

Henri Rousseau



Henri Rousseau was a French artist who loved to paint magical jungle scenes, even though he never visited a real jungle! His colourful, dreamlike pictures are full of wild animals, trees, and plants, and they look a bit like storybook illustrations.

Childhood

- Henri Rousseau was born in France in 1844.
- His father was a plumber, and his family didn't have much money.
- As a child, he liked drawing and nature.
- He played the violin and enjoyed music too.

Education

- Henri didn't go to art school when he was young.
- He learned to paint by copying pictures and teaching himself.
- He visited museums and studied famous paintings.
- People called him a “naïve” or “self-taught” artist.

Fun Fact:

Even though Rousseau never left France, his jungle paintings were inspired by books, visits to the zoo, and plants at the botanical gardens!

Career

- He worked as a customs officer, checking goods at the city gates—so people called him “Le Douanier” (The Customs Officer).
- He painted in his spare time and didn't become famous until later in life.
- Many people made fun of his art at first because it looked different.
- Today, his jungle paintings are loved all over the world!

Quotes from Henri Rousseau

“When I go into the glass houses and I see the strange plants of exotic lands, it seems to me that I enter into a dream.”

“I always believe in my art.”

“Beauty is the promise of happiness.”

“I’m not copying nature, I’m expressing it.”

Art



Tiger in a tropical storm



The
equatorial
jungle



Carnival evening

Boy on the rocks

