FIND A GIRL, SETTLE DOWN

Poor van Gogh couldn't catch a break, especially when it came to women. His first passion was for the daughter of his London landlady, but when he finally got up the courage to propose, she announced she was engaged to someone else.

His second infatuation was with his cousin, the recently widowed Kee Vos-Stricker. Van Gogh spent the summer of 1881 in Etten living with his parents and Kee. Seven years older, she was kind and sympathetic, and van Gogh became obsessed. He proposed, but she declined decisively. So he proceeded to stalk her, following her to Amsterdam and pestering his aunt and uncle. One night, he stuck his hand in the flame of a lamp, declaring he would keep it there until they allowed him to see his cousin; he passed out from the pain before his uncle could blow out the flame.

Van Gogh was finally distracted by a new love, although this one was no less inappropriate. Clasina Maria Hoornik (known as "Sien") was a pregnant, alcoholic prostitute with a young daughter. Van Gogh resolved to "rescue" the unfortunate woman and took her into his house. His family was disgusted with the relationship, particularly because Sien returned to her old profession after the baby was born. He finally left her in 1883.

Henceforth, van Gogh's relationships with women were purely, ahem, professional. He wrote to Theo from Arles that he made it a practice to visit the local brothel once every other week—strictly for his health.

ISBN: 978-1-59474-257-6

VINCENT VAN GOGH

MARCH 30, 1853–JULY 29, 1890

ASTROLOGICAL SIGN:
ARIES

NATIONALITY:
DUTCH

STANDOUT WORK:
STARRY NIGHT (1889)

MEDIUM:
OIL ON CANVAS

ARTISTIC STYLE:
POST-IMPRESSIONIST

SEE IT YOURSELF:
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK

"I CANNOT HELP IT THAT MY PICTURES DO NOT SELL. NEVERTHELESS, THE TIME WILL COME WHEN PEOPLE WILL SEE THAT THEY ARE WORTH MORE THAN THE PRICE OF THE PAINT."

QUOTABLE

It's hard to understate the unrelieved misery that was Vincent van Gogh's life. He staggered from one disaster to another—lost jobs, failed careers, troubled relationships. In his entire artistic career, he sold only one painting. In the end, he killed himself.

Yet today his art elicits tremendous acclaim worldwide.

It's also hard to reconcile the despairing man with his exuberant creations. In a painfully short career—only eight years—van Gogh revolutionized art. His colors seem to leap off the canvas. Brilliant blues, glowing greens, luminous yellows—van Gogh's palette never ceases to astound.

MISSIONARY POSITION

Vincent Willem van Gogh was the eldest surviving son of the Calvinist pastor Theodorus van Gogh and his wife, Anna Cornelia. Of their five other children, Vincent was closest to his brother Theo. He showed early interest in art—selling it, not painting it—and at age fifteen took a position with the dealers Goupil and Co. at a branch run by one of his uncles. In 1873 his employers transferred him to the London branch, but soon they found him distracted by religious fervor inspired by the evangelism movement sweeping England. He was then transferred to Paris, where he took to preaching to annoyed customers rather than selling them art. In March 1876, he was fired.

Van Gogh took his dismissal with unseemly enthusiasm and returned to England to undertake mission work. When he visited his parents for Christmas, however, they insisted he stay in the Netherlands and enter divinity school. To pass the entrance exam, he would have to study higher Latin and Greek. Vincent rebelled. What did dead languages have to do with serving the poor? The family enrolled him in an evangelical academy, which he attended a few months before the faculty declared his explosive temper unsuitable for a missionary. "Whatever," said van Gogh, and he set off to be a missionary anyway. Moving to a desperately poor coal-mining community, he lived like the miners to whom he preached, eating scraps and dressing in rags. Without the little money Theo sent to him, he would have starved.

THE MAKING OF AN ARTIST

Although barely aware of it himself, van Gogh's passions began to shift during the two years spent with the miners. He developed a distaste for organized religion, which did little to help the poorest of the poor. He also began

drawing compulsively and spent hours copying prints sent by Theo. In 1880, the twenty-seven-year-old renounced a life of religion and embraced one of art.

He was still the same person, though—just as unwilling to follow convention—and a stint at an arts academy ended in failure. He returned to his parent's house in the country, where he startled his father's parishioners with his bedraggled appearance and odd behavior. "We cannot change the fact that he's eccentric," sighed his father.

Van Gogh came of age as an artist during this time, although his somber early work is hard to reconcile with his later, vivid masterpieces. He preferred to paint the most downtrodden of peasants and chose determinedly dull colors—browns, grays, dirty greens, and blacks. His restless spirit eventually tired of country life, so, on the spur of the moment, he hopped a train for Paris in March 1886. Soon after arriving, he attended the last Impressionist exhibit. He was amazed by the colors of the Impressionist palette—their brilliance and purity was like nothing he had ever seen—and soon his own canvases glowed with bright colors infused with light. As influential as the older Impressionists were younger artists such as Georges Seurat and Paul Gauguin. In the spirit of the times, van Gogh organized an exhibition that, although ignored by critics, attracted the attention of other artists.

HEADING SOUTH

The bohemian's life was wearing thin. After two years in Paris, van Gogh's health was failing due to the consumption of vast quantities of brandy and long nights spent at the Moulin Rouge. He needed to get out of the city and recuperate. In one of his sudden fits of inspiration, he envisioned a "Studio of the South" in southern France, where like-minded artists could work without the pressures of the capital. He picked the small town of Arles as the ideal location—no one really knows why—and set off in February 1888.

Provincial Arles didn't know what to make of the odd Dutchman. Van Gogh was horribly lonely. He didn't speak the Provençal dialect and could barely communicate with his neighbors. He had nothing to do but paint. In fifteen months, he completed some two hundred canvases. The brilliant light of Provence fired his imagination, and soon he was painting in his immediately recognizable, mature style characterized by pure pigments applied with thick brushstrokes.

Still obsessed with his Studio of the South, van Gogh pestered Gauguin to visit. Gauguin had also turned to art as a second career, having starting out as a stockbroker, and, although initially inspired by Pissarro and Impressionism, by 1888 he was moving away from the direct recording of nature to an approach intended to represent the working of his imagination. He had only tepid interest in Vincent's artists' community but did want to cultivate the relationship of Theo, now an important dealer, and so he journeyed to Arles. Van Gogh greeted his arrival with delight; he had spent the preceding weeks painting still lifes of sunflowers for the walls of Gauguin's room.

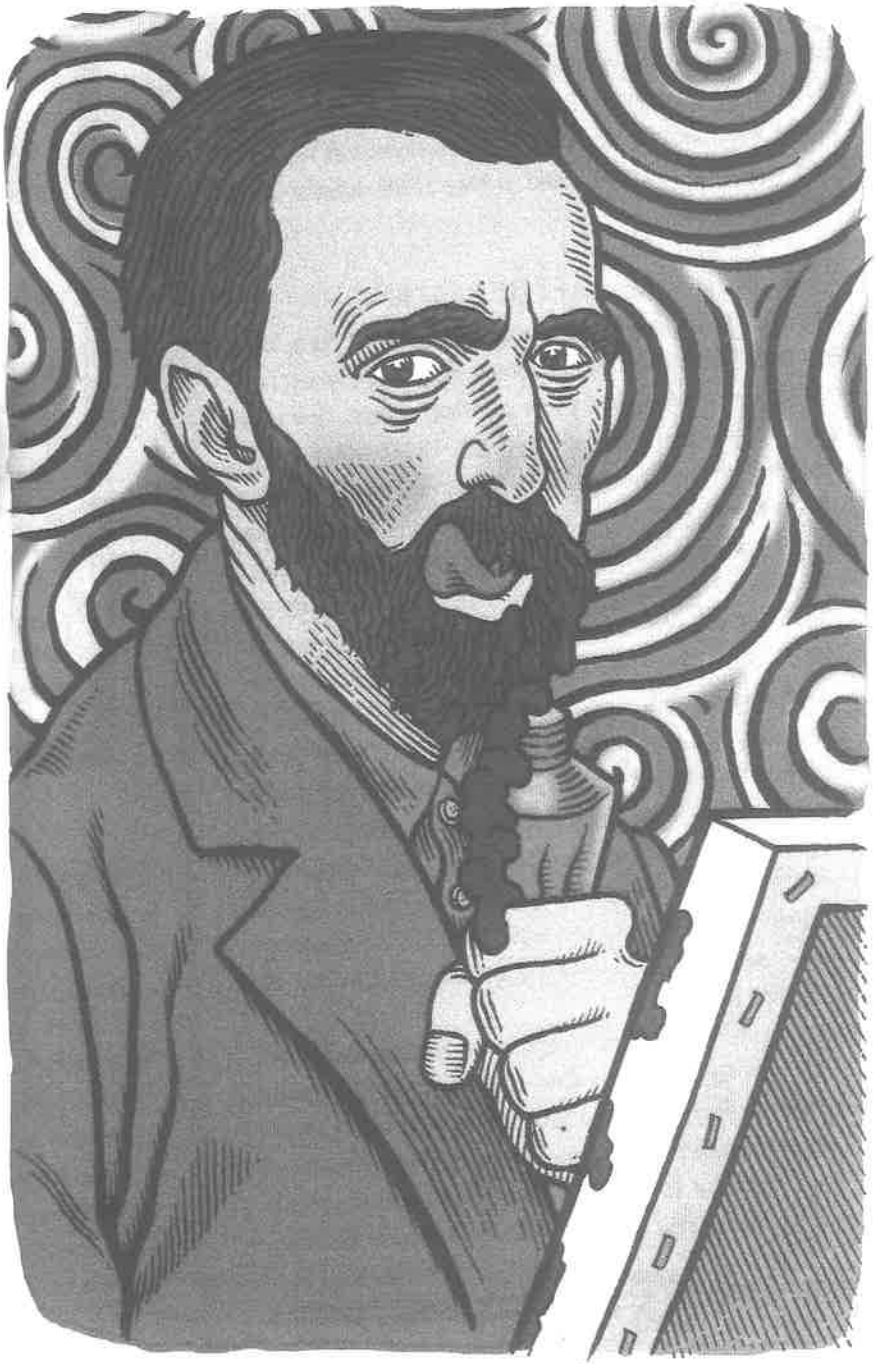
IN THE EXTREMES OF HIS MADNESS, VINCENT VAN GOGH ATE PAINT DIRECTLY FROM THE TUBE.

CRAZY IN PROVENCE

Gauguin had anticipated a master-pupil relationship, and for the first few weeks, he got it. Van Gogh seems to have followed Gauguin around like a puppy. But before long van Gogh's stubbornness resurfaced, and intense arguments broke out about art and the proper source of inspiration. (Van Gogh said nature; Gauguin, imagination.) Gauguin's surliness didn't help matters. With only the neighborhood café-slash-brothel for diversion, the tension grew. Gauguin unexpectedly declared he was returning to Paris. Van Gogh snapped.

