



'The painter of the future
is a colourist such as
there hasn't been before.'

Van Gogh wrote these words to his brother in the early months of his stay in Arles, and strove to achieve this goal throughout his time in Provence. In just over two years, he developed ways of using intense colour and technique to create poetic subjects filled with emotion.

On 16 May 1890 Van Gogh left Saint-Rémy to return to northern France. He settled in Auvers-sur-Oise, not far from Paris, and created an extraordinary body of new work. Two paintings from this period can be found in the Main Collection in Room 43.

Chronology

1853

30 March

Vincent Willem van Gogh is born in Zundert, the Netherlands.

1869–75

Van Gogh works for the art dealers Goupil & Cie at The Hague, London and Paris. His brother Theo (1857–1891) works for the same company from 1873.

1876–9

Van Gogh takes a teaching post in England, where he also becomes a Christian lay preacher. He works as an evangelical preacher in the Borinage, a coal-mining region in Belgium.

1880–5

Theo begins to provide financial support. Van Gogh decides to become an artist and spends a brief time at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Brussels, but over the next years he works chiefly on his own. He lives in The Hague for two years, where he receives painting lessons, and at the end of 1885 he moves to Antwerp. Throughout this time, in a repeating pattern, Van Gogh is forced home to live with his parents due to lack of funds.

1886

End of February

Van Gogh moves to Paris to live with Theo, who is now an art dealer. He remains in Paris for the next two years.

Early March–early June

Van Gogh attends the studio of the painter Fernand Cormon (1845–1924). He becomes friends with the artists Emile Bernard (1868–1941), Louis Anquetin (1868–1932) and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901), among others.

Autumn

Van Gogh exhibits works at a small number of informal venues, including the shop of the colour merchant Père Tanguy (1825–1894).

1887

About February–March

He organises an exhibition of Japanese prints from his own collection at the Montmartre café Le Tambourin.

May

Van Gogh meets and works with Paul Signac (1863–1935) in the suburbs of Paris.

November–December

He organises an exhibition at a restaurant on the Boulevard de Clichy including works by Bernard, Anquetin, Toulouse-Lautrec and himself. He meets the painters Georges Seurat (1859–1891) and Paul Gauguin (1848–1903).

1888

20 February

Van Gogh arrives in Arles and starts working right away. Throughout his time in the South of France he sends his work to Theo.

1 May

Van Gogh rents the Yellow House and uses it as a studio during the summer while lodging elsewhere in the town. He creates the drawings from Montmajour and views of the public garden in Arles.

17 September

He moves into the Yellow House where he aims to create an artist's home.

23 October–23 December

Paul Gauguin lives and works with Van Gogh at the Yellow House.

23 December

Van Gogh has his first mental breakdown, cuts off his left ear and is admitted to the hospital in Arles the next day.

1889

7 January

Van Gogh leaves the hospital and resumes work.

February

He experiences repeated crises and hospitalisations.

March and April

Residing at the hospital in Arles, Van Gogh is assigned a room where he continues to work.

23–24 March

The painter Paul Signac pays Van Gogh a visit.

8 May

Van Gogh admits himself to the mental health hospital in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. He experiences two further crises in July/August and December. They do not deter him from continuing to work at a very high level, first in

the hospital's grounds and then also in the countryside. He is assigned a room to use as a studio and continues to send his work to his brother.

Autumn

Van Gogh resumes correspondence with his friends Paul Gauguin and Emile Bernard. Theo sends two of Van Gogh's works to the Salon des Indépendants exhibition in Paris.

1890

Following a renewed crisis at the end of January, Van Gogh falls ill again in February for almost two months.

February

Van Gogh shows six paintings at the annual avant-garde exhibition of Les XX in Brussels.

March/April

He exhibits ten paintings at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris.

16 May

Van Gogh leaves Saint-Rémy and, after a stop in Paris, arrives in Auvers-sur-Oise, north-west of the city, on 20 May. He immediately takes up work, creating an impressive body of paintings, drawings and prints.

27 July

Van Gogh shoots himself in the chest and dies from his wounds two days later.

For more information about Van Gogh's life, as well as all his letters, visit vangoghletters.org. All letter quotes in the exhibition are taken from this source.



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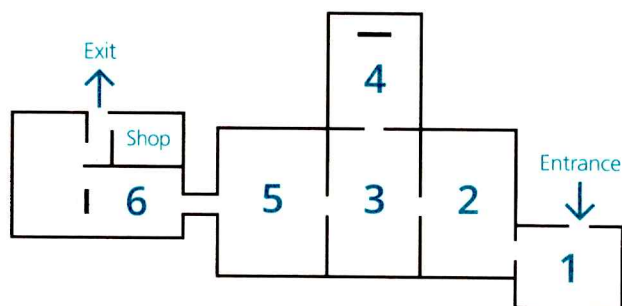
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Within the exhibition, light levels are kept low to protect the works. If you have difficulty reading this booklet or the information on the walls, please pick up a large-text version from the dispenser at the exhibition entrance.

Works within the exhibition are numbered but may not always appear in sequence.

The exhibition has been made possible by the provision of insurance through the Government Indemnity Scheme. The National Gallery would like to thank HM Government for providing Government Indemnity and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England for arranging the indemnity.

Exhibition plan



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| Room 1 | Introduction |
| Room 2 | The Garden:
Poetic Interpretations |
| Room 3 | The Yellow House:
An Artist's Home |
| Room 4 | Montmajour: A Series |
| Room 5 | Decoration |
| Room 6 | Variations on a Theme |

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