Vincent van Gogh was born on March 30, 1853, in Zundert, Netherlands, to Theodorus van Gogh, a pastor, and Anna Cornelia Carbentus. Interestingly, Vincent was not the first child named Vincent in the family; a year before his birth, his parents had a stillborn son whom they also named Vincent. Some believe that growing up with the knowledge of his deceased older brother, whose name and birthdate he shared, might have had a deep psychological impact on van Gogh, contributing to the emotional intensity seen in his artwork. Before becoming a painter, Vincent van Gogh pursued several different careers. He worked as an art dealer at the Goupil & Cie art gallery, a position he initially succeeded in due to his passion for art. However, his interest in the commercial aspect of art waned, and he was eventually dismissed. He then turned to religion, hoping to become a pastor like his father, and even served as a missionary in a mining region of Belgium. It was there, moved by the plight of the miners, that he began to sketch their lives, which marked the true beginning of his commitment to art. Van Gogh's mental health is a topic of much discussion. He suffered from psychotic episodes and delusions, with one of the most infamous incidents being the night he severed part of his own left ear after a heated argument with fellow artist Paul Gauguin. He wrapped the ear in paper and presented it to a woman at a local brothel. Following this event, he was admitted to the hospital and began a cycle of hospitalizations and self-imposed recoveries, which continued until the end of his life. Despite his mental health struggles, van Gogh was remarkably prolific in his artistic output. He created more than 2,100 artworks, including around 860 oil paintings, most of which date from the last two years of his life. This period of intense creativity included some of his most famous works, such as 'The Starry Night,' 'Sunflowers,' and 'Café Terrace at Night.' His style is characterized by bold colors, dramatic, impulsive, and expressive brushwork, which contributed to the foundations of modern art. Van Gogh was largely unappreciated during his lifetime and sold only one painting, 'The Red Vineyard,' for a modest sum. His lack of commercial success contributed to his feelings of failure and poverty. He was financially supported by his brother Theo, who believed in Vincent's talent and provided him with funds for art supplies and living expenses. Their close relationship is documented in the hundreds of letters they exchanged, which now provide invaluable insights into Vincent's thoughts and creative process. The exact circumstances of van Gogh's death are still debated by historians. He died at the age of 37 from a gunshot wound. While it is widely believed that he shot himself in the chest in a field near Auvers-sur-Oise, France, some researchers have posited that the wound could have been the result of an accident or even foul play. However, the suicide theory is supported by the artist's prolonged periods of mental illness and previous attempts to harm himself. Van Gogh's artistic influence is vast, and he is often associated with Post-Impressionism, an art movement that rejected the naturalism of the Impressionists in favor of more symbolic, emotional, and avant-garde expression. His work went on to influence several generations of artists, including the German Expressionists and the Fauves. His approach to painting with emotive force and his use of color to convey mood was particularly revolutionary and continues to inspire artists today. One of van Gogh's most notable relationships was with fellow artist Paul Gauguin. They lived together for a brief period in the Yellow House in Arles, hoping to establish an artist's colony. However, their time together was fraught with disagreements, leading to the ear-cutting incident. Despite their tumultuous relationship, they continued to have a profound impact on each other's work, with Gauguin's Symbolist ideas and use of color influencing van Gogh's style. Van Gogh's painting 'The Starry Night' is one of the most recognized pieces of art in the world. Created during his stay at the Saint-Paul-de-Mausole asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, France, the painting depicts the view from his window, albeit with some artistic liberties. The swirling skies, bright stars, and vibrant colors reflect van Gogh's inner state and his fascination with the infinite, which he saw as a metaphor for the human spirit's resilience. The legacy of Vincent van Gogh is preserved not only through his art but also through cultural institutions dedicated to his life and work. The Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam is one of the most visited museums in the world, housing the largest collection of his paintings and drawings, as well as those of his contemporaries. The museum serves as a center for research into his life and work, ensuring that the story of this remarkable artist continues to captivate and inspire future generations.