We don't really know what happened during those two days before Christmas 1888. Gauguin's account is self-serving, to say the least, and van Gogh never wrote about the events. After (possibly) threatening Gauguin with a razor, van Gogh severed part of his earlobe (not, as myth would have it, his entire ear) and headed to the brothel to present it to his favorite prostitute. The next morning, the police followed a trail of blood to van Gogh's room and found the artist lying unconscious in bed. Gauguin sent for Theo, and Vincent was hospitalized, hovering close to death from blood loss while Gauguin beat a hasty retreat for Paris. The two men would never meet again.

Van Gogh would never be the same. He was released in January but relapsed in February. Realizing how unstable his mental state was, he vol-



unt[illegible]ed to be committed to a mental institution in nearby Saint-Rémy. He spent several months lapsing in and out of insanity. Sometimes he was able to work, paintings irises in the asylum's garden and the night sky full of stars. Other times, he was the hopeless victim of delusions and hallucinations. Gradually, his condition improved, and in May 1889, after a year in confinement, he left Provence.

LUST FOR LIFE—AFTER DEATH

Theo settled his brother in a small town about twenty miles north of Paris, where Vincent obsessively painted the surrounding landscape, particularly wheat fields blazing under the summer sun. Many find these paintings, particularly *Crows over Wheat Fields*, terrifyingly oppressive. On July 27, 1890, the innkeeper found van Gogh lying in his room in a pool of blood: He had shot himself, apparently while in one of the wheat fields. Poor, bungling Vincent—the bullet had missed his heart but was lodged in his side. It took two days for him to die.

And so the world learned of the death of an artist they had only just begun to notice. Theo had entered Vincent's paintings at the Salon des Indépendants in 1888, 1889, and 1890, where they received small but glowing praise. He even sold a painting, his first and only one.

Instead, van Gogh was acclaimed as the prototypical "mad" artist destroyed by an indifferent society. By the early twentieth century, the public was gobbling up publications of his letters and novelizations of his life, particularly Irving Stone's 1934 *Lust for Life*. (The book was made into an Oscar-winning movie in 1956, directed by Vincent Minnelli and starring Kirk Douglas.) Meanwhile, artists continued to be inspired by him. The Fauves, including Henri Matisse, celebrated his dynamic use of color, as did the Abstract Expressionists fifty years later.

In the late twentieth century, van Gogh's reputation was secured when his paintings sold at auction for vast sums. One of his last works, *Portrait of Dr. Gachet*, commanded a record-breaking $82.5 million in 1990. Today his paintings are found at museums around the world, as well as on throw pillows, silk ties, coffee mugs, and tote bags. As a defender of the nonelite classes, van Gogh may have appreciated the irony of his art's afterlife as kitsch.

COLORS TO DIE FOR

We can thank the Industrial Revolution for the brilliance of van Gogh's paintings. In the nineteenth century, chemical research resulted in the development of some twenty new pigments, many of which were much brighter and more stable than those previously available. Van Gogh took advantage of all of these innovations, writing Theo that it was false economy to try to make do with the older, cheaper paints.

Unfortunately, many of these pigments might have contributed to his ill health. The brilliant Emerald Green, with its concentrated copper/arsenic base, is highly toxic and was sold as an insecticide to kill rats as well as a paint. It's been theorized that van Gogh's neurological symptoms were caused by arsenic poisoning, although the lead in flake white and the mercury in vermilion could also have played a role—particularly when you consider that, in the extremes of his madness, van Gogh ate paint directly from the tube.

DIAGNOSIS: GENIUS

So what was wrong with Vincent van Gogh? In addition to the paint-poisoning hypothesis, numerous diagnoses have been proposed, including schizophrenia, syphilis, and porphyria. Two of the most convincing theories are that he suffered from bipolar disorder, which could account for his periods of mania followed by deep depression, and temporal lobe epilepsy, which could explain his hallucinations and seizure-like episodes. Any of these conditions would have been exacerbated by malnutrition and alcohol abuse; it seems during his time in Arles, the artist survived on absinthe, black coffee, and pipe tobacco. Whatever van Gogh's sickness, twenty-first-century medicine probably could have cured him, which leads to the unanswerable question: What would a cure have done to van Gogh's magnificent art?

CLAUDE MONET

NOVEMBER 14, 1840–DECEMBER 5, 1926

ASTROLOGICAL SIGN:
SCORPIO

NATIONALITY:
FRENCH

STANDOUT WORK:
WATERLILIES (1920–26)

MEDIUM:
OIL ON CANVAS

ARTISTIC STYLE:
IMPRESSIONIST

SEE IT YOURSELF:
THE ORANGERIE, PARIS

QUOTABLE ***"I WANT TO PAINT THE AIR."***

Claude Monet had little interest in giving titles to his paintings; he was content with descriptors like "View of the Village." The monotony of these generics frustrated Edmond Renoir, brother of the artist Pierre-Auguste Renoir, as he prepared the catalogue for the first avant-garde exhibit in 1874. When he asked Monet what he should call a painting of a sunrise, Monet replied, "Why don't you just call it 'Impression'?" And thus the painting was recorded as *Impression: Sunrise*.

The name caught on. Critics loved it, of course, because of the comedic opportunities it presented. Louis Leroy, in particular, noted derisively: "I was just telling myself that, since I was impressed, there had to be some impression in it . . . and what freedom, what ease of workmanship! Wallpaper in its embryonic state is more finished than that."

For his part, Monet generally liked the term, for it captured what he was trying to do: record an "impression" of an instant in time.

LIGHT, PAINTER, ACTION!

Oscar-Claude Monet, son of a shop owner from the French port city of Le Havre, showed remarkable early talent for creating clever caricatures. By the time he quit school at age seventeen, he was earning a good living off his drawings, saving two thousand francs, which he dedicated to building his artistic career. At nineteen, he headed for Paris, where he spent two years studying before being called up for military service. Given his scholarly underachievement, he rather surprisingly enlisted in a crack cavalry regiment that trained in Algeria, but within a year he came down with typhoid and was sent home.

In 1862 Monet was back in Paris, this time at the academy of Charles Gleyre, who taught traditional painting methods, none of which interested Monet. He was already dedicated to plein-air painting, work done outdoors directly from nature, and was well on the way to developing his own style. (Of course, plein-air painting had its risks. Monet was once seriously injured in the leg by a stray discus.) He found kindred spirits in fellow students Camille Pissarro, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Alfred Sisley, and Frédéric Bazille, and one afternoon in 1863, the five artists abandoned Gleyre's atelier and headed for the countryside to paint. That was the end of Monet's artistic education.

The year 1865 was a good one for Monet. He met the lovely Camille Doncieux and had a landscape accepted at the Salon, the state's fomal

exhibition. A scant two years later, however, his ambitious Salon submission called *Women in the Garden* was rejected outright, and Camille was pregnant. Monet's father, furious that his son had fathered a child, cut off his allowance and demanded that he return to Le Havre. Camille was left alone in Paris to have the baby. Over time, Papa Monet softened enough to pay his son a pittance, but it wasn't enough to support Camille and baby Jean, so friends were regularly asked for loans.

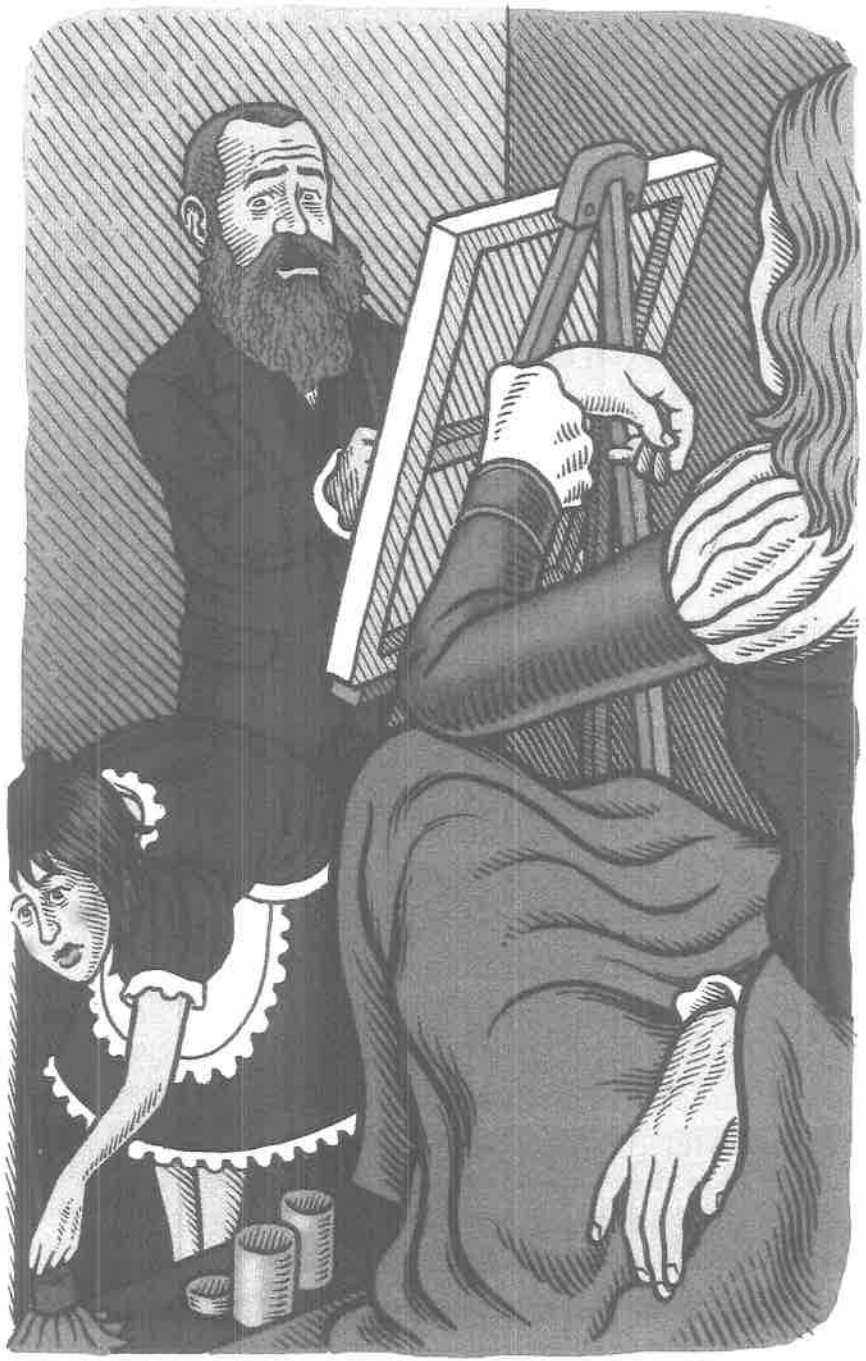
When his 1869 Salon submissions were rejected, Monet grew so depressed he threw himself into the Seine River. He immediately regretted his rash action. Fortunately, he was a good swimmer.

