

Brassaï, photographer. His encounter with Matisse

Two photographic exhibitions, The Matisse Museum/Théâtre de la Photographie et de l'Image

25 February - 3 June 2012

The Matisse Museum and the Théâtre de la photographie et de l'image de Nice present the exhibition: *Brassaï, photographer. His encounter with Matisse*, to pay tribute to this great artist and to honour the legacy of Madame Gilberte Brassaï, which in 2011 was granted to the Town of Nice for the benefit of the Matisse Museum.

This legacy comprises sixty-eight photographs, a sculpture – *Vénus blanche III* – the illustrated book *Transmutations* and five drawings.

For this event, le Théâtre de la Photographie et de l'Image presents a panorama of the photographic creation of Brassaï, based around several series such as *Paris By Day*, *Paris By Night*, *the Secret Paris of the 1930s*, *the Graffiti series* and *The Riviera*, constituted of photographs some of which form part of the legacy and have never previously been presented. The Matisse Museum will be exhibiting images chosen in line with themes that link the works of the painter and the photographer.

Guyla Halász, known as Brassaï (1899-1984) – a pseudonym which he borrowed from his native town of Brasso in Transylvania – first became a painter, settling in Paris in January 1924. At that time he was a correspondent for several Hungarian and German journals and magazines. In 1929, he began to devote himself to photography. In 1932, his work found recognition in the publication of the book *Paris By Night*, with a foreword by Paul Morand. Brassaï frequented literary and artistic figures: Queneau, Miller, Prévert, Max Jacob, Reverdy, Léger, Le Corbusier, Breton, Eluard, Man Ray, Matisse, Dali. He photographed Picasso's sculptures and in 1965 published the book *Conversations with Picasso*. At the end of his life, Brassaï received several honours; he was made an honorary member of the American Society of Magazine Photographers in 1966, and was awarded the first French national Grand Prix for photography by the Ministry of Culture in Paris in 1978.