine, caught the eye of Diaghilev with his experimentations that combined nineteenth-century ballet and images from paintings. This vision of what ballet could be spurred Benois, Nouvel, and Diaghilev, along with Fokine, to forge forward in uniting the arts through the venue of the theater,[92] which was in tune with many concepts of the Modernist movement spurred on by the pioneering efforts of Wagner.

In 1909, a team including composers, ballet patrons, dancers, and critics met in Diaghilev's apartment in St. Petersburg to discuss their plans for the upcoming Parisian theater season. Although seeking to resurrect a dance form with a long history, the group desired to create a completely new and inventive interpretation of ballet. Instead of uninspired interludes between operatic performances, the ballet became the main attraction. Ultimately their productions resulted in outstanding ovations in Paris and Diaghilev decided he would create his own ballet company in 1911, which showcased the dancer Vaslav Nijinsky. With this premise of innovation, painters—instead of traditionally trained set and costume designers—became the artists commissioned to create the scheme of each production, where the music and dancers evoked the same emotion as that of the scenery and costumes.[93]

In the first few seasons of the Ballets Russes, Diaghilev selected mostly Russian artists. Interestingly, the designers Bakst, Natalya Gontcharova, and Mikhail Larionov were deeply influenced by the explosive colors initiated by Matisse as the leader of Postimpressionist Fauvism from 1904–08.[94] In May of 1914, Matisse attended the premiere of *Le Coq d'Or (The Golden Cockerel)*, which featured brightly painted designs by Gontcharova (fig. 2.16) whom he had met in 1911 at Shchukin's house in Moscow, where *Harmony in Red* was prominently displayed. Matisse walked away from this production observing that her backdrop in red was a direct descendent of his own painting.[95] Not only was the dominant hue red but the stylized florals that swirled in flattened patterns reflected his own decorative scheme that brought textiles to life and into the realm of fine art.

Gontcharova and Larionov's acquaintance with Matisse and his contemporaries provided a bridge between the Ballets Russes's design origins from St. Petersburg to the European avant-garde modern art scene. Always seeking new talent and dynamic ways to radicalize theater, Diaghilev looked outside his native country in 1917 by engaging the Spanish-born artist Pablo Picasso to design *Parade*. Interestingly, this year coincided with the Russian revolution, which cemented Diaghilev's place of work and inspiration in Europe apart from the melee of the formation of the Soviet Union. This led to further collaborations between contemporary artists living in Paris and his increasing directory of composers and choreographers, which remained mostly Russian.[96] In these ways, the Ballets Russes not only fused the arts, but also created a union of cultures and nations.

Although decades earlier Wagner proposed opera as the venue, Diaghilev believed ballet was a more perfect setting for the union of the arts. In one of his rare public statements, Diaghilev claimed an initial debt to Wagner with further self-acknowledgment:

> In our modern ballet, the union of the line and rhythm of the dancer's body, of his gestures and facial expressions, and the music, is intended to be as intimate as the union of text and music dreamed of, if not always achieved, by Richard Wagner. In fact, I sometimes think that we have at our command a more perfect medium for the arts of the theatre than any composer of opera, however gifted, or fortunate in his libretto, can find. With the elimination of speech, with the emphasis on the factor of design, which must remain an inherent principle of the most fantastical ballet, in place of the clumsy literalisms which threaten the composer of music-drama, we have an opportunity for combining music and other arts more perfectly, in all probability, than he can ever combine them. The poignant musical expression of the modern composer, accompanying symbolical interpretation by the dancers, can express moods as well as represent events with unsurpassable intensity, dispensing with everything that is rite and commonplace in opera. The composer is freer to express himself. The word, which is anti-lyrical, is no longer, at times, his deadliest enemy, as at other times it may prove to be his inspiring angel. Then the introduction of color as a dramatic art, as an element in itself can convey the most potent suggestion, and stir the imagination, by means of the eye,

> full as much as music by means of the ear—all this, to me, represents the most significant of recent developments in the theater.[97]

Interestingly, *Le Chant du Rossignol* was first conceived as a three-act opera under the shortened title, *Le Rossignol*. Stravinsky began composing this musical score in 1908, and by 1911, Diaghilev selected Benois to be the designer of the production. Premiering at the Paris Opéra in 1914, there was only one repeat performance before being staged a mere four times in London. Although largely unsuccessful, Benois described his scenery fondly in his autobiography (fig. 2.17).[98] His meticulously rendered Chinese-infused design will be discussed in Chapter Four in comparison to Matisse's interpretation of this oriental-themed story.

In these early years of the Ballets Russes, Diaghilev began leaning more and more towards ballet compositions instead of operas, feeling that either words or dance should be incorporated into the theater, but not both.[99] According to Stravinsky, Diaghilev suggested that he refashion the score into a ballet because the design would then have to be more expressive and cohesive with the song and dance to be the "voice" of the story through visuals instead of words. The composer decided to compress his three acts into one "symphonic poem for the orchestra"[100] (see app. B for the adaptations Stravinsky made to the story to become a one-act ballet).[101] After this visit with Stravinsky in 1916, the ever-energetic impresario visited Fortunato Depero, an Italian Futurist painter, to ask him to be the designer of this new vision of Andersen's tale. Markedly different in style from Benois's version, Depero's designs were never seen on the Ballets Russes stage. Ultimately, the intricate design of the scenery would have been too difficult to assemble and breakdown for the touring season (fig. 2.18).[102] However, both of these early

manifestations of the Ballets Russes adaptation of "The Nightingale" played a role in Matisse's final designs and will be discussed further in the following chapters.

Matisse's biography up to the point where Diaghilev and Stravinsky knock on his home/studio door positioned him in a place where his art naturally synthesized textiles, dance, music, and theater. He already had a knowledge and passion for the collaborations he saw on the stage of the Ballets Russes and was acquainted with many of the participants and its founder. Nonetheless, there were still several other temptations that *Le Chant du Rossignol* offered him. Throughout Matisse's career—past, present, and future—he longed for a large-scale decorative space to create freely in.[103] In fact, as Labrusse notes, he wrote to his wife on October 17, 1919 that he hoped to compose the ballet's décor "'like one of my paintings.'"[104] Additionally, he was familiar and friendly with the choreographer, Léonide Massine, whom Diaghilev had selected to orchestrate the movements.[105] These collaborations between artists (see fig. 2.19 for a photograph of many of the members behind the production of *Le Chant du Rossingol*) also summoned fond associations of times spent in Paris working with his painter friends. He dearly missed their enlightening conversations as he worked in isolation at the end of the 1910s at Issy-Les-Moulineaux. Also, competition for recognition in the art world alongside fellow artists like Picasso and Derain—who each designed supremely successful Ballets Russes productions that furthered their fame: one a "crazy Cubistic visual wise-crack" and the other full of "gaiety and throwaway wit,"[106] respectively—may have spurred Matisse to also share in their accomplishments.[107]

Most appealing would have been the opportunity to translate his two-dimensional painted textile designs into actual fabrics and forms. Virginia Gardner Troy, author of

The Modernist Textile: Europe and America, 1890–1940, notes that the particular collaboration between textiles and painters was the most logical since both mediums were two-dimensional.[108] However, Matisse was provided with a more experimental chance at clothing three-dimensional bodies as they danced through space. Given these exciting prospects, Matisse signed his first contract with Diaghilev on September 13, 1919, which outlined that the designs would be made in Paris and then sent to London for fabrication. However, owing to the artist's meticulous personality and the enormity of the commission, Matisse ended up going to London on two occasions in the fall to execute the designs and oversee their creation. Coincidentally, some of Matisse's paintings were being exhibited at the Leicester Gallery, which was across the street from the Empire Theater, the home base of the Ballets Russes that season. Although Matisse worked diligently on the ballet, he also spent time at the gallery to let off steam because Diaghilev had a reputation for being domineering. Matisse also visited local museums, especially the Victoria & Albert Museum, using the collection as reference material.[109]

According to one of the daily letters Matisse wrote to his wife, he started a model for the stage design on Tuesday, October 14, 1919, learned from his childhood recreated staging of the eruption of Mont Vesuvius, although undoubtedly more sophisticated. The following week, he worked out color inconsistencies once it began its large-scale translation to the stage. He worked up to sixteen and a half hours a day sketching the costumes as a draughtsman would by writing in the color notations.[110] Before returning to Paris in the first week of November, Diaghilev and Matisse signed a second contract stipulating that he come back to London in order to paint the curtain for the stage. On November 13, 1919, he returned to London to attend the opening night of *Parade*, which

although a success in the press, Matisse found Picasso's designs to not be "very honest."[111] Shortly thereafter, he drew the stage curtain on graph paper to ease its enlargement to the theater (fig. 2.20). By the end of November, Matisse's work in London was complete. At the end of January 1920, he traveled from his winter studio in Nice to Poiret's atelier to oversee and execute some of the costumes for the final production.[112]

This last collaboration between couturier and painter will be further discussed in Chapters Three and Four as it reveals his working process and his translation of Chinese motifs. However, it is important to remember that Matisse did not sew these costumes, nor would he have had the necessary skills. Although he designed them with his penchant for textiles, perhaps painted some of them,[113] and largely oversaw their creation as stipulated in his contract, the fabricator of these costumes often goes unnoticed. Marie Muelle not only constructed these costumes, but also was considered the "top theatrical costumier of the time"[114] and had started her career with the Ballets Russes by working with Bakst. Unfortunately, she is often omitted or barely represented in the literature (normally as a footnote), but it appears as though Matisse "thoroughly enjoyed the process"[115] of having her expertise to convert his designs into the final costumes for *Le Chant du Rossingol*.[116]

Although this commission largely appealed to Matisse at the time and was a natural progression for his art, he also struggled with various aspects of working with the Ballets Russes. First and foremost was his relationship with Diaghilev, whom many found to be stubborn and unrelenting in his quest for precision. Before Matisse came to London, frustration had already set in for the artist in regards to Diaghilev, as he was

unreachable to verify plans. Once he arrived, Matisse began work with a man very much like himself: completely and fervently consumed with the perfection of his art. Of course, this meant two things, both enormous potential for a creative collaboration and the danger of sparking impassioned debates. While in London, Matisse became increasingly discouraged, feeling he was loosing precious time for his own work by continually being roped in by an obstinate overseer. A fiery exchange erupted when Diaghilev asked Matisse to lengthen his stay in order to paint a drop curtain. Ultimately, Matisse acquiesced to creating a sketch, but believed he got the final word by going with a more subdued décor than the "Russian" desired.[117] Although spitefully created, the final plans for the curtain still demonstrate Matisse's artistic sensibilities (to be discussed in Chapter Three), showing that his difficulties were not in working across the arts, but rather working with certain artists.

In addition to this volatile relationship, Matisse's stays in London may have been short but his days were filled with more hours working than resting and/or sightseeing. His letters to Amélie often exude feelings of inadequacy, exhaustion, and anxiety over his designs, fearing they would not reach the acclaim of Picasso or Derain's productions.[118] However, Matisse was perpetually plagued with feelings of self-doubt just when he was on the brink of something grand and innovative. Additional personal factors affected his mood, which may have added to his sometimes-sour memories of working with the Ballets Russes. After leaving London for the last time in December, he returned to his haven in Nice only to find that his dear friend and fellow painter, Auguste Renoir had passed away. In addition to this loss, he learned that Marguerite's frail condition had worsened owing to complications from an emergency tracheotomy performed on her

when she was a small child. Also in this year following World War I, many of his friends remained imprisoned or had grown debilitated by depression and/or war-inflicted injuries. Some of his most ardent collectors sold their paintings by Matisse to regain financial control after the devastation of war on home soil, while others of his works of art had gone missing or been confiscated. After the Revolution of 1917 in Russia, Lenin took possession of Shchukin's home and belongings.[119] Sadly, Matisse's mother passed away after a short illness a week before the premiere of *Le Chant du Rossignol.* Despite all these tragedies from the past year, Matisse remained loyal to his designs by going to the Théâtre National de l'Opéra in Paris to oversee the finishing touches on his costumes for their premiere on February 2, 1920 (see fig. 2.21 for the ballet's advertisement).[120]

Throughout his struggles in 1919–20, Matisse maintained, "[T]he road lay uphill, that he was toiling like a carthouse, that his labours exhausted him and made him despair. But he had no doubt that he was on to something."[121] And "on to something" he was because the costumes by Matisse and Muelle were the largest hit of the production, which was overwhelmingly panned by the critics and audiences.[122] Jean-Louis Vaudoyer, a critic from *La Gaulois*, wrote, "'As for *Le Chant du Rossignol*, inspired by one of the most sensitive and human of Andersen's tales, it has been so elliptically reduced by M. Stravinsky that one should no longer try to find any meaning in it but be satisfied with the cheerful and sharp feast of colors offered to our eyes by M. Matisse's setting and costumes.'"[123] Serge Grigoriev, the dancer who played the Chinese Emperor, reminisced, "[T]he ballet had an exquisite décor in white and turquoise by Henri Matisse, and choreography of a pleasing and interesting variety."[124] A year after the performance, Diaghilev reflected in *The Observer* that "'a new principle has been introduced, that of

giving to the decorative artist the direction of the plastic movement, and having a dancer simply give it choreographic form. Both the setting and the music of this ballet [*Le Chant du Rossignol*] are of the highest modernity…'"[125] Despite these words of praise for both choreography and design, Diaghilev largely blamed Massine for the poor showing. He, along with other contemporary viewers, felt the dance steps did not match the rhythm of the music, resulting in a performance that appeared ill rehearsed.[126] Some condemnation arose from the musical score, with the most striking illustration of a critic's distaste appearing in an editorial cartoon, where a caricature of Stravinsky hurled a harmony book at a nightingale.[127]

However, not everyone felt that Matisse's décor "saved" the performance. His fine-tuned lines appeared "too sketchy" to some critics who expected the usual elaborate splendor in keeping with the Bakst tradition.[128] Others found Matisse's adaptation of the Chinese setting to be too similar to cheap *chinoiserie* found in the street stalls and department stores of Paris.[129] Most viewers, however, felt the overtly fantastical storyline of a man saved from the grip of Death by the sweet song of a nightingale to be too unfathomable and ill-timed so near to the end of a massive war.[130]

Although *Le Chant du Rossignol* contained some elements of social commentary with subtle allusions to anti-industrialism by having a Real Nightingale as the hero over a mechanical version, the ultimate goal of the production was to create a visual and aural spectacle for the theater-going crowd. *Le Chant du Rossingol* was too far removed from post-war European experience, and even Matisse's designs could not save the performance. His daughter Marguerite realized this stating in a letter to him that the audience would have been more desirous of a story that was "'on level altogether more

serious, with more depth and nobility.'"[131] However, a concurrent reconsideration of the opportunities in theater offered a much-needed dialogue about a society torn asunder by war and steadily advancing industrialization.

In 1919, just a few months before Matisse signed a contract with the Ballets Russes to design his first major total work of art, Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus, declared in Wagnerian fashion: "'Today the arts exist in isolation from which they can be rescued only through the conscious, cooperative effort of all craftsmen.'"[132] This signaled a movement in the union of the arts into its ideal media: the theater, which occurred in other ventures outside the Ballets Russes. In contrast to the one extreme of decadent historicism and exoticism in scenery and décor of Diaghilev's productions was the innovative work of Oskar Schlemmer's *Triadic Ballet* (fig. 2.22) along with some previous Ballets Russes's designers like Fernand Léger, who experimented with performance film in his famed *Ballet mécanique* (fig. 2.23) and Fortunato Depero—the original designer for *Le Chant du Rossignol*—who similarly found inspiration in the machine age with his *Mechanisches Ballett.* Integrating technology and dancers who either mimicked machinery or were mechanical entities, these members of a large entity of Modern theater referenced contemporary times by using art to question how society would cope with the advancement of the machine age and the uncertainty of life lived in tandem with war.[133] To a certain extent Matisse's display of human bodies in geometrically flattened forms presented a version of mechanized humanity; however, it was a minor abstraction compared to the extreme deviations from human anatomy as seen in Schlemmer's ballet (fig. 2.22). "Construction" rather than "design" became the objective of Modernist productions, whereas Matisse adhered to the latter.

Another goal of theater from the Modern era included dissolving the hierarchy of the theater: both on and off stage. A trend for androgynous costume design along with dissolution of the "star performer" posited an example of an egalitarian society. Designers also moved from backstage to spotlight, thus increasing the union of the arts,[134] whereas Matisse remained behind the stage curtain. Additionally, Modernist theater sought to be accessible to all audiences, not just the elite. In particular, Schlemmer believed that the spectators were of equal importance to the performance, and in 1926, Gropius constructed the Total Theater, which was void of opera boxes and aisles, creating a class-less audience.[135] In addition, Modern theater engaged the audience by propelling them to reconsider the familiar, whereas the fantastical backdrop of the Ballets Russes presented entertainment and delight to a bourgeois public, who remained mostly passive in their seats.[136]

Even with the negative press surrounding *Le Chant du Rossignol* and Matisse's continual rejections of further offers to design for the Ballets Russes,[137] Diaghilev surged ahead to reincarnate this ballet another time in 1925. Hiring a new choreographer, George Balanchine, to hopefully rectify the errors from five years previous, Diaghilev kept both Matisse's designs and Stravinsky's score for this production—much to the artist's and composer's skepticism of success.[138] Committed to his designs and reputation as an artist, Matisse begrudgingly assisted with the revival by creating a new costume for the Real Nightingale, this time played by the preteen-ballerina-soon-to-be-star, Alicia Markova.[139] True to his exceptional predilection for success, Diaghilev gave new breath to a previously suffocated performance with greater applause from critics.[140]

When viewing these costumes in the next two chapters, there are several things to keep in mind from this chapter. First, textiles initially influenced Matisse before he turned to painting and persisted throughout his artistic decisions no matter what media the conception revealed itself in. Second, he and the Ballet Russes were part of a larger movement that sought to integrate all media—including theater, dance, and music, in addition to the visual and applied arts—into a *Gesamtkunstwerk.* Matisse also was in tune with the Impressionists and Aestheticists who radicalized preconceived notions of depicting and displaying the world around them, the latter largely influenced by Japanese art. And third, these costumes exist outside their original social and physical context, orphaned from their bodies, music, movement, stage lighting, set design, and audience. In describing the circumstances of how and why Matisse obtained this commission, this chapter demonstrates that the artist was poised to take on the challenge of creating costumes that would resound with Stravinsky's composition, enable the movements of each dancer as conceived by Massine, present themselves as translatable to becoming wearable costumes in the expert hands of Marie Muelle, adapt to the direction of Diaghilev, and remember the setting and narrative scheme that Hans Christian Andersen first put into word.

This total work of art can never be realized the way it was in 1920 because only the music and some of the costumes and sketches survive and in the context of museums and not stage performances. However, these records of *Le Chant du Rossigno*l stand to surpass the harsh criticism they received ninety years ago. As Matisse stated in a radio interview from 1942, "[T]he advantage that painting has over the theater is that future generations may repair the injustice of the generation in which the painting first appeared,

while in the theater, if a play does not have immediate success it is buried for a very long time."[141] Especially in the case of the costumes, they embody Matisse's proficiency in uniting his early experiences and inherent love of all the arts while simultaneously imbuing the designs with his own aesthetic, which is the subject of the next chapter. In these ways, and in the words of Schouvaloff in the opening quote to this chapter, Matisse became a true "designer-artist."[142]

Chapter Three

Expression through Color, Movement in a Line, and Abstraction as Decoration

> *For Matisse this large task was a test of his fundamental aesthetic principles based on the notion of decoration. Was he capable of producing a multifaceted ensemble—scenery, costumes, accessories—which would retain the pictorial intensity of great art? Was teamwork compatible with the realization of a coherent and artistically honest piece of work? Could the overall quality of an image, based on an equilibrium between colored surfaces, be achieved when the painted surfaces were so vast, the overall effect complicated by interaction with moving costumes?*
>
> —Rémi Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 1997

> *I first worked as an impressionist, directly from nature; I later sought concentration and more intense expression both in line and color, and then, of course, I had to sacrifice other values to a certain degree, corporeality and spatial depth, the richness of detail. Now I want to combine it all and I believe I will be able to, in time.*
>
> —Henri Matisse from an interview with Ragnar Hoppe, 1919

Matisse realized his desire to "combine it all" shortly after these words were uttered in 1919 with his commission for the Ballets Russes.[143] Although faced with the challenges addressed by Labrusse in the quote above,[144] Matisse synthesized his working processes, personal experiences, and aesthetic into a coherent vision for the stage. Not only were the three main genres in painting of still life, landscape, and portraiture combined in his respective designs of stage props, scenery, and costumes, but also his ideas on the role of expressive color, gestured line, rhythmic pattern, and spatial illusion harmonized in *Le Chant du Rossignol*. This chapter will explore how Matisse's creations in painting, drawing, and clay—and even the initiation of his cut-out technique—translated into a created environment where his art would move through space in the form of costumes and stage design that was assisted by his early observance of textile techniques in his

childhood weaving village leading up to his adulthood fabric and costume collection that served as the invigorating force in his paintings. By comparing the formal qualities and themes of his work in a variety of media with his creations for *Le Chant du Rossignol*, this chapter will demonstrate how these costume designs represent his aesthetic goals in their entirety.

Closing the previous chapter was a look at the ill reception of this ballet that romanticized Andersen's Chinese Emperor near death so soon after the tragedy of World War I. Despite this postwar mourning, Matisse continually championed an art that was "devoid of troubling or depressing subject matter, an art that could be for every mental worker, for the businessman as well as the man of letters, for example, a soothing, calming influence on the mind, something like a good armchair that provides relaxation from fatigue."[145] Spurling suggests that his therapeutic vision of art sought to placate his continual fears about the acceptance and adequacy of his work.[146] Paintings of windows often acted as metaphoric escapes from negative thoughts and circumstances (fig. 3.1), stemming from his early musings out the window of his law clerk's office.[147] This theme continued throughout his career as he watched life from the sanctity of his studio apart from war, his daughter's illness, his wife's growing depression, and ridicule from the press. Just as these visions of what life and art could attain propelled the artist forward, Matisse provided his audience with a revelation of beauty and enchantment framed by the stage curtains of the Ballets Russes.