DRAFT-DODGER MAKES AN IMPRESSION

In the summer of 1869, war with Prussia loomed. As a veteran, Monet faced compulsory conscription, a duty he was desperate to avoid. First, he got hitched, since married men were called up last, and then, when war broke out, he moved his family to London, where they remained for more than a year. They returned to France in the fall of 1871, settling in the small town of Argenteuil, outside Paris. Monet was seeking to free himself from artistic conventions and to paint exactly what he saw, not what he "knew" was there. Academy artists were taught to paint objects in their natural colors (brown bark, blue ocean) and to ignore the effects of light that change colors as perceived by the human eye. Monet reversed this notion. "Try to forget what objects you have before you, a tree, a house, a field," he advised. "Merely think, here is a little square of blue, here is an oblong of pink, here a streak of yellow, and paint it just as it looks to you." He also sought to create a sense of instantaneity, to show a scene as it was at one moment in time.

AN ARTIST WITH AN EYE FOR THE LADIES, CLAUDE MONET DECLARED, "I ONLY SLEEP WITH DUCHESSES OR MAIDS. PREFERABLY DUCHESSES' MAIDS. ANYTHING IN BETWEEN TURNS ME RIGHT OFF."

After years of rejection by the Salon, Monet latched onto the idea of an independent exhibition, working with Edgar Degas to make the show a reality in 1873. Critics seized on his painting's title to label the entire group "Impressionist" and brutally attacked the works on display. One critic exam-



ined a Paris streetscape called *Boulevard des Capucines*, imagining a dialogue with the artist: "Will you kindly tell me what all those little black dribbles at the bottom of the picture mean?" the critic asks. "Why, they are pedestrians," explains the artist. "And that's what I look like when I walk along the Boulevard des Capucines? Good Heavens! Are you trying to make fun of me?"

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNEST—AND ALICE

In 1876, Monet met Ernest Hoschedé, a wealthy new patron and owner of one of the first Paris department stores, and the two families became close. When the economy suddenly took a nosedive, commissions ran out, and the Monets were plunged into debt. Even harder hit was Hoschedé: His business failed, and he ran off to Belgium, leaving behind his wife, Alice, and their four children. Monet invited Alice and the kids to live with Camille and their two children in a new house in the remote village of Vétheuil.

Tragically, Camille developed cervical cancer and suffered constant pain. Alice nursed her, kept the household, and tended the children, two of whom were babies. At some point, she also became Monet's lover, although it's impossible to know whether it was before or after Camille's death, in September 1879. Monet painted his wife on her deathbed, although he later described with dismay the way his painter's mind automatically analyzed the colors of her sick face. So desperately poor was the Monet-Hoschedé ménage that Monet had to beg one of his patrons to retrieve Camille's favorite golden locket from a Paris pawnshop.

That winter would be the lowest point of Monet's life. In time, the economy rebounded and patrons returned. In 1883, the couple and their children moved to a house set within a large garden in the village of Giverny, where Monet spent the rest of his life.

MAKING HAY

In autumn 1890, Monet used the haystacks in local fields as a motif to capture what he liked to call the "envelope" of light and atmosphere. In the end, he completed twenty-five paintings depicting different seasons and times of day, thus composing his first series, the paintings for which today he is best known. There are haystacks in pale winter light, haystacks in spring fog, and haystacks in summer sunsets. When exhibited together in

May 1891, the paintings dramatically impacted audiences, who finally understood what Monet had been attempting all along. (Some of the artist's friends were less understanding; Pissarro, for example, thought Monet was simply repeating himself.) The success of the haystacks convinced Monet to undertake more series—of poplars, of Rouen cathedral, and of London's Houses of Parliament. He would carry multiple canvases, each noted on the back with the time of day it depicted, and work on them in turn.

In 1891, Ernest Hoschedé died, and the next summer Claude and Alice quietly married. She continued to run the house like clockwork in deference to her husband's artistic sensibilities; Monet went into the sulks if his dinner or lunch were delayed by dawdling children. When Alice died in 1911, one of her daughters took over the housekeeping. Monet didn't even allow World War I to disrupt his routine, although the German front line was fewer than forty miles from Giverny.

HAD ENOUGH OF HAY?

Increasingly, Monet concentrated on one theme: the water lilies in his garden, the subject of some 250 canvases. During the first world war, he began his most ambitious works: enormous, curved canvases, more than 6½ feet tall and almost 14 feet tall. After the war, with his close friend Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau, Monet arranged for France to build two oval-shaped rooms in the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris especially for these works. By the time the water lilies were installed in 1927, they were an anachronism. Modernism was ascendant and Impressionism was an art of the past. Contemporary artists derided the works as "pretty." Monet died at Giverny in December 1926 at age eighty-six, little aware of how much art had changed.

Yet the dip in his reputation was short-lived. Today, Monet is one of the most beloved artists of all time—less intimidating than Leonardo da Vinci and saner than Vincent van Gogh. His paintings have been translated into every conceivable consumer item: You can play with the limited edition Waterlily Barbie, entertain your infant with Baby Monet videos, and create your own Impressionist water lilies with a paint-by-numbers kit.

I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR BLUE

In the early 1900s, Monet started to notice he was having trouble with his vision. He was well aware of Edgar Degas' blindness and feared the same fate for himself. Fortunately, he was diagnosed with cataracts, a treatable ailment; however, in the early twentieth century cataract surgery was far more dangerous than it is today, and Monet put it off until 1920. When he was finally able to return to the studio, Monet viewed his own paintings with shock. Before his surgery, the yellowish-brown cataract had shifted his perception until the blue portion of the spectrum was almost completely invisible. To compensate, Monet had been painting everything in tones of red and yellow. After the surgery, blues came flooding back, to the point that he couldn't see reds. It took several months for Monet's vision to return to normal.

Many joked that the artist painted in an Impressionist blur because he was nearly blind. Not so. Monet's paintings were as "unfocused" in his thirties as in his seventies. But the cataract did change the way he saw the world. Paul Cézanne said famously that Monet was "only an eye—but, my God, what an eye!"

MAID MAN

While studying art in Paris, Monet wowed all the female models with his handsome features, well-cut clothes, and fashionable lace cuffs. "Sorry," the artist told them, "I only sleep with duchesses or maids. Preferably duchesses' maids. Anything in between turns me right off."

THE HONORABLE MONSIEUR MONET

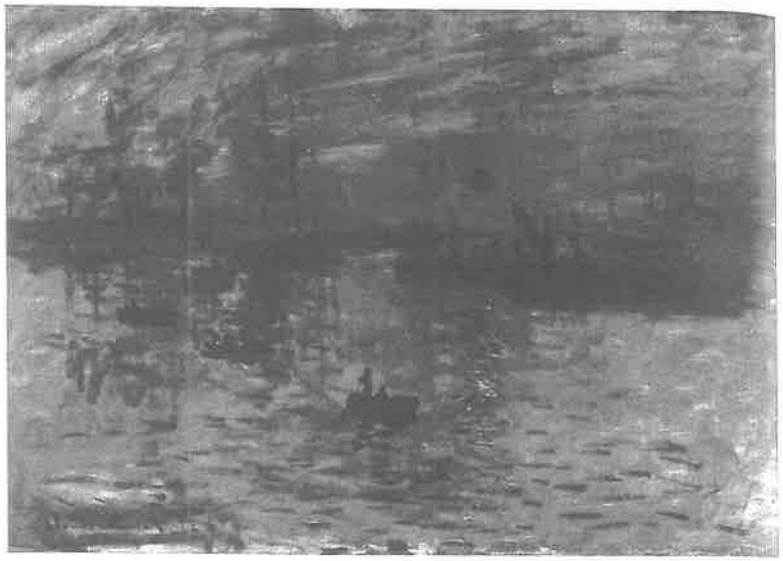
Monet didn't hesitate to effect distinguished airs to advance his interests. In 1877, he wanted to paint the Gare Saint-Lazare train station and decided the light would be best if the train for Rouen was delayed a half hour. Unfortunately, railways don't usually adjust their schedules for impoverished artists. Renoir describes what happened next:

> He put on his best clothes, ruffled the lace at his wrists, and twirling his gold-headed cane went off to the office of the Western Railway, where he sent in his card to the director. . . . He announced the purpose of his visit. "I have decided to paint your station. For some time I've been hesitating between your station and the Gare du Nord, but I think yours has more character." He was given permission to do what he wanted. The trains were all halted; the platform cleared; the engines were crammed with coal so as to give out all the smoke Monet desired. Monet established himself in the station as a tyrant and painted amid respectful awe. He finally departed with half-a-dozen or so pictures, while the entire personnel, the Director of the Company at their head, bowed him out.

Impressed by his grand manner, the Western Railway staff had no idea they were dealing with an artistic outcast, an "intransigent" constantly rejected by the official Salon. Renoir concluded with amazement, "I wouldn't have even dared to paint in the front window of the corner grocer!"

From: Elizabeth Lunday
The Secret Lives of Great Artists
ISBN: 978-1-59474-257-6
pages 132-139

AGE OF IMPRESSIONISM



The term "Impressionist" was originally intended as an insult. Critic Louis Leroy (1812–85) seized on the title of a seascape by Claude Monet (1840–1926), *Impression, Sunrise* (above), and wrote: "Impression. . .a wallpaper pattern in its most embryonic state is more finished than this seascape!" Leroy titled his scathing article "Exhibition of the Impressionists." The name stuck.

Monet was one of a group of artists working in France during the second half of the nineteenth century who reacted against the historical themes and highly polished finish of French Academic art (see p. 276). They set out to create images of modern life as they saw it, capturing the impression of a passing moment and the fleeting effects of light. Impressionist paintings were greeted with derision when they were first exhibited in Paris in the 1870s because they looked unfinished to the nineteenth-century eye. Instead of creating a smooth surface where individual brushstrokes were blended to be invisible, the Impressionists applied paint in bold colors and in broken brushwork. Their subject matter was as pioneering as their technique. They ventured out of their studios to observe the world around them and painted what they saw: landscapes around Paris, ballerinas adjusting their pumps, and laundresses at work, for example. Such scenes were deemed radical and even improper at the time.

