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| Cézanne, Paul (1839–1906) |
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| Paul Cézanne was a French painter, whose innovative techniques and original interpretations of traditional genres made him perhaps the most influential artist in the early history of modernism. Affiliated primarily with Post-Impressionism, Cézanne famously declared: ‘I wanted to make of Impressionism something solid and enduring like the art in the museums.’ Along with his Post-Impressionist contemporaries Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh, and Georges Seurat, Cézanne advanced the lessons of the Impressionist painters with whom he was initially affiliated. His grasp of colour and composition, however, reflect his study of Éugene Delacroix and Nicolas Poussin. But it was Cézanne’s ability to represent underlying structures in nature while retaining gestural but disciplined brushstrokes that earned him the admiration of artists such as Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso. Career Cézanne was born in Aix-en-Provence, where – at his father’s behest – he studied law before devoting himself to painting in his early twenties. Dividing his time between Paris and Aix, Cézanne studied at the Académie Suisse and tried twice, but failed to be admitted to the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts. Dark, lurid palettes and perverse subjects of murder and sexual intrigue characterize his early work, examples of which were several times rejected from the official Salon. |
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