The main component Matisse wished to convey to the viewer of all his work, including the designs for *Le Chant du Rossignol*, was his personal expression. He achieved this largely through color. Approaching his palette "without a preconceived

plan," Matisse explained, "My choice of colors does not rest on any scientific theory; it is based on observation, on feeling, on the experience of my sensibility."[148] As noted in Chapter Two, this "experience of sensibility" led Matisse to refashion the color scheme of *Harmony in Red* (fig. 2.6) three times before it achieved the ultimate emotive quality as transmitted by its scarlet tone. This instinctive impulse served Matisse well in the realm of the ballet commission by selecting colors he felt evoked the mood of each scene. Michel Fokine, the first choreographer and one of the originators of the Ballets Russes, pointed out, "'It [ballet music] accepts of every kind provided only that it is good and expressive. It does not demand of the scenic artist that he should array the ballerinas in short skirts and pink slippers. It does not impose any specific "ballet" conditions on the composer or the decorative artist, but gives complete liberty to their creative powers.'"[149] Adapted from an opera, *Le Chant du Rossingol* contained no words; necessitating the visuals to speak even louder for the dancers.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the vibrancy of the warp and weft of the Bohain weavers first introduced the young Matisse to the possibilities of working in brilliant hues. Another early impression in regards to color was his mother who managed the family store's house paints and recommended swatches to the customers. She supplied Matisse with his first paint set and he later reflected on her effective use of color schemes on her painted porcelains. This not only influenced him to later paint ceramics (fig. 3.2),[150] but also became another step on his perpetual quest towards the integration of a variety of media into his art, which was a common endeavor among many artists of this period as illustrated in Chapter Two. Throughout his career, Matisse's palette reflected his emotional state and surrounding circumstances by brightening with the exuberance

from early experiments along the Mediterranean during the Fauve years and sobering throughout times of war and family hardship. Similarly, the colors of *Le Chant du Rossignol* reflected not only flashes of bright Fauvist oranges and yellows as seen most vividly in the *Costume for a Chamberlain* and *Mandarin* (figs. 3.3 and 3.4, respectively), but also in the subdued postwar tones of the *Costumes for the Ladies of the Court* (see figs. 3.5 and 3.6 for the pastel colors in both the painted and embroidered versions of this role). These lightened tones not only echo a greater solemnity after the war, but also evoke his trips to sun-drenched Morocco, which will be examined in the next chapter.

Although color often flooded his work, Matisse was careful in its execution. By analyzing previous performances of the Ballets Russes, he observed past designers' use of color to decide how he would proceed with the chromatic scheme of *Le Chant du Rossignol*. Most notable are his reflections on the productions by Bakst:

> Color is never a question of quantity, but of choice. At the beginning, the Russian Ballet, particularly *Schéhérazade* by Bakst, overflowed with color. Profusion without moderation. One might have said that it [was not] the result of any organization . . . . An avalanche of color has no force. Color attains its full expression only when it is organized, when it corresponds to the emotional intensity of the artist.[151]

A similar "avalanche of color" can be seen in Benois's solution to the operatic version of Andersen's story from five years earlier (fig. 2.17). By reviewing Figure 1.2 from the introduction to this thesis, one can note that Matisse reduced the composition of the costumes to nine essential colors: white, black, turquoise, gold, pale green, pink, dark blue, bright orange, and red. Interestingly, most of his preliminary sketches for the garments include written and not applied color notations (figs. 3.7–3.11), exhibiting Matisse's careful consideration of the palette and also recognition of the fact that fabric colors may be outside the control he usually exerted to formulate mixed paints. However,

he was able to match the textiles' hues with applied brushstrokes, as will be discussed later.

In a letter to his wife in October 1919 while he was in London, Matisse wrote about the color scheme of the stage décor, "The ensemble is turquoise blue with four columns of which the bases are white, white ceiling, and a black rug."[152] These colors in particular held a lasting presence in Matisse's life and working theory. Blue remained near and dear to the artist's heart from its early influence in the calming tones of Cézanne's paintings to the sea outside his studio window in Nice.[153] The "black rug" ended up becoming a deep blue after a lighting test for the scenery revealed a more reddish hue emanating from the original black. Matisse wanted this red to scream from the lining of the black-and-gold *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (figs. 3.12 and 3.13).[154] In seeking to complement this blue, Matisse chose pink as recorded by Michel Georges-Michel, friend and chronicler of the artists from this period, during a visit to his studio in London: "[A] huge fire broke out in a neighboring loft and lit up the whole studio, Matisse, who was not alarmed by the sparks flying in our direction, suddenly exclaimed: 'Look how the pink reflections turn to orange against my blue. That's a good idea: I'm going to make the costumes pink.'"[155] In the final designs, this pink can be glimpsed as a flicker of brilliant color from the lining of both versions of the *Costume for a Lady of the Court* (figs. 3.14 and 3.15), serving as a beautiful contrast to their exterior greens.

The second most important color to the production design was white. Although it posed several problems in its translation from sketch to stage with areas of intense shadows, Matisse was enamored with the subtle yet dramatic tonalities white brought to his designs.[156] Stravinsky recalled a day spent at the Louvre with Matisse, "He was not a

rousing conversationalist, but he stopped in front of a Rembrandt and started to talk excitedly about it. At one point he took a white handkerchief from his pocket: 'Which is white, this handkerchief or the white of the picture? Even the absence of color does not exist, but only "white" or each and every white.'"[157] The predominance of white in the scenery backdrop also harkened to Andersen's original description of the palace as being "made entirely of porcelain, very costly, but so delicate and brittle that one had to take care how one touched it. In the garden were to be seen the most wonderful flowers."[158] Matisse "touched" the purity of the white scenery with delicate outlines of black to denote columns (fig. 3.16) and used the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted* (fig. 3.5) and *Costume for a Mandarin* (fig. 3.4) to evoke a garden with their hand-painted floral motifs. In another discussion with Georges-Michel, Matisse even stated in accordance with Andersen's description of the palace,

> 'I'm planning to have a curtain as white as *porcelain*… For it's to be a Chinese curtain, after all, isn't it? There will be as few lines as possible. As for the décors, those Russians expect something violent, don't they? Well, they're not going to get it. I'm going to teach them the proper proportion of color according to French tradition: pure white, pale pink, light blue. And they can take it or leave it.'[159]

Paradoxically, this moderation and maturation of color options in reaction to Bakst's designs (which in turn had been inspired by Fauvism's vibrancy as noted in Chapter Two) became the oft-cited criticism in contemporary reviews. Although Matisse may have felt his palette was in keeping with "French tradition," the audience expected the visual extravagance of brilliant tones from the previous Ballets Russes productions. However, one critic praised his "very slight means—a sense of proportion, a little invention, [and] intelligent restraint . . . [to produce] something delightfully cool and fresh, and free from the oppressive opulence of conventional Western interpretations of

the 'gorgeous East.'"[160] Matisse's particular integration of the Orient into his own style will be the subject of Chapter Four, however, this paring down of color also matched the simplicity of the black line that the artist used to suggest not only form, but also movement in his designs for the set and costumes and his larger body of work.

Just like color, many artists use line to define their subject matter in their work. However, Matisse had a unique relationship with line in the ways he reduced it to its essence in order to communicate his intended depiction to the viewer in the simplest possible terms: "My line drawing is the purest and most direct translation of my emotion. The simplification of the medium allows for that."[161] This can be seen in the sole existing photograph from the production (fig. 3.16) where the repetition of the patterning on the costumed figures enhances the visual rhythm and harmonious simplicity of color, line, and form. Just as color served his expressive needs, line too, could summon the artist's vision and emotions. His use of line drawings to convey form and content exploded in his later years, most prominently in the tiled murals in the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence, France from the late 1940s to early 1950s (fig. 3.17). Interestingly, Matisse began experimenting with the gesture of the paint stroke as early as 1907 as seen in the decorated ceramics (fig. 3.2). However, the decoration for both costumes and scenery in *Le Chant du Rossignol* most elaborately exposed his love for the purity of line for the first time via painted, drawn, and embroidered gesture.

When viewing the entire ensemble of the production, the design for the stage curtain (fig. 3.18) showcases the most immediate example of line to evoke form and the power Matisse saw in the colors of black and white. Matisse's decision to render the central three visages so bluntly stemmed from his later stated belief that

> the face is anonymous. Because the expression is carried by the whole picture. Arms, legs, all the lines act like parts of an orchestra, a register, movements, different pitches. If you put in eyes, nose, mouth, it doesn't serve for much; on the contrary, doing so paralyzes the imagination of the spectator and obliges him to see a specific person, a certain resemblance, and so on; whereas if you paint lines, values, forces, the spectator's soul becomes involved in the maze of these multiple elements . . . and so, his imagination is freed from all limits.[162]

Again, although this statement was voiced over thirty years after these designs for the ballet, Matisse's feelings on art remain consistent. In the Israel Museum's catalogue for the costumes from 1991, the author V. Barsky recognized the compositional similarity of the stage curtain with its masked countenances and floating flowers to his later gouache cut-out *Large Composition with Masks* from 1953 (fig. 3.19).[163] In these ways, the lines that compose the faces not only convey his expression but also remain open to the audiences' reaction due to their simplification to avoid a specific likeness—a theme that continues throughout not just these designs for the ballet but Matisse's oeuvre of work.

This refined use of line, however, as cited in Chapter Two, was deemed "too sketchy" by one critic.[164] Although the free-flowing lines of Matisse's designs for the production may appear erratic and rushed, they were a culmination of numerous and meticulously rendered practice sketches to arrive at the ultimate expression to be communicated to the audience. This practice also mimics the studied patience of an Asian calligrapher's brushstrokes to achieve perfection of expression.[165] Matisse outlined his process for creating this look of spontaneity:

> It is in order to liberate grace and character that I study so intently before making a pen drawing. I never impose violence on myself; to the contrary, I am like the dancer or tightrope walker who begins his day with several hours of numerous limbering exercises so that every part of his body obeys him, when in front of his public he wants to give expression to his emotions by a succession of slow or fast dance movements, or by an elegant pirouette.[166]

Again using an allusion to dance, Matisse shows how he worked hard to appear to work effortlessly by insuring that the finished product conveyed his intended vision and free emotion.

Matisse's intense study of a subject and/or object to distill it to its most basic characteristics can been seen in his portrayal of flowers on many of the costumes and on the stage curtain. In observing the "leaves of a tree," Matisse found that "the great difference of forms that exists among them does not keep them from sharing a common quality. Fig leaves, whatever their fantastic variations of form, always remain unmistakably fig leaves. I have made the same observation about other growing things: fruits, vegetables, etc."[167] With just a few swishes of the brush, the audience recognizes the image of a flower without the fine details of shading and veins. One may not be able to identify the type of flower or its stage of growth, but for Matisse this was not important because "exactitude is not truth."[168] These "signs," as the artist dubbed them, of flowers can be seen in the hand painting on both the *Costume for a Mandarin* (fig. 3.4) and *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted* (fig. 3.5). Although both contain the emblematic lines of petals, the execution on each calls into question the debated topic of whether or not Matisse or a stage assistant was the executor of their strokes.

Research into this question reveals mixed results. Some, in particular Serge Grigoriev who played the Chinese Emperor, recalled that each motif was hand-painted by Matisse, whereas others feel this would have been improbable given the short amount of time and large number of costumes.[169] In looking at details of the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted* from the Wadsworth Atheneum, one notes a very pattern-like, repetition of stroke and form with minimal variation. Also, since many of the motifs are

truncated and disappear into the seams of the garment, it appears as though they were most likely painted on the fabric before construction in a more systematic manner (fig. 3.20). However, there are a few swishes of paint that extend over some of the seams, suggesting possible additions after assemblage to achieve a more cohesive and finished look (fig. 3.21). These factors promote the hypothesis that Matisse demonstrated his desires on a costume or from his original sketches and then others executed the rest.

According to his daughter, Marguerite Duthuit, "He did not paint or work on all the costumes, but it is certain that, brush or scissors in hand, he indicated the distinctive features and marked the specific accents of the garments for each group of personages."[170] However, one wonders if Matisse may have demonstrated his desires on the *Costume for a Mandarin* in the National Gallery of Art's collection. Again, similar floral "signs" appear, but this time, they are painted over gold lamé disks. When considering all the motifs together, there are subtle nuances and character given to each decoration: a flourish here that does not appear there (figs. 3.22–3.24).[171] Also of note is the continuation of painted lines over the shoulder seam (figs. 3.25 and 3.26). In order to achieve this, it is unlikely that the costume was placed flat on a table to be painted; rather, this particular rendering suggests the costume may have been worn and then the petals painted directly on the garment. Of course, one would love to hope that all these garments bear Matisse's unique hand stroke. Although this would be impossible to prove, it is obvious that they contain the design of his iconic floral within the confines of a few gestured strokes. Matisse was actively involved in synthesizing his particular aesthetic to his ideal medium of textile design.

Also in the interest of line are the intriguing echoes of pink on the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted* (fig. 3.27). On first inspection, it appeared as though these pink lines resulted from fugitive dye from the pink silk lining. This transfer of dye is highly possible since they were previously stored in inadequate conditions, as noted in the introduction to this thesis.[172] However, upon further examination and review of the photography with the textile conservator at the National Gallery of Art, Julia Burke, it seems unlikely that the dye would have sublimated so perfectly across the surface.[173] Although the curatorial files at the Wadsworth Atheneum report that the "damp has caused many colors to combine and run [and] the ivory ground [is] now mottled with pink and green,"[174] this applies to the more washed out areas (fig. 3.20) than the distinct mimicked outlines of decoration. Rather—and again it cannot be proved—it appears more likely that Matisse intended this pink echo to not only harmonize with the flare of pink lining that would have been seen through dance gestures, but also would have reinforced their role as moving garments. It should also be remembered that Matisse had practice making still patterns evoke movement in his 1909–10 painting *Dance* (fig. 2.11).

Another effective use of line in the costumes was created through both couched and chain-stitched thread. Again, this harkens to the context of Matisse's life story where he was continually surrounded by embroiderers, and therefore, understood the distinct possibilities and limitations of needle and thread as decoration. His first long-term romantic relationship, and the mother of his daughter Marguerite, was with the hat-maker and accomplished seamstress, Camille Joblaud. Later when he met his soon-to-be-wife Amélie, she was working in her aunt's Parisian hat shop, the Grande Maison de Modes, and continued fine needlework throughout her life and marriage to Matisse (see fig. 3.28

for a portrait by Matisse of Amélie displaying her love of hats).[175] Although Matisse collaborated with Marie Muelle to translate his sketches into textiles for the ballet, his personal relationships assisted the artist in deciding what techniques to use to apply decoration: whether it was paint, embroidery, or appliqué.

In the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor*, couching is the predominant method employed to render the motifs. Defining the stylized waves along the bottom hem are two different weights of coiled gold threads couched to black silk (fig. 3.29). On the gold lamé bodies of the dragons, heavy black couched thread outlines the scales and facial features (fig. 3.30). If these lines had been painted, their impact would not have been as legible to the audience as the dynamic contrast of metallic textile or thread paired with black. This use of gold juxtaposed with black is seen in the medallions on the *Costume for a Chamberlain* (fig. 3.31) as well.

Even more elaborate textile techniques are used in the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered*. The design of this robe utilized chain stitch executed by hand[176] to define the outline of the floral swirls on the collar and the cloud motifs on the bottom two-thirds of the costume (fig. 3.6). Using two rows of embroidery with a zigzag line between them, Matisse defined these stylized clouds for the theater's audience. Also, to emphasize this jagged line, he added a thinly painted squiggle to the center of each cloud (fig. 3.32) reaffirming a statement he made to his students in 1908: "Remember, a line cannot exist alone; it always brings a companion along. Do remember that one line does nothing; it is only in relation to another that it creates a volume. And do make the two together."[177] Upon closer inspection, it can be noted that the bottom third contains extra padding in a trapunto quilted effect, where the embroidery acts as a border and

emphasizes the additional layers of batting to provide a puffed look to these motifs (fig. 3.33).[178] Plouffe notes in his thesis that Matisse used "his own innovative solution of 'cut-outs,' rather than submitting to the time-consuming processes of sewing and embroidery techniques."[179] Although Matisse suggested appliquéd forms over embroidered decoration for some of the costumes, he still adhered to the unique quality that embroidery and quilting could exhibit as decorative elements on these particular costumes. Plouffe's hypothesis may have been right when looking at the costumes he examined, but is inadequate to describe the entire suite of these garments for the ballet.

Matisse's concept of "exactitude is not truth" can also be applied to the evidence of the hand of the artist (or assistant) on these costumes: a missing disc on the *Costume for a Mandarin* (fig. 3.34), the unsteady lines and splotch that heighten the effect of the gold ribbons on the base of the *Costume for a Chamberlain* (fig. 3.35), or the intersection of stitching on the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered* (fig. 3.32). These imperfect executions enforce Matisse's slogan for the expression of feeling in a work of art, whereas the Modern theater of the 1920s—especially Léger's film *Ballet mécanique* (fig. 2.23)—delighted in producing exact prototypes that could appear in serialized and perfected mass production as their costume designs.[180] Conversely, in *Le Chant du Rossignol*, Matisse's designs also tied in with the anti-mechanical theme of the ballet where the Real Nightingale—not the Mechanical—rescues the Chinese Emperor from Death. Matisse's creation for this pivotal role played by Tamara Karsavina consisted of delicate petal-like feathers in silk that floated over her form-fitted tights and in her hair (fig. 3.36). Although Andersen's tale cited a "little grey bird,"[181] Matisse turned this somewhat ugly duckling into a swan with a pale grey-blue crêpe-de-chine cape covered

with a multitude of shimmering studs attached to her wrists to evoke the feel of birds' wings.[182] The choreographer, Massine, recalled how this "filmy white dress" matched his dancing steps "with ethereal lightness and a haunting atmosphere of pathos."[183]

When Matisse was called to redesign the Real Nightingale's costume for the new dancer, Alicia Markova, in 1925 for the revival, he retained the form-fitting tights which, in the young dancer's words were "all-over white silk… with large diamond bracelets on my ankles, and my arms, my wrists, and with a little chiffon bonnet rimmed with white ospreys."[184] Interestingly, Matisse and Stravinsky paid for these feathers after Diaghilev claimed they overdrew the budget;[185] thus showing both artists' desire for the realistic portrayal of the Real Nightingale. However, social forays impinged on this costume when it traveled from Paris to the London stage (fig. 3.37) as revealed by Markova:

> [The costume] was perfect for the Paris opening, because nobody had any objections to a female appearing on-stage in all-over tights. But two years later, for the London première at the Prince's Theatre, suddenly the London manager was in a panic because of the Lord Chamberlain. At that time it wasn't permitted to appear like that. So there was this terrible situation where I was allowed to appear at the Paris Opèra in the tights only, but before we came to London, we had to find Matisse to have the costume adjusted. That was when he designed those little white chiffon trousers to go over the tights, studded with rhinestone, and this little tunic that went over that also to make me decent.[186]

This remembrance reveals Matisse's prolonged efforts to cater to the demands of theater design and public discretions while still remaining true to his aesthetic goals of maintaining a white ensemble. In contrast to this light and airy costume, the Mechanical Nightingale wore the hard armor of a highly stylized shell (fig. 3.38), which most assuredly limited the dancer's movements to jerky and halting steps alluding to its manufactured role. Lydia Sokolova, the dancer of Death, remembered the dancer of the Mechanical Nightingale, Stanislas Idzikovsky, "rigged up in a great barrel-shaped body

with terrifying beak and wings."[187] By suggesting the natural flutter of a bird's flight next to the exacting lines of its mechanized version, Matisse was able to reconcile his affinity for both portraying realism and exploring the potentials of decorative abstraction in *Le Chant du Rossignol*.

Attempts at finding a balance in this dual struggle appear throughout the artist's works, most dramatically in his *Still Life with 'Dance'* (fig. 3.39). While working on *Dance* (fig. 2.11) for Shchukin in 1909, Matisse felt the need to insert this flat decorative panel into a more realistic view of his studio with a still life in the foreground.[188] The artist also rejected the Divisionist style of painting embraced by his friend Paul Signac, feeling the painted dots that were calculated to optically blend in the viewer's eye from a distance were "a purely physical systematization; an often mechanical means corresponding only to a physical emotion."[189] Instead, the liberated strokes as seen on these painted costumes expressed his efforts better than a methodical style. Although the costumes bear some mark of manufactured items—the ribbon on the lower third of the *Costume for a Chamberlain* (fig. 3.40), the buttons on the placard of the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted* (fig. 3.41), and the brass studs on the *Costume for a Courtier* (figs. 3.42 and 3.43) and the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.44)—Matisse was still largely concerned with creating an authentic and unique vision for the production by painting and/or embroidering the fabrics, rather than using pre-printed patterned textiles. Of course, these additional items would also have added to tactile quality of the pieces by producing different textures that could not be achieved via paint on fabric.

Matisse began synthesizing his struggle between realistic depictions and the decorative arabesque during the Fauve years by eliminating shadow through the dynamic

use of color. This new palette led to a greater flattening of space observed in Japanese woodblock prints. Views through windows dramatically emphasized this compression of wide-apart planes because, in the words of the artist, "[F]or me the space is one unity from the horizon right to the interior of my work room, and that the boat that is going past exists in the same space as the familiar objects around me; and the wall with the window does not create two different worlds."[190] Matisse often used clay to grapple with one of his other favorite subjects: the human form.[191] His studies of the back from 1908–c. 1931 (fig. 3.45) broke down his existing mastery of anatomy to its most basic forms that remain recognizable even when translated into two-dimensions in 1947 (fig. 3.46). In the ballet, the Chinese Emperor's bed raised so that he would be visible to the audience (fig. 3.16). This unnatural slanted position mimicked the tilted, foreshortened floors seen in many of Matisse's paintings to downplay the recession of space (see fig. 3.47 for an example) that, in the words of Spurling, "abolish[ed] the distinction between background and foreground."[192] However, his solutions for the costumes (with the exception of the two for the Nightingales) compressed depth to its greatest extent by moving from the already flat plane of the canvas to create patterned surfaces to render human bodies in two dimensions.

One of the ways he achieved this was by using broad areas of flat color in large geometric shapes that obscured the natural curves of the human figure. These designs foreshadow Matisse's later large washes of color as he approached even greater disillusion of space (fig. 3.48). These negations of modeled form do not reveal lack of anatomical knowledge but rather Matisse's outstanding awareness of the body's structure provided him with the ability to manipulate its forms to their utmost emotive effect of

decoration. In addition to expanses of tone, Matisse also assured the costumes would adhere to designated shapes by the materials used in their construction. His growing interest in structure began during World War I as a search for stability during a time of insecurity and irrationality.[193]Although the majority of these garments are made of silk, they do not hang limply, clinging to the body with the sway of its movements. Instead, an interior batting and buckram[194] stiffen the exterior silk in many of the costumes to maintain the rigid architecture of the costumes (figs. 3.49 and 3.50). Similarly, the disc-like structure of a *Costume for a Mandarin*'s headdress is reinforced with a lining also made of buckram and a wire that runs its entire circumference (figs. 3.51 and 3.52).[195] Nancy Van Norman Baer wrote about the combination of Massine's choreography and Matisse's architectural compositions in her essay "Design and Choreography: Cross-Influences in the Theatrical Art of the Ballets Russes":

> One of Matisse's concerns in designing *Le Chant du Rossingol* was the manner in which individual costumes could be made to interact and combine. The sculptural poses and ensemble movement of the uniformly clad corps de ballet allowed the artist to think in terms of volumetric modeling. . . . [Matisse] deliberately masked the curves of the body, thereby transforming the dancers into building blocks of Massine's accumulative architectonic structures. When the costumes were isolated and placed in movement by the figures inside, they became part of an overall fluctuating pattern of stylized shape and color.[196]

Also discussing the effective sight of the costumes together, Plouffe states how the designs on the costumes "have the ability to interconnect. They are self-sustaining, individual pieces of a larger puzzle. For example, when two characters wearing the same costume stand next to one another, the costumes seem to merge, creating a greater optical effect…."[197] It could be added that they became like a large decorative panel akin to *Dance* and *Music* (figs. 2.11 and 2.12). This unification of the human form, however, remained tempered by the individuality of the brushstrokes.