Among the Impressionists' inspirations were Japanese woodblock prints, first seen in France in the 1850s. They showed scenes from everyday life using bold, flat colors and simple designs, with dynamic, often off-center compositions. Sometimes they featured looming foreground figures that were cropped by the edge of the picture. Photography also had an impact on the Impressionists. Edgar Degas's (1834–1917) pictures of ballet dancers (see p. 320) were inspired by the freeze-frame photographs of Eadweard Muybridge (1830–1904), which revealed how animals and humans move. Photographers used handheld cameras to take photographs showing blurred moving figures. The pictures featured random compositions, sometimes with empty foregrounds and odd crops, and Impressionist artists carefully composed their work to suggest such spontaneity.

Impressionism emerged from the coming together of a group of like-minded artists who met in the teaching studios and cafés of Paris in the 1860s. The oldest member of the group, Camille Pissarro (1830–1903), first met Monet at the Académie Suisse in 1859. When Monet joined the studio of Charles Gleyre (1806–74) in 1862, he became friends with his fellow students who became known as the Impressionists: Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919), Alfred Sisley (1839–99), and Frédéric Bazille (1841–70). The gifted Bazille was killed in the Franco-Prussian War before he could make a name for himself. Bazille's spacious studio in the Batignolles suburb of Paris, which he shared with Renoir, is captured in *Bazille's Studio* (below). It was a meeting place for Impressionist artists who were said to be from the "Batignolles School" at the time. Edouard

1 *Impression, Sunrise* (1872)
Claude Monet • oil on canvas
18 1/8 x 24 1/2 in. / 48 x 63 cm
Musée Marmottan, Paris, France

2 *Bazille's Studio* (1870)
Frédéric Bazille, Edouard Manet
oil on canvas
38 1/8 x 50 3/4 in. / 98 x 128.5 cm
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

KEY EVENTS

1859
issarro and Monet ttend the Académie uisse in Paris.

1863
Napoleon III (1808–73) pioneers the Salon des Refusés for artists rejected by the Paris Salon. Among the exhibits is Manet's *Le*

1870–71
The Franco-Prussian War causes a number of artists to flee Paris. Several Impressionists move to London for safety. Bazille is killed in the conflict.

1872
Monet paints *Impression, Sunrise*, the painting that gives the Impressionist movement its name.

1874
A group of artists whose work had been rejected by the Paris Salon mount an exhibition in Paris; among them are some of the Impressionists.

1876
Sisley paints *The Flood at Port-Marly*. He paints the scene seven times, concentrating on depicting the changing reflections in the water.

1876
Renoir paints *Dance at Le Moulin de la Galette* (see p. 322).

1877
Degas invites Cassatt to exhibit with the Impressionists. She is the only American and one of only three women to join them.

1881
The sixth Impressionist exhibition causes discontent among the group and some artists refuse to participate owing to its emphasis on realism.

1886
Emile Zola's (1840–1902) novel *The Work* criticizes the Impressionist movement.

1894
The Dreyfus Affair splits the Impressionist movement as it exposes Renoir and Degas as anti-Semites; many fellow Impressionists are

1902
Rodin makes a full-size relief of *The Thinker* (see p. 324). Its energetically textured surface echoes the broken brushwork of Impressionist painting.

Manet (1832–83) is shown looking at a canvas on an easel and it is thought that the man behind him smoking a pipe is Monet and the man sitting on a table by the stairs is Renoir. Bazille includes some of the works rejected by the Paris Salon in his painting, in an implicit criticism of the Academy and to affirm his own ideas regarding art.

Monet invited his friends to join him on painting trips to the forest of Fontainebleau, south of Paris. The young artists were inspired by the Realist (see p. 300) ethos of Gustave Courbet (1819–77) and by the *plein-air* (open-air) landscapes of the Barbizon school painters Théodore Rousseau (1812–67), Charles-François Daubigny (1817–78), and Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796–1875). But while the earlier generation of artists made landscape studies in the open air, all apart from Daubigny worked them up into finished paintings in the studio, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, and Bazille put great store on completing their works on the spot.

When they were not painting, the future Impressionists would meet regularly at the Café Guerbois, a popular haunt with many progressive artists and writers. Manet often held court there, expounding his avant-garde ideas about art. Around this time Degas also came under the influence of Manet. Degas had trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and studied antique and Renaissance art in Italy, but under Manet's influence he turned his sights on themes of modern life. Manet also drew his elegant model, protégée, and sister-in-law, Berthe Morisot (1841–95), into the group.

Despite their common concerns, the Impressionists did not all adhere consistently to Impressionist principles. Monet is seen as the quintessential Impressionist because of his modern subject matter and his lifelong commitment to capturing the visual impression created by transient light effects. Sisley's subject matter was more circumscribed and he mostly painted landscapes. Degas was aloof from the group, despite exhibiting in seven of the eight Impressionist shows; he was committed to drawing and painting indoors, working up his compositions in the studio. Much of Pissarro's work features rural, rather than urban, scenes. *The Red Roofs, Corner of a Village, Winter* (opposite) depicts the countryside near his home at Pontoise. His modernity lies in his approach to color, light, and composition. The orange-brown color of the roofs is echoed by that of the plants and fields, and his thick impasto brushwork catches the light. Successive parallel planes stretch across the canvas as he creates a sense of depth by the diminishing size of his subjects.

As respectable women, Morisot and American artist Mary Stevenson Cassatt (1844–1926) were excluded from painting many of the scenes of contemporary modern life that feature in works by their male counterparts. Unlike the male Impressionists, they could not sit and paint in the boulevards, cafés, and parks. In consequence, pictures by the female members of the Impressionist circle mostly feature women in domestic settings, such as the boudoir shown in Morisot's *Young Woman Powdering Her Face* (above left), or in respectable public settings, such as a box in the theater as seen in Cassatt's *In the Loge* (below left). Cassatt depicts a fashionable lady dressed for an afternoon performance at the Français, a theater in Paris.

Manet came to be seen as the father figure of the Impressionists, inspiring them to paint modern life, but he refused to exhibit with them and continued to seek recognition at the Paris Salon, France's official annual art exhibition. At this time in France, success as an artist meant success at the Salon. Its selection committee chose to display highly finished Academic paintings, with historical, religious, or mythological themes. Since this was not the type of art that the future Impressionists wanted to paint, most of their paintings were rejected. In 1874, in response to the repeated rejections, the artists decided to take matters into their own hands and organize a show for themselves. They gave themselves a name that suggested no particular group style. Thirty artists, including the core group of Monet, Renoir, Sisley, Pissarro, Degas, and Morisot, exhibited under the name "Société Anonyme des artistes, peintres, sculpteurs, graveurs" (Anonymous Society of Artists, Painters, Sculptors, Engravers). Between 1874 and 1886, there were eight Impressionist exhibitions. This was the period during which Impressionism was at its height and when the group was at its most coherent. Even then, however, it was not a unified or exclusive school and only Pissarro exhibited at all eight shows. Numerous other artists, from Monet's old mentor Eugène Boudin (1824–98) to Degas's protégée Mary Cassatt, were invited to exhibit with the Impressionists. At the eighth show in 1886, one room in particular spelled the end of the original Impressionist circle: it was here that Georges-Pierre Seurat (1859–91) and Paul Signac (1863–1935) exhibited works including *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte–1884* (1884–86; see p. 334). These artists used a more systematic approach to representing color and light, which became known as Neo-Impressionism.

Although Impressionism was essentially a new way of painting, Degas and Renoir both made sculptures, and contemporary sculptors such as Medardo Rosso (1858–1928) and Auguste Rodin (1840–1917) shared the spirit of Impressionism, rejecting the precision and idealism of Academic sculpture in favor of vibrant textured surfaces that echoed Impressionist brushwork.

The initial Impressionist circle broke up in the late 1880s, but Impressionism had a huge and lasting influence. By the end of the nineteenth century, artists around the world were painting contemporary subjects with bold, freely handled brushwork, and subsequent art movements can be seen as both a development of Impressionism and a reaction against its limitations. In many ways, Impressionism represents the beginning of modern art. JW

3

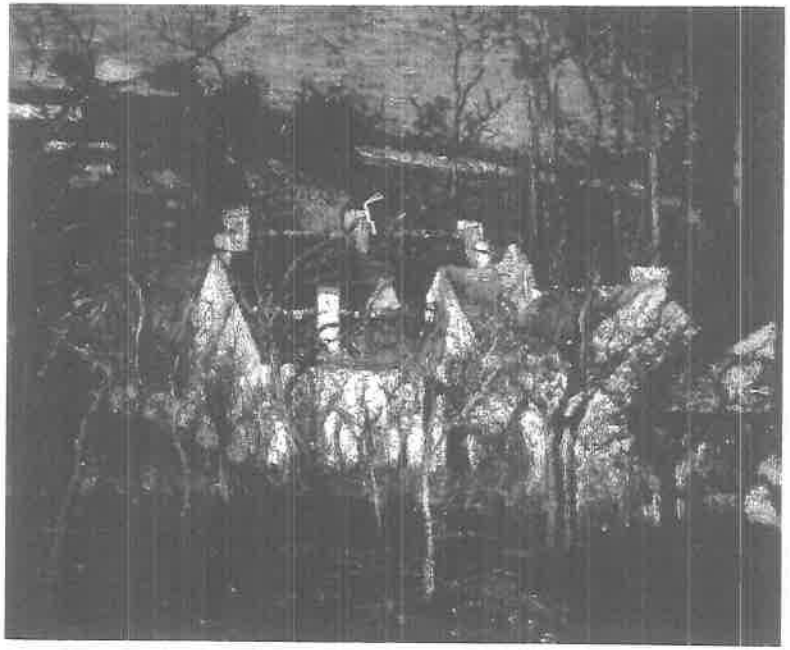
5

4

3 *Young Woman Powdering Her Face* (1877)
Berthe Morisot • oil on canvas
18 1/8 x 15 1/8 in. / 46 x 39 cm
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

4 *The Red Roofs, Corner of a Village, Winter* (1877)
Camille Pissarro • oil on canvas
21 1/2 x 25 3/8 in. / 54.5 x 65.5 cm
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

5 *In the Loge* (1878)
Mary Stevenson Cassatt • oil on canvas
32 x 26 in. / 81 x 66 cm
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA



POST-IMPRESSIONISM

1 *Bathers* (c. 1894–1905)
Paul Cézanne • oil on canvas
50 1/4 x 77 1/4 in. / 127 x 196 cm
National Gallery, London, UK

2 *Self-portrait* (1889)
Vincent van Gogh • oil on canvas
25 5/8 x 21 1/2 in. / 65 x 54.5 cm
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

3 *Tropical Landscape, Martinique* (1887)
Paul Gauguin • oil on canvas
35 1/8 x 45 1/4 in. / 90 x 115 cm
Staatsgalerie Moderner Kunst, Munich, Germany

The term "Post-Impressionism" is assigned to the work of a number of pioneering artists who followed in the wake of the Impressionists (see p. 316). They did not form a cohesive group or movement, nor did they share a common aim or style. Most had either been through an Impressionist phase or had been affected by some aspect of the style before moving on to explore new artistic territory. In practice, the term "Post-Impressionism" is mainly used to describe the work of four artists: Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), Georges-Pierre Seurat (1859–91), Vincent van Gogh (1853–90), and Paul Gauguin (1848–1903). All these artists responded in individual ways to Impressionism: Cézanne focused on pictorial structure; Seurat was interested in the scientific nature of color; Van Gogh's expressive brushstrokes reflected his emotional intensity; and Gauguin experimented with the symbolic use of color and line.

