

Vincent van Gogh 1853-1890 | Dutch



Tête de paysanne à la coiffe blanche

🌟 TABLE OF CONTENTS 🌟

Painting Overview	4
Literature	6
Exhibited.....	31
Auction Comparables	38
Museum Comparables	39

Oil on canvas laid on panel | Circa 1884

Canvas: 13 1/4" high by 10 1/4" wide | 33.65 cm x 26.03 cm
Frame: 19 5/8" high by 17" wide by 2 5/8" deep
49.85 cm x 43.18 cm x 6.67 cm



“

*Find things
beautiful as much
as you can, most
people find too
little beautiful.*

- Vincent van Gogh

”



OVERVIEW

A striking and evocative example of Vincent van Gogh's early portraiture, *Tête de paysanne à la coiffe blanche* showcases the artist's powerful ability to capture both the likeness and the essence of his sitters. Rendered in thick, deliberate brushstrokes, van Gogh paints his sitter with an unbroken forward gaze. The composition's tertiary palette conjures a dimly lit evening setting, accentuating the dramatic lighting of the subject's solemn face. The woman's white headpiece greatly contrasts with the subject's dark and dramatic facial features, emphasizing the large pools of her emotive eyes. This bold chiaroscuro effect conveys a sense of drama, evoking a deeper emotional connection with the viewer.

This work comes from a pivotal moment in van Gogh's artistic journey. In 1883, van Gogh returned to his family's home in Nuenen begrudgingly, though the new setting soon renewed his artistic vigor and sense of purpose. Turning toward portraiture, van Gogh sought to portray the local peasants not as an outsider viewing them as a spectacle, but rather from a place of empathy. Van Gogh's portraits rendered these locals with dignity and expressive individuality. Poignant and intimate, *Tête de paysanne à la coiffe blanche* immortalizes an ordinary local Nuenen woman in a deeply stirring, emotional way.

Despite experiencing familial and societal alienation, van Gogh found Nuenen to be a supportive environment where he could fully devote himself to his craft, unconstrained by societal norms he vehemently opposed. During this period, van Gogh immersed himself in various Dutch artistic traditions, engaging in a meaningful dialogue with his roots both physically and emotionally. His time in Nuenen is widely recognized as a critical period in his artistic development, culminating in his renowned masterpiece, *The Potato Eaters*, completed in 1885.

Works from van Gogh's time in the Dutch village of Nuenen are highly sought after as they capture the crucial moment when van Gogh connected to his past, focused on the evolution of his artistic genius and created some of the most iconic works in his magnificent oeuvre. Van Gogh's *Tête de paysanne à la coiffe blanche* demonstrates the artist's ability to imbue his subjects with dignity and empathy, while also subtly reflecting his own inner struggles. An important work reflecting van Gogh's profound and persistent desire to evolve, this beautiful and rare painting is exemplary of van Gogh's genius.

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam. ●



OVERVIEW

PROVENANCE

Col. C. Mouwen Jr., Breda, The Netherlands

Galerie d'Art Oldenzeel, Rotterdam

H. van Ogtrop-van Kempen, Aalst, The Netherlands (acquired by 1929)

Mrs. H. van Ogtrop-van Kempen, Aalst, The Netherlands (by descent from the above)

E.J. van Wisselingh, Amsterdam

Private Collection, Spain

Sotheby's, London, 30 June 1981, lot 27a

Piccadilly Gallery, London

Landau Fine Art, Montreal

Private Collection, Midwest, 1998

Sotheby's New York, 7 May 2014, lot 45

Private Collection

M.S. Rau, New Orleans

LITERATURE

Jacob Baart de la Faille, *L'Oeuvre de Vincent van Gogh*, vol. II, pt. I, Paris, 1928, no. 74, illustrated p. XXII

Walther Vanbeselaere, *De Hollandsche periode in het werk van Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam & Antwerp, 1937, no. 146, listed pp. 290 & 415

Jacob Baart de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, no. 145, illustrated p. 126

The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh, vol. II, New York, 1959, letter nos. 390 & 394, pp. 341-43 & 348-50

Jacob Baart de la Faille, *The Works of Vincent van Gogh*, London, 1970, no. 146, illustrated p. 91

Paolo Lecaldano, *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Van Gogh*, Paris, 1971, no. 127

Paolo Lecaldano, *L'Opera pittorica completa di van Gogh e i suoi nessi grafici*, Milan, 1977, no. 127, illustrated p. 101

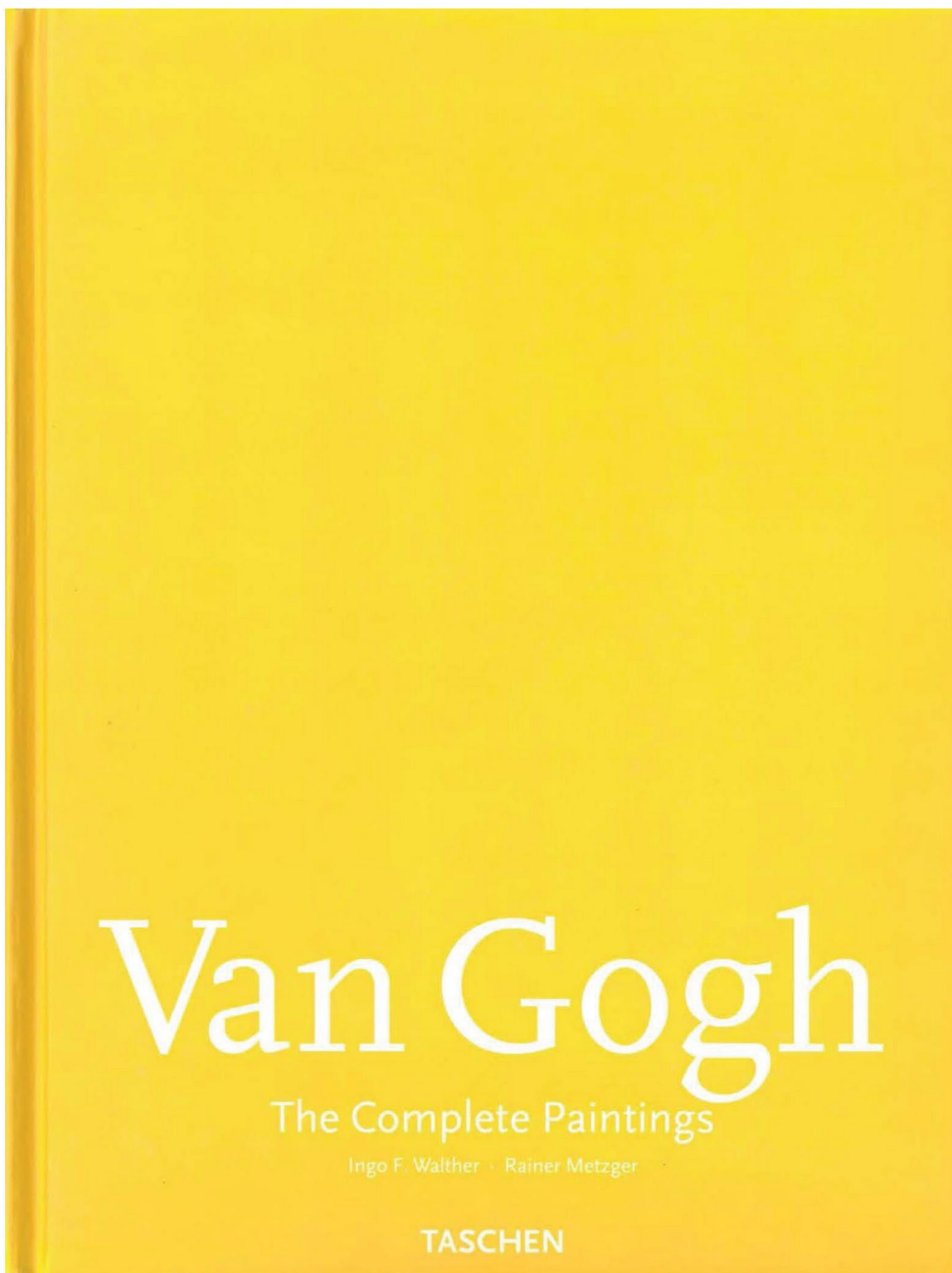
Jan Hulsker, *The Complete Van Gogh*, Oxford, 1980, no. 551, illustrated p. 127

Ingo F. Walther & Rainer Metzger, *Vincent Van Gogh: The Complete Paintings*, vol. I, Cologne, 1990, illustrated in color p. 69

EXHIBITED

Rotterdam, Galerie d'Art, Oldenzeel, *Vincent van Gogh*, 1903





Ingo F. Walther & Rainer Metzger, *Vincent Van Gogh: The Complete Paintings*, vol. I, Cologne, 1990, illustrated in color p. 69



Ingo F. Walther · Rainer Metzger

Vincent van Gogh

The Complete Paintings

Part I

Etten, April 1881 – Paris, February 1888

TASCHEN

HONGKONG KÖLN LONDON LOS ANGELES MADRID PARIS TOKYO

Ingo F. Walther & Rainer Metzger, *Vincent Van Gogh: The Complete Paintings*, vol. I,
Cologne, 1990, illustrated in color p. 69





Head of an Old Peasant Woman with White Cap
 Nuenen, December 1884
 Oil on canvas, 36.5 x 29.5 cm
 F 75, JH 550
 Wuppertal, Von der Heydt-Museum



Head of an Old Peasant Woman with White Cap
 Nuenen, December 1884
 Oil on canvas on cardboard, 33 x 26 cm
 F 146, JH 551. Private collection
 [Sotheby's Auction, London, 30. 6. 1981]

Head of a Peasant Woman with Dark Cap
 Nuenen, January 1885
 Oil on canvas on panel, 39.5 x 30 cm
 F 133, JH 584
 Private collection