The most significant costume to convey the abstraction of the human form is the *Costume for a Mourner* (fig. 3.53). Composed of the stiffness of hand-made felt, its overall aesthetic was the most graphically charged element in the production. Dark blue velvet chevrons extend down the back with triangular shapes sprinkled across the entire garment in sharp contrast to the white background. This technique not only allowed for greater expediency in completion, but it also demonstrates how the artist understood the array of technical possibilities in textiles to arrive at a number of different aesthetic solutions. Most important to the oeuvre of his work, these velvet shapes formed by scissors are the first examples of Matisse's unique use of cut-outs that he would resurrect over a decade later in his monumental works in painted and cut paper (fig. 3.19).[198] The National Gallery of Art highlights this connection by placing the costume in the same gallery as his cut-outs (fig. 3.54). Also, by displaying it on a flat, slanted surface with the back to the viewer presents this correlation all the more prominently by exhibiting it more as a design element than the fullness of a costume on a mannequin.[199]

Although the *Costume for a Mourner* presents the clearest use of the cut-out technique, Matisse also engaged scissors when working with the material for the creation of the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.12). At the request of Diaghilev, Matisse and Poiret reunited in the couturier's studio, along with Marie Muelle, to complete the costumes for the impending premiere. Rather than waiting the three months that Muelle predicted the embroidery would take on the robe, Matisse decided to expedite the process by employing a different technique. In a dramatic scene that pays homage to his particular affinity for color and textiles coupled with his obsession with the process of creation, Spurling recounts:

> Matisse replied he could do it himself in three days by laying the red stuff on the floor, cutting an imperial dragon out of the kind of ready-made cloth-of-gold sold in department stores, assembling the different sections and tacking them down.... The painter spotted a fabulous, and fabulously expensive, roll of red velvet, ruthlessly overriding the impresario's [Diaghilev's] pleas that he had already bought the fabric ([to which Matisse responded:] 'You showed me a sample of cotton velvet in fake red, a dark velvet, a dead velvet that didn't sing at all.') Matisse took off his shoes and mounted a vast cutting table 'like a trampoline,' with the velvet spread out beneath his bare feet, shaping and placing his scraps of gold stuff, attended by four or five of Poiret's assistants to pin and stitch at his direction. The great cloak was finished in two days.[200]

Although Matisse's "cut-out" technique is applauded by critics as revolutionary to those applied in the fine arts world, it actually derives from the traditional method of appliqué used for centuries to decorate textiles. In these ways, the artist was expanding his working methods in the fine arts by incorporating early lessons in textile creation.

However, Matisse not only cut fabric to design the costumes, but also employed painted pieces of paper for the stage maquette. Later the artist described his process of composing inside a wooden crate to plan out "'all my décor, my accessories, and my characters [were] represented by little pieces of colored paper which I moved around inside it. I even placed a small electric light in the ceiling of my little model, so that nothing was left to chance.'"[201] By installing this light, Matisse foresaw the limits of designing for the theater where artificial light would be the source of illumination rather than natural light, which he was used to working from. He also understood the properties of silk in reaction to the lighting. One of Matisse's goals in his perpetual quest for expressive color in his work also went hand in hand with a desire to emit light from the flat planes of his paintings.[202] Calling the flowers on his costumes "light splashes,"[203] the ground silk reflected and shined through the matted tones of the painted motifs as the dancers moved about under the stage lighting.

These concerns worked out by Matisse begin to answer the questions posed by Labrusse in the introductory quote of this chapter about Matisse's ability to move from canvas to stage. In order to achieve a cohesive unit that would be legible to the audience, he enlisted help from the creative circle that surrounded him. At the London studio rented by Diaghilev, he asked Georges-Michel for "some practical advise on several points. 'I've never done stage scenery before,' he [Matisse] explained."[204] Also, the daily visits from Diaghilev and Massine assisted his process with a shift in feelings towards the producer from "distrust… [to] unwilling admiration."[205] However, it is his relationship with the scene painter Vladimir Polunin that reveals the most intimate portrait of Matisse's efforts in the translation from two to three dimensions:

> [Matisse's] model was of a very simple, almost austere character, and its concentrated tones, well combined and balanced, produced at once a soft and brilliant impression, free from any garish contrasts. He left me to paint the scene and departed for Paris, saying that I should do it much better in his absence. The scene, which suggested a Chinese porcelain manikin, was successful.
>
> Working from a colored model, instead of from a design, is difficult and rarely productive of a good result. In the first place, the model has to be taken to pieces in order to see the colors on the same plane as the cloth and not as when placed at different angles in a model. Again, the shadows of the model do not correspond in their dimensions with those of the stage owing to the complexity of stage lighting…
>
> However, in spite of many difficulties, I managed to reproduce the general impression of the scene, as in the end Matisse had instinctively realized in his model the decorative principles of the art of the theater. But having to proceed carefully, almost gropingly, it was far from easy to reproduce the effect; whereas a design, in which everything is explained on a flat surface, would have obviated such difficulties.[206]

In these ways, Matisse fully realized the stage scenery beyond what the scene fabricator needed since two-dimensional designs suited Polunin better than three-dimensional. However, by meticulously planning the designs out in miniature with mimicked lighting effects, the end result of colors, lines, and forms moving in space proved successful. In

comparison to Matisse's designs, it is more understandable the inherent difficulty of Fortunato Depero's version from 1916 to 1917 (fig. 2.18). Although the Italian Futurist's designs were based on the confines of rigid geometric shapes, their heightened complexity of dramatic pleats and folds proved to be a distracting cacophony of color and form in the direct lighting of the stage (figs. 3.55–3.57).[207] Although this may have been Depero's desire, ultimately Matisse's minimal and serene conception was chosen as a more suitable adaptation to the stage.

In all these ways, the overarching success of Matisse's design was his adherence to creating a true sense of harmony—a highly sought artistic goal of the era as espoused by Wagnerian and Aesthetic philosophy. Even in what appears to be dissonant colors between the luminous orange in the *Costume for a Chamberlain* (fig. 3.3) versus the pale green of the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted*, there are hints of this same vibrant orange enlivening its painted flowers (figs. 3.27 and 3.41). In "Notes of a Painter," Matisse wrote about his theory of color combinations: "…different tones mutually weaken one another. It is necessary that the diverse marks [*signes*] I use be balanced so that they do not destroy each other. To do this I must organize my ideas; the relationship between the tones must be such that it will sustain and not destroy them."[208] Other equations of color and form can be noted between the blues of the scenery (fig. 3.58) and the *Costume for a Warrior* (fig. 3.59); the hand-painted flower motifs materialize on both the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted* (fig. 3.5) and the *Costume for a Mandarin* (fig. 3.4), as well as surround the masks and griffons on the front stage curtain (fig. 3.18) and appear in embroidered form on the collar of the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered* (fig. 3.60); the similarity of motifs on the collars of the *Robe for a Chinese*

Emperor (fig. 3.61) and the *Costume for a Chamberlain* (fig. 3.62); the half-circles that radiate out from the center of the *Costume for a Courtier* (fig. 3.42) mimic the scallops of the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered* (fig. 3.6) and the feathers of the Real Nightingale (fig. 3.36); and dragon medallions figure prominently on the back curtain (fig. 3.63), the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.30), and the *Costume for a Chamberlain* (fig. 3.31).

Additionally, materials are shared between the costumes as follows: the same velvet from the *Costume for a Mourner* (fig. 3.64) is used as binding on both *Costumes for a Lady of the Court* (figs. 3.14 and 3.60, 3.15 and 3.41; also these two costumes are lined with the same pink silk); the repeated gold lamé on the discs of the *Costume for a Mandarin* (figs. 3.22–3.25) and *Chamberlain* (fig. 3.31) as well as the appliquéd dragons on the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.30); the same silk from the *Costume for a Mandarin* (fig. 3.4) is used for the headrest of its headdress (fig. 3.52); and the star-like metallic studs are scattered over the Real Nightingale's cape (fig. 3.36), the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.44), and the *Costume for a Courtier* (fig. 3.43). These are only a few of the similarities and by far not a complete list of the numerous ways Matisse achieved harmony between the costumes and set design in *Le Chant du Rossignol*. Although this repetition of materials may have been a practical application as these fabrics were on hand, it also elucidates Matisse's thought processes of keeping the final suite of costumes and scenery in mind as a whole design.

This chapter provides the first half of the discussion on the analysis of Matisse's designs for *Le Chant du Rossignol*. By looking at the costumes' visual components, correlations were made to his work in painting, drawing, and sculpture to show how he

extended his aesthetic in these media to the decorative arts. However, this movement was more of a side-step than a leap for Matisse who already created in a highly stylized manner guided by patterned surfaces and flattened planes as influenced by his childhood in Bohain, as discussed in Chapter Two. The artist aligned himself more with the decorative than the fine arts by stating, "'The decorative for a work of art is an extremely precious thing. It is an essential quality. It does not detract to say that the paintings of an artist are decorative.'"[209] However, in the realm of the fine art world, this label often tainted Matisse's reputation. In the preface to the second volume of Spurling's biography of Matisse, she seeks to dispel his classification as a decorative artist.[210] But Matisse did not care about rejecting this term. Instead, he embraced it and acted as a spokesman for the qualities of the decorative when he claimed, "What possible interest could there be in copying an object which nature provides in unlimited quantities and which one can always conceive more beautiful. What is significant is the relation of the object to the artist, to his personality, and his power to arrange his sensations and emotions."[211]

In these ways, it takes almost more talent and intellect to translate an image into one's own style and then adapt it to a framework within the decorative arts. Fine art remains infinite in its possibilities by not constraining the artist to a particular shape or collective vision, but in the decorative arts, there is often the added complexity of collaboration and adjustments needing to be made on the part of the maker and designer to arrive at a cohesive whole that literally fits into predetermined dimensions. To answer Labrusse's questions, Matisse worked with a team to "produc[e] a multifaceted ensemble… [that] retain[ed] the pictorial intensity of great art… [that was] based on an equilibrium between colored surfaces… [and the] interaction [of] moving costumes."[212]

In the designs for *Le Chant du Rossignol*, Matisse integrated his own sense of expression through color, movement in a line, and abstraction as decoration in tandem with traditional Chinese design that will be explored as the second half of this equation in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

Matisse's Interpretation of the Orient

> *Indeed, every important step forward in Matisse's painting took place in a specific corner of the world: he became an impressionist in Brittany, an adept of* peinture claire *in Corsica, a proto-fauve in Toulouse, a divisionist in Saint-Tropez, a fauve in Collioure.*
>
> —Pierre Schneider, "The Moroccan Hinge," 1990

> *...I realized that for me it was necessary to forget the technique of the Masters, or rather to understand it in a completely personal matter. Isn't this the rule with every artist of classical training? Next came the knowledge and the influence of the arts of the Orient.*
>
> —Henri Matisse, "Notes d'un peinture sur son dessin," 1939

It could be added to Schneider's quote[213] from above that in London, Matisse became a textile artist with the integration of "the knowledge and the influence of the arts of the Orient,"[214] particularly inspirations from Chinese costume. However, 1919 was not his first introduction to arts and cultures apart from the Western world. Matisse had not only frequented collections of Islamic, Asian, and folk art, but also traveled beyond his French homeland prior to his commission for the ballet. In these ways, the backdrop of China in *Le Chant du Rossignol* provided Matisse with an exciting opportunity to perpetuate his love of faraway places and designs. By analyzing the materials, construction, and symbolism of Chinese costume in comparison to Matisse's design decisions, this chapter will build on the previous sections to explore the ways he expanded on his early knowledge of the properties and patterns of textiles along with their integration into his "fine" arts to reveal his personal aesthetic vision.

This chapter also posits that Matisse's creations were unique and not "'snob-funereal export *chinoiserie*'"[215] as espoused by one commentator of the ballet. Even

Stravinsky reflected, "Diaghilev hoped Matisse would do something Chinese and charming, but all he did was to copy the China of the shops in the rue La Boëtie."[216] This *chinoiserie* and other objects with Oriental inspirations had roots beginning as early as the late thirteenth century when Marco Polo returned from his epic travels with Chinese silk to the delights of Europe.[217] Throughout the fifteenth century, artists such as Hans Holbein and Jan van Eyck often featured Persian and Turkish rugs as important applications of design in their paintings.[218] The East India Companies of France, England, and Holland expanded the marketability and availability of exotic goods to their homelands from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries.[219] Also during this time period, influences from China resulted in an amalgamated style of *chinoiserie*, featuring disproportionate pagodas with exotic flora and women shying underneath parasols.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the opening of Japanese ports in the mid-nineteenth century marked a new era of infatuation with the mythic Orient, particularly among the Impressionists, Postimpressionists, and Aestheticists. Increased importation of exotic goods along with the ease of transportation to these previously "faraway" lands and the advent of the World Exposition provided the platform for the surge in Oriental depictions via the brushstrokes of Western artists, most notably Eugene Delacroix, John Singer Sargent, Moreau, and Renoir.[220] (As previously noted, Moreau was Matisse's teacher from his student days in Paris, and Renoir, one of his close friends.) As discussed in the second chapter, the Ballets Russes then perpetuated and heightened the fad for Oriental décor and clothing in the early twentieth century, often worn by the avant-garde at Oriental-themed parties, most famously hosted by Poiret.[221] In particular, Bakst

reinvented ballet costume by appropriating the loose-fitting tunics and harem pants akin to the Orient, which freed the movements of the dancers and allowed for expanded creativity (fig. 4.1).[222] These "Oriental" influences, however, are important to understand within the larger context of Europe and Russia.

"Orientalism" is a European term that encapsulates all cultures outside the realm of mainstream Western society, including Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and even some folk traditions within Europe and Russia. This idiom was also the title of Edward W. Said's 1978 publication where he explores its various misnomers, namely that it was not so much about the "Orient" but Europe's—particularly England and France's—perception of the "Orient."[223] He believes it to be a "corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style of dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."[224] Although Matisse was not interested in imperial conquest, his view of the Orient was through the guise of this social construction of Orientalism in Europe. However, by merging his travels and study of Chinese costume and ornament with the aesthetic he fostered over the previous decades, he rejected the perpetuation of a long history of *chinoiserie* that became further isolated from its origins as it entered the European artistic canon. Matisse joined the Orientalists' vision of "formulat[ing] their discoveries, experiences, and insights suitably in modern terms, to put ideas about the Orient in very close touch with modern realities."[225] In appropriating certain tenets and motifs from faraway countries, Matisse and this larger movement of artists opened new possibilities for their artwork

outside the stilted Beaux-Arts tradition, which relied heavily on copies of past European masters.

In the context of the Ballets Russes, it was not only a European conception of the Orient at play, but also a unique fusion with Russian history in reference to their Eastern counterparts. In contrast to the domination of Europe over the Orient, Russia was under the rule and vassalage of the Mongol Empire from the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries. During this time, Mongolian culture and design infiltrated and fused with much of the existing Russian decorative arts.[226] Despite this hybridization of Oriental style with the development of Russian design, Russia also had a long-standing and reciprocal trade route—including metals, furs, and silks—with Islamic countries starting as early as the late eighth century, followed by the introduction of Turkish luxury fabrics in the fifteenth century. The enticing drape of silks from the Ottoman and Safavid empires influenced the Moscow court and its artisans in similar ways to their European counterparts.[227] Interestingly, Russia encouraged trade between Western Europe and the East, particularly with Iran.[228] Additionally, the Iranian textiles coveted by Russia—and subsequently Europe—frequently incorporated influences from China, which seeped into Russian fabrics as well.[229] Therefore, the presence of Chinese pattern and design subconsciously permeated Matisse's vocabulary in a variety of guises.

For Matisse, the inculcation of the Orient began early in his training with Moreau. A scholar on Oriental influences on European artists, Fereshteh Daftari believes that Moreau probably included his collection of Oriental miniatures into his teaching. Under his guidance, Matisse often visited the Louvre in order to perfect his technique, often drawn instinctively to their Islamic department.[230] In these early years of the new century,

Islamic art exhibitions proliferated in Paris with the Louvre's showing of Persian textiles and carpets in 1903 and, four years later, the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs presented the first and most complete gathering of "Coptic and Byzantine fabrics, Fatimid silks, Safavid embroideries and carpets, and Ottoman velvets from Bursa…."[231] Perhaps one of Matisse's first experiences with Chinese art was through some of his earliest collectors, Michael and Sarah Stein. According to the artist they "had an important collection of Chinese arts… and [had] bought one or two [of my] canvases which they regarded at first as objects, or curios, because of their exotic appearance."[232] This quote reveals how it was a natural progression for Matisse to imbue his artwork with a Chinese theme, as the Steins noted a kinship between his work and "exotic" affiliations.

In 1909, they introduced him to Matthew Prichard, who had previously been employed at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts as an Oriental specialist.[233] With Byzantine art as the core of his admiration, "Prichard provided historical and aesthetic ammunition for the comparison between oriental art . . . and Matisse's own pursuits."[234] Their shared vision included the elimination of what they believed to be "the outmoded laws of three-dimensional illusion."[235] In 1910, the two traveled to Munich where their collective affinity for the flat, decorative qualities of design reached new heights while visiting the exhibition *Masterpieces of Islamic Art*. With approximately 3,500 objects on display, Matisse focused on the textiles and bronzes in long talks with Pritchard.[236] In one sculpture from the exhibition, the same approach of distilling the feathers in a bronze rooster from the eighth or ninth century in Central Asia (fig. 4.2) is similar to the stylization of natural features seen on Matisse's Mechanical Nightingale for *Le Chant du Rossignol* (see fig. 3.38 for a photograph and fig. 4.3 for a preliminary sketch of this

costume). The following year, Matisse had further opportunities to view art from the Orient with his journey to Moscow to visit Shchukin, whose son Ivan Stchoukine was a famed collector of Persian and Indian miniatures.[237]

In the first decade of the 1900s, Matisse also had firsthand experience of the Orient outside museum visits. Initially inspired by Moorish architecture along the Catalan coast in 1905, coupled with his interest in African tribal masks and wooden figurines introduced to him by Picasso, Matisse was spurred to travel even further from his homeland. In May of 1906, he embarked on a ferry across the Mediterranean to visit Biskra, Algeria,[238] a French colony that inspired many artists to travel there for its exotic appeal. His two-week stay is often romanticized in the literature demonstrating these glorified notions of the Orient, but in actuality, it initially left him feeling uninspired. It was not until he returned to his studio that this trip seeped into his paintings and persisted throughout his career, inciting future trips to North Africa.[239] Just as Renoir famously posed models in oriental dress in textural detail and heightened color (fig. 4.4), Matisse too staged presences of models sheathed in silks, embroideries, and appliquéd textiles from Morocco and Algiers during the 1920s (figs. 4.5 and 4.6).[240] Although the fabrics may have been authentic, the models were European and thus, became associated with the eroticized and often exploited Oriental woman—furthering supremacy of the West over the East. However, in comparing the two depictions, Matisse approached the Orient emotively, whereas Renoir executed it technically. In *Seated Odalisque, Left Knee Bent*, her presence bears a greater emotional expression in the gestured brushstrokes as compared to the almost photorealistic rendering of Renoir's *Odalisque*. In these ways, Matisse was not merely supplying the viewer with an ethnographic translation of the

Orient, but an integration of his personal style into these new influences.[241] However, it is in the designs created for *Le Chant du Rossignol* that this becomes most readily apparent.

Color changed dramatically in Matisse's canvases and in his subsequent color palette for the ballet after his introduction to the harsh sunlight of the North African desert. A noted sobriety can be seen when comparing his *Open Window, Collioure* from 1905 (fig. 3.1) to the minimal palette used in *The Moorish Café* from 1913 (fig. 4.7), after a second trip to northern Africa, this time to Morocco. Spurling notes that with this canvas, "Matisse had reached a pitch of abstract purity and intensity unprecedented at that point in the West."[242] These simplified tonalities emerge in the 1919–20 designs for *Le Chant du Rossignol* with his choice of nine pure colors to convey the characters and setting, especially the dominance of pale turquoise. Diaghilev foresaw the production as lavishly decorated in black and gold and was initially shocked by Matisse's reductive vision. Instead, Matisse equated the myth of resurrection with an aesthetic that would appear "spring-like, fresh and youthful, and I couldn't see what one earth that had to do with black-and-gold sumptuousity."[243] Although the Emperor was enrobed in black silk with lustrous gold embroidery (fig. 3.12), his surroundings evoked the bleached environment of the North African desert (fig. 3.16). One critic, Arnold Haskell, commended this divergence from prior lavishness as "'far simpler than that of Bakst, yet on account of its colour and perfect proportions, it gives the impression of great oriental grandeur and luxury.'"[244]

Another pivotal aesthetic that emerged from Matisse's experience of the Orient appears in the upper portion of *The Moorish Café*'s background. These iconic archways of Islamic architecture figure prominently in *Entrance to the Kasbah* from 1912 (fig. 4.8).

He also saw similar structures in 1910 when visiting the Alhambra in Grenada, Spain (fig. 4.9). This keyhole niche reappears in 1919 with Matisse's preliminary watercolor sketch for the background stage design in *Le Chant du Rossignol* (fig. 4.10). Additionally, Matisse's iconic flowers that appear on both costumes (figs. 3.4 and 3.5) and stage curtain (fig. 3.18) as described in Chapter Three, may have originated in studies of Islamic motifs made while traveling (fig. 4.11) and began appearing in his contemporary paintings, most notably in *Interior with Eggplants* from 1912 (fig. 4.12). These quatrefoil symbols adhere to Islamic tenets of only employing non-figural and highly stylized motifs,[245] although Matisse's incorporation of them was purely aesthetic and in keeping with the abstracted flat patterns he admired in textile design. By repeating them across the surface of the canvas, they mimic oriental carpets, which reemerge in *Le Chant du Rossignol*'s stage curtain (fig. 3.18).[246]

Although "the Orient revealed itself"[247] to Matisse in various forms, it was most accessible to the artist through this application in textiles.[248] One can grasp his life-long love of the arabesque as "those givers of life"[249] in the fluid form of the Indian *butah*—later known as "paisley" after its full assimilation into European culture, which obscured its initial origination—that featured prominently on Kashmir shawls (fig. 4.13). Considered the height of fashion extending from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries, they were also replicated in his hometown of Bohain.[250] Also noted in Chapter Two, textiles became dynamic presences in his paintings beginning in the 1890s with his initial acquisitions of fabrics, before Matisse ventured to foreign soil. His travels substantially increased this collection with firsthand purchases from afar (fig. 4.14).[251] Algerian rugs brought back from his first trip to Biskra in 1906 absorbed his paintings

that summer (see the wall hanging in the upper left of fig. 2.14).[252] African Kuba bark cloths are often cited by scholars as being one of the origins of Matisse's late career cut-outs.[253] However, their exacting geometric rhythms (fig. 4.15) mimic those found in the scattered dark blue velvet triangles of the *Costume for a Mourner* (fig. 3.53), suggesting their exposure to Matisse as possibly earlier than recorded in his collection. In a letter dated September 28, 1943, Matisse wrote to his daughter,

> 'I'm astonished to realize that, although I've seen them often enough, they've never interested me before as they do today… I never tire of looking at them for long periods of time, even the simplest of them, and waiting for something to come to me from the mystery of their instinctive geometry…. I can't wait to see what [they] will reveal to me—for it is perfection.'[254]

The *Costume for a Mourner* is evidence of a—perhaps unconscious—infiltration into his design aesthetic twenty-three years prior to his admittance. Of course, some of the textiles bought by Matisse may have been created explicitly for the tourist market and thus catered more to European tastes than retaining aesthetics from their cultural origins, but still influenced his design in fresh ways.

