

Van Gogh

Vincent Willem van Gogh (30 March 1853 – 29 July 1890) was a Dutch Post-Impressionist painter who is among the most famous and influential figures in the history of Western art. In just over a decade he created approximately 2100 artworks, including around 860 oil paintings, most of them in the last two years of his life. They include landscapes, still lifes, portraits and self-portraits, and are characterised by bold, symbolic colours, and dramatic, impulsive and highly expressive brushwork that contributed to the foundations of modern art. Only one of his paintings was known by name to have been sold during his lifetime. Van Gogh became famous after his suicide at age 37, which followed years of poverty and mental illness. Van Gogh's nephew and namesake, Vincent Willem van Gogh (1890–1978), inherited the estate after his mother's death in 1925. During the early 1950s he arranged for the publication of a complete edition of the letters presented in four volumes and several languages. He then began negotiations with the Dutch government to subsidise a foundation to purchase and house the entire collection. Theo's son participated in planning the project in the hope that the works would be exhibited under the best possible conditions. The project began in 1963 architect Gerrit Rietveld was commissioned to design it, and after his death in 1964 Kisho Kurokawa took charge. Work progressed throughout the 1960s, with 1972 as the target for its grand opening. The Van Gogh Museum opened in the Museumplein in Amsterdam in 1973. It became the second most popular museum in the Netherlands, after the Rijksmuseum, regularly receiving more than 1.5 million visitors a year. In 2015 it had a record 1.9 million. Eighty-five percent of the visitors come from other countries.