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Two Models Resting, 1928, by Henri Matisse.

MASTER CLASSES

Henri Matisse's appeal—and influence—would appear to be inexhaustible. Not only is the French master a surefire crowd-pleaser, but curators also continue to explore overlooked aspects of his work, as in two shows opening this spring. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art presents "Matisse/Diebenkorn," an exhibition of 40 of Matisse's paintings and drawings juxtaposed with 60 works by Richard Diebenkorn. Throughout his career, the California modernist sought out Matisse's paintings and acknowledged the painter's influence on his own style, including the lightening of his palette and an increasing emphasis on geometric structure in both his representational and abstract works (March 11–May 29; sfmoma.org). "Matisse in the Studio," at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, presents the artist as a collector of furniture and exotic objects, including vases, tables, African masks, and Egyptian textiles that appear repeatedly in his work, often depicted in startlingly different ways. The sheer number of such pairings suggests an artist constantly reimagining what's closest at hand, in an ever-evolving quest for originality. As Matisse himself once said, "A good actor can have a part in 10 different plays; an object can play a role in 10 different pictures" (April 9–July 9; mfa.org).



Notre-Dame de Laon, Afternoon, 1902.



NORTHERN LIGHT

New York City's Michelin-starred Aquavit has launched a glamorous new branch in London, bringing chef Emma Bengtsson's acclaimed Nordic cuisine to the revamped St. James's Market. Swedish-born designer Martin Brudnizki has infused the oak-walled space with true Scandinavian style. It features floors clad in Swedish Brannlyckan marble, Josef Frank fabrics, and wall hangings by Icelandic artist Olafur Ellason. Equally authentic: menu offerings such as venison tartare with lingonberries and whiskey cocktails flavored with birch and gingerbread (aquavitrestaurants.com).