All of these early and continuing inspirations laid the groundwork for Matisse's commission for the Ballets Russes. In a reflection, he explained the tremendous impact these experiences had on him:

> Once my eye was unclogged, cleansed by the Japanese *crépons* [crêpe prints]. I was capable of really absorbing colors because of their emotive power. If I instinctively admired the Primitives in the Louvre and then Oriental art, in particular at the extraordinary exhibition at Munich, it is because I found in them a new confirmation. Persian miniatures, for example, showed me the full possibility of my sensations. I could discover in nature how my sensations should come. By its properties this art suggests a larger and truly plastic space. That helped me to get away from intimate painting.[255]

In these ways, Oriental art not only enlightened Matisse to new styles and use of color, but also encouraged his large murals like *Dance* (fig. 2.11) and *Music* (fig. 2.12), and

most importantly, his monumental designs for the stage. Before he embarked on this project, Matisse added to his existing knowledge and aesthetic by researching Chinese culture and decoration to better evoke the setting.

Upon arriving in London in the autumn of 1919, the artist sought out the Victoria and Albert Museum's departments of Chinese, Persian, and Indian art[256] for their "[m]arvels such as rugs of all kinds, costumes, carpets, faience."[257] The museum acquired their first costume from the imperial court of China in 1863 and now owns approximately two hundred and fifty costumes from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. These acquisitions perhaps stemmed from Great Britain's vested interest in trade with China that sparked a series of conflicts known as the Opium Wars throughout the nineteenth century. Henry Courtney Selous depicts this intersection of cultures in *The Opening of the Great Exhibition by Queen Victoria on 1 May 1851* from 1851–52 (fig. 4.16). Standing predominantly in front of the large group of attendees is a Chinese ambassador dressed in a garment known by Western curators as a "mandarin" or "dragon robe."[258] Acquired by the museum in 1889, Matisse may have viewed this painting while there and saw this European interpretation of Chinese dress. Of course, "The Nightingale" was also written by an author who never ventured to China[259] and in these ways, *Le Chant du Rossignol* possessed a vision of this Asian country twice removed from its authenticity: first by Hans Christian Andersen and then by Matisse, Diaghilev, Massine, and Stravinsky—all of whom approached the production through the lens of an Orientalist. However, by going directly to the source and looking at authentic Chinese clothing materials, styles, and motifs, Matisse moved beyond *chinoiserie* to arrive at his unique interpretation of the Orient.

As previously stated in this chapter, although Renoir and Matisse both painted the "Oriental odalisque," the latter artist instilled his distinctive expressive brushstroke to the foreign and oft-depicted Europeanized model. Although not authentic to the Orient, it was authentic to his style with European Orientalist overtones. This analogy can also be applied when comparing the work of Benois's initial adaptation of *The Nightingale* (see figs. 2.17, 4.17, and 4.18 for his conception[260]) with Matisse's version. In his 1914 design, Benois described his process, influences, and outcome:

> The sea and landscape of the first act, the throne-room and the golden bedroom in the Emperor's palace, gave me an opportunity to express all my infatuation with Chinese art. At first I hoped to keep to the style of the somewhat ridiculous Chinoiseries fashionable in the eighteenth century, but as the work advanced I became irritated by their insipidity. My love for genuine Chinese Art began more and more to permeate my production. My collection of popular Chinese color-prints, which had been brought for me from Manchuria, served as valuable material for the costumes. The final result was a Chinoiserie *de ma façon* [*chinoiserie* in my style], far from accurate by pedantic standards and even, in a sense, hybrid, but undoubtedly appropriate to Stravinsky's music. The magnificent march in the second act and the parts of the Nightingale and of Death have a style that is definitely and genuinely Chinese, but the rest of the opera is more 'general European' in character.[261]

Although Benois speaks highly of his synthesis of "Chinese Art" into "Chinoiserie *de ma façon*" and later states, "On the whole, I consider *Le Rossignol* one of my most successful productions,"[262] many felt his scenery and costumes lacked an effective blend of authentic China with his unique sensibilities. Ballets Russes scholars note his overall style as traditionalist and conservative with his costumes and scenery for this particular production deriving from the perception of China from eighteenth-century Russia.[263] Alexander Schouvaloff notes that although Benois's

> sets and costumes appear to be impressively realistic they lack a lightness of touch and seem oppressive. The contrast between them and the later 'oriental' set and costumes designed by Henri Matisse for *Le Chant du rossignol* (the ballet

> from the opera) in 1920 reveals the difference between serious artistic accuracy and brilliantly imaginative interpretation.[264]

Although both studied Chinese art, Benois merely regurgitated it while Matisse took his initial sketches (figs. 4.19 and 4.20) one step further by incorporating his own voice into their execution.

Another museum the artist visited as a study venue was the Musée Guimet in Paris, whose foundation was in the arts of Egypt, classical antiquity, and Asia.[265] In their collection exists the only documented evidence of an object that directly correlates to a design for one of the costumes for *Le Chant du Rossignol*. In the choreographer, Massine's memoirs, he recounts his visit with Matisse, "[H]e stood for a long time in front of a statue of a Chinese warrior. I watched him as he sketched it from various angles, and was not surprised to see the costumes of the Emperor's bodyguard [in the production]."[266] In looking at one archival photograph of the original sculpture (fig. 4.21) and Matisse's subsequent sketch (fig. 4.22), the artist captured the likeness of this *Celestial King* without much deviation. However, the final *Costume for a Warrior* (figs. 3.59, 4.23, and 4.24) reveals Matisse's adaptation of the original stylized geometry. Although he retains the shape of the apron, he invents his own decoration with scalloped edges to mimic the scenery in soft turquoise with contrasting white, black, and gold.

Although there is evidence that Matisse looked at a sculpture of Chinese origin, several clues point to his study of Chinese costume construction, design, materials, and meaning. In the case of the role of the warrior, John E. Vollmer, an internationally recognized scholar on Chinese costume, describes how "[s]uits of brigandine armor covered with luxury silks and gilt brass fittings were used for ceremonial armor by the guards at the Forbidden City or for the emperor's own attire...."[267] Although these brass

studs as seen on a *Suit of Parade Armor* from the early eighteenth century (fig. 4.25) do not appear on the *Costume for a Warrior*, they appear on several costumes for *Le Chant du Rossignol*: the *Costume for a Courtier* (fig. 3.43), *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.30), and the Real Nightingale's cape (fig. 3.36). The latter of these three roles does not adhere to traditional definitions of military personnel, but rather, the inclusion of these brass fittings on her cape shows how Matisse was not particularly focused on strictly adhering to Chinese culture (although sometimes achieving strikingly similar results), but rather, more concerned with evoking the general aura of China.

Silk is the primary fabric used in the suite of costumes, which reflects China's affinity for this material over dozens of centuries. Aligned with the imperial court, silk has been cultivated in this country for over six thousand years.[268] In Europe, silk became an icon of China from early trade routes along the Silk Road to the fashion for and expansion of silk garments and accessories.[269] In *Le Chant du Rossignol*, the *Costume for a Mourner* (fig. 3.53) is the only garment to not be predominantly constructed from silk; instead, it is made from hand-made felt with velvet appliqué. Aside from cotton used for many of the linings, velvet is the second most notable fabric and is also seen on the contrasting bands of the *Costume for a Warrior* (fig. 4.26) and both *Costumes for a Lady of the Court* (figs. 3.14, 3.15, 3.41, and 3.60). Cuff bands were often added to Chinese women's robes (fig. 4.27) and, although wider and more decorated than Matisse's, both exhibit a love of contrasting hues. Usually made from flat-woven silk,[270] there is also evidence of cuff bands made from velvet or warp-pile weaves dating from the second century BCE in China.[271] And in 1919, as stated in Chapter Three, Matisse fell in love with a red velvet that truly "sang" to him in Poiret's studio that he used as the dynamic

reveal hidden in the interior of the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.13).[272] Massine described the drama of its translation to stage "[w]hen the dying Emperor, danced by Grigoriev, came back to life at the end of the ballet, he stood up and loosened his black mantle, which flowed down and covered about sixty square feet of the stage with its magnificent vermilion lining. Matisse had designed it as an integral part of the spectacle."[273] Even Andersen, in his original story, cited specific materials when describing the Emperor's bed as being surrounded by "long velvet curtains."[274] Of course, Matisse and Andersen may not have realized the long history of silk velvet in China, but definitely acknowledged the opulence associated with the technique in relation to the splendor of the Chinese imperial court.

The most intriguing material used in the ballet, although existing on only one garment, is hand-made felt that constitutes the body of the *Costume for a Mourner*. In comparing this material to those of traditional Chinese costume, a striking resemblance can be made to the nomadic wardrobe. Many of these garments created by herders were made from wool and often felted with various animal hairs (fig. 4.28). Another popular material used were animal hides,[275] which, in the context of the *Costume for a Mourner*, provides an interesting correlation because Matisse modeled this design after the shape of Chinese deer. Often depicted in Chinese art (fig. 4.29), the deer represents longevity, a fitting allusion to the continuation of life of the Chinese Emperor in *Le Chant du Rossignol*. To achieve the likeness of this animal, Matisse fashioned a headdress with adjustable ears and attached hood that extends down the dancer's back like a tail (figs. 4.30–4.33). The deer's spotted fur and horizontal stripes along their back are translated into the appliquéd triangles and the line of chevrons in velvet.[276]

Although numerous scholars have established the similarities between the Chinese deer and the *Costume for a Mourner*, another interesting comparison to emerge in the research for this thesis was made between the design of altar valances and this graphically divergent costume. Altar valances were long and narrow, appearing en masse inside temples (fig. 4.34).[277] The noticeably similar appearance of some of the chevron patterning suggests that Matisse may have viewed either depictions of them or an actual valance in his visits to museums and collectors. If so, these designs served as a visual inspiration and/or as a mark of reverence owing to their relation to the temple. Also in keeping with Chinese culture is his decision to use white for the *Costume of a Mourner*, which traditionally signifies mourning in Eastern cultures as opposed to black in the West[278] and provides an example of Matisse's larger understanding of and appreciation for culture significance in light of his aesthetic choices.

Not only did Matisse maintain silk as the icon of Chinese imperial court costume but it is also evident from the costumes that he looked at the construction of the materials he employed. Most of the costumes, with the exception of the *Costume for a Warrior*, follow the standard robe shape of long sleeves with varying widths in flare of skirt and lengths of robes.[279] One of the most notable similarities between Matisse's costumes and authentic Chinese dress is the asymmetrical closure where the front folds to the right over the body and clasps in a diagonal extending from the neck to under the right arm and then down the side (see fig. 4.27 for a Chinese example and fig. 4.35 for its employment in Matisse's designs. However, the *Costume for a Courtier*'s [fig. 3.42] closure is flipped, showing a notion of Chinese design rather than a strict replication.) This construction is believed to have morphed from the combination of jacket and apron from the horse-

riding culture of the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368) and included slight variations to denote gender and level of formality. Wide sleeves on the *pao*, or full-length robe, signaled the stateliness of the imperial court.[280] Many of Matisse's costumes contain this exaggerated fullness of sleeves. Chinese costume also altered with successive dynasties and these shifts can be noted in Matisse's constructions. The *Costume for a Mandarin* (fig. 3.4) contains the narrowest sleeves, which are closer to the proportions and decorations of Manchu coats (fig. 4.36). Although Matisse's version does not include the iconic horse-cuff extension, the design of scattered roundel motifs in silk damask appear familiar in relation to his lamé disc flowers with painted petals. Of course, these latter decorations are not only much more noticeable in order to be visible by the ballet audience, but they also are more randomly scattered across the plane of the garment, signaling Matisse's more emotive expression and distinct style.

In the assemblage of both Chinese costume and Matisse's garments, form overrules economy of cloth. For instance, in creating the traditional Japanese kimono, every square inch of the loom width of fabric is used to construct the final garment (fig. 4.37). Conversely, in both the Manchu coat (fig. 4.36) and Matisse's constructions, the ultimate flare of the skirt and sleeves were often wasteful of the textile (see fig. 4.38 for a cutting diagram of the pattern for the Manchu garment). Although this pattern shows how this particular garment was seamed in the middle with each side approximately equal to a loom-width of fabric, Matisse's costumes typically were seamed about a quarter of the way into the arms (figs. 4.39 and 4.40). Most Chinese robes' elaborate decorations remain enough to detract from this seam line.

Matisse also acknowledged the importance of Chinese collars as an additional opportunity for decoration. The traditional Chinese collar typically included a "quatrefoil yoke and band pattern,"[281] which can be seen in the *Costume for a Chamberlain* (fig. 3.62), *Lady of the Court Embroidered* (fig. 3.60), and the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.61). Although Matisse's whip stitched collars mimicked the designs seen on these accessories of Chinese descent (fig. 4.41), his were permanent and unisex whereas the original versions were identified with female costume and had the ability to be removed when outside the court setting.[282] Other accessories that the artist infused with Chinese sensibilities were the headdresses worn by the various members of the court. Although many are no longer in existence, archival photographs aid in their identification. Hats and headdresses signaled a formal court occasion. Those for women often echoed elaborate hairstyles and were complete with ribbons, decorative hairpins, and surrounded by a crown.[283] While the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered*'s matching headdress appears most authentic with its crown and styled hair (fig. 4.42), its counterpart in the painted version was partnered with a "pink satin skull cap appliquéd with painted roses, edged in black fringing" (fig. 4.43).[284] Fringe was sometimes used for men's formal headdresses,[285] but there is no evidence in the research that they existed on women's. Still, figure 4.44 shows a woman's formal headdress that resembles the skullcap shape of the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted*'s headdress.

One of the most important accessories missing from the headgear designed by Matisse is the finial that denoted one's position (fig. 4.45).[286] However, the artist alludes to several other important Chinese traditions in his designed accessories. During the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), men shaved their hair in the front, letting it grow long in the back

into a ponytail.[287] Although the curatorial record for the *Costume for a Chamberlain* cited a "hat of shaped black velvet with pony-tail shaped back panel,"[288] a photograph of the Chamberlains in costume only shows them from the front with more of a chignon-style coiffure (fig. 4.46), which was another traditional hairstyle. Circular sunshades made of strips of bamboo covered by silk gauze were worn by Manchu court members in the summer[289] and appear to have morphed into the mushroom-shaped and lamé-ribboned headdress of the Mandarin (fig. 4.47). Not only did the movable structure of the Mourner's hood with ears evoke a Chinese deer, but also nomadic garments often included a hood that was separate from the robe and extended down the back,[290] like the *Costume for a Mourner*'s. Similar in shape and decoration to the top of this hood are the headdresses worn by the Courtiers. With their large ear-like flaps and two circular eye-like discs, they appear anthropomorphic (figs. 4.48 and 4.49). According to Vollmer, the nomadic herders of the circumpolar area used "hides of actual animal heads."[291] Again, these largely do not exist, but perhaps Matisse came upon depictions of them in his research. If not, the similarities between the Mourner's hood and the Courtier's headdresses continue the harmony between the costumes, again implementing an Oriental style as part of his visual decision.

One of the most distinguishing elements of Chinese court costume is the rank badge, placed on both the front and back of the robe. Beginning in 1759, these embroidered badges include symbols to denote one's status within the court: birds signaled a civil officer whereas animals symbolized members of the military (figs. 4.50 and 4.51, respectively). Although predominantly square, circular badges also existed and this shape indicated greater prestige with its associations to heaven.[292] Matisse continued

this tradition on both his *Costume for a Courtier* and *Chamberlain* by including motifs within circles positioned centrally on both sides of the robes (figs. 3.42 and 3.3, respectively). This placement also was considerate of the movement of bodies on stage to ensure visual continuity whether the dancer was faced front or back to the audience.

Embroidered in gold coiled couching and black chain stitch these techniques used on the rank badges also imitate those valued by Chinese embroiderers. Gold metallics, including wound threads, increased during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries.[293] As early as the ninth century, a similar technique in metallic threads as seen on the *Costume for a Courtier* is employed on a monk's robe (fig. 4.52). Chain stitch, however, was the main embroidery stitch used throughout the history of China,[294] and in addition to the central rank badges on the *Costume for a Chamberlain*, it also outlines the cloud motifs on the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered* (fig. 3.32), as discussed in Chapter Three. Matisse's combination of embroidered and painted lines was unique to the oeuvre of designs for the Ballets Russes where only one method was typically used.[295] This design application also cited China's incorporation of both painting and embroidery on export silks to keep up with increased demand from European markets.[296] Since these costumes were made outside Chinese tradition, they border on the *chinoiserie* referred to by Matisse's critics; however, the artist maintained and transformed several other elements prized by China in their garments. This can most notably be seen in his *Robe for a Chinese Emperor* (fig. 3.12).

Chinese robes, more commonly referred to as "dragon robes," signal an important aspect of the design of the costumes: the motif of the dragon (fig. 4.53). Seen in both rank badges on the *Costume for a Courtier* and *Chamberlain* as well as the back stage curtain

(fig. 3.63), this mythic beast was reserved for the upper echelon of the Chinese court and represented power since ancient times.[297] The more dragons that appeared on one's robe, the higher one's place at court. With eight total dragons, Matisse's costume for the Emperor reigns. Also, the more claws on these dragons also increased one's prestige.[298] This was an omission on Matisse's part where the claws become indistinct in his distillation and stylization of form (fig. 3.44). However, the placement on the robe of the roundels containing this imperial beast remains true to Chinese layout (fig. 4.54), which reflected an important group in their society:

> Four dragons radiating from the neck opening to the chest, back, and shoulders pointed to the cardinal points of the compass when a courtier [or emperor] was aligned with the axial arrangements of the Forbidden City. Four more dragons on the skirts—two at the front, and two at the back—indicated the intervening directions of the compass. A ninth dragon that remained unseen was placed on the inner flap. This protective arrangement referred to the centrally controlled ideal land division called the *jingtien* (well-field) system. … Eight farmers were envisioned as tending each of the fields around the perimeter. All participated in the work necessary to farm the central field. The eight fields protected the ninth by encircling it.[299]

Although Matisse maintained much of this tradition, again, he would mostly be interested in the aesthetic of the "radiating" roundels and no inner "protective" ninth dragon exists on the interior. He also probably would not have been aware of this inner placement, viewing the robes fastened closed in museum displays (see fig. 4.55 for an example of the ninth dragon on a traditional dragon robe). Another animal of protection is the "Dog of Fo," which is a lion-like canine that staves off demons. Often depicted in pairs at temple gates, Matisse saw statues of them at Musée Guimet (fig. 4.56) and subsequently inserted them on the stage curtain as a valid entrance to the Emperor's palace (fig. 3.18).[300]

Chinese dragon robes from the Qing dynasty are also not complete without depictions of the three levels of the universe: ocean, earth, and heaven. Although the *Robe for the Chinese Emperor* does not include these in their original structure, other costumes in the suite contain these elements. Traditionally the three tiers of water, land, and sky are most similar to the layout of the *Costume for a Chamberlain* where the strong diagonals on the bottom third symbolize the "universal ocean that surrounds the earth"[301] (compare fig. 3.3 with fig. 4.53). Cloud formations often embody the heavens and although they are not illustrated on the Chamberlain's garment, they appear on the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered* (fig. 3.6). This costume along with the others contain a less hierarchical placement of motifs, much like the late Ming period style that began to decorate their garments at the end of the 1500s as a complete decorative surface with no primary focal point, known as the "integrated style" (fig. 4.57).[302] In this style, Matisse most readily addressed the elements of the earth on the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted* and the *Costume for a Mandarin*. Although not the typical mountains as seen on traditional dragon robes, his inclusion of flowers highlights the beauty of the land and is akin to Chinese affinities for a variety of blossoms, especially seen on the robes of ladies in waiting (fig. 4.58).[303]

Another signifier of imperial power as well as an aspect of supreme importance to both Chinese tradition and Matisse was the use of color. Different dynasties were associated with specific colors and there were often tight restrictions on what colors could be worn by different groups within the population to maintain this hierarchy. Color also signified the five elements of the universe, which were associated with corresponding seasons, compass directions, and musical scales[304] (much like Matisse's

own equations between colors and music). Yellow played the most important role in China's hierarchy of hues, especially during the Qing dynasty, and was solely linked to the Emperor as the color of the center of the earth, or in this case, the center of the Chinese court.[305] Those outside his immediate attendees and families were forbidden to wear it.[306] Reserved for the Emperor was the boldest of yellows known as *minghuang* (fig. 4.53), while other familial and court members wore varying hues of yellow:

> [t]he heir apparent and his consort used *xinghuang* (apricot yellow), usually orange in tone; the emperor's other sons used *jinhuang* (golden yellow), also in the orange range but duller in tone than *xinghuang*. Imperial consorts and some ranks of imperial princesses wore *xiangse* (incense color), a greenish-yellow color, and other members of the imperial clan used *qiuxiangse* (tawny incense), which actually ranged from brown to plum tones.[307]

Although Matisse's Emperor appears in black, many of the court members' garments are in similar shades as described in the previous quote: the "greenish-yellow" of the *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered* and the "apricot yellow" of the *Costume for a Mandarin* (see fig. 3.49 for an interior photo that is closer to the original color). Again, the artist may not have been aware of these distinctions, but his investigation into Chinese costume could have inspired these particular palettes. Red, which appears in the *Robe for a Chinese Emperor*'s lining (fig. 3.13), interestingly was linked with "the summer of life"[308] and was only revealed as it cascaded from his bed when he rose from the brink of Death.

The figure of Death, however, does not derive from Chinese tradition but rather from Hinduism. No costume or accessories remain, but sketches reveal this sinister character (fig. 4.59). More importantly, Lydia Sokolova, one of the stars of the Ballets Russes who played this role, described the costume and her overall appearance in the larger context of the stage:

> Most of the costumes… were white, with designs sketched on them in little dashes and squiggles of black. As Death I was the only note of brilliant color. I wore scarlet all-over tights, with a very uncomfortable brass waistcoat, suggesting the ribs of a skeleton. On my head was a black wig and a very painful head-dress of brass supporting a china ball on which a skull was painted. Round my neck hung a necklace of *papier-mâché* skulls.
>
> There was some question as to what make-up I should have, or whether I would be better in a mask. On the afternoon of the dress rehearsal I sat at a table in the wings while Massine tried out several designs on my face from pictures of Chinese theatrical make-ups. He decided in the end that my face and neck should be red all over—the same color as my costume. He drew white gashes down my checks from the temples to the corners of my mouth, then gave me a small black slit of a mouth, with slanting black eyes and eyebrows. He drew this gruesome design on paper for me, then colored it; and I always carried it in my make-up box for reference.
>
> The last scene was impressive. The Emperor—played by Grigoriev—was dying on his great carved and painted bed. … Karsavina, who represented the song of the nightingale rather than the bird itself, was dressed in such a way that she suggested all the beauty of the summer night outside: she was a white rose. As she moved lightly and sweetly about the stage, I came slowly down the steps from the bed to dance with her, making threatening gestures. At the end of our *pas de deux* I lifted my necklace of skulls over her head, gave it a sinister twist as though I were strangling her, and then glided sideways with her, in *pas de bourrée* off the stage. That was the end of me…[309]

This gruesome portrait reveals this Indian inspiration: the fearsome Hindu goddess Kali. As the incarnation of "death, destruction, fear, [and] terror… she is death itself"[310] and is frequently depicted in dark colors with disheveled hair, accessorized with the severed limbs of her victims. Blood is often smeared on her face,[311] much like the description of Sokolova's make-up. The most iconic image of Kali includes a necklace of skulls around her neck (fig. 4.60),[312] similar to Death's foreboding ring around her neck.