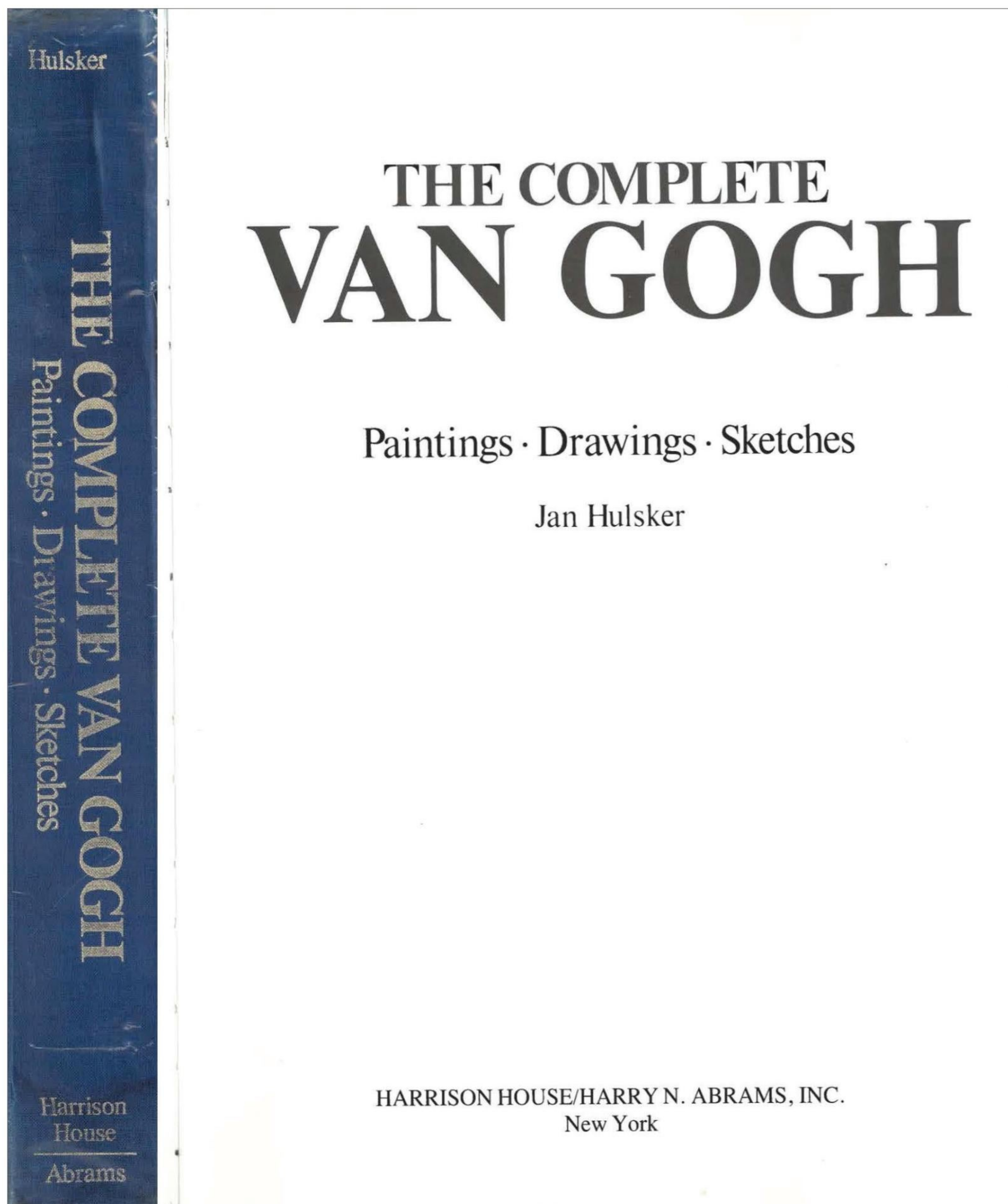
Head of a Peasant with Cap
 Nuenen, January 1885
 Oil on canvas, 35.5 x 26 cm
 F 169a, JH 583
 Collection Stavros S. Niarchos

Head of a Peasant Woman with Dark Cap
 Nuenen, January 1885
 Oil on canvas on panel, 25 x 19 cm
 F 153a, JH 586
 New York, Private collection



Ingo F. Walther & Rainer Metzger, *Vincent Van Gogh: The Complete Paintings*, vol. I, Cologne, 1990, illustrated in color p. 69





Jan Hulsker, *The Complete Van Gogh*, Oxford, 1980, no. 551, illustrated p. 127





544



545



546



547



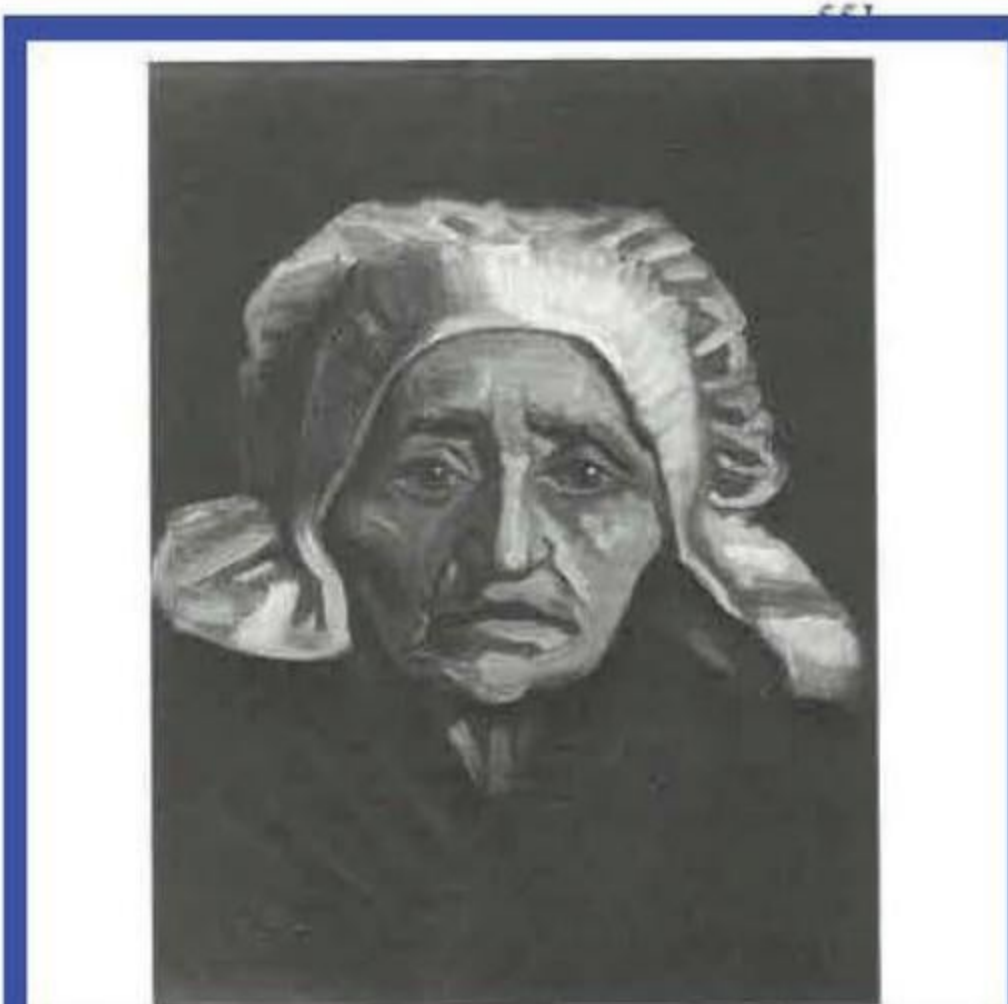
548



549



550



551



552

- December 1884
 544 Peasant Woman, Head, F1192
 Pencil, black chalk, washed, 34.5 × 21 cm
 (13½ × 8¼")
 Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, Amsterdam
 545 Peasant Woman, Head, F1180
 Black chalk, 41.5 × 29 cm (16½ × 11⅝")
 Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, Amsterdam
 546 Peasant Woman, Half-Figure, Sitting, F143
 Canvas on panel, 36 × 26 cm (14⅛ × 10¼")
 Collection Max Wirth, Basel

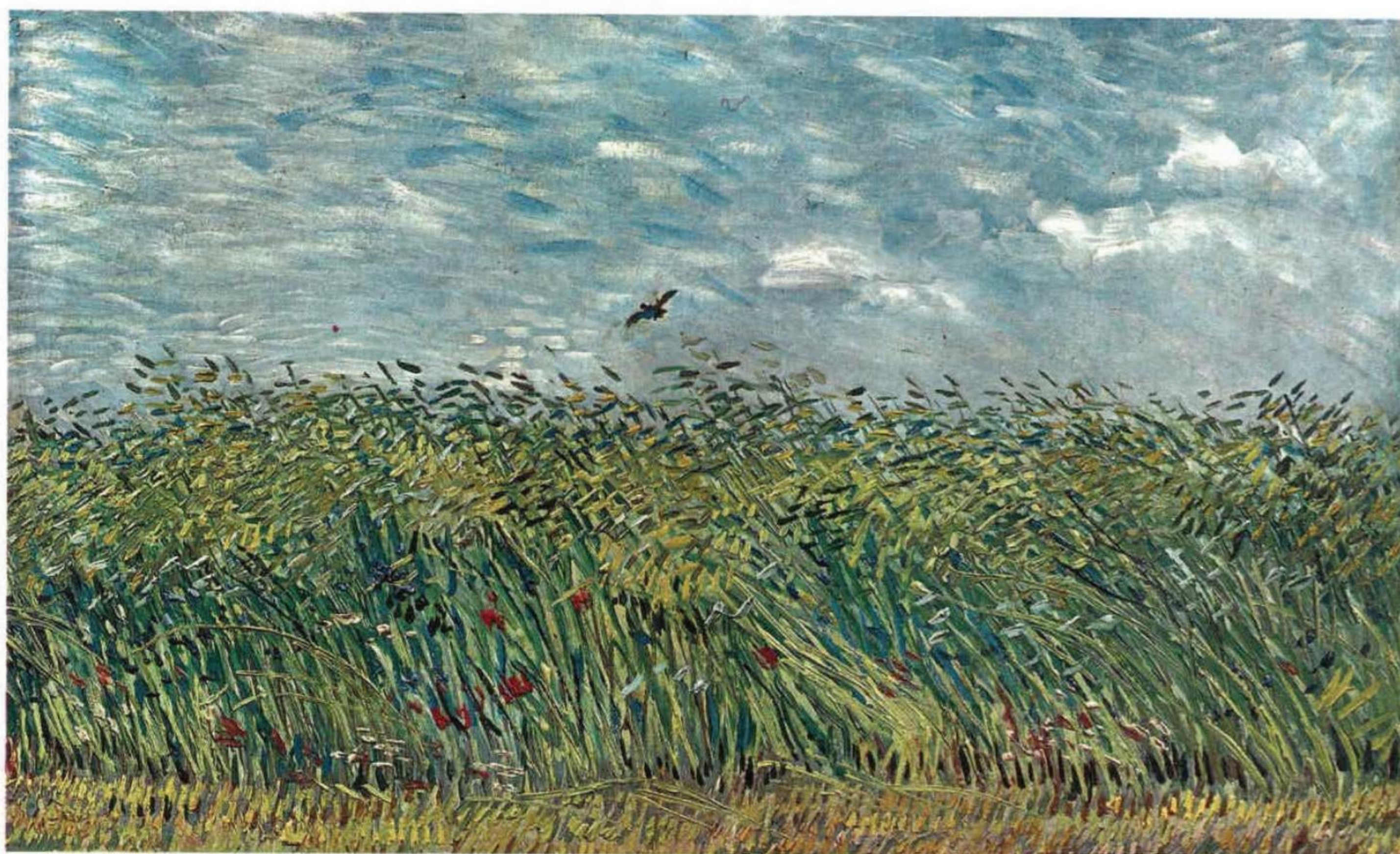
- 547 Peasant Woman, Half-Figure, Sitting, F1191
 Pencil, 35 × 21 cm (13¾ × 8¼")
 Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, Amsterdam
 548 Peasant Woman, Head, F136a
 Canvas on panel, 35 × 26 cm (13¾ × 10¼")
 Private collection, Japan
 549 Peasant Woman, Head, F1176
 Pen, pencil, 12 × 9 cm (4¾ × 3½")
 Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, Amsterdam
 550 Peasant Woman, Head, F75
 36.5 × 29.5 cm (14⅝ × 11⅝")
 Von der Heydt Museum, Wuppertal

