



## VAN GOGH'S GREATEST WORKS. CLOSE ENOUGH TO TOUCH.



Vincent Van Gogh is one of the world's most celebrated artists – in his brief career, he produced some of the most famous paintings in history. Now, brought to you by the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, a select few Van Gogh Museum Editions are coming to West Galleria at Oakridge Centre, bringing the experience of Van Gogh's visionary works closer than ever.

### VAN GOGH

Vincent Van Gogh (1857-1890) was a Dutch post-Impressionist painter who exerted enormous influence on western art. Although he only began painting in his mid-twenties, Van Gogh was prolific in his later life, and produced more than 2,100 artworks in a single decade. His paintings are characterized by vivid colours and an unmatched intensity of emotion. Together with his now-legendary letters, they make up a body of work that has had an immense impact on our painting tradition.

**IN 1882, EIGHT YEARS BEFORE HIS DEATH, VINCENT WROTE A PRESCIENT LETTER TO HIS BROTHER THEO, SUGGESTING THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE HIS PAINTINGS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PEOPLE.**

*"What I wrote to you in my last letter about a plan for making prints for the people is something to which I hope you'll give some thought one day. I don't have a fixed plan about this myself as yet... But I don't doubt the possibility of doing something like this, nor its usefulness. Nor can I doubt that people can be found whose heart would be in it. In short, I believe it could be done in such a way that no one would regret having taken part."*

*With a handshake,*

*Vincent*

## VAN GOGH'S VISION MADE REAL

More than a century later, the Van Gogh Museum has found a way to go beyond Van Gogh's vision, creating lifelike editions of his work that can be distributed worldwide. In collaboration with FujiFilm Belgium, the museum has developed state-of-the-art Reliefofographs – now called the Van Gogh Museum Edition Collection.

The specially developed process ("reliefography") took seven years to develop and brings together three dimensional laser scanning, digital imaging, and state-of-the-art printing technologies, combined with hours of handcraft. The Edition includes a meticulous reproduction of both the front and the back of the painting, as well as a frame. Each resulting canvas is painstakingly examined and compared to the original work by the museum's curators before being blessed and authenticated as a limited, numbered and certified Van Gogh Museum Edition.

Oakridge is proud to present this Collection, from February 24 – March 27.

**VIEW THESE AMAZING MASTERPIECES IN PERSON - OR OWN ONE FOR YOURSELF.**

Mondays and Tuesdays 12 pm – 6 pm  
Wednesdays, Thursday and Fridays 12 pm – 8 pm  
Saturdays 10 am – 6 pm  
Sundays and Holidays 12 pm – 5 pm

Entrance Fee: \$5 per person. (Children under 10 free.)  
Location: Oakridge Centre, West Galleria

## WIN A TRIP TO AMSTERDAM!

Win a trip for two to Amsterdam – and experience the city the master called home! This unforgettable trip includes two round-trip flights from Vancouver to Amsterdam with KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, a private tour of the Van Gogh Museum with a museum curator, and a 3-night stay at the Lloyd Hotel Amsterdam. The Van Gogh Museum, in Amsterdam, houses the world's largest collection of works by Vincent van Gogh.



**SUNFLOWERS, 1889**  
95 X 73 CM

The original painting of 'The Sunflowers' is itself a reproduction made by Van Gogh. He called it 'an absolutely equal and identical' copy. The first version of this painting, now in the National Gallery, London, dated from August 1888. It was meant to be part of a decoration intended for the room of Gauguin if he were to come to Arles. Vincent envisaged a narrow, orange-red frame for it that was meant to create the impression of a shining, stained-glass window. In order to achieve this translucent effect, Vincent painted the bouquet with the 'light on light' technique. Two hues of luminous yellow were used next to each other and with cross-hatching in the background, thus reinforcing the painting's luminosity. Half of the sunflowers are overblown, and their fat, seedy crowns stand out from the bright background as palpable objects.

The Van Gogh Museum Edition permits us to perceive a small zone that has been added to the original canvas, at the top of the painting. He may have done this to allow for more breathing space around the upper flowers. This strip may also have been added for spatial reasons, in order to fit the painting to an existing frame.

## OWN YOUR OWN VAN GOGH

**ALMOND BLOSSOM, 1890**  
73.5 X 92 CM

The picture postcard of this painting is the best selling reproduction in the Amsterdam Van Gogh Museum. This is entirely understandable; few paintings of Van Gogh radiate such an uncompromised 'joy de vivre'. The occasion for which Vincent made this optimistic work is in complete harmony with its expressive power. The budding almond blossom symbolises new life and it was inspired by the birth of his nephew, Vincent. This painting was a gift to the couple that they were to hang in their bedroom.