As previously stated, Matisse had plenty of opportunities to view Indian art, and may have felt a particular affinity towards it. S. Balaram, in his essay "Product Symbolism of Gandhi and Its Connection with Indian Mythology," elucidates how "[m]any Indians see their own culture as basically nonmaterialist and reliant more on

spiritual than on physical values. Indians also like to distinguish their own approach, which gives preference to feelings, emotions, and inexplicable inner convictions, from the Western approach, which is predominantly analytical, intellectual, and logical."[313] Like Indian culture, Matisse was prone to depicting emotions in his artwork as noted in the previous chapter. India also featured prominently in the news during this time period owing to its struggle for independence from British rule. However, Balaram explains how "nearly all folk performances contain ritualistic elements, and performers wear exaggerated costumes, jewelry, and colors far removed from what one encounters in the reality of Indian everyday life."[314] Matisse and others viewing these objects from exemplary events may have reinterpreted them as everyday, thus loosing the true picture of Indian life. Still, Kali provided Matisse with this ultimate depiction of Death.

Matisse was not the only artist in this production to study Oriental traditions. Both Stravinsky and Massine researched and infused the music and dance with varying degrees of authenticity. In the score for the ballet, Stravinsky assigned the operatic vocals of the Real Nightingale to the flute and violin and the Mechanical Nightingale to the oboe and harp. These solos carry a particularly lilting Oriental tonality (listen to the audio CD included with this thesis).[315] Stravinsky later stated the difficulties in translating Andersen's "gentle poetry… [to the] baroque luxury of the Chinese Court, with its bizarre etiquette, its palace fêtes, its thousands of little bells and lanterns, and the grotesque humming of the mechanical Japanese nightingale . . . in short, all this exotic fantasy obviously demanded a different musical idiom."[316] In listening to the musical composition, a dialogue is created through the clashing instruments and the varying tempos and decibels evoke the escalating drama between the scenes.

Added to this aural splendor was the collaboration of Massine and Matisse to ensure the elegant union of costume and movement (fig. 4.61).[317] According to Sokolova,

> Massine, as ever, had been very thorough: whatever he did he worked at with the utmost seriousness, and he had crammed in some homework on Chinese art. A choreographer must search far and wide for artistic material which will suggest movements or groupings to him, and I suppose he can never know what picture of sculpture may be the one to give him an idea. There were some very fine and highly ingenious groupings in *Le Chant du rossignol*. They built themselves up into flat friezes, rather in the way that acrobats do, but their bodies were packed tight and knitted close together, some men on one leg, some upside down resting on a bent arm, some in a kind of hand-stand. These groups suggested to me the grotesque combinations of figures on carved ivory boxes, and I wondered if it was from these that Massine had taken his ideas.[318]

Massine discussed his equation between Chinese art and his attempts at meeting his goals in dance: "In this formalized Oriental fantasy, in which I tried to imitate the tiny, restrained movements which I had seen on Chinese paintings on silk and on lacquered screens, I worked closely with Matisse to create a fusion of costumes, décor and choreography, and I found this ballet one of my most successful efforts at collaboration with a designer."[319] This success assuredly came from their similarity in approaching the project through research of the traditions of China in addition to their mutual admiration of each other. One critic noted Massine's approach,

> He has, moreover, carefully avoided the temptation of all local realism, and this Chinese ballet does not contain any Oriental dances in the ordinary sense of the term. In this respect, Massine has followed the suggestions of the music, for it is not the least among Stravinsky's achievements to have succeeded in making us commune with the very soul of China without resorting to the usual tricks of musical orientalism. There is, in fact, in this score that so powerfully evokes the spirit of the East, not a single Chinese theme.[320]

In these ways, Massine and Stravinsky, like Matisse, also did not purely copy China, but instead infused their own spirit while capturing the essence of the art of China.

Although the preceding quotes contain only accolades of the fusion of music, dance, and design, one common fault highlighted in the reviews was the inertness of the Emperor. Matisse desired this role to remain stagnant amidst the swirling dances of the court to maintain a coherent pictorial space. Labrusse believes this was a downfall of the collaboration between Matisse and Massine and demonstrates the former's inability to move outside his comfort zone of static painting.[321] However, the Emperor was not only dying—and therefore would have been immobile—but Matisse's adherence to the abundant lengths of traditional Chinese robes that were made from up to twelve yards of silk, would have preempted movement.[322] Sokolova describes the climatic reveal at the end of the ballet when

> Suddenly the Emperor came back to life, and a mechanical device tipped his bed so that he stood upright. At this moment Grigoriev released the fastenings which held a mass of black material rolled up across his chest: this cascaded down the front of the platform on which the body stood, covering the whole central part of the stage, and revealed itself as an immense ceremonial garment like a train—only attached to the front of the body—embroidered with a golden dragon.[323]

Not only did this extravagant use of a costly material signal wealth and status, but it also would have "encumbered movement, imposing a slow and orderly pace appropriate to court pageantry."[324] In these ways, Matisse was able to move beyond the flatness of canvas and unfurl costumes that reflected not just his style but also traditions from China.

Theoretically, court costume was supremely important not only to distinguish between the members of the court with their affiliated roles, but also served a higher purpose as outlined by Vollmer:

> Court clothing forged a link between the needs of human society and the universal order. When worn, both coat and courtier were transformed. The human body became the world axis, and the neck opening became the gate of Heaven, separating the material world of the coat from the realm of the spiritual,

> represented by the wearer's head. Universal forces were activated, creating the harmony that was essential to the survival of the empire.[325]

This concept can extend to the transformation that took place when these costumes were worn by the dancers of *Le Chant du Rossignol* with their adherence to a harmonious union of color, form, and shape. Matisse worked outside the realm of reiterating Chinese design in the form of *chinoiserie* to convey his interpretation of the Orient to his audience. In these ways, he worked along a natural progression within his art from his early years in the weaving village of Bohain as discussed in Chapter Two to the distillation of his aesthetic sense that revealed itself in these costumes as seen in Chapter Three. The last step of the completion of this commission involved using Islamic, North African, Chinese, and Indian art as his starting point to achieve a personal Orientalism that maintained his aesthetic sense and evoked the desired atmosphere. All the struggles and obstacles that he encountered, including the jeers from critics and collaborative difficulties, were trivial and short-lived. The lessons Matisse learned from his work for the Ballets Russes—his intimate understanding of the drape, movement, texture, and patterning of textiles; his collaboration with director, set painter, seamstress, composer, choreographer, and dancers to arrive at a harmonious fusion of all the arts, including painting, textiles, music, dance, theater, and sculpture of the human form; and the way he reinterpreted the Orient into his artwork—persevered and resurfaced in his later work to be discussed in the final chapter. Thus, these costumes not only indicate a turning point in his career, but also became a central point of reference for his future endeavors and for those who admire and study trends in his art.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The Textile Continuum

> *In the closing decade of his life he used the basic technique of cut, pinned and pasted paper to design anything from illustrated books, tapestry and decorative tiling to the chasubles and stained-glass windows of the chapel of Vence… The old seductive repertoire of painterly skills was discarded altogether… It was the ultimate expression of the alternative decorative tradition that had opened paths into unknown territory all his life.*
>
> —Hilary Spurling, "Material World: Matisse, His Art and His Textiles," 2004

> *I am made up of everything I have seen.*
>
> —Henri Matisse, as quoted in M. A. Couturier and L. B. Rayssiguier, *La Chapelle de Vence: Journal d'une création*, 1993

Although Matisse claimed he would never design for the Ballets Russes again,[326] the lessons he learned and the solutions he arrived at when creating the costumes, scenery, and props for *Le Chant du Rossignol* during the fall of 1919 and winter of 1920 prepared him and continued to influence him throughout the remainder of his career. Not only did textiles maintain a prominent presence in his paintings and later cut-outs, but he also accepted further commissions in textile design and even—despite his declaration of distancing himself from the stage—collaborated with the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo in 1939. Textiles were a constant presence in his life from those woven in his childhood village of Bohain to his lifetime collection; their flat patterning danced across his early paintings, which seamlessly led to physical three-dimensional costumes in *Le Chant du Rossignol*. This conclusion examines how the textile continuum progressed in his work post-1920 to demonstrate how the costumes acted as a referential point for his creations in paint, cut-outs, and multi-media. In these ways, Matisse designed like a textile artist, no matter what media he used.

After designing for the Ballets Russes, Matisse's artwork during the 1920s took a slightly different direction into full incorporation of his textile collection into his paintings. Posing European and Russian models in Oriental garb, he staged them in his Nice studio, again taking on the role of costume designer (fig. 4.6). Letters from 1919–1930s to his wife back at Issy-les-Molineaux often included directives to send items like a "white turban" or a "Persian robe" that would later materialize in respective paintings (figs. 5.1–5.3).[327] He not only took full advantage of his personal collection but also pulled from the extensive catalogue of costumes created for the Ballets Russes. Driving to Monte Carlo in 1921, he borrowed an odalisque costume from Léon Bakst's production *Schéhérazade*. Although his model could not fit into it, Matisse declared: "I saw how it was made, and I could make one like it myself."[328] Instead of mere appropriation, Matisse actively continued creating textiles as the star of the stage within his total work of art.

Bodies were not just sheathed in fabric; Matisse also acted as set and interior designer, combining wall hangings, clothing, upholstery, and throws. This effectively displayed a synergy of pattern and color that, as Schneider states, "tips into abstraction."[329] Textiles were not just painted into his compositions but they guided the layout of the picture plane. In *Pianist and Checker Players* from 1924 (fig. 3.47), the figures appear like appliqués on varying shapes of patterned fabrics—rug, carpet, costume, upholstery, and wallpapers—that are pieced together like a patchwork quilt. In these ways, Matisse adhered to ideas of "good design" from the last half of the nineteenth century promoted by A. W. N. Pugin and William Morris who believed the design of an object should remain true to its inherent properties. In the case of textiles, the patterning

should not try to replicate nature through three-dimensional illusion, but should embrace the flat surface producing stylized motifs. *Harmony in Red* (fig. 2.6) from 1908 began this aesthetic but with *Le Chant du Rossignol* in the interim years, these compositional elements became his cemented aesthetic. Working mainly from hotels, Matisse could not make permanent changes to their interiors; and again, textiles provided a perfect solution. His increasing collection transformed the impersonal décor into an environment reminiscent of faraway places.[330] Matisse often purchased lengths of plain fabric to dye specific colors in order to achieve his desired effect in his continual pursuit of the perfect harmony of hues.[331]

It was the textiles, however, that remained the star of his created stage, as they often appeared livelier than the female subject. This, of course, revisits the discussion of *Still Life with Apples on a Pink Tablecloth* (fig. 2.9) from 1924, as discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, where the textile wins the reward for visual vibrancy and energy in relation to the still life.[332] However, this contrast is most dramatically made in paintings like *Odalisque Seated with Arms Raised, Green Striped Chair* (fig. 5.4) from 1923 where the embroidery on the sheer skirt dances across the figure's languid legs. Matisse's arabesque competes with and also complements the curves of the odalisque. Not only did Matisse's use of textiles in his paintings increase during this time period, but also, as Plouffe argues in his thesis, "a much more detailed and accurate rendering of the textiles as clothing can be witnessed."[333] This perhaps stemmed from his more intimate considerations of garment construction throughout the design process of *Le Chant du Rossignol*, but also shows how the production provided a turning point for the artist. This commission was not just an interesting segue from his work; it was a pivotal point of

reflection and continuation of his work. Although many criticized his Nice period as being "too easy, too seductive . . . [and that he] sold out and sold up . . . [making] only for the bourgeois,"[334] Matisse continually pushed his initial foray into textiles to see where it could take him.

Throughout the 1920s and 30s, his primary collectors were located not in Europe, but in America. Claribel and Etta Cone lived in two Baltimore apartments beaming with not only some of Matisse's most noteworthy paintings (figs. 4.5 and 5.3), but were fittingly accompanied with a vast collection of embroideries, tapestries, and lace.[335] Just as Shchukin, the Russian collector who shared Matisse's admiration for works outside the "fine" arts, the Cone sisters embraced all arts beyond a prescribed hierarchy. More importantly in the context of this thesis is another of Matisse's famed collectors, Dr. Albert Barnes, who also resided in America. His mansion outside Philadelphia burst with Pennsylvania German furniture and textiles, modern art, and primitive objects, including African masks. The artist was floored upon arriving at the imposing doctor's foundation in 1930 to see this union of the arts, which was in tune with Matisse's own aspirations.[336] As noted in Chapter Two, they were not alone in their desires for *Gesamtkunstwerk*, which became a driving goal of the past hundred years.[337] Owning the largest collection of the artist's paintings in the world at this time, Barnes had another proposition for Matisse: to create a mural in the three arched lunettes that overlooked the main gallery. Matisse, who perpetually longed for commissions that would capitalize on his affinity for decorating large surfaces, was eager to accept the challenge. It definitely posed many obstacles—not just in the abnormal shape of the space—but also the ways he would need

to coordinate with the surrounding works of art that Barnes regularly moved about like dancers on a stage.[338]

Just as Matisse realized that the Ballets Russes commission existed within the larger context of music, dance, and theater, he also acknowledged how the Barnes mural would interact within the interior in his following statement:

> The main point to observe was that this decoration was placed in an enormous room in which there were the finest Renoirs, the finest Cézannes; and remarkable Seurats. I could not, did not claim to, nor ought to have fought with these paintings. Being up above I had to use a range of sort of aerial colors, and I also had to avoid some colors like green, it's true; but at the same time, I made big black contrasts corresponding to the spaces between the doors, and pink compartments, blue compartments, compartments of various colors so as to create a music of colors that was not very singular really, although my feeling was in harmony with the dance.[339]

As a textile designer, one has to consider its use and environment, whether as upholstery, clothing, or wallpaper. In essence, Matisse sought a rhythm to appear not only in his work, but also with its surrounding metalwork, wood molding, paintings, flooring, and garden viewable through the windows. Again returning to the theme of the dance for this mural, this demonstrates his ability to adapt to the works of others within a prescribed space as learned during his work on *Le Chant du Rossignol*. Although the final media was paint for the Barnes mural, Matisse also employed many methods developed out of this previous commission and his knowledge of textile construction.

At first, Matisse used a long stick of bamboo with a piece of charcoal attached at the end to reach all dimensions of the massive canvas, which was his largest painting to date (fig. 5.5).[340] However, this proved futile and unproductive. In order to figure out the way the colors would "dance" throughout the composition, he decide to cut and pin pieces of paper in the shape of dancers—reminiscent of his 1910 mural *Dance* (fig. 2.11)

for Shchukin.[341] By shaving off slivers of paper with scissors to get the ideal form, Matisse acted like a tailor perfecting a fitted dress as he angled and moved the bodies around the surface of the template (fig. 5.6). This also was an old weaver's trick used to achieve the ideal composition by repositioning tracing paper patterns.[342] Flam notes that this method originated during his work for *Le Chant du Rossignol* in 1919–20, but in the Barnes mural, he believes Matisse moved from a "decorative effect" to "generate representational imagery on a large scale."[343] However, in revisiting Matisse's cut paper stage maquette from the ballet, he also worked out proportions, colors, and lighting for the final production. This was not a device used solely for decoration. Although the final Barnes mural was painted in flat washes of color that more directly referenced these preparatory cut pieces of paper (fig. 5.7), this technique served Matisse beyond mere "decorative effect" in *Le Chant du Rossignol* to organize and represent the forms and dynamics of human bodies moving in three-dimensional space on the stage.

In its finished state—after two redoes with its final installation in 1933—*The Dance* mural vibrates between the three arches while simultaneously leading the viewer to consider its environment (fig. 5.8). From the ground floor, one can appreciate its colors of pink, blue, and black in reaction to the greens emanating through the windows below. Surrounded by the paintings of Cézanne and Renoir, the gallery acts like a visual biography of some of his earliest inspirations. The second floor balcony provides an eye-level observation of the mural in tandem with chairs upholstered in tapestry, a wall-hanging by Miró, and painted furniture—a perfect integration of Matisse's love of *Gesamkunstwerk* (fig. 5.9).

An on-looker who was greatly impressed with the development of this work was Léonide Massine, the choreographer for the 1920 edition of *Le Chant du Rossignol*. Visiting Matisse in his Parisian studio that housed this monumental two-dimensional dance in progress, he explained how he

> sensed that he [Matisse] was longing to design another ballet. He was at that time working on a series of painted panels, and when I pointed out to him that they were very similar in conception to the ballet I was planning, which I visualized as a vast mural in motion, he became suddenly very interested. He suggested that Shostakovitch's music could be interpreted in five basic colours, white, black, blue, yellow and red. Thinking this over, I realized that the colours could be made to correspond, not only to the music but to the philosophic theme of the ballet, which was to be the conflict between the spiritual and the material world.[344]

Matisse continued the themes and styles executed in his mural for Barnes and his first venture into the Ballets Russes, now for the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, one of the many offshoots of Diaghilev's production after his death.[345] Again, Matisse intensely studied his subject: the dance. Beginning in 1937, he frequented the rehearsals in Monte Carlo and "sketched" with torn colored paper to work out the harmony of color and pattern (figs. 5.10–5.15)[346] in similar ways to his mutable collages for Barnes and his maquettes for Diaghilev. Pure abstraction became the vehicle of expression in this metaphysical ballet titled *Rouge et Noir*,[347] where an "eternal inner battle [ensues] between Mind and Matter to which Man is subjected throughout his life. In the ballet is seen a couple dressed in white, representing the poetic mind, which is being attacked by performers in black or red symbolizing brutal and evil forces which Man has succeeded in dominating, but only for a time—then he submits to *his fate*."[348] Color, once again and even more so, was the defining force. Massine described its prominent symbolic value:

> With his unerring sense of decorative values, he designed for it an evocative background of abstract shapes of pure colour, and created tight-fitting costumes in

> the same colors decorated with black and white curvilinear patterns. The Man and Woman, danced by Markova with her usual delicacy, and Youskevich with powerful spirituality, were in white; the dancers in yellow represented the Wicked, those in blue idyllic Nature; those in red Materialism, and those in black Violence, to which Man is forced to yield after his separation from Woman.[349]

Unlike *Le Chant du Rossignol*, the costumes were only subtly different between the various roles. Stylized flames and seaweed wrapped around the dancers' bodies in appliquéd matte and shiny fabrics (figs. 5.16 and 5.17).[350] In the pencil sketches for these form-fitting costumes, Matisse used semi-transparent paper so that the full figure could be seen from front and back (fig. 5.18 and 5.19). According to Jody L. Blake, Curator of the Tobin Collection of Theatre Arts at the McNay, this was an uncommon method in costume sketches she has encountered, where most designers will illustrate the various views as separate drawings. However, it was wholly practical in that it enabled Matisse to experiment with the way the shapes enveloped the human form;[351] again displaying Matisse's anatomical knowledge and proficiency in designing for the human figure. Photographs of Matisse painting on costumes being worn (fig. 5.20) strongly suggests a greater potential that this was not the first time the artist worked in this way. Perhaps Matisse did paint the floral motifs that wrap over the shoulder on the *Costume for a Mandarin* (figs. 3.25 and 3.26). In the costumes for *Rouge et Noir*, the designs appear to dance around the body even before it is in motion. Additionally, the snugness of the tights reveal the contours of the dancer while simultaneously, the designs flatten and blend them with the scenery.[352] The stage setting—again preconceived in a maquette of pasted paper like that of *Le Chant du Rossignol*[353]—echoed the triplet arches from the Barnes foundation (fig. 5.21).[354]

Another difference between *Le Chant du Rossignol* and *Rouge et Noir* was that the latter's premier in Monte Carlo in May 1939 received accolades from the audience. Critics praised the collaboration between Matisse and Massine to the music of Shostakovich's *First Symphony* and it toured Paris and New York with continued success.[355] Again produced around the time of another World War, the theme of man's struggle in *Rouge et Noir* assisted in its more positive reception, according to Massine's reflections: "[T]he ballet seemed unhappily only too appropriate to the moment of history through which we were passing, for the spiritual life of the world seemed to be disintegrating rapidly under the brute heel of totalitarianism."[356] This story-line was more relatable to the contemporary atmosphere than the romance of an Emperor resuscitated by the song of a nightingale. Despite the surrounding events, Matisse, too, found the experience of designing for the ballet more pleasant the second time around.[357] Several factors undoubtedly contributed to this: the friendship between designer and choreographer (sans the imposing figure of Diaghilev), but also, an increased comfort with working for the ballet having had his first experience two decades before.

Around the same time as the commission for *Rouge et Noir*, Matisse gradually dissolved his camaraderie with the medium of oil paint. Spurling notes how he would sometimes return to

> the shapes and patterns of particular garments that turn up again and again like favourite actors in his work. The great blue ball gown with white organdie ruffles made specifically to tempt him back to painting in 1935 was followed by a skinny, stripey, purple Algerian robe, an expansive band of embroidered Romanian blouses, and six couture dresses picked up in 1938 at an end-of-season sale in the garment district round the rue do Boétie… When he moved at the end of 1939 into a spacious new apartment adapted to his own design at Cimiez on the heights above Nice, he set aside a whole room—*la pièce à chiffons*—to house the costumes and hangings that made up his working library.[358]

In the heightened flatness of pure planes of color, there remains an obsessive interest in showcasing the garment over the facial expression (fig. 5.22), sometimes detailing the ruching of fabric outside of a visage (fig. 5.23). But largely, Matisse laid down his paintbrush and by 1945, he stated, "Painting seems to be finished for me now…. I'm for decoration. There I give everything I can—I put into it all the acquisitions of my life. In pictures, I can only go back over the same ground… but in design and decoration, I have the mastery, I'm sure of it."[359] This "mastery"—begun seventy-years ago in Bohain with the inspiration of the weavers and heightened with his 1919–20 commission for the Ballets Russes—led him to paper the walls of his studio like an interior designer and creator.