- 551 Peasant Woman, Head, F146
 Canvas on cardboard, 33 × 26 cm (13 × 10¼")
 Collection Mrs. H. van Ogtrop-van Kempen,
 Aalst, The Netherlands
 552 Peasant woman, Head, F1193a
 Pencil, pen, washed, 12.5 × 9 cm (5⅛ × 3½")
 Collection Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Michel,
 Southampton, New York

Jan Hulsker, *The Complete Van Gogh*, Oxford, 1980, no. 551, illustrated p. 127



TOUT
L'ŒUVRE
PEINT
DE
VAN GOGH / 1881-1888



LES CLASSIQUES DE L'ART ■ **FLAMMARION**

Paolo Lecaldano, *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Van Gogh*, Paris, 1971, no. 127, p. 101



Tout l'œuvre peint de

Van Gogh

I
1881-1888

Documentation et catalogue raisonné par
PAOLO LECALDANO

Flammarion

Paolo Lecaldano, *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Van Gogh*, Paris, 1971, no. 127, p. 101



113 Lettre 397* (cf. n. 113).
114
117
117 A
117 B
120
120 A
121
122
124
125
125 A
125 B
126
127
131
132
133
133 A
136
137 A
137 B
137 C - Œuvre exclue.

1885; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh.

134 ^{42,5}/_{32,5} Nuenen :
NATURE MORTE: MONNAIES DU PAPE. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh.
Janvier-mars 1885. Toile marouflée sur carton. FM 76, H 81. Lettre 398*.

135 ^{41,5}/₃₁ Nuenen :
NATURE MORTE: FEUILLES MORTES. Londres, Collection Tylor.
Janvier-mars 1885. Toile marouflée sur bois. FM 200, H 215. Vendu aux enchères, chez Sotheby à Londres, le 21 avril 1971 pour 18.000 livres sterling.

136 ⁴¹/₃₄ Nuenen :
TÊTE DE PAYSANNE (en coiffe blanche, de profil vers la gauche). La Haye, Gemeentemuseum (dépôt Steinmetz).
Vers avril 1885. FM 131, H 162.

137 ⁷²/₉₃ Nuenen :
LES MANGEURS DE POMMES DE TERRE (cinq paysans à table). Otterlo, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller.
Avril 1885. Toile marouflée sur bois. FM 78, H 92. Lettres 398, 399* et 400. Seconde version du thème: voir les n. 123 et 151.

A. Dessin: plume et crayon gras; M 1226; 11×18 cm.; Nuenen, avril 1885; New York, Collection Thannhauser (peut-être mentionné dans la lettre 400).

B. Lithographie postérieure; M 1661; 26,5×30,5 cm.; Nuenen, mi-avril 1885; deux exemplaires à Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, un à Otterlo, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller (référence dans les lettres 401-405, 407, 408, 410, R 57 et 424).

C. Une version ultérieure, cataloguée par De la Faille dans son manuscrit pour M (77 a; toile; 65×92 cm.), doit être considérée comme une copie (d'une autre main) du présent tableau.

138 ³³/₄₁ Nuenen :
LE TRAVAIL DES CHAMPS (pay-sanne plantant des pommes de terre, de profil vers la droite et de dos). Zurich, Kunsthaus.
Avril 1885. F 129 bis, H 192, M 129 a. Lettre 399 et carte postale 399 a*.

A. Dessin: plume; M 1225; 6,5×9 cm.; Nuenen, avril 1885; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh.

139 ⁴⁵/₅₈ Opwetten : (Nuenen)
LE MOULIN À EAU (à Opwetten, avec figures). Londres, Collection Smith.
Printemps 1885. Toile marouflée sur bois. FM 48, H 52.

140 ^{27,5}/_{41,5} Nuenen :
LE COUCHER DE SOLEIL. Rüsslikon (Suisse), Collection Graber.
Avril 1885. FM 79, H 90. Lettre 402.

141 ²⁷/₅₇ Nuenen :
LE JARDIN DU PRESBYTÈRE A

124 ⁴¹/_{31,5} Nuenen :
TÊTE DE PAYSANNE (en coiffe blanche, de face). New York, Justin K. Thannhauser Foundation.
Mars-avril 1885. Toile marouflée sur bois. FM 81, H 85.

125 ^{37,5}/₂₈ Nuenen :
TÊTE DE VIEILLE PAYSANNE (bonnet noir, de face). Otterlo, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller.
Février-mars 1885. FM 74, H 83. Lettres 394 et 395.

A. Dessin: plume et encre de chine, fond de lavis d'encre; M 1149; 10×9 cm.; Nuenen, décembre 1884; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh.

126 ^{36,5}/_{29,5} Nuenen :
TÊTE DE PAYSANNE À COIFFE BLANCHE (de face). Wuppertal, Von der Heydt-Museum.
Février-mars 1885. FM 75, H 82. Lettres 394 et 395.

127 ³³/₂₆ Nuenen :
TÊTE DE PAYSANNE À COIFFE BLANCHE (de face). Aalst-Waatre (Pays-Bas), Collection Van Ogtrop-Van Kempen.
Février-mars 1885. Toile marouflée sur carton. FM 146, H 145. Lettres 394 et 395.

128 ⁴¹/₃₂ Nuenen :
TÊTE DE PAYSANNE (à coiffe claire, devant une fenêtre, de profil vers la droite). Bergen

(Pays-Bas), Collection De Wolff-Peereboom.
Février-mars 1885. Toile marouflée sur carton. FM 70, H 76. Lettres 394, 395, 396* et **.

129 ^{38,5}/_{30,5} Nuenen :
PAYSANNE EN BUSTE (à coiffe claire, devant une fenêtre, de face vers la droite). Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh.
Février-mars 1885. F 70 bis, H 77, M 70 a. Lettres 394, 395, 396* et **.

130 ^{43,5}/_{34,5} Nuenen :
PAYSANNE RACCOMMODANT (devant une fenêtre, de profil vers la gauche). Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh.
Février-mars 1885. Toile marouflée sur carton. FM 71, H 78. Lettre 396.

131 ⁴²/₂₉ Nuenen :
PAYSANNE PRENANT SON RE-

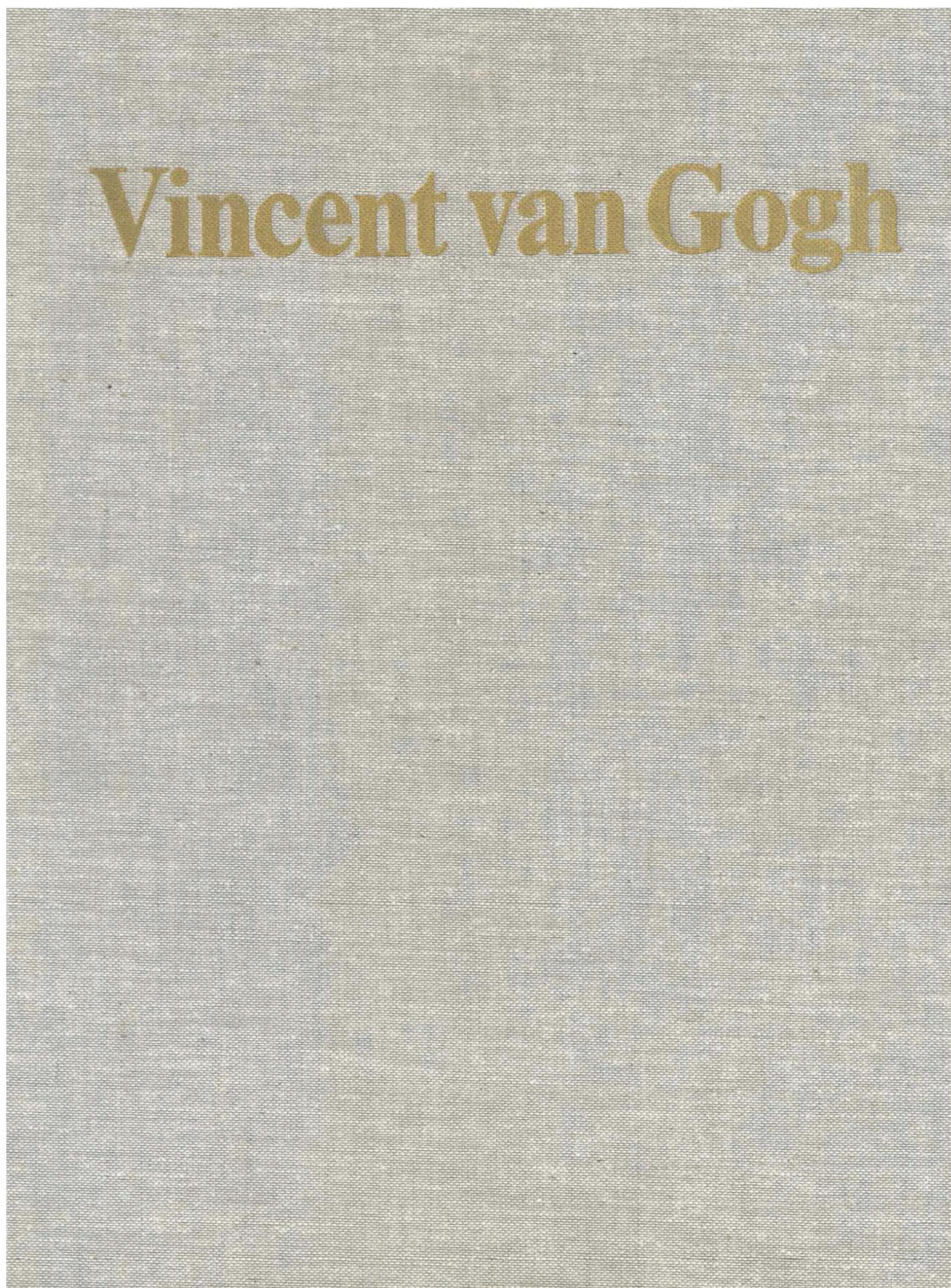
132 ^{36,5}/₂₅ Nuenen :
PAYSANNE ASSISE DEVANT UNE PORTE OUVERTE (de profil vers la droite). Suisse [...], Collection Doyer.
Février-mars 1885. Toile marouflée sur bois. FM 73, H 79. Lettre 396.

133 ^{28,5}/_{18,5} Nuenen :
RACCOMMODER LES BAS (pay-sanne de profil vers la gauche). Edgware (Grande-Bretagne), Collection Azulai.
Février-mars 1885. Toile marouflée sur bois. FM 157, H 169. Lettre 396.