Vincent chose to depict the criss crossed branches as a maze under the deep blue sky. The twigs almost seem to be sculpted with paint, an effect that can only be experienced with the impasto technique.

The baby for whom 'Almond Blossom' was made, later became the founder of the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam. Through his efforts, a large part of the paintings created by his uncle are still together, for everyone to appreciate in the Van Gogh museum.

The Van Gogh Museum Edition on Tour presents attendees a memorable chance to own up to 9 unique Van Gogh Museum Editions. Each Van Gogh Museum single Edition is released as part of a



**THE HARVEST, 1888**  
73 X 92 CM

When the wheat in Arles was ripe in June 1888, Vincent did not want to waste the opportunity to embark on a series of paintings. He worked feverishly and 'The Harvest' may be the best of this series in Arles. True to his own disbelief, he was rather content with this work. Along with the other canvases from the 'oogst' series, he put 'the harvest' on the terracotta-tiled floor of his studio and he had to confess 'this last canvas kills the rest'. From a high vantage point we look down on the plain called 'La Crau'. The fields are bordered with a precision reminiscent of his beloved Japanese prints. At the immediate foreground, a country lane is running past a fence made of wooden sticks, tied together. This fence and the herbs in front of it are painted in impasto which is directly contrasted by the blue green sky, painted with thin, flat, transparent touches. An immense sensation of depth and distance is created by the composition itself. Reinforced by the experience of the impasto in the foreground, the pictorial space is made palpable, an effect that is all but lost in a normal, flat reproduction.

worldwide limited and numbered series of 260 multiples, and comes with anti-counterfeit protection and an official certificate of authenticity from the Van Gogh Museum.

For purchase inquiries, visit [oakridgecentre.com](http://oakridgecentre.com)

*Van Gogh*

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**WHEATFIELD UNDER THUNDERCLOUDS, 1890**

50 X 100.5 CM

This painting is among the ominous series of ‘double square’ paintings that Van Gogh made in the last weeks before his suicide. In hindsight, these portentous works seem to announce the painter’s inevitable fate. Van Gogh had returned under the northern sky expecting a healthier existence in Auvers-sur-Oise. It is this message that we are to understand through the depiction of the menacing clouds above the wheat fields. A quote from one of his letters is linked to ‘Wheatfield under Thunderclouds’ that seems to support a desperate emotional state to this work. ‘They are immense stretches of wheat fields under turbulent skies, and I made a point of trying to express sadness, extreme loneliness.’ The letter continues with a phrase that allows for a more optimistic understanding of the piece. ‘these canvases will tell you what I can’t say in words, what I consider healthy and fortifying about the countryside.’ It may be that it is hope rather than desperation that is expressed by the life-giving thunderclouds that are threatening to drown the green wheat. Van Gogh worked feverishly during the last few weeks of his life; often at a rate of more than one canvas a day. Before they were dry, they were stowed under his bed in the tiny room above Cafe Ravoux. In the Van Gogh Museum Edition, one can see how his thumb has smudged the still wet paint in the lower left hand corner. He piled them up on each other while they were still drying, the backside of the top canvas left an impression upon the thickly applied paint. The Edition gives us an insight in to the tumultuous last few days of the painter’s life.



**BOULEVARD DE CLICHY, 1887**

46.5 X 55 CM

What we see here is the neighbourhood close to the Paris apartment where Vincent lived with his brother Theo from 1886-1887. We look westward on the Boulevard de Clichy where many of his fellow artists lived, such as Georges Seurat and Paul Signac. Down the road, at nr. 104 was the studio of Fernand Cormon, where Vincent took lessons and he met Émile Bernard and Henri de Toulouse Lautrec. Vincent called this avant-garde group of artists ‘The painters of the Petit Boulevard’ in order to contrast them with the more established impressionists like Monet, who had their dealers at the ‘Grand Boulevard’. Van Gogh had seen the work of neo-impressionists like Seurat and Signac, and he readily absorbed their modern notions of colour. Their meticulous application of dots in pure colour, straight from the tube, was perhaps too precise for Vincent’s character. Vincent’s temperament betrays itself with his use of dynamic dabs of pure colour, loosely applied to the canvas that remains visible throughout the oeuvre. The Van Gogh Museum Edition technique enables us to experience this hasty technique. The paint has been applied in a single session, like a watercolour. There is one exception: in the left foreground the silhouette of a woman crosses the boulevard. Her position is an afterthought: Vincent has moved her to the left and the original figure, all but scratched out, can still be seen and felt in the Edition.