Using the method he originated in 1919 with the stage design and expanded into the appliqué on the *Costume for a Mourner* (fig. 3.53), Matisse moved closer to cutting and further from painting during the 1940s. Starting in 1939, the artist was not only exploring a transitional aesthetic, but also adapting his past experiments to present practicalities. His eyesight began waning during this time and, after a colostomy in 1941, his increasing reliance on a wheel chair and/or bed made paper sculpted by scissors a more accessible working material and technique (fig. 5.24).[360] Always the innovator and investigator of new media, Matisse illustrated books using this technique, most famously in his 1947 publication *Jazz*, which again pulled inspiration from music.[361] However, it was textiles that continually surrounded him in inspiration, familiarity, and comfort as he became more and more confined to his home (fig. 5.25 and 5.26).[362] In addition to Kuba cloths from Africa (as discussed in the previous chapter; see fig. 4.15), Matisse added barkcloths (*tapas*) acquired from a trip to Tahiti in 1930 (fig. 5.27) that further instilled

his love of appliqué as translated to cut paper.[363] Again, this trip to a foreign land did not initially inspire him, but gradually the intense light[364] of the Pacific Ocean reflecting off the coral, fish, and birds[365] became the subject of many of his cut-outs that swam and flew around his studio home (fig. 5.29). In viewing these created "wall-papers," a silk manufacturer, Zika Ascher, saw the ease of their translation into silk-screen printed panels in 1946. *Oceania: The Sky* (fig. 5.30) and *Oceania: The Sea* (fig. 5.31) were printed in editions of thirty each,[366] a pair residing at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. In an interview, Matisse described their encapsulation of his inspiration from his travels:

> This panel, printed on linen—white for the motifs and beige for the background—forms, together with a second panel, a wall tapestry composed during reveries that came fifteen years after a voyage to Oceania.
>
> From the first, the enchantments of the sky there, the sea, the fish, and the coral in the lagoons plunged me into the inaction of total ecstasy. The local tones of things hadn't changed, but their effect in the light of the Pacific gave me the same feeling as I had when I looked into a large golden chalice.
>
> With my eyes wide open I absorbed everything as a sponge absorbs liquid.
>
> It is only now that these wonders have returned to me, with tenderness and clarity, and have permitted me, with protracted pleasure, to execute these two panels.[367]

In addition to their implementation in silk-screen—a technique becoming increasingly popular in textile design during the mid-1950s with the invention of the automated flat-bed screen printer[368]—the designs were also composed as tapestries for Beauvais (figs. 5.32 and 5.33), yet another textile medium undertaken by Matisse.

Starting in the 1930s, Matisse began receiving commissions from long-standing and influential companies such as Gobelins, Beauvais, and Aubusson in France. As part of the tapestry revival occurring at this time, these centuries-old manufacturers who had produced tapestries for the French court beginning in the fifteenth through seventeenth

centuries, looked to contemporary artists to rejuvenate a decaying art form. Marie Cuttoli led this resurrection in tapestry design by hiring Matisse (fig. 5.34), along with others like Joan Miró, Georges Braque, Raoul Dufy, Pablo Picasso, and Fernand Léger to upend the stagnation in design by introducing this fresh perspective to the medium.[369] Who better to commission than Matisse, a man who not only held a life-long love of textiles, but also understood their unique properties and potentials? During this period, Matisse again drew on his experiences from Polynesia to create a tapestry cartoon *Window at Tahiti* to be woven into tapestry (figs. 5.35 and 5.36). Although this and some others contained Matisse's more painterly style in tonal modulations, he also realized the importance of large flat areas of color to complement the process of woven tapestry as evidenced in the *Polynesia* duet (figs. 5.32 and 5.33), which of course, also adhered to his concurrent personal style in cut-outs.[370]

Another project that amplified this technique was his final commission for the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence, France. Matisse's dream of designing a large decorative space as he had done for the English and French stage with *Le Chant du Rossignol* and subsequent commissions through the Barnes Foundation and for *Rouge et Noir*, culminated in this modest sanctuary for Dominican nuns. He again consulted his preliminary work in 1919–20 by starting with a 1/20 scale maquette (fig. 5.38) to plan a total work of art that included his famed stained glass windows, tiled murals, chalices, and crucifixes. With *Le Chant du Rossignol* in mind, he also clothed the priests in chasubles that were distinctive to his aesthetic while mindful of the textile and context. Outside the artist's philosophical beliefs but very much a part of his artistic values, the chasubles incorporate brilliant color with stylized symbols that even caused the hesitant

Picasso to applaud.[371] Researching fifteenth-century copes, Matisse continued his study of previous examples to synthesize with his personal aesthetic as he had interpreted traditional Chinese costume into his 1919–20 ballet costumes. According to Alfred Barr, Matisse felt "more at home"[372] in the execution of the chasubles, again using his beloved silk with his initial formulation of ideas via painted and cut paper (fig. 5.39–5.41). *Le Chant du Rossignol* provided a point of reference as the chasubles became the dancers that harmonized with the stage of the church (figs. 5.42 and 5.43).[373] In a discussion about the Vence commission, Matisse declared: "'I don't need to build churches. There are others who can do that. . . . I'm doing something more like a theater décor . . . the point is to create a special atmosphere to sublimate, to lift people out of their everyday concerns and preoccupations,'"[374] a philosophy very much in keeping with turn-of-the-century *Gesamtkunstwerk*. By acknowledging his previous work for the stage, Matisse revealed how he truly came full circle in his love and creation of textiles with *Le Chant du Rossignol* as his point of reference.

From his early days watching his neighbors weaving to these chasubles, the pinnacle of his vision lay in his work for the Ballets Russes in 1919–20. Created at mid-career, these designs provide a cumulative moment of his past, present, and future life experiences, aesthetic goals, and affinity for lands, cultures, and arts beyond France. These costumes and their accompanying stage design reveal his adherence to the principles of *Gesamkunstwerk* in their incorporation of the rhythm of the dancers as prescribed by Massine and the chords of the orchestra composed by Stravinsky, which emerge throughout his paintings and cut-outs as well. They underline Matisse's aesthetic concerns: expression through color, movement in a moment, and abstraction as

decoration. And they showcase his understanding and research of the Orient to arrive at his own conclusions by way of ancient traditions and design. But most importantly, they highlight what Matisse eternally treasured: the drape of fabric, the pattern of design, and the supreme inspiration of textiles. Matisse truly was "made of everything he had seen;"[375] the costumes encapsulated the weavings of Bohain; the couture clothing of the Parisian fashion houses; fabrics picked up from various junk stalls; robes, carpets, and embroideries seen in museums' and friends' collections; and textiles acquired in exotic places of North Africa and Tahiti. However, the ultimate expression of not only Matisse's love of textiles, but also the "best spokesman" for his personal aesthetic, were the costumes created for the *Le Chant du Rossingol*.

APPENDIX A
"The Nightingale"
by Hans Christian Andersen
Translated by W. A. & J. K. Craigie[376]

In China, you must know, the Emperor is a Chinaman, and all whom he has about him are Chinamen too. It happened a good many years ago, but that's just why it's worth while to hear the story, before it is forgotten. The Emperor's palace was the most splendid in the world; it was made entirely of porcelain, very costly, but so delicate and brittle that one had to take care how one touched it. In the garden were to be seen the most wonderful flowers, and to the costliest of them silver bells were tied, which sounded, so that nobody should pass by without noticing the flowers. Yes, everything in the Emperor's garden was admirably arranged. And it extended so far, that the gardener himself did not know where the end was. If a man went on and on, he came into a glorious forest with high trees and deep lakes. The wood extended straight down to the sea, which was blue and deep; great ships could sail in beneath the branches of the trees; and in the trees lived a Nightingale, which sang so splendidly that even the poor fisherman, who had many other things to do, stopped still and listened, when he had gone out at night to take up his nets, and heard the Nightingale.

"How beautiful that is!" he said; but he was obliged to attend to his business, and thus forgot the bird. But when in the next night the bird sang again, and the fisherman heard it, he exclaimed again, "How beautiful that is!"

From all the countries of the world travelers came to the city of the Emperor, and admired it, and the palace, and the garden, but when they heard the Nightingale, they said, "That is the best of all!"

And the travelers told of it when they came home; and the learned men wrote many books about the town, the palace, and the garden. But they did not forget the Nightingale; that was placed highest of all; and those who were poets wrote most magnificent poems about the Nightingale in the wood by the deep lake.

The books went through all the world, and a few of them once came to the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read, and read: every moment he nodded his head, for it pleased him to peruse the masterly descriptions of the city, the palace, and the garden. "But the Nightingale is the best of all," it stood written there.

"What's that?" exclaimed the Emperor. "I don't know the Nightingale at all! Is there such a bird in my empire, and even in my garden? I've never heard of that. To think that I should have to learn such a thing for the first time from books!"

And hereupon he called his cavalier. This cavalier was so grand that if any one lower in rank than himself dared to speak to him, or to ask him any question, he answered nothing but "P!"—and that meant nothing.

"There is said to be a wonderful bird here called a Nightingale!" said the Emperor. "They say it is the best thing in all my great empire. Why have I never heard anything about it?"

"I have never heard him named," replied the cavalier. "He has never been introduced at court."

"I command that he shall appear this evening, and sing before me," said the Emperor. "All the world knows what I possess, and I do not know it myself!"

"I have never heard him mentioned," said the cavalier. "I will seek for him. I will find him."

But where was he to be found? The cavalier ran up and down all the staircase, through halls and passages, but no one among all those whom he met had heard talk of the nightingale. And the cavalier ran back to the Emperor, and said that it must be a fable invented by the writers of books.

"Your Imperial Majesty cannot believe how much is written that is fiction, besides something that they call the black art."

"But the book in which I read this," said the Emperor, "was sent to me by the high and mighty Emperor of Japan, and therefore it cannot be here this evening! It has my imperial favor; and if it does not come, all the court shall be trampled upon after the court has supped!"

"Tsing-pe!" said the cavalier; and again he ran up and down all the staircases, and through all the halls and corridors; and half the court ran with him, for the courtiers did not like being trampled upon.

Then there was a great inquiry after the wonderful Nightingale, which all the world knew excepting the people at court.

At last they met with a poor little girl in the kitchen, who said,

"The Nightingale? I know it well; yes, it can sing gloriously! Every evening I get leave to carry my poor sick mother the scraps from the table. She lives down by the strand, and when I get back and am tired, and rest in the wood, then I hear the Nightingale sing. And then the water comes into my eyes, and it is just as if my mother kissed me!"

"Little girl," said the cavalier, "I will get you a place in the kitchen, with permission to see the Emperor dine, if you will lead us to the Nightingale, for it is announced for this evening."

So they all went out into the wood where the Nightingale was accustomed to sing; half the court went forth. When they were in the midst of their journey a cow began to low.

"Oh!" cried the court page, "now we have it! That shows a wonderful power in so small a creature! I have certainly heard it before."

"No, those are cows lowing!" said the little kitchen-girl. "We are a long way from the place yet."

Now the frogs began to croak in the marsh.

"Glorious!" said the Chinese court preacher. "Now I hear it—it sounds just like little church bells."

"No, those are frogs!" said the little kitchen-maid. "But now I think we shall soon heart it."

And then the Nightingale began to sing.

"That is it!" exclaimed the little girl. "Listen, listen! and yonder it sits."

And she pointed to a little grey bird up in the boughs.

"Is it possible?" cried the cavalier. "I should never have thought it looked like that! How plain it looks! It must certainly have lost its color at seeing such grand people around."

"Little Nightingale!" called the little kitchen-maid, quite loudly, "our gracious Emperor wishes you to sing before him."

"With the greatest pleasure!" replied the Nightingale, and began to sing most delightfully.

"It sounds just like glass bells!" said the cavalier. "And look at its little throat, how it's working! It's wonderful that we should never have heard it before. That bird will be a great success at court."

"Shall I sing once more before the Emperor?" asked the Nightingale, for it thought the Emperor was present.

"My excellent little Nightingale," said the cavalier, "I have great pleasure in inviting you to a court festival this evening, when you shall charm his Imperial Majesty with your beautiful singing."

"My song sounds best in the green wood!" replied the Nightingale; still it came willingly when it heard what the Emperor wished.

The palace was festively adorned. The walls and the flooring, which were of porcelain, gleamed in the rays of thousands of golden lamps. The most glorious flowers, which could ring clearly, had been placed in the passages. There was a running to and fro, and a thorough draught, and all the bells rang so loudly that one could not hear oneself speak.

In the midst of the great hall, where the Emperor sat, a golden perch had been placed, on which the Nightingale was to sit. The whole court was there, and the little kitchen-maid had got leave to stand behind the door, as she had now received the title of a real court cook. All were in full dress, and all looked at the little grey bird, to which the Emperor nodded.

And the Nightingale sang so gloriously that the tears came into the Emperor's eyes, and the tears ran down over his cheeks; and then the Nightingale sang still more sweetly, so that its song went straight to the heart. The Emperor was so much pleased that he said the Nightingale should have his golden slipper to wear round its neck. But the Nightingale declined this with thanks, saying it had already received a sufficient reward.

"I have seen tears in the Emperor's eyes—that is the real treasure to me. An Emperor's tears have a peculiar power. I am rewarded enough!" And then it sang again with a sweet glorious voice.

"That's the most amiable coquetry I ever saw!" said the ladies who stood round about, and then they took water in their mouths to gurgle when any one spoke to them. They thought they should be nightingales too. And the lackeys and chambermaids reported that they were satisfied too; and that was saying a good deal, for they are the most difficult to please. In short, the Nightingale achieved a real success.

It was now to remain at court, to have its own cage, with liberty to go out twice every day and once at night. Twelve servants were appointed when the Nightingale went out, each of whom had a silken string fastened to the bird's leg, and which they held very tight. There was really no pleasure in an excursion of that kind.

The whole city spoke of the wonderful bird, and when two people met, one said nothing but "Nightin," and the other said "gale"; and then they sighed, and understood one another. Eleven peldars' children were named after the bird, but not one of them could sing a note.

One day the Emperor received a large parcel, on which was written "The Nightingale."

"There we have a new book about this celebrated bird," said the Emperor.

But it was not a book, but a little work of art, contained in a box, an artificial nightingale, which was to sing like the natural one, and was brilliantly ornamented with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. So soon as the artificial bird was wound up, he could sing one of the pieces that the real one sang, and then his tail moved up and down, and shone with silver and gold. Round his neck hung a little ribbon, and on that was written, "The Emperor of Japan's nightingale is poor compared to that of the Emperor of China."

"That is capital!" said they all, and he who had brought the artificial bird immediately received the title, Imperial Head-Nightingale-Bringer.

"Now they must sing together; what a duet that will be!"

And so they had to sing together; but it did not sound very well, for the real Nightingale sang in its own way, and the artificial bird sang waltzes.

"That's not his fault," said the playmaster; "he's quite perfect, and very much in my style."

Now the artificial bird was to sing alone. He had just as much success as the real one, and then it was handsomer to look at—it shone like bracelets and breastpins.

Three and thirty times over did it sing the same piece, and yet was not tired. The people would gladly have heard it again, but the Emperor said that the living Nightingale ought to sing something now. But where was it? No one had noticed that it had flown away out of the open window, back to the green wood.

"But what in all the world is this?" said the Emperor.

And all the courtiers abused the Nightingale, and declared that it was a very ungrateful creature.

"We have the best bird, after all," said they.

And so the artificial bird had to sing again, and that was the thirty-fourth time that they listened to the same piece. For all that they did not know it quite by heart, for it was so very difficult. And the playmaster praised the bird particularly; yes, he declared that it was better than a nightingale, not only with regard to its plumage and the many beautiful diamonds, but inside as well.

"For you see, ladies and gentlemen, and above all, your Imperial Majesty, with a real nightingale one can never calculate what is coming, but in this artificial bird everything is settled. One can explain it; one can open it and make people understand where the waltzes come from, how they go, and how one follows up another."

"Those are quite our own ideas," they all said.

And the speaker received permission to show the bird to the people on the next Sunday. The people were to hear it sing too, the Emperor commanded; and they did hear it, and were as much pleased as if they had all got tipsy upon tea, for that's quite the Chinese fashion; and they all said "Oh!" and held up their forefingers and nodded. But the poor fisherman who had heard the real Nightingale, said,

"It sounds pretty enough, and the melodies resemble each other, but there's something wanting, though I know not what!"

The real Nightingale was banished form the country and empire. The artificial bird had its place on a silken cushion close to the Emperor's bed; all the presents it had received, gold and precious stones, were ranged about it; in title it had advanced to be the High Imperial Night-Singer, and in rank to number one on the left hand; for the Emperor considered that side the most important on which the heart is placed, and even in an Emperor the heart is on the left side; and the playmaster wrote a work of five-and-twenty

volumes about the artificial bird; it was very learned and very long, full of the most difficult Chinese words; but yet all the people declared that they had read it and understood it, for fear of being considered stupid, and having their bodies trampled on.

So a whole year went by. The Emperor, the court, and all the other Chinese knew every little twitter in the artificial bird's song by heart. But just for that reason it pleased them best—they could sing with it themselves, and they did so. The street boys sang, "Tsi-tsi-tsi-glug-glug!" and the Emperor himself sang it too. Yes, that was certainly famous.

But one evening, when the artificial bird was singing its best, and the Emperor lay in bed listening to it, something inside the bird said, "Whizz!" Something cracked. "Whir-r-r!" All the wheels ran round, and then the music stopped.

The Emperor immediately sprang out of bed, and caused his body physician to be called; but what could *he* do? Then they sent for a watchmaker, and after a good deal of talking and investigation, the bird was put into something like order; but the watchmaker said that the bird must be carefully treated, for the barrels were worn, and it would be impossible to put new ones in in such a manner that the music would go. There was a great lamentation; only once in a year was it permitted to let the bird sing, and that was almost too much. But then the playmaster made a little speech, full of hard words, and said this was just as good as before—and so of course it was as good as before.

Now five years had gone by, and a real grief came upon the whole nation. The Chinese were really fond of their Emperor, and now he was ill, and could not, it was said, live much longer. Already a new Emperor had been chosen, and the people stood out in the street and asked the cavalier how their old Emperor did.

"P!" said he, and shook his head.

Cold and pale lay the Emperor in his great gorgeous bed; the whole court thought him dead, and each one ran to pay homage to the new ruler. The chamberlains ran out to talk it over, and the ladies'-maids had a great coffee party. All about, in all the halls and passages, cloth had been laid down so that no footsteps could be heard, and therefore it was quiet there, quite quiet. But the Emperor was not dead yet: stiff and pale he lay on the gorgeous bed with the long velvet curtains and the heavy gold tassels; high up, a window stood open, and the moon shone in upon the Emperor and the artificial bird.

The poor Emperor could scarcely breathe; it was just as if something lay upon his chest: he opened his eyes, and then he saw that it was Death who sat upon his chest, and had put on his golden crown, and held in one hand the Emperor's sword, and in the other his beautiful banner. And all around, from among the folds of the splendid velvet curtains, strange heads peered forth; a few very ugly, the rest quite lovely and mild. These were all the Emperor's bad and good deeds, that looked upon him now that Death sat upon his heart.

"Do you remember this?" whispered one after the other, "Do you remember that?" and then they told him so much that the perspiration ran from his forehead.

"I did not know that!" said the Emperor. "Music! music! the great Chinese drum!" he cried, "so that I need not hear all they say!"

And they continued speaking, and Death nodded like a Chinaman to all they said.

"Music! music!" cried the Emperor. "You little precious golden bird, sing, sing! I have given you gold and costly presents; I have even hung my golden slipper around your neck—sing now, sing!"

But the bird stood still; no one was there to wind him up, and he could not sing without that; but Death continued to stare at the Emperor with his great hollow eyes, and it was quiet, fearfully quiet.

Then there sounded from the window, suddenly, the most lovely song. It was the little live Nightingale, that sat outside on a spray. It had heard of the Emperor's sad plight, and had come to sing to him of comfort and hope. And as it sang the specters grew paler and paler; the blood ran quicker and more quickly through the Emperor's weak limbs; and even Death listened, and said,

"Go on, little Nightingale, go on!"

"But will you give me that splendid golden sword? Will you give me that rich banner? Will you give me the Emperor's crown?"

And Death gave up each of these treasures for a song. And the Nightingale sang on and on; and it sang of the quiet churchyard where the white roses grow, where the elder-blossom smells sweet, and where the fresh grass is moistened by the tears of survivors. Then Death felt a longing to see his garden, and floated out at the window in the form of a cold white mist.

"Thanks! thanks!" said the Emperor. "You heavenly little bird! I know you well. I banished you from my country and empire, and yet you have charmed away the evil faces from my couch, and banished Death from my heart! How can I reward you?"

"You have rewarded me!" replied the Nightingale. "I have drawn tears from your eyes, when I sang the first time—I shall never forget that. Those are the jewels that rejoice a singer's heart. But now sleep and grow fresh and strong again. I will sing you something."

And it sang, and the Emperor fell into a sweet slumber. Ah! how mild and refreshing that sleep was! The sun shone upon him through the windows, when he awoke refreshed and restored: not one of his servants had yet returned, for they all thought he was dead; only the Nightingale still sat beside him and sang.

"You must always stay with me," said the Emperor. "You shall sing as you please; and I'll break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces."

"Not so," replied the Nightingale. "It did well as long as it could; keep it as you have done till now. I cannot build my nest in the palace to dwell in it, but let me come when I feel the wish; then I will sit in the evening on the spray yonder by the window, and sing you something, so that you may be glad and thoughtful at once. I will sing of those who are happy and of those who suffer. I will sing of the good and the evil that remains hidden round about you. The little singing bird flies far around, to the poor fisherman, to the peasant's roof, to every one who dwells far away from you and from your court. I love your heart more than your crown, and yet the crown has an air of sanctity about it. I will come and sing to you—but one thing you must promise me."

"Everything!" said the Emperor; and he stood there in his imperial robes, which he had put on himself, and pressed the sword which was heavy with gold to his heart.

"One thing I beg of you: tell no one that you have a little bird who tells you everything. Then it will go all the better."

And the Nightingale flew away.

The servants came in to look at their dead Emperor, and—yes, there they stood, and the Emperor said "Good morning!"

APPENDIX B

Stravinsky's Adaptation of "The Nightingale" by Hans Christian Andersen into a Three-Part Symphonic Poem for Orchestra and Ballet[377]

1. *The Fête in the Emperor of China's Palace*. In honour of the Nightingale that sang so sweetly "the palace was festively adorned. The walls and the flooring, which were of porcelain, gleamed in the rays of thousands of golden lamps. The most glorious flowers, which could ring clearly, had been placed in the passages. There was a running to and fro, and a thorough draught, so that all the bells rang loudly . . ." The Nightingale is placed on a golden perch; and a CHINESE MARCH signals the entrance of the Emperor.

2. *The Two Nightingales*. "The Nightingale sang so gloriously that the tears came into the Emperor's eyes. . . . The lackeys and chambermaids reported that they were satisfied too; and that was saying a good deal, for they are the most difficult to please. . . ." Envoys arrive from the Emperor of Japan with the gift of a mechanical nightingale. "So soon as the artificial bird was wound up, he could sing a piece, and then his tail moved up and down, and shone with silver and gold. . . . He had just as much success as the real one, and then it was much handsomer to look at. . . . But where was the living Nightingale? No one had noticed that it had flown away out of the open window. . . ." The fisherman is heard out-of-doors, singing for joy because his friend has returned.