A. Dessin: pierre noire; M 1205; 34,5×28 cm.; Nuenen, mai-juin

Paolo Lecaldano, *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Van Gogh*, Paris, 1971, no. 127, p. 101





Jacob Baart de la Faille, *The Works of Vincent van Gogh*, London, 1970, no. 147, illustrated p. 91



J.-B. de la Faille

The Works of Vincent van Gogh

His Paintings and Drawings

Reynal & Company

In association with William Morrow & Company

Jacob Baart de la Faille, *The Works of Vincent van Gogh*, London, 1970, no. 147, illustrated p. 91



different in technique and in spirit
 COLLECTION Hexham, Northumberland, Clive
 Cookson

F 149 [H 156] WOMAN WITH A BOY ON HER
 LAP

Canvas on pasteboard 43 × 34 [17 × 13½]
 Nuenen March-April 1885, before THE POTATO
 EATERS
 LITERATURE Vanbeselaere 1937, pp 290, 415:
 January 1885; close in style to F 132 and F 65;
 mentioned in letter 392 of January 1885
 COLLECTION London, Jacques O'Hana Ltd
 Collection

F 146a



F 148



F 147

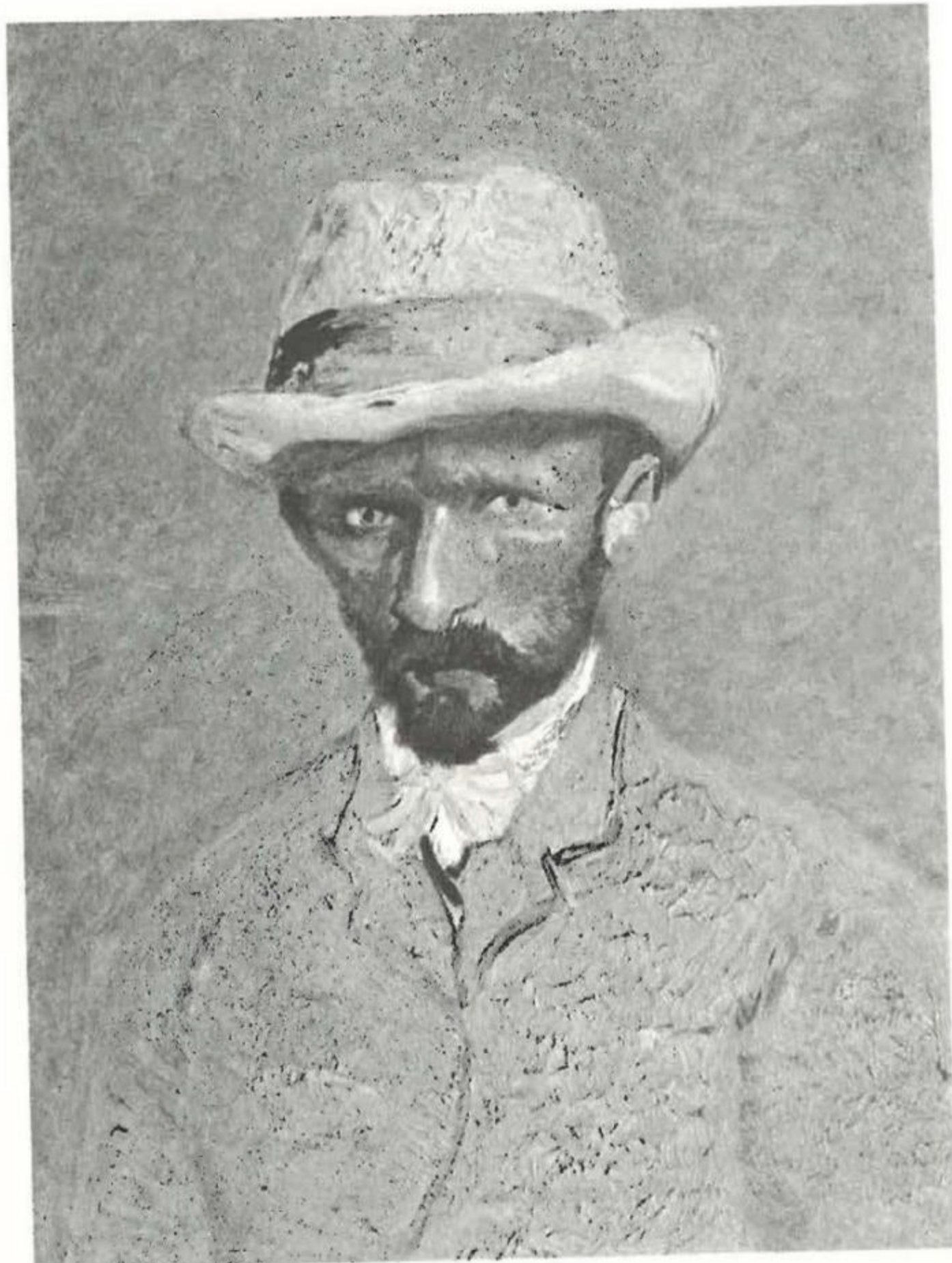


F 140



Jacob Baart de la Faille, *The Works of Vincent van Gogh*, London, 1970, no. 147, illustrated p. 91





THE COMPLETE LETTERS
OF
VINCENT VAN GOGH

*with reproductions of all the drawings
in the correspondence*

VOLUME TWO

A Bulfinch Press Book
Little, Brown and Company
Boston • New York • London

*The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh, vol. II, New York, 1959, letter nos. 390 & 394,
pp. 341-43 & 348-50*





I received from Rappard a series of drawings by Renouard, "Le Monde Judiciaire," types of lawyers, criminals, etc. I do not know if you have noticed them, I like them very much. And I think he is one of the genuine race of the Daumiers and the Gavarnis.

Yours, Vincent

390

Dear Theo,

I'm working very hard on the series of heads from the people which I have set myself to make. I'm just enclosing a little scratch of the last one; in the evening

341

The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh, vol. II, New York, 1959, letter nos. 390 & 394, pp. 341-43 & 348-50



I generally sketch them from memory on a little scrap of paper, this is one of them. Perhaps later I will make them in water color too. But first I must paint them.

Now just listen. Do you remember how in the very beginning I always spoke to you about my great respect and sympathy for the work of father De Groux? Lately I think of him *more than ever*. One must not see only his historical pictures, though these are also very good, nor primarily a few pictures with the sentiment of, for instance, the author Conscience. But one must see his "Le Bénédicité," "Le Pélerinage," "Le Banc des Pauvres" [Grace before Meat—The Pilgrimage—The Bench of the Poor] and above all, above all, the simple Brabant types. De Groux is appreciated as little as Thijs Maris, for instance. He is different though, but this they have in common, that they met with violent opposition.

In these days—whether the public is wiser now I can't tell, but this much I know, that it is not at all superfluous to weigh one's thoughts and one's actions seriously.

And at this very moment I could tell you some new names of people who are hammering again on the same old anvil which De Groux hammered on. If it had pleased De Groux at that time to dress his Brabant characters in medieval costumes, he would have run parallel with Leys in genius, and also in fortune.

However, he didn't, and *now*, years later, there is a considerable reaction against that medievalism, though Leys always remains Leys and Thijs Maris, Thijs Maris, and Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame, Notre Dame*.

But the realism *not wanted* then is *in demand* now, and there is more need of it than ever.

The realism that has character and a serious sentiment.

I can tell you that for my part I shall try to keep a straight course, and shall paint the simplest, the most common things.

For pity's sake, how is it possible that you do not seem able or willing to understand that by fixing up my studio here, and keeping it here for the present, I have made it possible to have money enough for painting, and if I had done otherwise, it would have been a failure for myself as well as for others. If I had not done so, I should have had to drudge at least three more years before I had definitely overcome the difficulties of color and tone, just because of the expenses. It is now just a year ago since I came here, driven by necessity. I certainly do not live here at home for my *pleasure*, but for my painting, and this being so, I think it would be a great mistake on your part if you robbed me of an opportunity, if I had to leave here *now*, before I had found something else. I must stay here somewhat longer still for my painting; then as soon as I have made more definite progress, I am willing to go anywhere where I shall earn the same money that I have here.

I do not need or deserve being put back, nor do I feel the slightest inclination for it, you see.

And I never tried to get rid of you, but where you showed me too clearly how little chance there was of our doing real business together, I do accept it for the future, that is true.

Know this once and for all, when I ask you for money, I do not ask it for



nothing, the work that I make with it is at your disposal; and if I am in arrears *now*, I am on the right road even to getting ahead with it.

I write this once more for the same reason that I wrote the previous letters; I shall be quite at bay at the end of the month, for I have only enough for two or three days to pay my model.

And I feel wretched because I shall again be handicapped for ten or twelve days this month.

And most seriously I repeat, Can't you find a way to help me to 20 francs, for instance, to cover those last days? What I mind most is the time I should lose otherwise. Good-by.

Ever yours, Vincent

391

Dear Theo,

Thanks for what you sent me. I appreciate your having done so, because so much depends on my working hard during those winter months when it is easier to get models.

In two or three days you will receive twelve little pen-and-ink drawings after studies of heads.

After all I feel most in my element when I am working on the figure, and there also seems to me to be more character in, for instance, those heads I already did in The Hague, and in some other figures, than in the other things I did. And perhaps it will be wise to concentrate more exclusively on the figure.

But the figure always stands in some surroundings, and one can't help doing those surroundings too, because one can't dispense with them.

Mother wants to add something to this letter, so I will be brief, as I shall send you those pen drawings one of these days.

I don't yet know what I shall do with those heads, but I want to extract the motif from the characters themselves.

But I know quite well why I made them, and what in general I have in mind. I am longing to see, sooner or later, that picture which you received.¹

I don't understand exactly what the legend itself means.

I don't understand it because you say the figure is Dante-esque, but it is the symbol of an evil spirit luring people into the abyss.

Surely these two things can hardly go together, for the sober, severe figure of Dante, full of indignation and protest against what he had seen happening, protesting against the terrible medieval abuses and prejudices, is certainly one of the most sincere, honest, noble ones imaginable. It was said of Dante, "Voilà celui qui va à l'enfer et qui en revient"; *entering it and coming back again* is quite different from the devilish *luring others into it*.

Consequently, a Dante-esque figure cannot be made to act a satanic part without the greatest misconstruction of character.

And the silhouette of a Mefisto is mighty different from that of Dante.

Contemporaries wrote of Giotto, "Le premier il mit 'la bonté' dans l'expression

¹ He means a picture by the Swedish painter Josephson—the study for his later famous picture "The Waternix."



it a pity that you, for instance, seldom or hardly ever go into those cottages, or associate with those people, or see that sentiment in the landscape, which is painted in the pictures you like best? I do not say that you *can* do this in your position, just because one must look much and long at nature before one becomes convinced that the most touching things the great masters have painted still originate in life and reality itself. A basis of sound poetry, which exists eternally as a fact, and can be found if one digs and seeks deeply enough.