**UNDERGROWTH, 1889**

73.0 X 92.5 CM

When Jo van Gogh-Bonger saw this work exhibited in Paris, early in 1890, she immediately grew fond of it and she always gave it a place of great importance in her house. We can easily understand why, since ‘Undergrowth’ shows Vincent at work in his most controlled, yet exuberant style.

Every one of the brushstrokes has the tendency, by its very thickness and direction, to reflect light in a different way. If one wants to truly appreciate the tactile qualities of this painting, such as the rhythmic dabs of paint that cover the ground and the tree trunks. A Van Gogh Museum Edition acts as a gateway to the understanding of his style and emotional position at this time.

The loaded Brushstrokes of green, blue, black with white dabs give perspective to the vegetation of the ‘Undergrowth’. Still there is order in this sea of paint, just as when a water surface is rippled by a gush of wind. Although his mental condition did not allow Vincent to leave the walled garden of the asylum as yet, he was certainly able to find a world within his own confinement.



**THE BEDROOM, 1888**

72.5 X 91.5 CM

Repeatedly, Van Gogh wrote in his letters that he considered The Bedroom to be one of his best paintings. It is quite a simple affair, an ‘interior without anything’ that nonetheless conveys a powerful suggestion of ‘utter repose’ with very different and contrasting tones ‘coarsely brushed in full impasto’, as described in his letter to Gauguin. What we see is the bedroom of the yellow house in Arles. Van Gogh was hoping for Gauguin to join him in Arles. He wanted to convince Gauguin that he was very much aware of the latest symbolic trends in painting. It was important to convey that no artistic controversies would stand in the way of their future cooperation. Three versions of ‘The Bedroom’ have come to light to this day. This version is a rather precise rendition by Van Gogh after the first version, now in the Chicago Art Institute. That one was damaged and because Theo was aware of the quality of the work he advised Vincent to make this copy before it was to be restored. ‘Coarsely brushed impasto’ accounts for much of the painting’s spatial and expressive effect. Vincent reinforced the lines of the wooden floorboards by painting them parallel to the perspective lines. Together with the irregular shape of the room, the forced flight of the perspective seems to undo the intended effect of ‘utter repose’. His vehement personality seems to be domesticated by the strong contours of the furniture and the flat, unbroken fields of colour.



**LANDSCAPE AT TWILIGHT, 1890**

50 X 101 CM

When he climbed the road from the deep valley of the Oise, Vincent gained easy access to the fields that shadowed the Château d’Auvers. Set off by a bright yellow evening sky, we are drawn to the silhouettes of trees in the field and the comparatively tiny Château underneath them.

Van Gogh attempted to create the ‘evening effect’, in which he wished to portray a sentiment of ‘Peace and Majesty’ while showing the reality of his world. He did not frown upon the more romanticized effects that were cherished by many artists: ‘adding to it a feeling so heart breaking, so personal. These emotions I do not detest.’

Again, Vincent’s temperament was hard to tame; even when he strived towards tranquillity, the rhythmic play of yellow and black pervades the painting with a feeling of brooding tension. In hindsight, these final pieces from Van Gogh become even more poignant. The fields painted here are similar to the spot where Vincent would shoot himself, a few weeks later.



**FISHING BOATS ON THE BEACH AT LES SAINTES-MARIES-DE-LA-MER, 1888**

65 X 81.5 CM

In late May 1888, Vincent made a short trip to the Mediterranean. He chose to go to Saintes-Maries-de-la mer, famous for its annual pilgrimage. Van Gogh made several drawings and painted what he saw on the spot. From huts to landscapes incorporating the elements of the town. Back in Arles, he combined these studies and sketches in the painting in question, which was beautifully described in a letter: ‘On the completely flat, sandy beach, little green, red, blue boats, so pretty in shape and colour that one thought of as flowers.’

Vincent was completely taken by Japanese art during this period of his short career. In Paris, he had been raving about Japanese woodcuts, and had begun acquiring quite a collection, which he exhibited in a local café. Japanese art had had a profound effect on Vincent’s style and it was this work that he wanted to emulate through his own. The swiftly drawn yet confident lines added a sense of emphasis to the brightly contrasting colours of the boats. The essence of the Japanese work that he had grown to love was delicately mastered into his own.