3. *Illnesses and Recovery of the Emperor of China*. "The poor Emperor could scarcely breathe. He opened his eyes and saw that it was Death who sat up on his chest, and had put on his golden crown, and held in one hand the Emperor's sword, and in the other his beautiful banner. And all around, from among the folds of the splendid velvet curtains, strange heads peered forth . . . these were all the Emperor's bad and good deeds. . . . They told him so much that the perspiration ran from his forehead." The mechanical bird refused to sing. Then the little live Nightingale was heard singing outside the window. "And as it sang the specters grew paler and paler. . . . Even Death listened and said, 'Go on, little Nightingale, go on!' . . . And Death gave up each of its treasures for a song . . . and floated out at the window in the form of a cold white mist. . . . The Emperor fell into a sweet slumber. The sun shone upon him through the window when he awoke refreshed and restored."

   FUNERAL MARCH. "The courtiers came in to look at their dead Emperor, and—yes, there they stood astounded, and the Emperor said 'Good morning!'" Meanwhile, the friendly Nightingale has flown back to the fisherman who is heard singing his song once more.

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

[1] Henri Matisse, "Notes d'un peintre," *La Grande Revue* (December 25, 1908), quoted in Jack Flam, *Matisse on Art* (Berkely: University of California Press, 1995), 37.

[2] Henceforth, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art will be referred to as the Wadsworth Atheneum and the McNay Art Museum as the McNay.

[3] The following institutions own Matisse's costumes and/or sketches from the Ballets Russes production of *Le Chant du Rossignol*: National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut; McNay Museum of Art, San Antonio, Texas; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Israel Museum, Jerusalem; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, Switzerland; Theater Museum of the Victoria & Albert, London, England; The Dance Museum, Stockholm, Sweden; Theatre Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Lord Howard of Castle Howard Collection, York, England; and Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London, England. Please note that this is not a complete list as some exist in private collections or have not been recorded.

[4] Roger Leong, Introduction to *From Russia with Love: Costumes for the Ballets Russes 1909–1993* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 1999), 19–20. Sotheby & Co. and Richard Buckle, *Costumes and Curtains from the Diaghilev and de Basil Ballets* (London: Sotheby Parke-Bernet Publications, 1972), xvii. Anna Winestein, "The Ballets Russes on the Auction Block," in *The Ballets Russes and the Art of Design,* eds. Altston Purvis, Peter Rand, and Anna Winestein (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2009), 189. The practice of models wearing costumes for auction is no longer in practice to further protect against deterioration of the textiles.

[5] These two designs for the Lady of the Court parts will be respectively referred to in this thesis as *Costume for a Lady of the Court Embroidered* and *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted.*

[6] This data was assembled from Sotheby & Co., *Costumes and Curtains,* 83–95. The other two principal roles' costumes—the Mechanical Nightingale and Death—appear to be extant, save for their memory in a photograph (fig. 3.38) and preliminary sketches (fig. 4.59), respectively. It should also be noted that neither of the Real Nightingale's costumes—one for the original 1920 production and a second, also made by Matisse for the 1925 revival of the ballet—have been tracked to a specific owner.

[7] David Allen Plouffe, "Textiles in the Artwork of Henri Matisse: 1894 to 1940," MA Thesis (California State University, Fullerton, 2008).

[8] These include the *Costume for a Warrior* and *Costume for a Mourner*, the latter of which the author of this thesis had the opportunity to inspect another version of at the National Gallery of Art.

[9] Plouffe, "Textiles in the Artwork of Henri Matisse," 4.

[10] Ibid., 57.

[11] Hilary Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse: A Life of Henri Matisse, The Early Years, 1869–1908* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005).

[12] Hilary Spurling, *Matisse the Master: A Life of Henri Matisse, The Conquest of Colour, 1909–1954* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).

[13] Ibid., Preface, xvii.

[14] Alfred H. Barr, Jr., *Matisse: His Art and His Public* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1951).

[15] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 461.

[16] This number does not include endnotes, color illustrations, or prefaces.

[17] Hilary Spurling and Ann Dumas, eds., *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004). This traveling exhibition premiered at the Musée Matisse, Le Cateau-Cambrésis, France from October 23, 2004–January 25, 2005. It then traveled to the Royal Academy of Arts, London from March 5–May 30, 2005 and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York from June 23–September 25, 2005.

[18] Spurling, Preface to *The Unknown Matisse*, xix.

[19] Pierre Schneider, *Matisse,* trans. Michael Taylor and Bridget Strevens Romer (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1984).

[20] Ibid., Acknowledgements, np.

[21] Ibid., 155–186.

[22] Ibid., 624–26.

[23] Ibid., 177.

[24] Spurling, Preface to *Matisse the Master*, xviii.

[25] Flam, *Matisse on Art,* 2. Spurling also acknowledges his prolific letter writing in Spurling, Preface to *Matisse the Master*, xviii.

[26] Jack Flam, *Matisse on Art* (London: Phaidon, 1973).

[27] Flam, *Matisse on Art* (1995).

[28] Ibid., 25.

[29] Ibid., 4.

[30] Ibid., 11–12.

[31] Peter Rand, Introduction to *The Ballets Russes and the Art of Design,* eds. Altston Purvis, Peter Rand, and Anna Winestein (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2009), 8.

[32] Sarah Woodcock, "Ballets Russes Costumes and the Art of Design," in *The Ballets Russes and the Art of Design,* eds. Altston Purvis, Peter Rand, and Anna Winestein (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2009), 40.

[33] V. Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet:* Le Chant du Rossignol, exhibition catalogue (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 1991).

[34] Rémi Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London and His Collaboration with the 'Ballets Russes,'" *The Burlington Magazine* 139 (Sept. 1997): 588–99.

[35] Ibid., 593.

[36] Ibid., 594.

[37] Alexander Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes: The Serge Lifar Collection of Theater Designs, Costumes, and Paintings at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997).

[38] Choreography reenacted by the Real Nightingale from the revival of the production in 1925 (to be discussed in Chapter Two) exists at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. However, this particular reincarnation was re-choreographed and although it utilized Matisse's costumes and scenery from the 1920 production, is not the original dance movements that Matisse collaborated with, and therefore, renders it irrelevant to this discussion.

[39] Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, eds. Phyllis Hartnoll and Robert Rubens (London: MacMillan and Co., 1968).

[40] Igor Stravinsky, *Chronicle of My Life* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1936). Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Memories and Commentaries* (London: Faber and Faber, 2002).

[41] Vladimir Polunin, *The Continental Method of Scene Painting: Seven Years with the Diaghileff Company*, ed. Cyril W. Beaumont (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979).

[42] Death: Lydia Sokolova, *Dancing for Diaghilev: The Memoirs of Lydia Sokolova,* ed. Richard Buckle (San Francisco, CA: Mercury House, 1989). Chinese Emperor: Sergey Leonidovich Grigoriev, *The Diaghilev Ballet 1909–1929*, trans. and ed. Vera Bowen (London: Constable and Company, 1974). Interview with Alicia Markova (the Real Nightingale) from the 1925 revival in John Drummond, *Speaking of Diaghilev* (London: Faber and Faber, 1997).

[43] Igor Stravinsky and Pierre Boulez, "Le Chant du Rossignol Poème symphonique for orchestra," in *Boulez conducts Stravinsky*, compact disc (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 2001).

[44] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 438.

[45] Ibid., 49. These words were used to describe his decorative mural panel, *Dance* (fig. 2.11), commissioned by his earliest and primary collector, Sergei Shchukin. It will reappear throughout this thesis, particularly in Chapter Two.

[46] Ibid., 462.

CHAPTER TWO

[47] The circumstances surrounding Diaghilev and Stravinsky's visit to Matisse were relayed by his son, Pierre Matisse to Alfred Barr in *Matisse: His Art and His Public*, 207.

[48] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 3–7. Hilary Spurling, "Chronology" in *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004), 200.

[49] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 26.

[50] Ibid., 18, 25–27. Also see Hilary Spurling, "Material World: Matisse, His Art and His Textiles," and Ann Dumas, "Beginnings in Bohain," in *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004), 14–21 and 75, respectively.

[51] Spurling, "Chronology," 201. See Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 234–48 and 264–65 for details on the Humbert scandal that affected his wife and her family.

[52] Spurling, "Material World," 14 and 20. Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 34–35, 51, and 203.

[53] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 19–20. Spurling, "Chronology," 200.

[54] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 21 and 54. Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 131.

[55] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 42.

[56] In an interview with Jacques Guenne, Matisse exclaimed: "[W]ith what pleasure I also discovered Japanese woodcuts! What a lesson in purity, harmony, I received! To tell the truth, these woodcuts were mediocre reproductions, and yet I did not experience the same emotion when I saw the originals. Those no longer brought with them the newness of a revelation" from "Entretien avec Henri Matisse," *L'Art vivant*, 18 (September 1925), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 80.

[57] Rosamond Bernier, "The Matisse I Knew," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Lecture Series: The Modern Masters*, DVD (Kultur Video: 1995; originally taped in 1987). Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 78 and 95. Spurling, "Chronology," 200. Spurling, "Material World," 16 and 28–29. Ann Dumas, "A Balance of Forces," in *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004), 81. Specific textiles from the Orient and their impact on his costumes will be discussed in Chapter Four.

[58] Richard Wagner, "The Art-Work of the Future," in *Richard Wagner's Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (New York: Broude Bros, 1966), 95. This essay was originally published in 1849.

[59] Ibid., 155.

[60] Bernier, "The Matisse I Knew."

[61] Spurling, "Material World," 28–29. Ann Dumas, "A Decorative Art," in *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004), 98.

[62] See page 58–59 of this thesis.

[63] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 191 and 224–25. Mary E. Davis, *Classic Chic: Music, Fashion, and Modernism* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2006), 93 and 100–01.

[64] Paul Poiret, *King of Fashion: The Autobiography of Paul Poiret*, trans. Stephen Haden Guest (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott, 1931), 108.

[65] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 146–47 and 186–87.

[66] Kathryn B. Hiesinger and George H. Marcus, *Landmarks of Twentieth-Century Design: An Illustrated Handbook* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1993), 373.

[67] Dale Harris, "Diaghilev's Ballets Russes and the Vogue for Orientalism," in *The Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1909–1929*, ed. Nancy Van Norman Baer (San Francisco, CA: The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1988), 88. There is much debate over which came first: Poiret's fashions or Bakst's designs. Poiret maintained in his autobiography that his translation of Oriental costume into couture clothing preceded any influence from the Ballets Russes (Poiret, *King of Fashion,* 182), while the similarities between the two remain uncanny.

[68] Virginia Gardner Troy, *The Modernist Textile: Europe and America, 1890–1940* (Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 2006), 61 and 64. Dumas, "Beginnings in Bohain," 75.

[69] Matisse, "Notes d'un peintre," quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 40.

[70] The French term *toile du jouy* directly translates to "fabric from Jouy," a town in France that became noted for its copperplate-printed monochrome textiles starting in the eighteenth century. Over time, the term became a catchall phrase for copperplate printed fabrics, although they may not have been produced in Jouy. However, for this textile previously owned by Matisse, the technique was block-printing and therefore, not an accurate term.

[71] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 415–16. Dumas, "A Balance of Forces," 81.

[72] Schneider, *Matisse*, 148. Jack Flam, "Matisse and the Metaphysics of Decoration," in *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004), 37.

[73] Matisse, "Notes d'un peintre," quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 38.

[74] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 27.

[75] Ibid., 417.

[76] Jack Flam, *Matisse: The Dance* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1993), 23.

[77] Information on Shchukin and his relationship with Matisse from Spurling, "Material World," 24–25; Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 413–17; and Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 89.

[78] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 49.

[79] Henri Matisse, "On Modernism and Tradition," *The Studio* IX (May 1935) quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 121.

[80] It should be noted that Matisse was not the only artist drawn to equations between music and visual arts, for this quote echoes sentiments espoused by the Russian Modernist painter, Wassily Kandinsky in his 1914 *The Art of Spiritual Harmony* (originally published by Constable and Company in London and is more popularly known as *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*).

[81] Matisse quoted in an interview from Georges Charbonnier, "Entretien avec Henri Matisse," *Le Monologue de peintre*, vol. II (Paris, 1960; first recorded on tape in 1950 and broadcast in 1951) quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 189–90.

[82] Flam, *Matisse: The Dance*, 24–25.

[83] The term "orient" is used very broadly in the context of this thesis to describe cultures and arts from non-Western origins. See Chapter Four for a more thorough analysis of the term within its historic context.

[84] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 200. Schneider, *Matisse,* 170. Spurling, "Material World," 21–22. Flam, "Matisse and the Metaphysics of Decoration," 36.

[85] Bernier, "The Matisse I Knew."

[86] Elena Bridgman, "*Mir Iskusstva*: Origins of the Ballets Russes," in *The Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1909–1929*, ed. Nancy Van Norman Baer (San Francisco, CA: The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1988), 26.

[87] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 296. Richard Buckle, *Diaghilev* (New York: Atheneum, 1979), 40.

[88] Polunin, *The Continental Method of Scene Painting*, 37.

[89] Bridgman, "*Mir Iskusstva*," 26. Simon Karlinsky, "A Cultural Educator of Genius," in *The Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1909–1929*, ed. Nancy Van Norman Baer (San Francisco, CA: The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1988), 14 and 16–19. Natalia Metelitsa, "St. Petersburg to Paris," in *From Russia with Love: Costumes for the Ballets Russes 1909–1993* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 1999), 24.

[90] Bridgman, "*Mir Iskusstva*," 38. Karlinsky, "A Cultural Educator of Genius," 20. The following Russian-born artists living in Europe, mostly in Paris, in 1906 that had works (the number is indicated in parentheses) in the 1906 Salon d'automne included Albert Abramowitz (2), Alice Dannenberg (5), Elisabeth Epstein (4), Gerazim Golovkoff (2), Nathan Imenitoff (6), Basile Kandinsky (20), Constantin Kousnetzoff (4), Konstantin Kraaht (3), Olga Meerson (2), Abram Motinsky (1), Élie Pavill (2), Jean de Peské (3), Abel Pfeffermann (1), Léon Schulmann (2), Nicolas Seddeler (4), Max Silbert (1), Séraphin Soudbinine (7), and Ivan Thièle (3), out of 1,805 total works listed in the "Catalogue des Oeuvres Exposées" of the Salon d'automne, *Catalogue des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, dessin, gravure, architecture et art décoratif exposés au Grand Palais des Champs-Elysées du 6 octobre au 15 novembre 1906* (Paris: Compagnie française des Papiers-Monnaies, 1906), 27–172.

[91] John E. Bowlt, "From Studio to Stage: The Painters of the Ballets Russes," in *The Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1909–1929*, ed. Nancy Van Norman Baer (San Francisco, CA: The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1988), 47.

[92] Metelitsa, "St. Petersburg to Paris," 27–28. Karlinsky, "A Cultural Educator of Genius," 20 and 24. Robyn Healy and Michael Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage: Costumes and Designs from the Russian Ballet in the Australian National Gallery* (Canberra: The Australian National Gallery, 1990), 6–7. Leong, Introduction, 6–7.

[93] Metelitsa, "St. Petersburg to Paris," 28–33. Leong, Introduction, 7. Karlinsky, "A Cultural Educator of Genius," 21. Bridgman, "*Mir Iskusstva*," 36–38. Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage,* 4.

[94] Nancy Van Norman Baer, "Design and Choreography: Cross-Influences in the Theatrical Art of the Ballets Russes," in *The Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1909–1929*, ed. Nancy Van Norman Baer (San Francisco, CA: The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1988), 64 and 69.

[95] Information about Matisse's visit and acquaintance with Goncharova comes from Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 94 and 153–54. Matisse's belief in a link between his painting and Gontcharova's design comes from a questionnaire issued to Matisse and his family, the results of which are published in Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 207.

[96] Leong, Introduction, 14. Metelitsa, "St. Petersburg to Paris," 39. Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage,* 7. Bridgman, "*Mir Iskusstva*," 43. Baer, "Design and Choreography," 72.

[97] Serge Diaghilev, quoted by Olin Downes in *The Boston Post*, Boston, January 1916 as cited in Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes*, 27.

[98] Alexandre Benois, *Reminiscences of the Russian Ballet*, trans. Mary Britnieva (New York: Da Capo Press, 1977), 361. Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 128–29. Charles M. Joseph, *Stravinsky & Balanchine: A Journey of Invention* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 56. Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 207. Selma Jeanne Cohen, "Ballet Productions, 1910–1962," in *Stravinsky and the Dance: A Survey of Ballet Productions 1910–1962* (New York: The Dance Collection of the New York Public Library, 1962), 43.

[99] Joseph, *Stravinsky & Balanchine,* 56–57.

[100] Stravinsky, *Chronicle of My Life*, 110–11.

[101] For a detailed discussion of the differences between musical scores for the opera and ballet version of *Le (Chant du) Rossignol*, see Eric Walter White, *Stravinsky: The Composer and His Works* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 193–94.

[102] Cohen, "Ballet Productions, 1910–1962," 44. Baer, "Design and Choreography," 72. Robert C. Hansen, *Scenic and Costume Design for the Ballets Russes* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1985), 57. Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage,* 50.

[103] This desire was expressed by many artists of this time period as noted by Bowlt, "From Studio to Stage," 49. Also see Schneider, *Matisse,* 624.

[104] Letter to Amélie Matisse dated Friday, October 17, 1919 as quoted in Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 594.

[105] Baer, "Design and Choreography," 72. Massine also owned one of Matisse's paintings at this time according to Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 207.

[106] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 233–34.

[107] Ibid., 39. Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet*, VI. Leong, Introduction, 15. Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 258.

[108] Troy, *The Modernist Textile,* 61.

[109] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 233. Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 588. Diaghilev's daily visits are noted by Matisse in a letter to his wife dated October 15, 1919 as quoted in the original French in Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 595.

[110] Matisse comments, "I began my day at 9 o'clock and I finished it at midnight. This night [I worked] till 1:30." Letter to his wife dated Wednesday, October 15, 1919 and translated by the author from the original French in Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 596.

[111] Letter to his wife dated Friday, November 21, 1919 and translated by the author from the original French in Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 595.

[112] Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 589. The chronology of these events comes from various letters between Amélie and Henri. Labrusse printed excerpts of their personal correspondence in the original French with permission from the Archives Matisse in Paris. Although he extrapolates much of the pertinent information, it has also been translated by the author to receive a more detailed picture of not just the logistics of the design, but the effort and emotion Matisse put into the production.

[113] The scholarship on whether or not Matisse and/or a design assistant painted directly on the fabric is inconsistent. Chapter Three will look at the painted strokes to hypothesize their creator.

[114] Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage,* 50.

[115] Ibid.

[116] In a letter from Matisse to Stravinky, he suggested Marie Muelle to create the costume for the 1925 revival of *Le Chant du Rossignol* (Stravinsky and Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, 113). Marie Muelle

appears in the contract according to Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet,* XVIIIn32. Her work with Bakst is mentioned in Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 72n6. Labrusse wrote that some of the costumes were "made by Marie Muelle in the atelier of Paul Poiret" in a caption to one of the images in "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 589.

[117] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 230–33. Information about this particular disagreement is from a letter Matisse wrote to Amélie dated November 21, 1919 as quoted in Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 233.

[118] Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 595.

[119] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 222.

[120] Ibid., 233–34.

[121] Ibid., 223.

[122] Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 208.

[123] Jean-Louis Vaudoyer in *La Gaulois*, Paris, February 11, 1920 as quoted in Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 258–59.

[124] Grigoriev, *The Diaghilev Ballet 1909–1929*, 152.

[125] From *The Observer* (5 June 1921) as quoted in Leong, Introduction, 14.

[126] Boris Kochno, *Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes,* trans. Adrienne Foulke (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 138.

[127] Davis, *Classic Chic,* 174.

[128] Quote from *La Vie Parisienne* as cited in Buckle, *Diaghilev*, 362.

[129] Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 208. Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet,* XII. Davis, *Classic Chic,* 174.

[130] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 234.

[131] Letter from Marguerite to Matisse dated February 22, 1920 as quoted in Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 234.

[132] Walter Gropius, "Program for the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar," in Hans M. Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, trans. Wolfgang Jabs and Basil Gilbert (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969), 31 as quoted in Juliet Koss, "Bauhaus Theater of Human Dolls," *The Art Bulletin* 85, no. 4 (2003): 738.

[133] Interestingly, mechanization equated with human form had roots in late-nineteenth century French ballet and opera according to Koss, "Bauhaus Theater of Human Dolls," 728.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid., 740.

[136] Ibid., 735. For more information on Modernist theater, also see Tag Gronberg, "Performing Modernism," in *Modernism: Designing of New World*, ed. Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 112–47.

[137] Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 25. Buckle, *Diaghilev*, 516. Matisse turned down the offers to design *Le Fils Prodigue (The Prodigal Son)* according to Schouvaloff (300–01) and again to redesign *Schéhérazade* (Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 598).

[138] Stravinsky's reaction to the revival is from Joseph, *Stravinsky & Balanchine,* 59.

[139] Markova later bridged the transition from Diaghilev's Ballets Russes to its successor, the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo. For footage of her dancing, see Marian Seldes, Robert Hawk, Douglas Blair Turnbaugh, Dayna Goldfine, Daniel Geller, Gary Weimberg, and Celeste Schaefer Snyder, *Ballets Russes,* DVD (New York: Zeitgeist Films, 2005).

[140] Kochno, *Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes,* 141. Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 259. Cohen, "Ballet Productions, 1910–1962," 44. Grigoriev, *The Diaghilev Ballet*, 205 and 209. Although most scholars concur that this version was more popular, Barr records that it was not successful in *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 208.

[141] Matisse's Radio Interviews (1942), transcript in French from Pierre Schneider quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 146.

[142] Schouvaloff, *Set and Costume Designs for Ballet and Theater*, 13–14.

CHAPTER THREE

[143] Ragnar Hoppe, "På visit hos Matiss," in *Städer och Konstnärer, resebrev och essäer om Konst*, Stockholm, 1931 (interview from 1919), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 75–76.

[144] Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 595–96.

[145] Matisse, "Notes d'un peintre" quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 42.

[146] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 405.

[147] Ibid., 305.

[148] Matisse, "Notes d'un peintre," quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 41.

[149] As quoted in Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage*, 7.

[150] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 15.

[151] Henri Matisse, "Rôle et modalités de la couleur," in Gaston Diehl, *Problèmes de la peinture* (Lyons, 1945), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 155.

[152] Letter dated Monday, October 27, 1919 and translated from the original French by the author as cited in Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 589.

[153] Schneider, *Matisse*, 148–50. Lydia Delectorskaya, his later model and secretary, reminisced that blue was by far the artist's favorite color as cited in Spurling, "Material World," 17.

[154] Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 596.

[155] Michel Georges-Michel, *From Renoir to Picasso: Artists in Action*, trans. Dorothy and Randolph Weaver (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957), 32.

[156] Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes*, 258.

[157] Stravinsky and Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, 112.

[158] Hans Christian Andersen, "The Nightingale," in *Fairy Tales and Other Stories*, trans. W. A. & J. K. Craigie (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), 228.

[159] Georges-Michel, *From Renoir to Picasso,* 31–32, emphasis added.