The term "Post-Impressionist" was coined by English art critic and painter Roger Fry (1866–1934). From 1906 to 1910 he was curator of paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1910, he organized an exhibition of modern French art in London titled "Manet and the Post-Impressionists." The show was put together hurriedly and attracted mostly unfavorable reviews, but it created a sensation because it introduced the English public to contemporary European art. The majority of the pictures were by Cézanne, Gauguin, and Van Gogh. The exhibition's title was the only one that all the organizers could agree on; they toyed with the terms "Expressionist" and "Synthetist," but "Post-Impressionist" stuck and, two years later, Fry staged a second Post-Impressionist exhibition that was more focused and better received.

Impressionism had revolutionized French art; it had shown new ways of capturing the physical world on canvas, but many artists felt that they had reached a dead end. It no longer seemed enough to paint shadows and reflections. Post-Impressionist artists generally moved away from the naturalism of Impressionism; they used vivid colors, thickly applied paint, real-life subject matter, and expressive brushstrokes that emphasized geometric forms. This approach lies at the heart of Cézanne's work. Cézanne wanted to strip away surface details and probe deeper, analyzing the essential geometry of nature. While most Impressionists employed tiny touches of paint, Cézanne opted for larger patches of color. As his confidence grew, these planes of color became larger and more abstract. The results can be seen in his later landscapes, such as *The Montagne Sainte-Victoire with Large Pine* (c. 1882; see p. 332), and figure paintings, such as *Bathers* (opposite). This radical approach to composition influenced the Cubists (see p. 388).

Gauguin began painting as a hobby. With the encouragement of Camille Pissarro (1830–1903), he developed an Impressionist style and contributed to the last five Impressionist exhibitions. When the movement started to disintegrate, he came under the influence of the Symbolists (see p. 338), who adopted pure colors and a rhythmic, linear style to express ideas or emotions. Before departing to spend the latter part of his career in Tahiti, Gauguin visited Martinique, in the Caribbean. He stayed there for five months in 1887, and painted *Tropical Landscape, Martinique* (below), one of a number of canvases

KEY EVENTS

1872
Cézanne moves near to Pissarro's home in Pontoise. Pissarro encourages Cézanne to focus on landscape painting.

1879
American amateur painter and physicist Ogden Rood (1831–1902) writes an influential book on color theory titled *Modern Chromatics*.

1884
Influenced by new optical and color theories, Seurat begins work on *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—1884* (see p. 334).

1886
Van Gogh leaves Antwerp and moves to Paris, where he meets Gauguin, Seurat, and Pissarro, among others.

1889
Van Gogh paints *Starry Night*. During the course of the year, he creates more than 150 canvases.

1891
Seurat dies of meningitis at the age of thirty-one; according to Signac, Seurat "killed himself by overwork."

1893
Gauguin paints *The Moon and the Earth* based on a Polynesian legend.

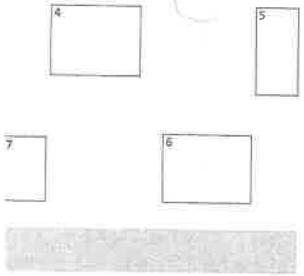
1895
Cézanne has a one-man show in Paris; it inspires many younger artists.

1899
Signac publishes *From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism*, glorifying the Post-Impressionists.

1903
Paris's Salon d'Automne holds an exhibition of Gauguin's paintings. His work influences young avant-garde artists.

1906
Cézanne dies in Aix-en-Provence, France, having attained almost mythic status in the eyes of succeeding generations of artists.

1912
Fry organizes a second Post-Impressionist exhibition in London. It includes several Cubist works, and has British and Russian sections.



4 *Models* (1886–88)
Georges-Pierre Seurat • oil on canvas
78 ¼ x 98 ¼ in. / 200 x 250 cm
The Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pennsylvania, USA

5 *Portrait of Alice Sethe* (1888)
Théo van Rysselberghe • oil on canvas
76 ¾ x 38 ⅝ in. / 195 x 98 cm
Musée départemental Maurice Denis, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France

6 *At the Moulin Rouge: The Dance* (1890)
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec • oil on canvas
45 ⅞ x 59 in. / 116 x 150 cm
Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA

7 *Women at the Well* (1892)
Paul Signac • oil on canvas
76 ¼ x 51 ⅛ in. / 195 x 131 cm
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

inspired by the island's exotic vegetation and scenery. The Martinique paintings demonstrate the artist's adoption of flat, warmer colors and his move toward Cloisonnism, a style of painting in which dark or bold lines enclose areas of bright color. Gauguin went on to explore this new style more fully at the artists' colony at Pont-Aven, Brittany, to which he made several visits along with a number of other artists. His work from this time proved an inspiration to a young group of painters, known as the Nabis, who were led by Paul Sérusier (1864–1927).

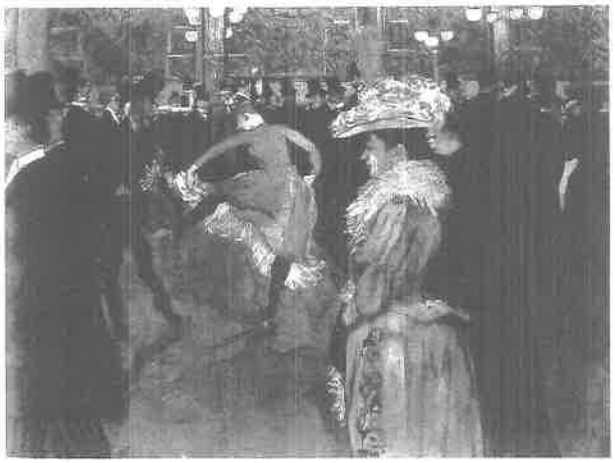
Gauguin had an ill-fated sojourn with Van Gogh at Arles in the South of France, where the latter lived in poverty and depression yet created many of his most celebrated works. The pair had met in Paris, where both had felt constrained by the limitations of the Impressionist style. A quarrel between the two artists in Arles led to Van Gogh's breakdown, during which he mutilated his left ear. Despite his troubled state of mind, Van Gogh managed to combine the simplified decorative forms that he found in Japanese prints and Symbolism to great effect. The intensity of Van Gogh's personality is evident in his *Self-portrait* (see p. 329). The artist produced more than forty-three self-portraits throughout a ten-year period. He wrote in a letter to his sister that he was looking for "a deeper likeness than that obtained by a photographer." This self-portrait from 1889 features his characteristic swirling and thick impasto brushstrokes, which emphasize the steady gaze of the subject. The dominant blue and green colors of the canvas contrast strongly with the artist's red hair and beard.

Like Cézanne, Seurat focused on a specific aspect of Impressionism, but moved it on to a different level. His key area of interest was optics. Seurat admired the vibrant color harmonies that the Impressionists had achieved but was dissatisfied with their methods. For the most part, they had combined their colors intuitively, whereas Seurat was determined to devise a more rational, scientific program for his art. He read widely on the subject, basing his "Divisionist" technique on ideas that he found in *Grammaire des Arts du Dessin* (Grammar of Painting and Engraving, 1867). He concluded that his colors would be more vivid and intense if he placed tiny touches of complementary tones side by side rather than mixing them on his palette.

Seurat described the theory of separating his colors as "Divisionism," but a number of other terms soon came into use. Critic Felix Fénéon (1861–1944) called the technique "Pointillism" and coined the word "Neo-Impressionism" to describe the movement formed by Seurat. The Neo-Impressionists brought a more scientific approach to color and light through Divisionist and Pointillist techniques. Seurat may have felt that he was refining the Impressionists' technique, but he had no intention of putting it to the same use. His paintings do not convey flickering reflections or fleeting light effects. Instead, Seurat's figures are static, sculptural, and have a timeless quality. Although *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—1884* (1884–86; see p. 334) created controversy when it was shown at the last Impressionist exhibition of 1886, it was widely seen and acted as a manifesto for the artist's theories, attracting numerous converts to the style. His painting *Models* (left) was the second that Seurat produced in the Pointillist style. This monumental work features nude models disrobing in Seurat's studio, perhaps having just posed for *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte*, a portion of which can be seen on the canvas leaning against the studio wall.

The most important of Seurat's disciples was Paul Signac (1863–1935). The pair met in 1884 and immediately became friends. Signac spread the gospel of Divisionism with considerable zeal and, after Seurat's death in 1891, became the leading spokesman for the group. In 1892, he left Paris for St. Tropez where he made several paintings of the harbor. His *Women at the Well* (opposite, below) was developed from one of his first sketches. Signac decided to isolate the two characters and devote a painting to them. He synthesized elements in the surrounding landscape in order to create a new one. In France, the other leading Neo-Impressionists were Henri Edmond Cross (1856–1910) and Pissarro, while in Belgium the style was taken up by Théo van Rysselberghe (1862–1926) and Henri van de Velde (1863–1957). Van Rysselberghe adopted Divisionist techniques in the field of portraiture in works such as *Portrait of Alice Sethe* (right, above).

One of the most colorful Post-Impressionist artists was Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901). Most of his work, including *At the Moulin Rouge: The Dance* (below), centers on the bohemian cafés, brothels, and nightclubs of Montmartre, a seedy world that he portrayed truthfully but with sympathy, humor, and insight. The man dancing nimbly to the left of the painting is a skilled dancer who performed under the name Valentin le Désossé (Valentin "the Boneless"). An outstanding draftsman, Toulouse-Lautrec was innovative in his use of fast brushstrokes, emphasis on outlines and contours, and ability to capture the spontaneity of people in their work environment. IZ



From: Reichold and Graf
Paintings that Change the World pages 140-141

ISBN: 978-3-7913-2980-4

Eros Awakes to a Storm of Indignation

Paris and the "Salon des Refusés"

When one considers the shameless indecency with which he foists his *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* on respectable visitors, all that is left to say is: as a painter, Edouard Manet possesses all the qualities necessary to be rejected unanimously by all the juries on earth.

Anonymous letter to the *Gazette de France*, 1863

Emperor Napoleon III derived pleasure in being benevolent. Under his patronage, the "Salon des Refusés" was held in 1863, an exhibition of paintings that had not been considered good enough for the official Paris Salon. Nevertheless, when the Emperor entered the room, he went into a rage. Who could have painted such a monstrous thing?

