

# Van Gogh

Paris  
Art Studies - Vincent Van Gogh 1853 -1890

1853 &ndash; Born in presbytery of Groot Zundert, Holland first of 6 children of Calvinist pastor Theodorus van Gogh and Ana Cornelia from the Hague.

1864 &ndash; Sent to boarding school studies French, English, German and drawing.

1868 &ndash; Sent home with mediocre results.

1869 &ndash; His uncle Vincent an art dealer gets him a position with the international art firm Goupil & Cie in Paris where he diligently sells art reproductions.

1873 &ndash; Vincent's younger brother Theo also joins the Goupil firm in Brussels.

Vincent is sent to London branch of firm. First deep disappointment in love after rejection by his landlady's daughter.

1875 &ndash; Hoping a change will improve his spirits, his uncle sends him back to Paris firm. Reads bible, visits galleries and museums is enthusiastic over Corot.

1876 &ndash; Fired by new owners of the firm Boussod and Valadon. Finds job as assistant teacher in small school in Ramsgate and later London. Begins teaching and preaching for a Methodist pastor in Isleworth a working class suburb of London. Exhausted physically and emotionally at Christmas he is persuaded to remain in Holland by his parents.

1877 &ndash; Works in bookshop in Dordrecht. Moves to Amsterdam to prepare entrance examinations to the Faculty of Theology which he fails.

1878 &ndash; Studies for 3 months in evangelical school in Brussels. He is considered however too emotional and impulsive and is sent away from his next school in Laeken where he begins his novitiate. Settles in poor mining town in the Borinage, where he visits the sick and teaches children.

1879 &ndash; Given a formal evangelical charge by his school he prefers to live in a hovel and sleep on straw. His fervour in succouring the miners alarms the school which refuses to re-new his contract. He remains in the district, reads fervently Michelet, Hugo, Dickens, Shakespeare and draws the miners.

1880 &ndash; Re-news correspondence with Theo and copies works by Millet and Jules Breton.

Moves to Brussels to attend the Academy of Fine Arts. Admires Gavarni, Daumier and Dupré.

1881 &ndash; Returns to family home in Etten, continues to draw local figures and landscapes. Falls in love with cousin Kate Vos-Stricker. He is again rejected. In the Hague receives encouragement for his painting by Anton Mauve prominent Dutch realist painter and a distant relative. On a visit to Kate in Amsterdam he holds his hand over a burning flame to prove his ardour. Violent dispute with his father over his increasingly Bohemian and irreligious life-style. He leaves Etten.

1882 &ndash; Settles in the Hague near Mauve. Borrows money from him and Theo. Meets Clasina Maria Hoornik (Sien) a 30-year old pock-marked, pregnant and alcoholic prostitute. Uses her as model and looks after her. Breaks with Mauve. Discovers the novels of Zola. Is treated for gonorrhoea in hospital.

1883 &ndash; At last abandons the un-reformable Sien. Leaves for Drenthe in northern Netherlands. Struck by hard life of local peasants, paints sombre landscapes. Tired of solitude returns to family home in December now at Nuenen. Reads critical works on art of Delacroix and Fromentin, interested in new theories linking music to colour takes flute lessons.

1884 &ndash; Margo Beggerman, 39 year old neighbour in Nuenen with whom Vincent had a sentimental liaison survives suicide attempt. Executes six decorative paintings for goldsmith in Eindhoven. Gives painting lessons in Eindhoven. Paints &ldquo;Weavers&rdquo; series and head studies.

1885 &ndash; Father Theodorus van Gogh dies of sudden stroke. Van Gogh is deeply affected. Rumour accuses him of impregnating one of his peasant models. Catholic priest forbids his parishioners to speak to him. Travels to Amsterdam where he studies Rembrandt and Hals in Rijksmluseum. Moves to Antwerp where he studies Rubens and discovers Japanese prints at the port. Paints &ldquo;Potato Eaters&rdquo;.

1886 &ndash; In January he registers in Antwerp School of fine Arts. Impatient with conventional teaching fails his examinations, is ill of under nourishment and excessive smoking, is treated by local doctor whom he pays with portrait. In February leaves for Paris on a whim hoping to matriculate in studio of Cormon. Moves in with his brother Theo first on rue Laval, later in rue Lepic in Montmartre and attends Cormon studio. Soon meets most of the new Paris artists

through his brother: Anquetin, John Russel, Toulouse-Lautrec as well as the older generation: Monet, Sisley, Pissarro, Degas, Renoir, and the Neo-Impressionists Seurat and Signac. Mother leaves Nuenen and gives his old works to local brocanteur in Breda who burns many and sells the rest for a few pennies. Meets and befriends Gauguin in the winter. Serious nervous tension between 2 brothers.

1887 &ndash; Meets Emile Bernard at shop of colour merchant Père Tanguy on the rue Clauzel in Monmartre. They paint together in Asnières. Has brief love affair with Agostina Segatori, a former model of Degas's who had opened an artistic café on bd de Clichy called the 'Tambourine'. Toulouse Lautrec, Bernard, Gauguin, Anquetin and Van Gogh organize exhibition in the café &ndash; they call themselves 'Groupe du petit boulevard'. In the summer adopts Signac's pointillist technique.

1888

20 February - Leaves Paris for Arles in the south. Settles in Hotel-restaurant Carrel. Overwhelmed by precocious Spring paints flower blossoms on trees, his 'Japon provençal'. Shows three paintings at Salon des Indépendants in Paris.