“Ce qui ne passe pas dans ce qui passe,” it exists.

And what Michelangelo said in a splendid metaphor, I think Millet has said without metaphor, and Millet can perhaps best teach us to see, and get “a faith.” When I do better work later on, I certainly shall not work *differently* than now, I mean it will be the same apple, only riper; I shall not change my mind about what I have thought from the beginning. And that’s the reason why I say for my part, If I am no good now, I won’t be any good later on either; but if later on, then now too. For corn is corn, though city people may take it for grass at first, and also vice versa.

In any case, whether people approve or do not approve of what I do and how I do it, I personally know no other way than to wrestle with nature long enough for her to tell me her secret.

I am working at various heads and hands all the time.

I have also drawn some again, perhaps you would find something in them, perhaps not, I can’t help it. I repeat, I know no other way.

But I can’t understand that you say, Perhaps later on we shall admire even the things done now.

If I were you, I should have so much self-confidence and independent opinion that I should know whether I could see *now* what there is in a thing or not.

Well, you must know those things for yourself.

Though the month is not quite over, my purse is quite empty. I am working on as hard as I can, and I for my part think that I shall keep a straight course by constantly studying the model.

I wish you could send me the money a few days before the first for the same reason that the end of the month is always hard, because the work brings such heavy expenses, and I don’t sell any of it. But this will not go on forever, for I work too hard and too much not to succeed eventually at least in defraying my expenses without being in a dependent position. For the rest, nature outside and the interiors of the cottages are splendid in tone and sentiment just now; I try hard not to lose time.

Good-by,

Ever yours, Vincent

394

Dear Theo,

Many thanks for the *Illustrations* you sent, I am much obliged to you. I think all the various drawings by Renouard beautiful and I did not know one of them.

However—this is not to give you extra trouble, but because I wrote things

348



about them which perhaps cannot quite be applied to other drawings of his—the real Renouard composition I meant is not among them, perhaps that issue is sold out. The breadth of the figure in it was superb, it was an old man and some women and a child, I believe, sitting idle in a weaver's cottage where the looms stood still.

I had not yet seen *anything* in reproduction from the Salon of '84, and now I at least got some idea of a few interesting pictures from the Salon number. For instance of that composition by Puvis de Chavannes.

I imagine that the Harpignies with the setting sun must have been splendid. And the pictures by Feyen-Perrin which they give sketches of.

I was also struck by the figure of a girl by Emile Levy, "Japonaise," and the picture by Beyle, "Brûleuses de Varech" [Women burning seaweed], and the one by Cottin, "L'Eté," three figures of nude women.

I am very busy painting those heads. I paint in the daytime and draw in the evening. In this way I have already painted at least some thirty and drawn as many.

With the result that I see a chance of doing it even better before long, I hope.

I think that *it will help me for the figure in general*. Today I had one white and black against the flesh color.

And I am also looking for blue all the time. Here the peasants' figures are as a rule blue. That blue in the ripe corn or against the withered leaves of a beech hedge—so that the faded shades of darker and lighter blue are emphasized and made to speak by contrast with the golden tones of reddish-brown—is very beautiful and has struck me here from the very first. The people here instinctively wear the most beautiful blue that I have ever seen.

It is coarse linen which they weave themselves, warp black, woof blue, the result of which is a black and blue striped pattern. When this fades and becomes somewhat discolored by wind and weather, it is an infinitely quiet, delicate tone that particularly brings out the flesh colors.

Well, blue enough to react to all colors in which hidden orange elements are to be found, and discolored enough not to jar.

But this is a question of color, and what matters more to me at the point I'm at now is the question of form. I think the best way to express form is with an almost monochrome coloring, the tones of which differ principally in intensity and in value. For instance "La Source" by Jules Breton was painted almost in one color. But one really ought to study each color separately in connection with its contrast before one can be positively sure of being harmonious.

When there was snow, I also painted a few studies of our garden. The landscape has changed much since then; now we have splendid evening skies of lilac with gold over dark silhouettes of cottages between the masses of ruddy-colored brushwood—above which rise the spare black poplars, while the foregrounds are of a faded and bleached green, varied by strips of black earth and pale, withered rushes along the ditch edges.

I certainly see all this too—I think it just as superb as anybody else, but I am even more interested in the proportion of a figure, the division of the oval of



the head, and I cannot master the rest before I have a better grip on the figure.

Well—first comes the figure; I personally cannot understand the rest without it, and it is the figure that creates the atmosphere. I can understand, however, that there are people, like Daubigny and Harpignies and Ruysdael and so many others, who are absolutely and irresistibly carried away by the landscape itself; their work satisfies us fully because they themselves were satisfied with sky and earth and a pool of water and a shrub.

But I think it a mighty clever saying of Israël's, when he remarked of a Dupré, It is just like "a picture of the figure."

Good-by and many thanks again for the *Illustrations*.

Ever yours, Vincent

395

Dear Theo,

Thanks for the early remittance of this month's money, which, coming early, in fact helps me more. Thanks also for the splendid wood engraving after Lhermitte, one of the few things of his I know, for I have only seen the following: a group of girls in a cornfield, an old woman in a church, a miner or some such type in a little bar and "La Moisson" [The Harvest], and that's all, and neither of these giving an idea of his real technique the way these woodcutters do. If *Le Monde Illustré* gives a composition of his every month—this one forms part of a series "Les Mois Rustiques"—I should like very much to have the whole series, and I shall be very glad if you will send them. For of course I never see anything here, and after all I need to see some beautiful things now and then; so just deduct 20 francs someday, but send me such things whenever they appear in the magazines.

As to what you write, that if I had anything ready which I thought suitable, you would try and send it in for the Salon, I appreciate your being willing to do so.

This in the first place, and further, that had I known it six weeks ago, I should have tried to send you something for this purpose.

Now I have nothing that I should care to send in; lately I have, as you know, painted heads almost exclusively, and they are studies in the real sense of the word—that is to say, they are meant for the studio.

However, today I at once started to make some, which I will send you. Because I think it might be useful if, when you meet a good many people on the occasion of the Salon, you have something to show—even if it's only *studies*.

So you will receive an old model, and a young woman's head, and probably more than one of these two models.

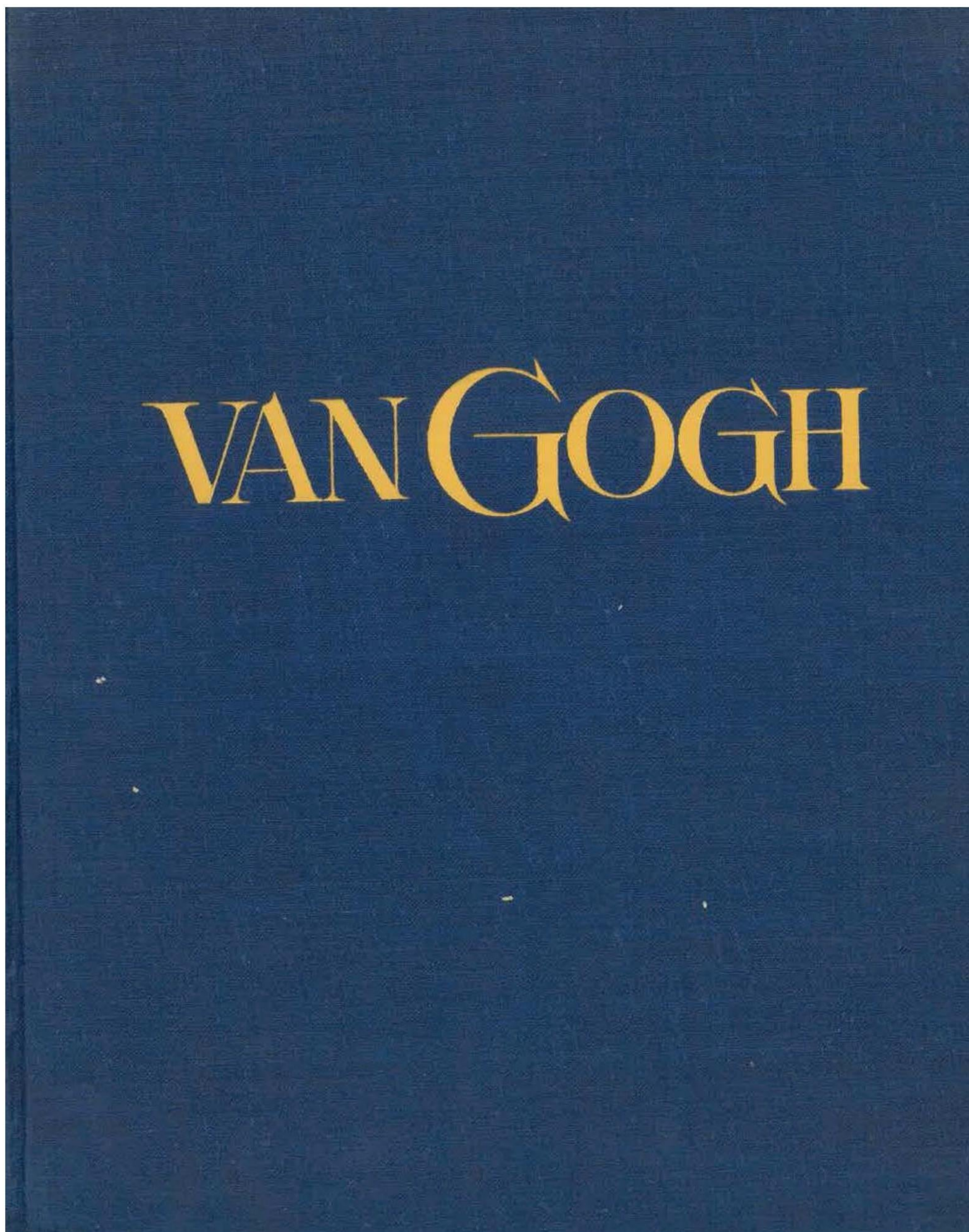
As to what you write of your feelings about various conceptions of heads, I believe that these which come straight out of a cottage with a moss-covered thatched roof will not seem absolutely inappropriate to you, though they are nothing but studies.

Had I known it six weeks ago, I should have made of it a woman spinning or a woman spooling yarn—a whole figure.

To return for the moment to the subject of the women's heads, genre Jacquet,

350





Jacob Baart de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, no. 145, illustrated p. 126



VINCENT VAN GOGH

BY

J.-B. DE LA FAILLE

WITH A FOREWORD BY

CHARLES TERRASSE

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

PRUDENCE MONTAGU-POLLOCK

WILLIAM HEINEMANN LTD.
LONDON - TORONTO

Jacob Baart de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, no. 145, illustrated p. 126



126



145. HEAD OF A PEASANT-WOMAN F. 146

Nuenen period 1885.

Canvas on pasteboard, 33 by 26 cm.
H. van Kempen collection, Amsterdam. Oldenzeel Art Gallery, Rotterdam. C. Mouwen Jr collection, Breda. Oldenzeel Art Gallery Exhibition, Rotterdam, January 1903. Reproduced in «*Moderne Kunstwerken*», 1st year (1903), 4, n° 30. Photo Bern. F. Eilers, Amsterdam.