[160] R. H. W., "Matisse and Dufy as Designers," *The Atheneum: A Journal of English and Foreign Literature, Science, the Fine Arts, Music and the Drama* (13 August 1920): 217 as quoted in Baer, "Design and Choreography," 72.

[161] Henri Matisse, "Notes d'un peinture sur son dessin," *Le Point*, no. 21 (July 1939), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 130.

[162] Matisse quoted in an interview from Georges Charbonnier, "Entretien avec Henri Matisse," *Le Monologue de peintre*, vol. II (Paris, 1960; first recorded on tape in 1950 and broadcast in 1951) quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 194.

[163] Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet*, XII.

[164] See page 36 of this thesis. Quote from *La Vie Parisienne* as quoted in Buckle, *Diaghilev*, 362.

[165] Thanks to Heidi Näsström Evans for pointing out this similarity. The work of Asian calligraphers was observed firsthand by the author at the Japan Information and Culture Center at the Embassy of Japan in Washington DC.

[166] Henri Matisse, "Notes d'un peinture sur son dessin," *Le Point*, no. 21 (July 1939), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 131.

[167] First published as "L'exactitude n'est pas la vérité," in *Henri Matisse: Dessins* (Paris, 1947), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 180.

[168] Ibid., 181.

[169] Woodcock, "Ballets Russes Costumes and the Art of Design," 40. Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 589.

[170] Unpublished letter, February 1976, courtesy Archives Matisse as quoted and translated in Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet,* XVIIIn26.

[171] Julia Burke (Textile Conservator, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC), in discussion with author, January 8, 2010.

[172] See page 3 of this thesis.

[173] Julia Burke, in discussion with author, March 9, 2010.

[174] Curatorial record for *Costume for a Lady of the Court* at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, CT as recorded on June 6, 1996.

[175] Information about Camille and Amélie from Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 77–78 and 153–54, respectively.

[176] The author was unsure if these stitches were produced by hand or machine owing to their consistency, but after a conversation with Julia Burke during review of the author's photography on March 9, 2010, they are believed to have been hand-sewn.

[177] Sarah Stein's Notes, 1908, transcribed by John Dodds, quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 48.

[178] Unfortunately, this additional padding on the costume likely exacerbated the deterioration since it would retain more moisture for longer, creating a favorable environment for mold to grow. Julia Burke, in discussion with author, March 9, 2010.

[179] Plouffe, "Textiles in the Artwork of Henri Matisse: 1894 to 1940," 59.

[180] Koss, "Bauhaus Theater of Human Dolls," 732.

[181] Andersen, "The Nightingale," 230.

[182] Description from observations of the photograph from the souvenir program (see fig. 3.36) and as recorded in Sotheby & Co. and Buckle, *Costumes and Curtains from the Diaghilev and de Basil Ballets*, 93.

[183] Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, 148.

[184] Drummond, *Speaking of Diaghilev*, 251.

[185] Joseph, *Stravinsky & Balanchine*, 68.

[186] Drummond, *Speaking of Diaghilev,* 251.

[187] Sokolova, *Dancing for Diaghilev*, 146.

[188] Schneider, *Matisse,* 34–35.

[189] E. Teriade, "Visite à Henri Matisse," *L'Intransigeant*, 14 and 22 January 1929 (also known as "On Fauvism and Color), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 84.

[190] Matisse's Radio Interviews, 1942, transcript in French from Pierre Schneider to Flam as quoted in *Matisse on Art*, 146.

[191] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse,* 212.

[192] Spurling, "Material World," 23.

[193] Spurling, *Matisse the Maste*, 175.

[194] Buckram is "a plain weave, coarse, open fabric that is sized heavily and used principally as a stiffener that is placed between the lining and the surface cloth of a garment to give it shape or form. Also serves such uses as hat shapes and bookbinding. Made with cotton, linen, hemp, hair, and other materials. Also made by gluing two open weave, sized cotton fabrics together. Usually white or plain colors." Phyllis G. Tortora and Robert S. Merkel, eds., *Fairchild's Dictionary of Textiles*, 7th ed. (New York: Fairchild Publications, 2007), 77.

[195] Julia Burke, in discussion with author, January 8, 2010.

[196] Baer, "Design and Choreography," 75.

[197] Plouffe, "Textiles in the Artwork of Henri Matisse," 60.

[198] Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage,* 50.

[199] According to Julia Burke, the *Costume for a Mourner* was previously displayed on a mannequin form with fanned out skirt, but still with its cut-out neighbors. She also notes that this is the difference between costume exhibition and fine arts presentation. In discussion with author, January 28, 2010.

[200] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 232. The quote, as cited by Spurling, came from Pierre Courthion, "Conversations avec Henri Matisse," unpublished ts, Getty Center for the History of Art, Santa Monica, CA, 87.

[201] Recorded by Pierre Courthion as quoted in Schneider, *Matisse,* 624. Sadly this maquette is no longer in existence.

[202] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 120.

[203] Ibid., 231.

[204] Georges-Michel, *From Renoir to Picasso,* 31.

[205] Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 232.

[206] Polunin, *The Continental Method of Scene Painting*, 61–62.

[207] For more information on the designs by Depero see Joseph, *Stravinsky & Balanchine,* 58; Cohen, "Ballet Productions, 1910–1962," 44; Hansen, *Scenic and Costume Design for the Ballets Russes*, 57; Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 257; and Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage,* 50.

[208] Matisse, "Notes d'un peintre," quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 40.

[209] Schneider, *Matisse,* 177.

[210] Spurling, Preface to *Matisse the Master*, xviii.

[211] Henri Matisse, "On Modernism and Tradition," *The Studio*, IX (May 1935), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 121.

[212] The author made adjustments of the quote from Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 595–96.

CHAPTER FOUR

[213] Pierre Schneider, "The Moroccan Hinge," in *Matisse in Morocco: The Paintings and Drawings, 1912–1913* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1990), 30.

[214] Henri Matisse, "Notes d'un peinture sur son dessin," *Le Point*, no. 21 (July 1939), quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 130.

[215] Davis, *Classic Chic,* 174.

[216] Stravinsky and Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, 112.

[217] Richard Martin and Harold Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), 11.

[218] Schneider, *Matisse*, 163.

[219] Martin and Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress,* 9.

[220] Baer, "Design and Choreography," 63. Martin and Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress,* 13. Mary Anne Stevens, "Western Art and its Encounter with the Islamic World: 1798–1914," in *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse: The Allure of North Africa and the Near East* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1984), 22.

[221] Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet*, VI. Leong, Introduction, 8. Bowlt, "From Studio to Stage," 47 and 52. Woodcock, "Ballets Russes Costumes and the Art of Design," 68. Also see page 21 of this thesis.

[222] Baer, "Design and Choreography," 63.

[223] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 4.

[224] Ibid., 3.

[225] Ibid., 43.

[226] Inna Isidorovna Vishnevskaya, "Eastern Treasures of the Russian Tsars," in *The Tsars and the East: Gifts from Turkey and Iran in the Moscow Kremlin*, ed. Dr. Alexey Konstantinovich Levykin (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), 2.

[227] Ibid., 7 and 12. Julian Raby, Foreword to *The Tsars and the East: Gifts from Turkey and Iran in the Moscow Kremlin*, ed. Dr. Alexey Konstantinovich Levykin (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), ix–x.

[228] Vishnevskaya, "Eastern Tresures," 4.

[229] Ibid., 3 and 7.

[230] Fereshteh Daftari, *The Influence of Persian Art on Gauguin, Matisse, and Kandinsky* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1991), 168–69 and 179. Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 85.

[231] Rémi Labrusse, "'What Remains Belongs to God': Henri Matisse, Alois Riegl and the Arts of Islam," trans. Caroline Beamish, in *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004), 51.

[232] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 351.

[233] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 44–45.

[234] Labrusse, "'What Remains Belongs to God,'" 53.

[235] Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 46.

[236] Ibid., 54. Daftari, *The Influence of Persian Art,* 178. Roger Fry, "The Munich Exhibition of Mohammedan Art-I," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs 17*, no. 89 (Aug. 1910): 283. Dumas, "A Balance of Forces," 82. Labrusse notes that "[e]ven now this exhibition remains the most outstanding event ever devoted to Islamic art . . . textiles were its main focus, in quantity as well as quality," in "'What Remains Belongs to God,'" 49.

[237] Daftari, *The Influence of Persian Art,* 181–82.

[238] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 299 and 354–55. Bernier, "The Matisse I Knew."

[239] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 360.

[240] Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet,* VI–VII.

[241] Kandinsky, a Russian contemporary of Matisse, also introduced an innovative interpretation of similar experiences to the art world apart from his predecessors like Matisse. See Stevens, "Western Art and its Encounter with the Islamic World," 22 for the difference in generations of artists depicting the Orient.

[242] Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 134.

[243] Pierre Courthion, "Conversations avec Henri Matisse," unpublished ts, Getty Center for the History of Art, Santa Monica, CA, 87 as quoted in Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 229.

[244] Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage,* 50.

[245] Caroline Bugler, "'Innocents Abroad': Nineteenth-Century Artists and Travelers in the Near East and North Africa," in *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse: The Allure of North Africa and the Near East* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1984), 27.

[246] Daftari, *The Influence of Persian Art,* 208.

[247] In a later statement from 1947, Matisse declared: "Revelation thus came to me from the Orient" as quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 178.

[248] Schneider, *Matisse*, 176.

[249] As quoted in Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 61n99.

[250] Martin and Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress,* 37. Also see page 16 of this thesis.

[251] Dumas, "A Balance of Forces," 81.

[252] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 364.

[253] Labrusse, "'What Remains Belongs to God,'" 55. Spurling, "Material World," 31–32.

[254] Letter between Henri Matisse and Marguerite Duthuit, 28 September 1943, Matisse Archives, Paris as quoted in Spurling, "Material World," 32.

[255] Henri Matisse, "Le chemin de la couleur: Propos de Henri Matisse" (also known as "The Path of Color"), *Art Présent* 2, 1947: 23, quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 178

[256] Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 593.

[257] Letter to Amélie, 18 October 1919 as quoted in Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 230.

[258] Verity Wilson, *Chinese Dress* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1986), 9 and 12.

[259] Maria Tatar, *The Annotated Hans Christian Andersen* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 80.

[260] Unfortunately, the original costumes and set designs no longer exist and all that remains are his preparatory drawings and paintings, according Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes*, 129.

[261] Benois, *Reminiscences of the Russian Ballet*, 359.

[262] Ibid., 362.

[263] Bowlt, "From Studio to Stage," 51. Hansen, *Scenic and Costume Design for the Ballets Russes*, 48 and 77. Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 131.

[264] Alexander Schouvaloff, "Orientalism and Exoticism," in *Working for Diahilev*, ed. Sjeng Scheijen (Groningen, Netherlands: Groninger Museum, 2004), 35.

[265] Information on the collection of the Musée Guimet from Guimet Museum, "History of the Museum," http://www.guimet.fr/History-of-the-museum (accessed March 8, 2010).

[266] Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, 147.

[267] John E. Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne: Costume of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911)* (Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 2002), 88.

[268] Ibid., 26. Patricia Anawalt, *The Worldwide History of Dress* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2007), 355. Jennifer Harris, ed., *5,000 Years of Textiles* (London: British Museum Press, 2004), 133 and 141. Shelagh Vainker, *Chinese Silk: A Cultural History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 8 and 20.

[269] Martin and Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress,* 15. Vainker, *Chinese Silk,* 170.

[270] Information on Chinese cuff bands from Wilson, *Chinese Dress,* 61.

[271] Ibid., 48–49. Harris, *5,000 Years of Textiles,* 139.

[272] Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 232–33.

[273] Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, 147.

[274] Andersen, "The Nightingale," 235.

[275] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 24–26.

[276] Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage*, 52.

[277] Vainker, *Chinese Silk,* 90.

[278] Wilson, *Chinese Dress*, 81. John E. Vollmer, *Five Colours of the Universe: Symbolism in Clothes and Fabrics of the Ch'ing Dynasty (1644–1911)* (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: The Edmonton Art Gallery, 1980), 9.

[279] Many were partnered with a pair of trousers, but since most are not in existence and are very minimal in construction, will not be discussed in this thesis. It is the robes that are the vital signifiers of the individual roles and each demonstrates different aspects of traditional Chinese garment construction.

[280] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 27.

[281] Ibid., 92.

[282] Description of Chinese Collar from the late 19th to the early 20th century as part of the Textile Museum's Textile of the Month online at http://www.textilemuseum.org/totm/chinesecollarindex.htm (accessed March 11, 2010).

[283] Linda Wrigglesworth, *"The Accessory" China: Exhibition, 3rd April–26th April 1991* (London: Linda Wrigglesworth, 1991), np. Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 35.

[284] Curatorial record for *Costume for a Lady of the Court Painted* at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, CT as recorded on June 6, 1996.

[285] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 76.

[286] Ibid., 76. Linda Wrigglesworth, *The Badge of Rank II, China: Exhibition, 27th November–20th December 1991* (London: Linda Wrigglesworth, 1991), 2.

[287] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 2. Anawalt, *The Worldwide History of Dress,* 163.

[288] Curatorial record for *Costume for a Chamberlain* at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, CT as recorded on June 6, 1996.

[289] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 76. Anawalt, *The Worldwide History of Dress,* 163.

[290] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 56.

[291] Ibid.

[292] Ibid., 116. Vollmer, *Five Colours of the Universe*, 25. Anawalt, *The Worldwide History of Dress,* 173.

[293] Harris, *5,000 Years of Textiles,* 136. Vainker also notes the reliance of embroiderers on gold-wrapped threads in *Chinese Silk,* 105.

[294] Wang Yarong, *Chinese Embroidery: A World of Fable and Color* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1987), 13.

[295] Jody Blake (Theatre Arts Curator, McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX), in discussion with author, March 16, 2010.

[296] Harris, *5,000 Years of Textiles,* 141.

[297] Vollmer, *Five Colours of the Universe*, 18 and 25. Anawalt, *The Worldwide History of Dress,* 170.

[298] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 116. Anawalt, *The Worldwide History of Dress,* 170.

[299]Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 106–07.

[300] Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 260.

[301] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 107.

[302] Ibid., 93.

[303] Ibid., 129.

[304] Ibid., 82. Anawalt, *The Worldwide History of Dress*, 158–59.

[305] Vollmer, *Five Colours of the Universe*, 3.

[306] However, Vainker notes that these restrictions were later lifted in *Chinese Silk,* 156.

[307] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 85.

[308] Vollmer, *Five Colours of the Universe*, 5.

[309] Sokolova, *Dancing for Diaghilev*, 146–47.

[310] David R. Kinsley, *Hindu Goddesses: Visions of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 124.

[311] Ibid., 116. Devdutt Pattanaik, *The Goddess in India: The Five Faces of the Eternal Feminine* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2000), 126.

[312] Richard T. Blurton, *Hindu Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 173.

[313] S. Balaram, "Product Symbolism of Gandhi and Its Connection with Indian Mythology," *Design Issues* 5, no. 2 (1989): 68.

[314] Ibid.

[315] Igor Stravinsky and Pierre Boulez, *Boulez conducts Stravinsky* booklet (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 2001), 4.

[316] Stravinsky, *Chronicle of My Life*, 87–88.

[317] Barsky, *Matisse at the Ballet,* IX. Baer, "Design and Choreography," 72 and 75.

[318] Sokolova, *Dancing for Diaghilev,* 147.

[319] Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, 147–48.

[320] Henry Prunieres, "Igor Stravinsky's 'Le Chant de Rossignol,'" *The Chesterian*, no. 9 (September 1920): 274.

[321] Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 596–97.

[322] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 27. Anawalt, *The Worldwide History of Dress*, 161.

[323] Sokolova, *Dancing for Diaghilev,* 148.

[324] Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne*, 27.

[325] Vollmer, *Five Colours of the Universe*, 19.

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[326] Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes*, 25. Buckle, *Diaghilev*, 516. Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 598.

[327] From a letter to wife, Amélie, dated January 1, 1919 as quoted in Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 243.

[328] Letter to his wife, Amélie as quoted in Spurling, *Matisse the Master,* 243. This incident is also cited in Spurling, "Material World," 28.

[329] Schneider, *Matisse*, 172.

[330] Dumas, "A Decorative Art," 97. Spurling, "Material World," 28.

[331] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 246.

[332] See page 22–23 of this thesis.

[333] Plouffe, "Textiles in the Artwork of Henri Matisse: 1894 to 1940," 4.

[334] These are opinions repeated by but not shared by Rosamond Bernier in her lecture "The Matisse I Knew."

[335] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 326. The Cone Collection now resides at the Baltimore Museum of Art in Baltimore, MD and contains "a group of 500 works by Matisse, considered the largest and most significant in the world" according to their website about the history of the collection (Baltimore Museum of Art, "Collection: Cone Collection," http://www.artbma.org/collection/overview/cone.html [accessed December 1, 2010]).

[336] Matisse reflected: "'One of the most striking things in America is the Barnes collection, which is exhibited in a spirit very beneficial for the formation of American artists. There the old master paintings are put beside the modern ones, a Douanier Rousseau next to a Primitive, and this bringing together helps students understand a lot of things that the academies don't reach.'" ("Entretien avec Teriade," *L'Intransigeant*, 20 and 27 October 1930 (also known as "On Travel") quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 92.)

[337] See page 20 of this thesis.

[338] Flam, *Matisse: The Dance*, 9, 16, and 18.

[339] Matisse quoted in an interview from Georges Charbonnier, "Entretien avec Henri Matisse," *Le Monologue de peintre*, vol. II (Paris, 1960; first recorded on tape in 1950 and broadcast in 1951) quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 191.

[340] Flam, *Matisse: The Dance,* 22 and 31.

[341] Ibid., 26. Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public*, 254.

[342] Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, 27.

[343] Flam, *Matisse: The Dance,* 75.

[344] Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, 211–12.

[345] Les Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo was founded by Colonel W. de Basil and René Blum in 1932. By 1935, de Basil became the sole producer and employed many of the original collaborators from the Diaghilev years, according to Leong, Introduction, 16.

[346] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 380

[347] The ballet also appeared in Paris for a season under the name *L'Etrange Farandole*, after the popular French dance, which Matisse witnessed at the Moulin de la Galette and had inspired him in the painting of his *Dance* mural from 1910 (see page 25 of this thesis). Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 599. Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 253–54.

[348] Lydia Delectorskaya, *With Apparent Ease. . . Henri Matisse: Paintings from 1935–1939*, trans. Olga Tourkoff (Paris: Adrien Maeght Editeur, 1988), 277.

[349] Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, 212.

[350] Dominique Szymusiak, "Chasubles: 'The Purest and Most Radiant Works Ever Created by Matisse,'" in *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004), 64.

[351] Blake, in discussion with author, March 16, 2010.

[352] Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 254.

[353] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 380.

[354] Delectorskaya, *With Apparent Ease. . .*, 277.

[355] Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 224. Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 385.

[356] Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, 212.

[357] Labrusse, "Matisse's Second Visit to London," 599.

[358] Spurling, "Material World," 30–31.

[359] Ibid., 32; Letter between Henri Matisse and Marguerite Duthuit, 11 February 1945, Matisse Archives, Paris.

[360] Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 391 and 398–99.

[361] Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 169.

[362] Spurling, "Material World," 31.

[363] Spurling, "Chronology," 203. However, Spurling does not acknowledge the direct link between cut paper and appliqué.

[364] According to Bernier in her lecture, "The Matisse Nobody Knew," Matisse told a reporter that he went to Tahiti "to see its light."

[365] Another perpetual interest of Matisse was his affinity for birds. Starting at an early age in Bohain, Matisse had always been enchanted by the "song of birds" or le chant des oiseaux. Around the time of the *Le Chant du Rossignol* commission, Massine went to visit the artist to discuss their collaboration. The choreographer describes Matisse's living quarters where "one of the best rooms was occupied by a giant

birdcage. He had hundreds of exotic birds from all over the world, and was so proud of them that he even carried about an official document testifying to the vocal range of his favorite nightingale. He was naturally delighted at the idea of doing the décor for *Le Chant du Rossignol*, and told me at once that he thought it should be simple but elegant. He was also very interested in the problem of dressing the real and the mechanical nightingales" (Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, 147; fig. 5.28). Ironically, in 1937, when Matisse nearly died from bronchial pneumonia he claimed that a songthrush's singing drowned out his cries of pain during an operation and thereafter became symbolic of "his own will to survive the winter ordeals that came to seem to him a kind of ritual cleansing, from which he emerged deathly weak but purged and purified each spring" (Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 379). Just as the Chinese Emperor credited the Real Nightingale in saving him from Death, so too, did Matisse regain energy from the songthrush.

[366] For more on the "Ascher Panels," see Dominique Szymusiak, "The Color of Ideas: Chasubles and African Fabrics," in *Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2004), 155; Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 169; Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 445; and Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 279.

[367] Henri Matisse, "Océanie, tenture murale," *Labyrinthe*, II, 3 (December 1946) quoted in Flam, *Matisse on Art*, 169.

[368] Matisse also participated in a project in 1949 where limited edition prints of works by modern artists were made into silk-screened mural scrolls for with Katzenbach and Warren, Inc. For more information, see Katzenbach and Warren, Inc., *Mural Scrolls: Calder, Matisse, Matta, Miro* (Katzenbach and Warren, Inc., 1949). Information on silk-screen inventions from Harris, *5,000 Years of Textiles*, 38.

[369] Troy, *The Modernist Textile*, 98–99.

[370] For more information on specific tapestry commissions, see Spurling, "Chronology," 204. Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 223, 250–51, 257, 261, and 278–79. Delectorskaya, *With Apparent Ease,* 152. Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 365 and 373. Matisse also designed a rug for Alexander Smith, Inc. in Yonkers, NY in 1948 according to Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 279. One edition of this rug resides in the collection of The Baltimore Museum of Art in Baltimore, MD (fig. 5.37).

[371] Interestingly, Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus, as discussed in Chapter Two, transferred his idea of the perfect venue for *Gesamtkunstwerk* from the theater to a church setting, feeling it could better address all forms of art (Koss, "Bauhaus Theater of Human Dolls," 738).

[372] Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 549.

[373] For information on Matisse's Vence commission, see Spurling, *Matisse the Master*, 448–50; Bernier, "The Matisse I Knew;" Barr, *Matisse: His Art and His Public,* 548–49; Schouvaloff, *The Art of Ballets Russes,* 259; Healy and Lloyd, *From Studio to Stage,* 50; and, especially, Szymusiak, "Chasubles," 64–69.

[374] Henri Matisse, M. A. Couturier and L. B. Rayssiguier, *La Chapelle de Vence: Journal d'une création*, ed. Marcel Billot (Paris, 1993), 101.

[375] Ibid., 361. Spurling, "Material World," 14.

APPENDICES

[376] Hans Christian Andersen, "The Nightingale," in *Fairy Tales and Other Stories*, trans. W. A. & J. K. Craigie (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), 228–37. Although this story was originally written in Danish in 1844, this version of "The Nightingale" by Hans Christian Andersen was published in 1914. This

date corresponds to the same time frame that Diaghilev and Stravinsky's first became interested in reconceptualizing the story into an opera, and then later, the ballet that Matisse designed.

[377] Printed in full from White, *Stravinsky*, 192. The quotations are excerpts selected by Stravinsky from Andersen's original fairy tale.

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