

VaDestitute But Free

This text is an extract from Michael Howard's book 'Life and Works of Van Gogh'. **Vincent van Gogh**, in full **Vincent Willem van Gogh** was a Dutch artist (painter). He was born on March 30, 1853 in Holland, Netherlands and died on July 29, 1890. His life was extremely poor, lacking food and possession (destitute). But even in such a crisis he felt free for his artistic creations. He posthumously became the most famous and influential figure in the history of western art.

The last ten years of his life were very productive in spite of his deteriorating health. At this stage his chosen path proved to be right. He started working seriously and compulsively.

He took lessons in perspective and anatomy in Brussels. He was totally dependent on his brother's financial and emotional support. His brother's name is Theo. Van Gogh's situation of crisis and his reliance upon the sympathy, understanding and financial support of his brother is a running motif throughout their correspondence.

Two letters bear witness to his state of affairs: one letter complains about Theo's lack of commitment to Vincent's needs and another apologizes for his selfishness.

His dearest wish: to travel to France and study there, but could not

He developed his knowledge and skill by self education, visiting galleries, reading, studying books on anatomy, phrenology and perspective and copying.

Friend: Anthon Van Rappard, in 1881 they departed, but remained in touch through correspondence.

Works: The Lamp Bearers, Miners' women carrying sacks

Van Gogh felt unable to remain in Brussels, he decided to move back to Etten, to his family, left Brussels on 12 April.

His masters: Rubens, Frans Hals, Rembrandt. Repeated encounters with the works of his masters presented him with the challenge to create a modern equivalent to their great achievements. He made commitment to strengthen portraiture.