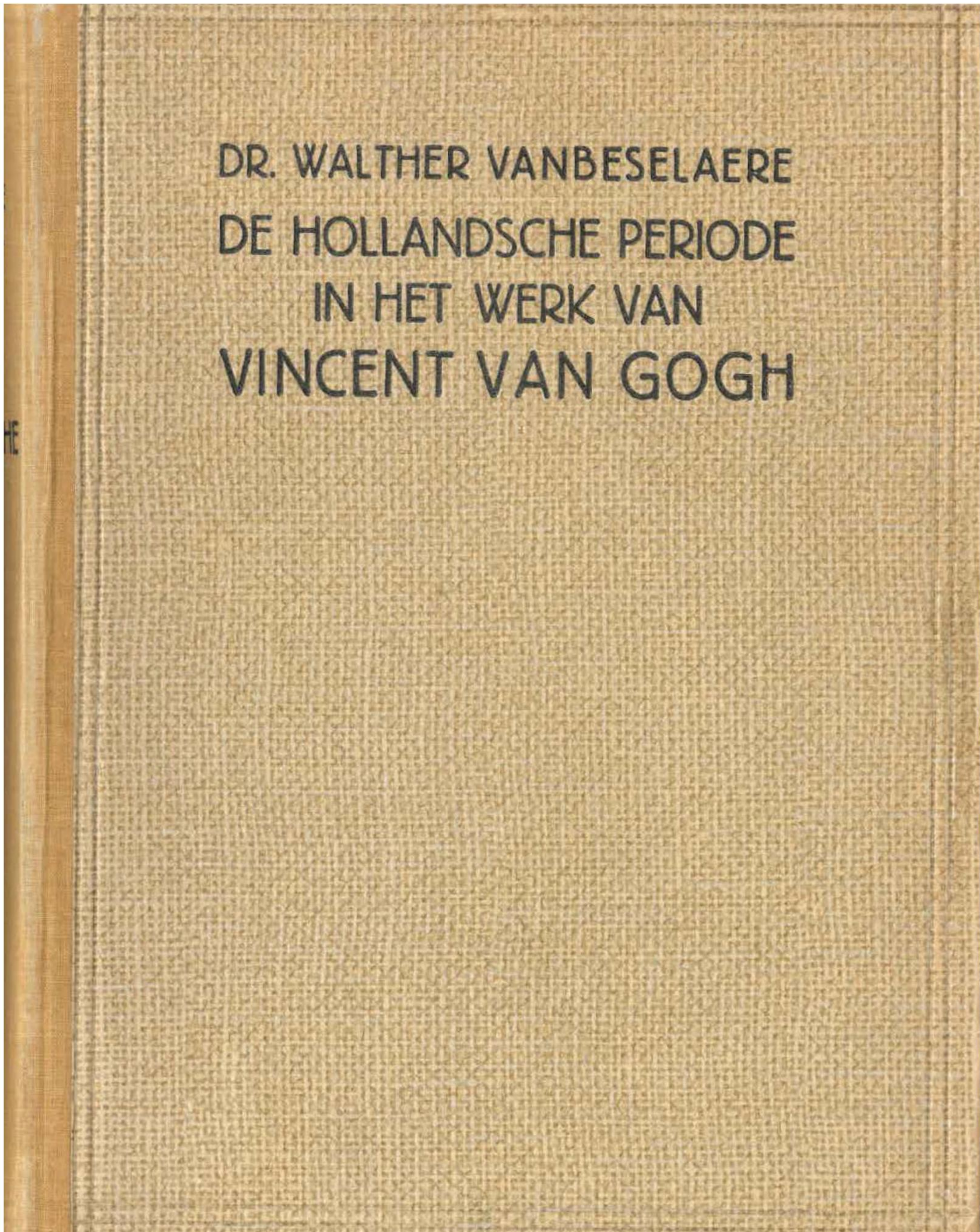
146. HEAD OF A PEASANT-WOMAN F. 146b.

Nuenen period 1885.

Canvas, 43,5 by 37 cm.
Thannhauser Art Gallery, Berlin. Hans Bammann collection, Düsseldorf. Private collection, Russia. Reproduced in «*Der Cicerone*», XIXth year, 3, p. 101 (February 1927).

Jacob Baart de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, no. 145, illustrated p. 126





Walther Vanbeselaere, *De Hollandsche periode in het werk van Vincent van Gogh*,
Amsterdam & Antwerp, 1937, no. 146, listed pp. 290 & 415



DE
HOLLANDSCHE PERIODE

(1880-1885)

IN HET WERK VAN

VINCENT VAN GOGH

(1853-1890)

DOOR

D^R. WALTHER VANBESELAERE

MET EEN WOORD VOORAF DOOR PROF. DR. AUG. VERMEYLEN



M.CM.XXXVII, DE SIKKEL, ANTWERPEN
EXPLOITATIE VOOR NEDERLAND, NED. INDIË EN
ZUID-AFRIKA : WERELDBIBLIOTHEEK, N. V., AMSTERDAM

Walther Vanbeselaere, *De Hollandsche periode in het werk van Vincent van Gogh*,
Amsterdam & Antwerp, 1937, no. 146, listed pp. 290 & 415



80. BOERINNEKOP.
Jan. '85. Doek op paneel 41'31.5.
Misschien II, 394, 463 : „Vandaag had ik er een wit en zwart
tegen de vleeschkleur.”
Verz. Dr. Gust. Schweitzer, Berlijn.
137. BOERINNEKOP.
Jan. '85. Doek 40'30.5.
Misschien II, 394, 463.
Kunsthandel d' Audretsch, den Haag.
Naast 132 en 65 plaatsen we 127 en 149.
127. BUSTE VAN EEN BOERIN (de face).
Jan. '85. Doek op paneel 45'27.
Verz. H. Fruidentberg, Nikolassee.
149. BOERIN MET JONGETJE OP HAAR SCHOOT.
Jan. '85. Doek op paneel 43'34.
Verz. H. P. Bremmer, den Haag.
Tusschen 132-65 en 70 in plaatsen we : 138, 144, 151, 165,
168.
138. BOERINNEKOP (de face).
Jan.-Febr. 85. Doek 33'23.
Kunstb. Huinck, Utrecht.
144. BOERINNEKOP (profiel).
Jan.-Febr. 85. Doek op paneel 40.5'30.5.
Verz. G. Ribbius Peletier, Utrecht.
151. BOERINNEKOP (3/4 naar links).
Jan.-Febr. 85. Paneel 36'25.5.
Verz. Kröller-Müller, den Haag.
165. BOERENKOP (de face).
Jan.-Febr. 85. Paneel 44'32.
Kunstb. Huinck, Utrecht.
168. BOERENKOP (profiel).
Jan.-Febr. 85. Doek 47'30.
Verz. Kröller-Müller, den Haag.
130. BOERINNEKOP (de face).
Jan.-Febr. '85. Doek op paneel 45'36.
Verz. V. W. v. Gogh, Laren.
140. BOERINNEKOP.
Jan.-Febr. '85. Doek op paneel 46.5'35.5.
Verz. Mevr. Flemming, Londen.
146. BOERINNEKOP.
Jan.-Febr. '85. Doek op paneel 33'26.
Verz. H. van Kempen, Amsterdam.



LITERATURE

89	Juni '85	Juni '85	130	Jan.-Febr. '85
90	Juni '85	Juni-Juli '85	131	Apr.-Ju. '85
91	Juni '85	id.	132	Jan. '85
92	Juni '85	Juli '85	133	Maart '85
93	Juni '85	Oct. '85	134	Apr.-Ju. '85
94	Juli '85	id.	135	Maart '85
95	Juli '85	id.	136	Apr.-Ju. '85
96	Aug. '85	Oct.-Nov. '85	137	Jan.-Febr. '85
97	Aug. '85	Sept. '85	138	Jan.-Febr. '85
98	Aug. '85	Sept. '85	139	Zomer '85
99	Sept. '85	id.	140	Jan. '85
100	Sept. '85	id.	141	Apr.-Ju. '85
101	Sept. '85	id.	142	Juli '85
102	Sept. '85	id.	143	vóór Jan. '85
103	Sept. '85	id.	144	Jan.-Febr. '85
104	Sept. '85	id.	145	Maart '85
105	Sept. '85	id.	146	Jan.-Febr. '85
106	Sept. '85	id.	146 ^{bis}	Apr.-Juni '85
107	Oct. '85	id.	147	Oct.-Nov. '85
108	Oct. '85	Sept. '85	148	April '85
109	Oct. '85	Sept. '85	149	Jan. '85
110	Oct. '85	Sept. '85	150	Maart '85
111	Oct. '85	Oct.-Nov. '85	151	Jan.-Febr. '85
112	Oct. '85	Sept. '85	152	Maart '85
113	Oct. '85	id.	153	Maart '85
114	Oct. '85	id.	154	Apr.-Ju. '85
115	Oct. '85	id.	155	Apr.-Ju. '85
116	Oct. '85	id.	156	Apr.-Ju. '85
117	Oct. '85	id.	157	Zomer '85
118	Oct. '85	id.	158	Maart '85
119	Oct. '85	Oct.-Nov. '85	159	Maart '85
120	Oct.-Nov. '85	id.	160	April '85
121	Oct.-Nov. '85	id.	161	Apr.-Ju. '85
122	Oct.-Nov. '85	id.	162	Mei '84
123	Oct.-Nov. '85	id.	163	Apr.-Ju. '85
124	Oct.-Nov. '85	id.	164	Apr.-Ju. '85
125	Nov. '85	Nov. '84	165	Jan.-Febr. '85
126		Zomer '85	166	Sept. '85
126 ^{bis}		Maart '85	167	Maart '85
127		Jan. '85	168	Jan.-Febr. '85
128		Maart '85	169	Apr.-Ju. '85
129		Sept. '85	170	Juli '85
129 ^{bis}		April '85	171	Maart '85

Walther Vanbeselaere, *De Hollandsche periode in het werk van Vincent van Gogh*,
Amsterdam & Antwerp, 1937, no. 146, listed pp. 290 & 415