Barely objectionable in this day and age: Nude sunbathing in Munich's English Garden

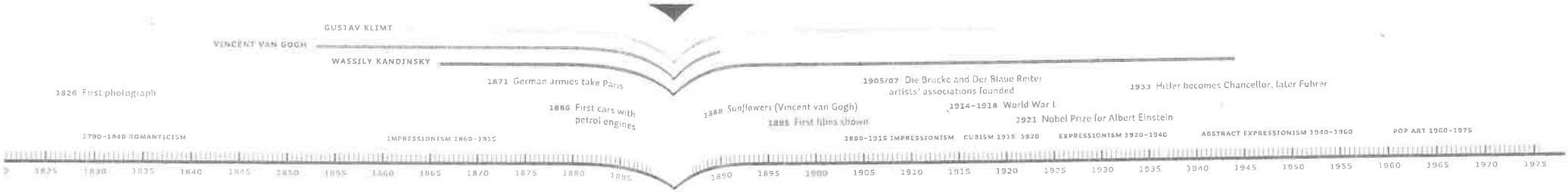
When he found out that the painter of the work thus stigmatised was Edouard Manet, he was not only furious, but appalled. The thirty-two-year-old painter Manet came from a hitherto respectable bourgeois family: His father was a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Justice and his mother came from a long line of diplomats. Edouard was the Prodigal Son. Although his family wanted him to study law, he failed the entrance examination. He was then sent to sea as a cadet on the "Havre et Guadeloupe" line. Life at sea did not agree with him and he was incapable of tying nautical knots. Yet he did learn some things that might prove useful to him as a painter, which was what he now intended to become. Despite his father's opposition to his plans, the family finally acquiesced.

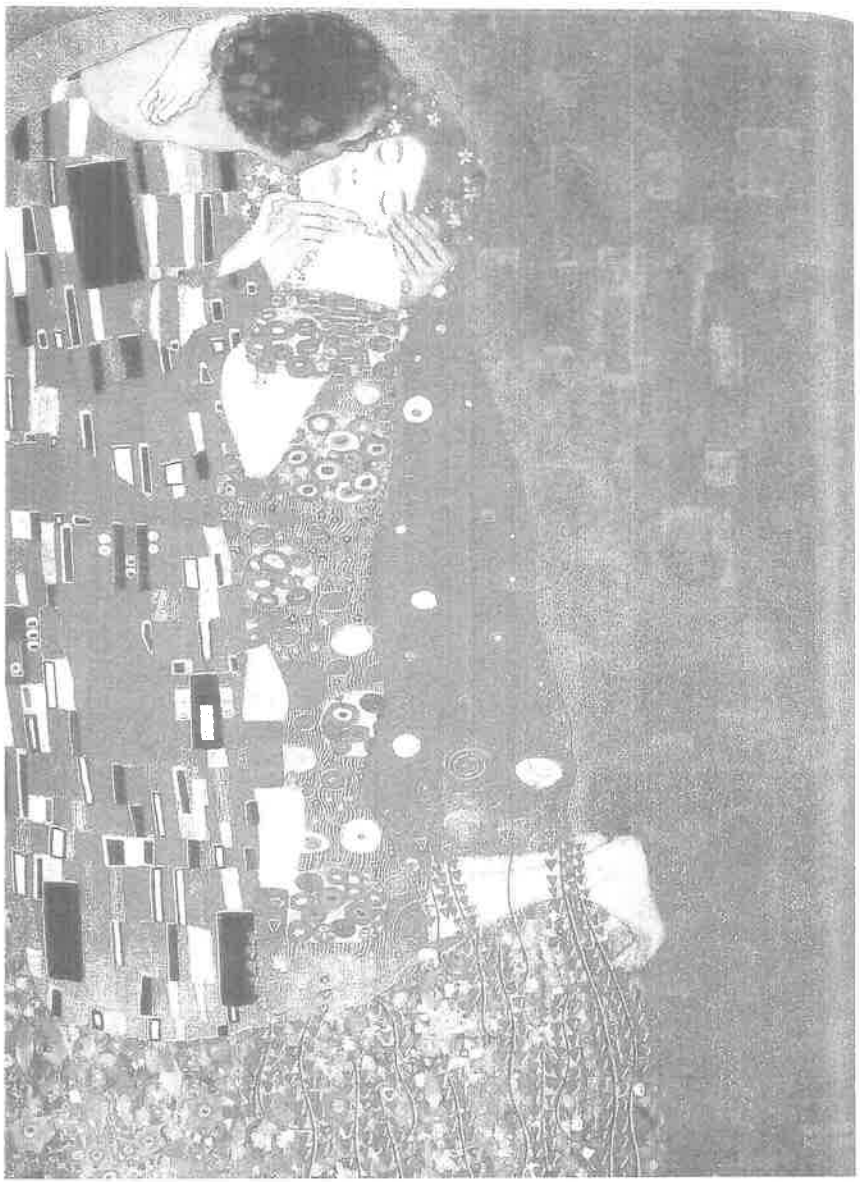
The cause of the scandal was that the naked figure at her ease enjoying breakfast outdoors was the naturalistic figure of what could be a real woman, not an allegorical personification of "Sin" or "Lust" and certainly not recognisably mythological. The woman represented was obviously modern. She was in the company of men who were dressed in the fashion of the latter half of the nineteenth century. In fact, this was a group portrait of identifiable public figures.

Criticism of the picture was devastating. Public condemnation ranged from biting irony to malicious chuckles at the artist's expense. Only the writer Emile Zola and several other open-minded friends of the arts stood up for Manet, even daring to call him "one of the leading personalities of the age" and a "courageous man" who had lent the exhibition "brilliance, intellectual élan, wit and the appeal of the unexpectedly novel". Today one might be inclined to think that the vehement reaction to the painting stemmed from the public's annoyance at having been caught out in collective forbidden fantasies by a sharp-witted voyeur.

EDOUARD MANET
(French, 1832–1883)
Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe

1863
Oil on canvas
214 × 279 cm
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





GUSTAV KLIMT

The Austrian painter Gustav Klimt created the face of Viennese Jugendstil with his portraits. His most famous picture, the golden-glowing painting The Kiss, *is also the most important of this period. Although he is best known for his portraits of women, Klimt's landscapes are also enchanting.*

Klimt did good business with art even as a child. At the age of fifteen he was already creating portraits from photographs, working with his brother Ernst, with whom he later produced a number of paintings as state commissions. Even though Klimt's style became increasingly more 'unrealistic' when painting clothes and backgrounds, he usually painted the faces of his subjects with photographic accuracy to the end.

Klimt always worked on several pictures at the same time, and each one had to turn out perfect. When he died, he left behind an unfinished painting called *The Bride*, which shows how he went about his work: first he painted people naked, then dressed them – in gold and pure colour.

Klimt's fame was due to his beautiful portraits of distinguished women in elegant clothes. His pictures of grimly-staring snake-women or water-nymphs had much less appeal in Vienna. Whenever Klimt had had enough of criticism and mockery or the hurly-burly of the big city he would move into the countryside to recuperate. He walked around the Attersee like the loner he was, wearing his wide, painter's smock and grumpily looking for subjects, then filling square canvases with blossoming expanses of sunflowers, pear trees and poppy fields.

Co-founder of the Vienna Secession

The professors of painting at the Vienna art college also found Klimt's magnificently coloured pictures with their ornate circles and undulating lines rather too novel and too sensual. As Klimt himself was refused a professorship, he and like-minded colleagues founded their own association for new art, the Secession, which suggests a splitting away. Klimt became the first president of the Secession. The architect Joseph Maria Olbrich built the group their own building in Vienna, with a golden dome reminiscent of a temple. Klimt decorated one of the rooms with a gigantic frieze dedicated to the composer Ludwig van Beethoven and his Ninth Symphony. Here, Klimt portrayed man's eternal longing for happiness and the threat to his dreams from sickness, madness and the forces of death. A couple embracing passionately features in the cheerful section of the *Beethoven Frieze*. This alludes to Beethoven's symphony, where an enormous choir thunders the portentous words "Freude, schöner Götterfunken. Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt" (Joy, beautiful spark of the gods. This kiss to the whole world). A kiss is also the motif for what is probably Klimt's best-known picture: in the large-format painting *The Kiss*, the painter shows the 'insurmountable' differences between man and woman – an important subject for Jugendstil. The 'angular' man is wearing a robe with rectangular ornaments in black and white, whereas the 'soft' woman's dress is flower-like, with colourful circles.

Jugendstil

Architects, painters and sculptors, but also cabinetmakers, glass artists and jewellers, were all fired by decorative Jugendstil around 1900. Everything was intended to become fresher and more imaginative, younger and more lively than the dull and dusty art produced by the academies. Decorative ornaments, reminiscent of flowers and squiggles, were popular in works of art and on furniture. The movement was called Secession in Vienna, and in Paris, where it originated, it was known as Art Nouveau. Important exponents of the Europe-wide movement were Aubrey Beardsley in England, Antoni Gaudí in Spain, Henry van de Velde in Belgium and Franz von Stuck in Germany.

1862 Klimt born on 14 July in the village of Baumgarten near Vienna
1876 Attends the Vienna Kunstgewerbeschule
1886 Produces pictures for the Burgtheater in Vienna with his brother Ernst
1893 The minister of culture refuses him a professorial chair
1897 Klimt and friends found the Secession
1898 Landscape at the Attersee becomes a theme
1902 Klimt paints the *Beethoven Frieze* in the Secession building. Auguste Rodin is impressed
1910 Participates successfully in the Venice Biennale
1918 Klimt dies in Vienna on 6 February after a stroke

MUSEUM AND INTERNET TIPS

Many of Klimt's works are now to be found in the Österreichische Galerie Belvedere in Vienna. You can also visit the artist's last studio at 11 and 13a Feldmühlgasse in Vienna; information at www.klimt.at

[above]
Klimt outside his studio in his garden in Josefstadterstraße, c. 1912/14
Photograph

[left]
The Kiss, 1907/08. Oil, silver and gold applied to canvas, 180 x 180 cm
Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna

From: Thomas Köster, 50 Artists You Should Know
pages 108-109
ISBN: 3-7913-3716-5

Art Nouveau:
Plants made of stone

Around 140 years ago, factories and other industrial buildings became common in cities. These huge structures were often built near older houses that looked like temples or castles. To many architects of the day, the fancy houses seemed old-fashioned, while the industrial buildings seemed cold and unfriendly. These architects wanted to give their cities a new look, with buildings that resembled nature. So they created houses with decoration that looked like flowers and vines. And most importantly of all—not one of these structures was exactly the same as the next.

