

VINCENT VAN GOGH (1853-90)

Vincent Van Gogh was born in **Groot-Zundert, Holland in 1853**. Before he took up painting, he became a **religious missionary** in the coal-mining district of the **Borinage** in Belgium.

After 1880, he taught himself to paint. He had a close relationship, with his brother **THEO**. Theo was a wealthy art dealer. He supported Van Gogh with money throughout his life. Throughout his whole life Van Gogh only sold one painting.

After his arrival in Paris, in **1886**, his style, colour and subject matter changed. He adopted the **Impressionist painting technique**. This means that he used impressionistic brushstrokes to describe the colour and light in his work. His paintings were mostly **PORTRAITS, STILL LIFES and FIGURES**.

Van Gogh was known as a **POST IMPRESSIONIST PERIOD** artist.

By **December 1888**, his mental and physical well being had deteriorated to a very low level. His paintings became brighter in colour, his painting technique became wilder and full of mark making. His paintings from around that time are **PORTRAITS, landscapes, still lifes, and paintings of his room and surrounding**, which make use of intense, passionate expression of colour, light and feeling.

Colours used are bright and pure. The paint technique is **IMPASTO** (paint is applied in very thick, textured layers to the painting canvas). The brushstrokes describe the textures in the paintings. His paintings are very **EXPRESSIVE** in style.

Between the years **1888-90**, Van Gogh produced his largest number of paintings. Van Gogh suffered mental ill health and was eventually admitted to an asylum in **Saint-Remy**. He painted, and was still very productive.

His paintings during this last period of his life at **Saint-Remy and Auvers**, are amongst the most expressive, and highly coloured. The brushstrokes in these paintings take on a swirling effect, with flame like forms, which reflect his tormented mental state.

In July 1890, Van Gogh shot himself and later died of his injuries.