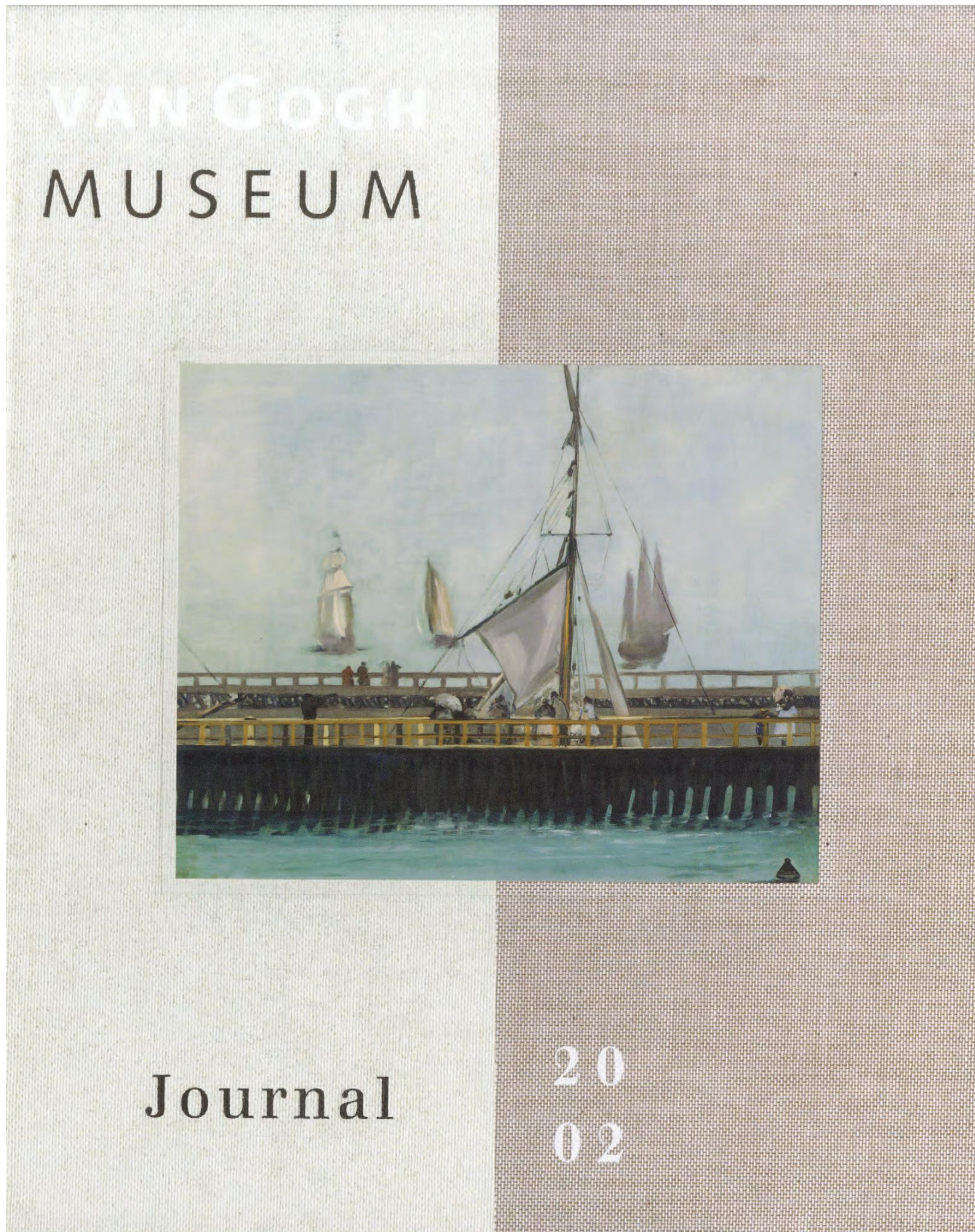


In 1903 three exhibitions of work by Vincent van Gogh from his Dutch years were organised by the Oldenzeel Gallery in Rotterdam. In January, May and November of that year, the public was able to view a collection of paintings and drawings that had never before been on public display. *Tête de paysanne à la coiffe blanche* was included in these exhibitions.



Rotterdam, Galerie d'Art, Oldenzeel, *Vincent van Gogh*, 1903





M. Op de Coul, "In search of Van Gogh's Nuenen studio, the Oldenzeel exhibitions of 1903"
in Van Gogh Museum Journal, Amsterdam, 2002, p. 115, no. 21.



In search of Van Gogh's Nuenen studio: the Oldenzeel exhibitions of 1903

Martha Op de Coul

In 1903 three exhibitions of work by Vincent van Gogh from his Dutch years were organised by the Oldenzeel gallery in Rotterdam. In January, May and November of that year the public were able to view a collection of paintings and drawings that had never before been on public display. These exhibitions caused quite a stir when it emerged that even the Van Gogh family had not been aware of the existence of this group of works. Where had the collection come from? Why had no one in the family circle known anything about it? The exhibitions prompted the Van Gogh family to launch an inquiry to establish the rightful owner of the pieces. The investigation concluded that the works must have come from the studio that Van Gogh had left behind in Nuenen.

More than 20 years later Benno Stokvis published his *Nasporingen omtrent Vincent van Gogh in Brabant*,¹ in which he endeavoured to clarify the history of Van Gogh's Nuenen studio. His sources included interviews with persons who had been directly involved. Two questions, however, remain yet unanswered: first, which works had been displayed at the Oldenzeel exhibitions; and, second, could these works actually be traced back to the Nuenen studio?

J.-B. de la Faille (1886–1959) was the first Van Gogh specialist to consider these exhibitions in detail. Illustrations in the journal *Moderne Kunstwerken* from 1903 allowed him to identify several works that had been in the January show in his oeuvre catalogues of 1928 and 1939.² New information gathered from further study was subsequently incorporated into his posthumously published catalogue, *The works of Vincent van Gogh: his paint-*

ings and drawings (1970). Still, to date no systematic research has been conducted regarding the works displayed at the exhibitions.

Using the sources currently available, the present article will endeavour to reconstruct the Oldenzeel exhibitions and to establish the connection, if any, with Van Gogh's Nuenen studio. Although this reconstruction is plainly incomplete in some respects, the interim results of the study seem sufficiently important to warrant publication.

Oldenzeel: art dealers in Rotterdam³

In 1855 Christiaan Sander Johan Vlaanderen Oldenzeel (1833–1896)⁴ entered into partnership with the Rotterdam bookseller Hendrik van Gogh (1814–1877), one of Vincent's uncles and owner of a shop on Steiger. Three years later Hendrik transferred full ownership of the business to Oldenzeel. In 1874 the latter decided to switch from the book to the art trade. His business was based on Zuidblaak, first at number 16, later at number 84. In late 1888 Oldenzeel moved to handsome premises at 74 Leuvehaven.⁵ Here, in the spring and autumn of 1892, he held two shows of Van Gogh's work, chosen from the collection administered by Jo van Gogh-Bonger (1862–1925) on behalf of her minor son Vincent Willem (1890–1978). These exhibitions made Oldenzeel the first dealer in Rotterdam to introduce art lovers to works from Van Gogh's Dutch and French periods.

The firm remained at this address for more than ten years, until 1899, when Margareta Wilhelmina Oldenzeel-Schot (1837–1912), who had assumed control of the busi-

I received assistance from many individuals during the preparation of this article. I would particularly like to mention Annet Tellegen-Hoogendoorn, who for many years has allowed me to share her considerable knowledge of Van Gogh's work.

1 Benno J. Stokvis, *Nasporingen omtrent Vincent van Gogh in Brabant*, Amsterdam 1926.

2 J.-B. de la Faille, *L'oeuvre de Vincent van Gogh: catalogue raisonné*, Paris & Brussels 1928 and idem, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris 1939.

3 See Bram Oosterwijk, 'Vincent van Gogh en Rotterdam,' *Rotterdams Jaarboekje* (1994), pp. 329–89.

4 The first part of his surname was never used.

5 The Hague, Gemeentearchief, OV 2 Personalia/Schildersbrieven, letter from C.S.J. Oldenzeel to A.C. Loffelt, 13 November 1888



VAN GOGH MUSEUM

**The Oldenzeel exhibition of
January-February 1903**

On Saturday, 3 January 1903 (fig. 4) an exhibition of hitherto unknown work by Vincent van Gogh was opened in the rear gallery of Oldenzeel's premises (*Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 3 January). Many of the pieces were apparently the property of Willem van Bakel.³⁸ According to the reviewer D.B. (= Julius de Boer), writing in the *Kroniek* of 17 January, around 40 works were on display. On 20 January the *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad* reported that the exhibition comprised 45 pieces. Although lack of an exhibition list or catalogue makes it impossible to determine the precise number of works in the show, there must have been around 50 in total.

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. every day for more than a month, visitors could view paintings and drawings from Van Gogh's Dutch period, ranging from still lifes and interiors with weavers to portrait heads and landscapes. In the *Kroniek* of 7 February the critic Albert Plasschaert noted that there were many 'surprises,' meaning that no one should think they already knew Van Gogh's work. Plasschaert saw a correspondence between Van Gogh and Millet, for both artists were greatly interested in depicting the working man or woman, and the toiling labourer. But there were also differences: Millet's work emanated a 'classic calm' while Van Gogh's manifested 'drama' and 'turbulence.'

R. Jacobsen's review in the journal *Onze Kunst* discussed various works at length. Jacobsen also considered Van Gogh's technique, which, he wrote, varied 'from admirable skill to childlike ineptitude.' He illustrated his opinions by comparing 'Stilleven van kool en klompen' (*Still life with cabbage and clogs*, F 1 JH 81) and 'Visscherskarikaturen' (*Caricatures of fishermen*, F 5 JH 188 and F 6 JH 189). At the end of his review, however, Jacobsen tempered his criticism somewhat, declaring that although a work might seem clumsy, this was a deliberate choice on Van Gogh's part, with the artist endeavouring to render the characteristic aspect of an action, which sometimes produced a caricature-style effect.³⁹

Around 20 January, when the exhibition had been open for more than two weeks, the collection was re-hung, resulting in an adjustment to the numbering in some instances (*Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 25 January).⁴⁰



fig. 4
Announcement of the Van Gogh exhibition at the Oldenzeel gallery, *Het Vaderland*, 11/12 January 1903, The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek

In several discussions of the exhibition reviewers mentioned the prices Oldenzeel was asking for the works. 'The grapes are sour for gentlemen art buffs! Now they have gradually started to realise that purchasing a work by Vincent van Gogh would not be such a poor investment, the owners are asking prices, prices!' (*Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 11 January). Although no sums were actually given, an indication of the prices can be found in a recent publication on the Gerlach Ribbius Peletier collection.⁴¹ In 1903 and 1904 Ribbius Peletier bought seven paintings at the Oldenzeel gallery from Van Gogh's Hague and Nuenen periods. The prices the collector noted in his account book range from 500 guilders for the head of a peasant woman to 700 for landscapes. A decided anomaly was 'Zeetje' (*Seascape at Scheveningen*, F 4 JH 187), for which he paid 2,500 guilders.⁴²

When the exhibition closed on 5 February, 17 works had been sold.⁴³

38 Tersteeg (see note 33). Tersteeg had seen several drawings at the exhibition that his company had framed for Van Bakel.