May - Rents

little 'yellow' house on place Lamartine from the M. and Madame Ginoux. He hopes to turn in into centre for community of painters. Dines at the Café de la Gare also owned by the Ginoux. Sends 26 paintings to Theo in Paris.

June &ndash; Travels to Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer on Mediterranean coast. In Arles meets lieutenant Millet of the Zouaves corps to whom he gives drawing lessons.

July &ndash; Paints

frequently outside Arles in Monmajour. Inspired by Pierre Loti's novel Madame Crysanthème paints 'Mousmé'.

August &ndash; Befriends

postman Joseph Roulin and his family. Using Millet sends 35 paintings to Theo. Paints first major 'Sunflower' compositions.

September &ndash; Paints

frequently outdoors at night placing candles in his hat and around canvas on easel. Meets Belgian painter-poet Eugène Boch. Paints 'Night Café' and 'Starry Night'.

October &ndash; Gauguin

arrives on the 20th after being repeatedly pressed to come. They now paint together.

December &ndash; They visit

the musée Fabre in Montpellier where they have violent dispute. On the 23rd Vincent attacks Gauguin with a razor. Gauguin escapes and spends night in

hotel. Meanwhile Vincent cuts off portion of his left ear wraps it up in newspaper and takes it to prostitute both painters knew. Police intervenes and takes van Gogh to hospital. Gauguin telegraphs Theo and leaves Arles. Theo arrives immediately.

1889

January &ndash; Placed by his brother in the care of doctor Felix Rey. Writes to Theo trying to re-assure him and adds affectionate greetings to Gauguin. On the 7th returns home assisted by Roulin. Immediately starts painting though suffering from insomnia. Paints 2 self portraits with bandaged ear.

February &ndash; Hospitalised for hallucinations and insomnia. Once crisis passes goes home to paint in daytime.

March &ndash; Mayor of Arles receives citizen&rsquo;s petition to intern van Gogh. Police brings him back to hospital.

April &ndash; Signac comes down to visit, together they return to &ldquo;yellow house&rdquo; locked up by police. Theo marries in the Netherlands Johanna Bonger. Van Gogh is again painting regularly, sends 2 crates of works to Theo.

May - Commits himself voluntarily to insane asylum of Saint Paul de Mausole, an old convent 20k outside of Saint-Rémy de Provence where he will be looked after by the director Dr Peyron. Through Theo&rsquo;s insistence obtains two rooms, one of which he can use as a studio. Frequent painting excursions to surrounding countryside.

June  
&ndash; Paints cypress series..

July &ndash; Suffers new nervous breakdown while painting in a field. Looses consciousness for several days.

August - Resumes work at new intense rhythm. Paints views from his window and copies after Millet.

September &ndash; &ldquo;Starry Night&rdquo; and &ldquo;Irises&rdquo; shown at Salon des Indépendants in Paris. More paintings including &ldquo;Sunflowers&rdquo; are shown at 7th Salon des XX in Brussels.

November &ndash; Sends &ldquo;Red Vine&rdquo; and 5 other works to 8th Salon des XX in Brussels.

December &ndash; Sends 3

painting packages to Theo. New crisis, tries swallowing his colours.

1890

January &ndash; At the Salon des XX in Brussels during banquet Toulouse-Lautrec provokes painter Groux to duel (which will never take place) after the latter's disobliging remarks on van Gogh's paintings. Art critic Albert Aurier publishes enthusiastic article on Vincent's works in the *Mercure de France*. New but brief mental crisis at the end of the month. Birth of Theo's son named "Vincent" after his uncle who is also godfather.

February &ndash; resumes painting ("Almond Tree Branch"). "Red Vine" is sold for 400 F in Brussels to Anna Boch, his friend's Eugène's sister. New crisis, stops painting for a month. Exhibits at Salon des Indépendants.

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May - On the 17th van Gogh leaves for Paris. Spends 3 days with his brother and meets Johanna and the baby. On the 20th leaves for Auvers-sur-Oise where he will eventually settle in room above the Café de la place de la Mairie belonging to M and Mme Ravoux. Theo has arranged for Auvers resident Dr Paul-Ferdinand Gachet, art lover and important collector of Impressionist painting to look after Vincent. They become quick friends. Van Gogh works with renewed enthusiasm and produces more than 80 pictures.

July  
&ndash; Van Gogh visits Paris where he meets Toulouse-Lautrec and Albert Aurier at Theo's. The atmosphere is tense. Theo is overwhelmed by financial and professional concerns and worried over baby's health. Vincent returns to Auvers much shaken. Paints wheat fields under stormy skies. Expresses doubts as to Doctor Gachet's capacities, finding him even more nerve wracked than himself. On the 27th shoots himself in the stomach while painting in a field. Manages to walk back to his room and is discovered in the evening by the landowners. Dr Gachet rushes to help and Theo arrives the next morning. Dies during the night on 29 July after smoking his pipe in bed all day. Buried on the 30th in the presence of Theo, Dr Gachet, Lucien Pissarro, Emile Bernard and Père Tanguy.

1891 &ndash; Theo dies

of the results of a syphilitic condition in a hospital in Utrecht.

1914 – Theo’s  
ashes are transferred to Auvers cemetery and buried next to Vincent’s grave.