

Title: Self-Portrait with a Straw Hat (obverse: The Potato Peeler), Vincent van Gogh 1887/1887

Medium: Oil on canvas

I have seen many works by Vincent van Gogh, including his famous cypress works and many of his self-portraits. I found this particular self portrait very interesting. He uses a lot of short strokes and many different colors in this work. In particular, while he renders shadow in this work, he uses red and green strokes instead of darker brown. It is very hard to utilize the color yellow since it is a light color. With many short strokes, van Gogh creates a flow of dynamic and intermixes many different colors together with a harmonized sense of peace. The short strokes in the background hinted the viewer to consider the wind of air flowing in the room but the short strokes on his face clearly render the texture of his skin surface. The short strokes are not flowing in one direction, but instead forming a curved wave in the painting. His eyes and lips are rendered by clear and decisive strokes. The tiny usage of green strokes, hiding deeply inside the yellow outline the shape of his hat.

To our best knowledge, Vincent van Gogh painted around 41 self-portraits in his lifetime (Vohr). These self-portraits not only help us to observe his artistic advancement but also learn about his mood and the change of his look during his ten year artistic creativity period (Brower). This work was painted 3 years before his death and the year before Paul Gauguin visited Vincent van Gogh in Arles, France, from October 23 to December 23, 1888 (van Uitert). The color choices in this work are super. I love to paint portraits, therefore this work attracts my attention and inspires me to later render a self portrait in this style.

Works Cited

Brower, Richard. "To reach a star: The creativity of Vincent van Gogh." *High Ability Studies* 11.2 (2000): 179-205.

"Self-Portrait with a Straw Hat (Obverse: The Potato Peeler) - Vincent van Gogh - Google Arts & Culture." *Google*, Google, artsandculture.google.com/asset/self-portrait-with-a-straw-hat-obverse-the-potato-peeler-vincent-van-gogh/zQGHorekyP-67w?hl=en. Accessed 16 Feb. 2024.

van Uitert, Evert. "Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin in competition: Vincent's original contribution." *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* (1980): 81-106.

Vohr, Katie. "Modern Self-Portraits: The Self in the Age of Artistic Autonomy." (2020).

Works Cited

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