Woodblock - Nude in profile on a chaise longue (The Large Woodcut)

Object: Woodblock

Place of origin: France (cut)

Date: 1906 (cut)

Artist/Maker: Matisse, Henri, born 1869 - died 1954 (artist)

Materials and Techniques: Incised fruit-wood

Credit Line: Bought with the assistance of the Lumley Cazalet Gallery, whose gift was made in memory of Frank Perls

Museum number: E.609-1975

Gallery location: Paintings, Room 88a, The Edwin and Susan Davies Galleries, case SW

Public access description

This woodblock is made up of two joined planks of pearwood. Matisse (1869-1954) cut away the wood to make the design with knives, chisels and gouges to leave the stark lines, dashes and dots that form the printed image. Although an impression printed from this block was identified as a 'woodcut' in an exhibition catalogue of 1907, for many years after the print was thought to be a linocut, and described as such in many publications about Matisse. It was only when the woodblock was found in the 1960s was it universally accepted that the print was in fact a woodcut.

Descriptive line

'Nude in profile on a chaise longue (The Large Woodcut)', woodblock (for E.276-1994), Henri Matisse, 1906

Physical description

Cut woodblock depicting seated female nude in profile. Block formed from two thick joined planks.

Dimensions

Height: 50 cm, Width: 37.5 cm, Depth: 5 cm with wooden support baton

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Object history note

Although a print from this block is described as a ‘gravure sur bois’ in the catalogue of the Salon des Independants of 1907, it was thought to be a linocut for many years and is described as such in much of the literature. Only on the re-discovery of the wood-block in the 1960s was the print re-instated as a woodcut. An edition of 50 impressions was printed from the block, one exists in MOMA and another in the BM.

URL

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O71621/nude-in-profile-on-a-woodblock-matisse-henri/