Art Nouveau, Modernisme, Secessionism, Jugendstil, or the Arts and Crafts Movement: Different countries had their own term for the new style. And their artists not only made houses but also subway stations, kiosks, bathrooms, and even everyday objects into forms that looked like they had grown in nature. Yet one man, the Spanish architect Antoni Gaudí (1852-1926), outdid everyone else when he began building the church of the Sagrada Família in Barcelona in 1883.

1 If you squint at it, the Sagrada Família looks as if someone had built a sandcastle with wet sand. A total of eighteen spires were planned—one of which, at 560 feet (170 meters), will be the highest church spire in Europe ...

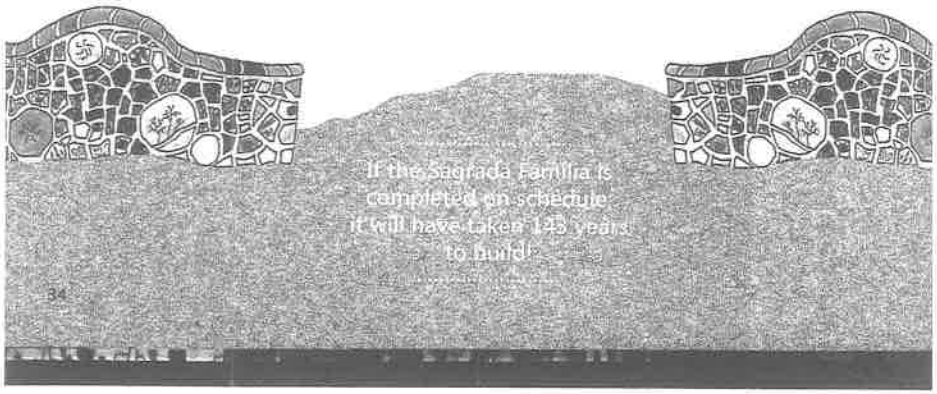
2 ... because, believe it or not, the Sagrada Família is still not finished. It is supposed to be done in 2026, and each year roughly 22 million Euros are poured into the work!

3 Gaudí used special *statics** to make his irregular building safe from collapse. He discovered a form in nature that was composed of straight lines but looked curved. Gaudí also used techniques that medieval architects employed in the construction of Gothic cathedrals.

3 The church's east façade,* with images of the birth of Christ, is finished. The rest of Gaudí's lifework, on which he toiled for forty-three years, looks like a giant construction site filled with cranes (which tend to resemble the spires a bit).

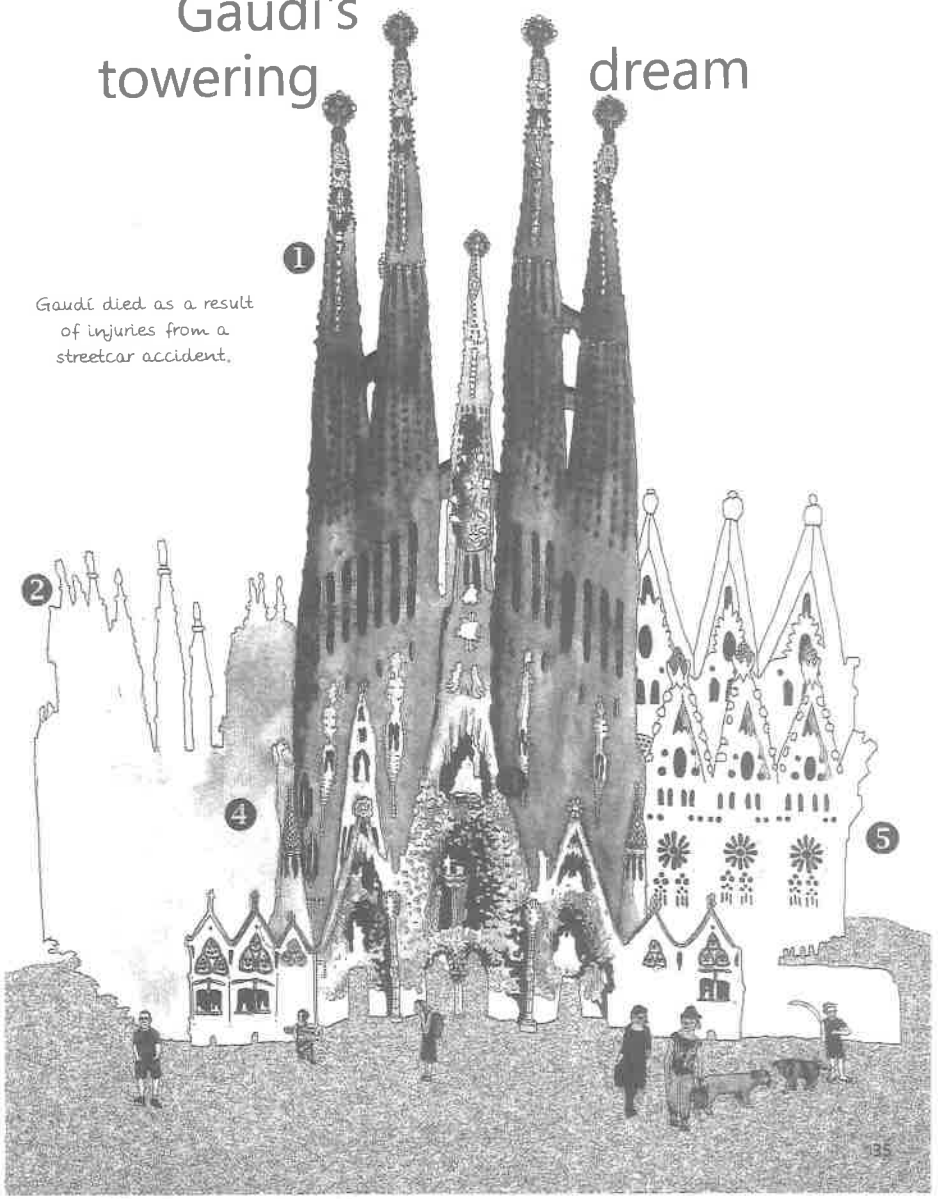
4 The interiors of the cross-shaped church seem like a jungle of stone plants, spiral staircases, and twisted, hollow spaces.

5 Colored light enters the church through—that's right!—colored panes of glass, which gives the building a spiritual feeling.



Gaudí's towering dream

Gaudí died as a result of injuries from a streetcar accident.



From: Paxmann and Ibelings, From Mud Huts to Skyscrapers
pages 34-35 ISBN: 978-3-7913-7113-9

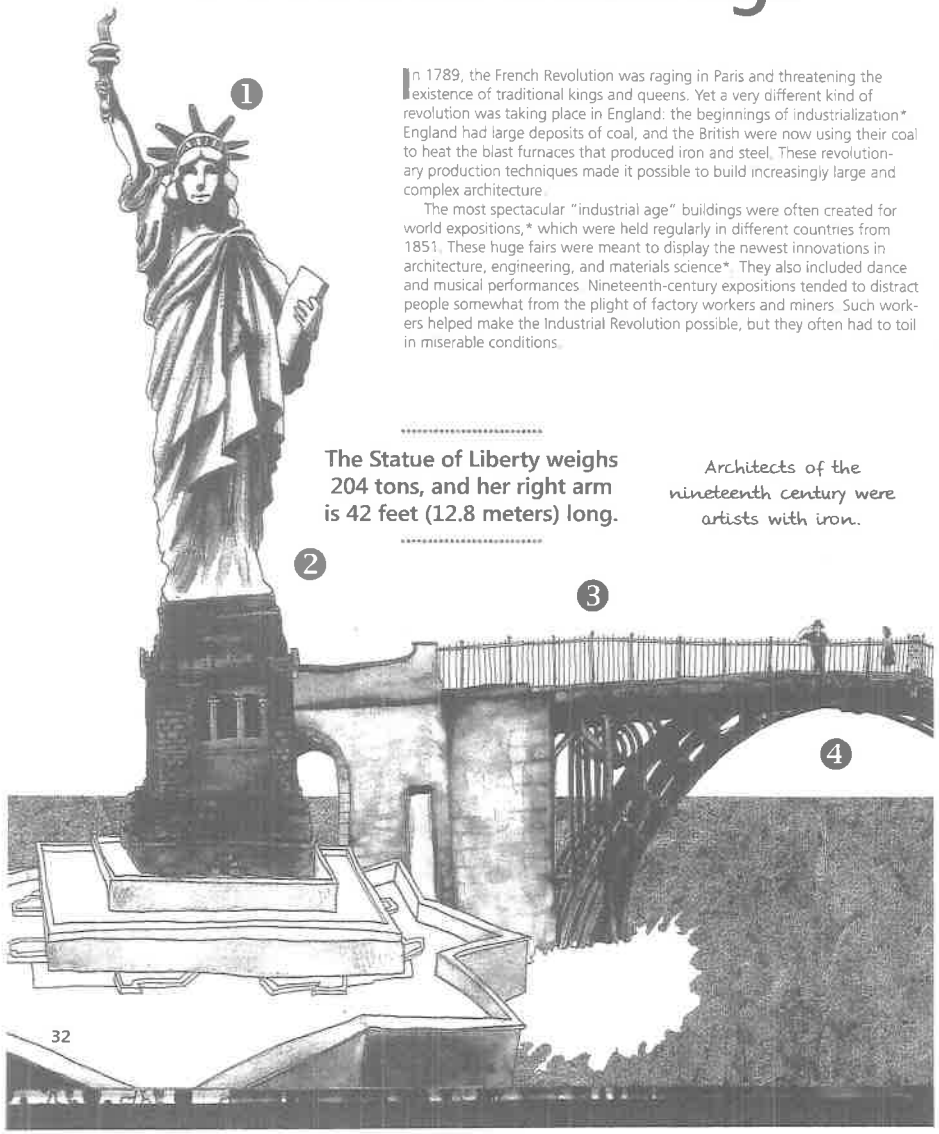
Practical and beautiful:
Industrial buildings

In 1789, the French Revolution was raging in Paris and threatening the existence of traditional kings and queens. Yet a very different kind of revolution was taking place in England: the beginnings of industrialization* England had large deposits of coal, and the British were now using their coal to heat the blast furnaces that produced iron and steel. These revolutionary production techniques made it possible to build increasingly large and complex architecture.

The most spectacular "industrial age" buildings were often created for world expositions,* which were held regularly in different countries from 1851. These huge fairs were meant to display the newest innovations in architecture, engineering, and materials science*. They also included dance and musical performances. Nineteenth-century expositions tended to distract people somewhat from the plight of factory workers and miners. Such workers helped make the Industrial Revolution possible, but they often had to toil in miserable conditions.

The Statue of Liberty weighs 204 tons, and her right arm is 42 feet (12.8 meters) long.

Architects of the nineteenth century were artists with iron.



A new world in iron and steel

1 To unite the two countries in friendship, the French people sent the Americans the Statue of Liberty, a colossal structure of iron steel and copper.

The sculptor Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi designed the statue. It was constructed in France and shipped in pieces to New York, where it has stood since 1886.

2 The giant iron lady represents Libertas, the Roman goddess of freedom. To help make her stable, Bartholdi enlisted the help of Gustave Eiffel, the builder of the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

3 In 1781, the world's first cast iron arch bridge was opened in central England. The Iron Bridge over the Severn River lies near the town of Coalbrookdale, a birthplace of the Industrial Revolution. The bridge's materials were obtained from a famous iron factory in Coalbrookdale.

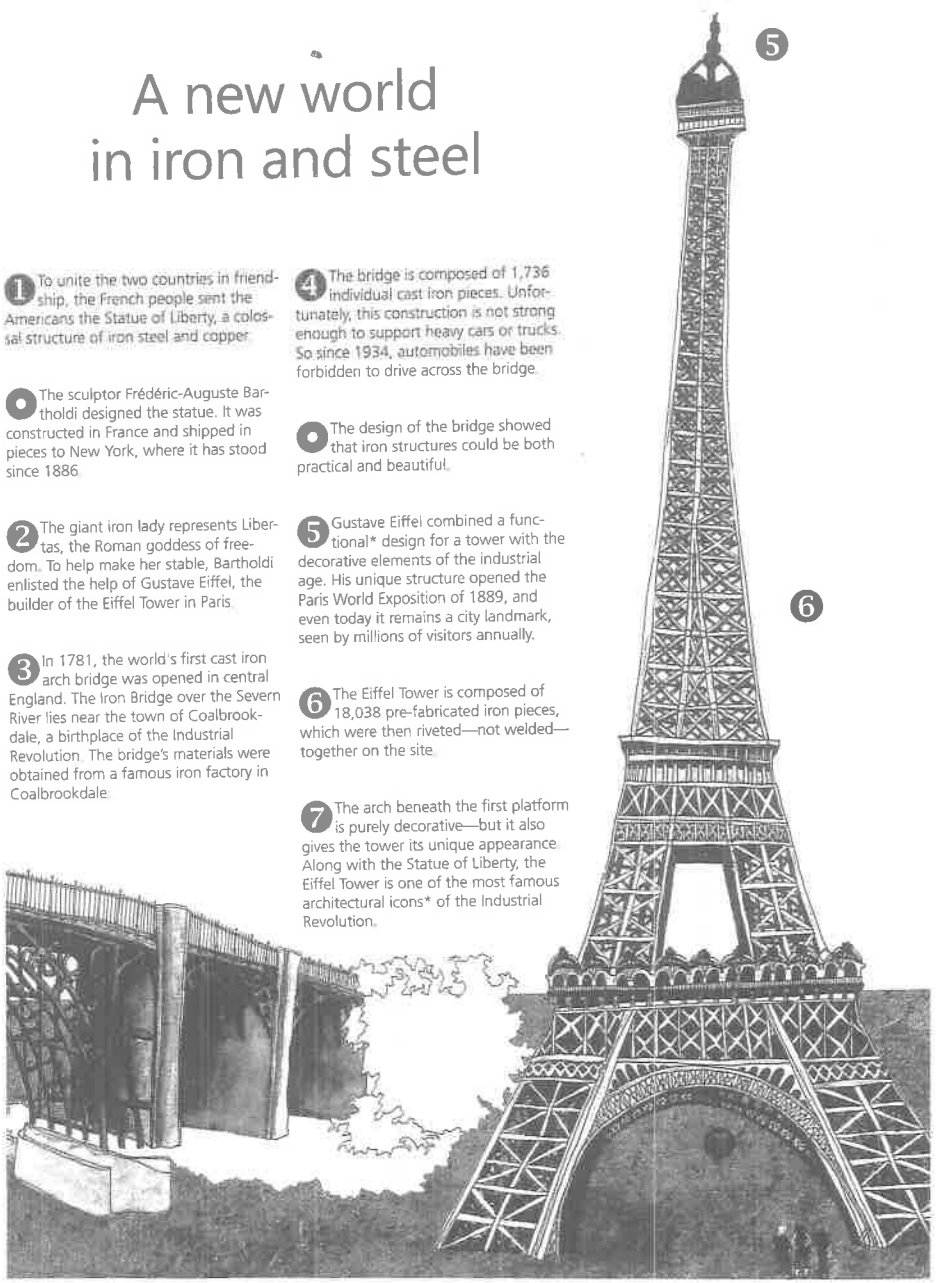
4 The bridge is composed of 1,736 individual cast iron pieces. Unfortunately, this construction is not strong enough to support heavy cars or trucks. So since 1934, automobiles have been forbidden to drive across the bridge.

The design of the bridge showed that iron structures could be both practical and beautiful.

5 Gustave Eiffel combined a functional* design for a tower with the decorative elements of the industrial age. His unique structure opened the Paris World Exposition of 1889, and even today it remains a city landmark, seen by millions of visitors annually.

6 The Eiffel Tower is composed of 18,038 pre-fabricated iron pieces, which were then riveted—not welded—together on the site.

7 The arch beneath the first platform is purely decorative—but it also gives the tower its unique appearance. Along with the Statue of Liberty, the Eiffel Tower is one of the most famous architectural icons* of the Industrial Revolution.



From: Paxmann and Ibelings, From Mud Huts to Skyscrapers
pages 32-33 ISBN: 978-3-7913-7113-9

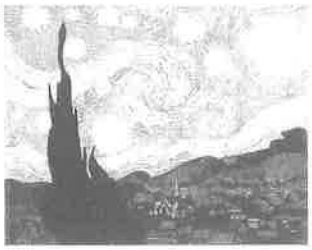
CLOSERlook

The Starry Night Vincent van Gogh

Stars explode like fireworks in a night sky that pulsates with wave-like energy, while the twisted silhouette of a cypress tree flames upward from the landscape below. A mixture of observation, memory, and imagination, *The Starry Night* expresses van Gogh's intense response to nature. The painting contains elements of the actual French Provencal landscape, but the village scene is an invention, with the church spire inspired by memories of van Gogh's native Holland. It is one of several "starry night" pictures that van Gogh painted.

Composition

Despite the asymmetry of the composition, and the busy arrangement of stars dotted over the surface, the painting has an ordered simplicity, which holds the frenetic energy in check and intensifies its impact. The layers of space—foreground, mid-ground, and sky—which exist in depth in nature, appear vertically on the canvas as three areas. The dark cypress tree that springs up from the bottom left is counterbalanced by the brilliantly luminous yellow moon in the top right.



▲ **TIED TOGETHER** The flame-like cypress stretches from the bottom almost to the top of the canvas—creating a visual link that ties the three layers of space together.

▲ **ROLLING ENERGY** Contrasting with the powerful vertical movement of the cypress on the left, clouds roll and swirl horizontally across the canvas—like waves, moving from left to right.

INcontext

ST. RÉMY ASYLUM While a patient at the St. Rémy Asylum, van Gogh often went into the countryside to paint. This sunny landscape is a similar composition (but reversed) to *The Starry Night*. Once again, it is dominated by the distinctive shape of the cypress.

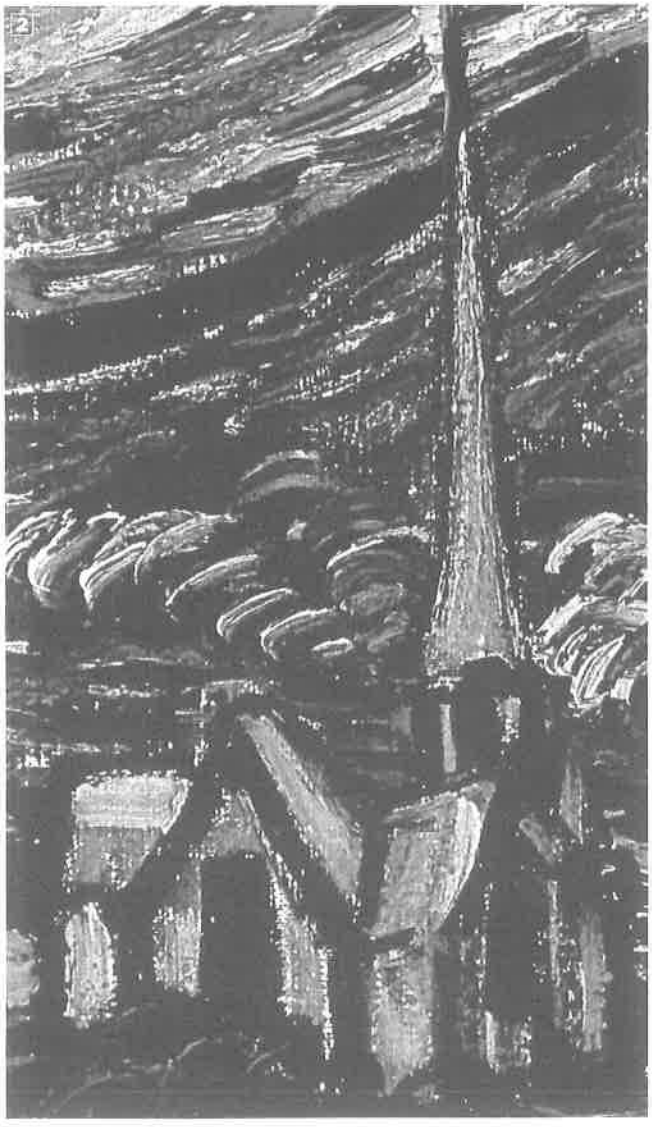
A Wheatfield with Cypresses, *Vincent van Gogh, (1889).*

> "Just as we **take the train** to get to Tarascon or Rouen, we **take death** to **reach a star**"
>
> VINCENT VAN GOGH, 9 JULY 1888

Technique

Characteristically for a picture made near the end of van Gogh's life, this canvas is painted with vigorous, impasted (thickly layered), dash-like brush strokes. Applying paint with a heavily loaded brush, van Gogh creates stylized swirls and concentric circles that have a powerful, overall effect. Color is as forceful as the brushwork, with bold contrasts of blue and yellow predominating. Van Gogh's expressive technique gives the whole canvas a frenzied animation, which seems to reflect the artist's state of mind.

▶ **DIFFERENT STROKES** Van Gogh uses distinctly different techniques for the dark cypress and the nearby white star. The cypress is painted in long strokes of fluid paint, while the star has a textured halo created by concentric dashes of thick, drier paint.



▶ **DARK OUTLINES** The village buildings have the bold outlines characteristic of many of van Gogh's paintings, reflecting the influence of Japanese art and, perhaps, old woodcuts. Small squares and rectangles of yellow, indicating lighted windows, create accents of color in the dark landscape and echo the yellow stars above.