39 R. Jacobsen, 'Kunstaal Oldenzeel. Vincent van Gogh, maand januar,' *Onze Kunst* (1903), I, pp. 114-16.

40 The numbers given in the lists below have been derived from these reviews.

41 Louis van Tilborgh and Marije Vellekoop, 'Van Gogh



JOURNAL 2002

**Reconstruction of the exhibition held from
3 January to 5 February 1903** See pp. 113-14.

The exhibition held in May 1903

In May 1903 Oldenzeel organised another, smaller, presentation of Van Gogh works in the front gallery of her premises.⁴⁴ Alongside the nine paintings and a single drawing she also exhibited works by other artists, such as Paul Gabriel, Willem Roelofs, Theo van Hoytema and Willem Tholen.

R.J. Jacobsen devoted several columns in *Onze Kunst* to the exhibition, whose works were drawn, for the second time that year, from Oldenzeel's 'secret storeroom.'⁴⁵ Jacobsen was particularly struck by the landscapes, which he described as 'specimens of sensitive lyrical landscape art.' The reviewer in the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* of 31 May was also full of praise for the works on display.

Although no list of the works presented has been preserved, these reviews have made it possible to identify most of the works.

**Reconstruction of the exhibition held in
May 1903** See p. 114

The exhibition held in November- December 1903

In late 1903 Oldenzeel held the third, and largest, exhibition of work from Van Gogh's Dutch period. From 1 November visitors could view around a 100 pieces; the drawings were displayed in the front gallery, while the rear was reserved for the paintings. Having been prolonged, the exhibition finally closed on 15 December.⁴⁶

The exhibition received a great deal of attention in the national press. Articles in the *Wereldkroniek* by N.H. Wolf on 7, 14 and 21 November played a major role in pro-

moting the show.⁴⁷ Wolf even claimed that the exhibition might be *the* event of the year, declaring that the time had come for Van Gogh's art to sell, and also for interest to be shown from abroad. The critic's predictions proved correct, as pictures were sold from the very outset. He described the new owner of a still life with 'blue porcelain pot' (probably F 52 JH 535) as a 'happy' man. In his final review, Wolf was able to report that the exhibition was continuing successfully; many art lovers having seized the opportunity to view Van Gogh's work in Rotterdam. The *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* reviewer also offered his opinion of the show in three articles (8, 15 and 22 November), declaring that the visitor could now see the rest of the 'mysterious' Breda collection, for which the two galleries were actually too small.

It would be interesting to know how Oldenzeel arranged the works in the two rooms. Were they hung according to theme, period or size? Unfortunately, we do not know. The only person to touch upon this subject was the critic for the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* (22 November), who mentions three paintings of considerable size: 'Watermill' (no. 48, F 125 JH 525), 'Potato planters' (no. 52, F 41 JH 513) and 'Shepherd' (no. 45, F 42 JH 517), all hung together. He felt the 'Shepherd' was painted very woodenly in comparison with the other two works.

The paintings were displayed in black frames (*Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 16 November). One painting still fitted with its exhibition frame is *Avenue of poplars in Nuenen* (F 45 JH 959), which was purchased in 1903 for the permanent collection of the Museum Boymans in Rotterdam. It is remarkable, but in fact this simple frame shows the work to its best advantage, allowing viewers to focus all their attention on the painting itself.

Wolf's enthusiasm for Van Gogh's work was shared by Albert Plasschaert, although the latter was also irritated that interest in the artist only now seemed to be developing

in Utrecht: the collection of Gerlach Ribbius Peletier (1856-1930), *Van Gogh Museum Journal* (1997-98), pp. 26-41

42 Oldenzeel had originally set the price at 5,000 guilders, but Ribbius Peletier thought this was out of line with those asked for the other works, see Van Tilborgh and Vellekoop, op. cit. (note 41), p. 31

43 Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, Vincent van Gogh Foundation, H.P. Bremmer to Jo Cohen Gosschalk-

Bonger, before 1 April 1903, b 1557 V/1962. Bremmer also mentions that two paintings at the exhibition came from 'Versteeg' (i.e. Tersteeg). According to De la Faille, Tersteeg owned F 910a (since 1882) and F 397 (French period), but this begs the question of whether Bremmer's assertion was correct. For the exhibition's closing date see Van Tilborgh and Vellekoop, op. cit. (note 41), p. 30, note 22.

44 The exhibition's opening and closing dates could not be ascertained. However, it is likely that the show was

held during the second half of May (see *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 31 May 1903).

45 See *Onze Kunst* (1903), II, p. 60

46 Announced in *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 28 November.

47 The same series of articles was published in the *Zondagsblad v/h. Dagblad v. Zuid-Holland en 's Gravenhage* on 8, 15 and 22 November.

M. Op de Coul, "In search of Van Gogh's Nuenen studio, the Oldenzeel exhibitions of 1903" in *Van Gogh Museum Journal*, Amsterdam, 2002, p. 115, no. 21.



JOURNAL 2002

Reconstruction of the exhibition held from 3 January to 5 February 1903 See pp. 113-14.

The exhibition held in May 1903

In May 1903 Oldenzeel organised another, smaller, presentation of Van Gogh works in the front gallery of her premises.⁴⁴ Alongside the nine paintings and a single drawing she also exhibited works by other artists, such as Paul Gabriel, Willem Roelofs, Theo van Hoytema and Willem Tholen.

R.J. Jacobsen devoted several columns in *Onze Kunst* to the exhibition, whose works were drawn, for the second time that year, from Oldenzeel's 'secret storeroom.'⁴⁵ Jacobsen was particularly struck by the landscapes, which he described as 'specimens of sensitive lyrical landscape art.' The reviewer in the *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant* of 31 May was also full of praise for the works on display.

Although no list of the works presented has been preserved, these reviews have made it possible to identify most of the works.

Reconstruction of the exhibition held in May 1903 See p. 114

The exhibition held in November- December 1903

In late 1903 Oldenzeel held the third, and largest, exhibition of work from Van Gogh's Dutch period. From 1 November visitors could view around a 100 pieces; the drawings were displayed in the front gallery, while the rear was reserved for the paintings. Having been prolonged, the exhibition finally closed on 15 December.⁴⁶

The exhibition received a great deal of attention in the national press. Articles in the *Wereldkroniek* by N.H. Wolf on 7, 14 and 21 November played a major role in pro-

moting the show.⁴⁷ Wolf even claimed that the exhibition might be *the* event of the year, declaring that the time had come for Van Gogh's art to sell, and also for interest to be shown from abroad. The critic's predictions proved correct, as pictures were sold from the very outset. He described the new owner of a still life with 'blue porcelain pot' (probably F 52 JH 535) as a 'happy' man. In his final review, Wolf was able to report that the exhibition was continuing successfully; many art lovers having seized the opportunity to view Van Gogh's work in Rotterdam. The *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant* reviewer also offered his opinion of the show in three articles (8, 15 and 22 November), declaring that the visitor could now see the rest of the 'mysterious' Breda collection, for which the two galleries were actually too small.

It would be interesting to know how Oldenzeel arranged the works in the two rooms. Were they hung according to theme, period or size? Unfortunately, we do not know. The only person to touch upon this subject was the critic for the *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant* (22 November), who mentions three paintings of considerable size: 'Watermill' (no. 48, F 125 JH 525), 'Potato planters' (no. 52, F 41 JH 515) and 'Shepherd' (no. 45, F 42 JH 517), all hung together. He felt the 'Shepherd' was painted very woodenly in comparison with the other two works.

The paintings were displayed in black frames (*Rotterdamse Nieuwsblad*, 16 November). One painting still fitted with its exhibition frame is *Avenue of poplars in Nuenen* (F 45 JH 959), which was purchased in 1903 for the permanent collection of the Museum Boymans in Rotterdam. It is remarkable, but in fact this simple frame shows the work to its best advantage, allowing viewers to focus all their attention on the painting itself.

Wolf's enthusiasm for Van Gogh's work was shared by Albert Plasschaert, although the latter was also irritated that interest in the artist only now seemed to be developing

in Utrecht: the collection of Gerlach Ribbius Peletier (1856-1930), *Van Gogh Museum Journal* (1997-98), pp. 26-41

42 Oldenzeel had originally set the price at 5,000 guilders, but Ribbius Peletier thought this was out of line with those asked for the other works, see Van Tilborgh and Vellekoop, op. cit. (note 41), p. 31

43 Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, Vincent van Gogh Foundation, H.P. Bremmer to Jo Cohen Gosschalk-

Bonger, before 1 April 1903, b 1557 V/1962 Bremmer also mentions that two paintings at the exhibition came from 'Versteeg' (i.e. Tersteeg). According to De la Faille, Tersteeg owned F 910a (since 1882) and F 397 (French period), but this begs the question of whether Bremmer's assertion was correct. For the exhibition's closing date see Van Tilborgh and Vellekoop, op. cit. (note 41), p. 30, note 22.

44 The exhibition's opening and closing dates could not be ascertained. However, it is likely that the show was

held during the second half of May (see *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, 31 May 1903).

45 See *Onze Kunst* (1903), II, p. 60

46 Announced in *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 28 November.

47 The same series of articles was published in the *Zondagsblad v/h. Dagblad v. Zuid-Holland en 's Gravenhage* on 8, 15 and 22 November.

M. Op de Coul, "In search of Van Gogh's Nuenen studio, the Oldenzeel exhibitions of 1903" in *Van Gogh Museum Journal*, Amsterdam, 2002, p. 115, no. 21.



JOURNAL 2002

Oldenzeel label and a reference to the November exhibition De la Faille 1970 incorrectly lists this work as F 10 and does not mention a catalogue number for F 195

No. 5
Title Peasant digging
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul 166
Plasschaert -
Sources -
Comments Identification based on subject and provenance

No. 6
Title Peasant dwelling (interior)
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul 78 (?)
Plasschaert -
Sources -
Comments -

No. 7
Title Still life
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul 54
Plasschaert -
Sources Wk 14 November, p. 514 (ill.); DZ-H 15 November (ill.)
Comments no. 34 is also possible

No. 8
Title Young peasant
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul ?
Plasschaert -
Sources -
Comments -

No. 9
Title Still life
Faille 1928/1970 - / 63
Op de Coul 63
Plasschaert clogs, small

bottle, small brown pot, canvas on canvas
Sources Kr 14 November, p. 363; RN 16 November; NRC 22 November; OK, II, p. 174
Comments -

No. 10
Title Rocky landscape
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul pb 2a
Plasschaert ?
Sources -
Comments Perhaps misleading description in the Oldenzeel list

No. 11
Title Peasant woman (half-length)
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul pb 127 or 144a
Plasschaert -
Sources -
Comments See comments on no. 3

No. 12
Title Weaver
Faille 1928/1970 - / 29 or 162
Op de Coul 29
Plasschaert canvas, white walls, red carpet
Sources Kr 7 November, p. 356; OK, II, p. 174
Comments Based on the colour description F 29 (JH 471) is the only possible candidate

No. 13
Title Head of a woman (white neckerchief)
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul ?
Plasschaert -
Sources -
Comments -

No. 14
Title Small head of a woman
Faille 1928/1970 - / 133 and 153a
Op de Coul 133
Plasschaert light green-blue ground
Sources NRC 22 November
Comments Based on the NRC description F 133 (JH 584) is the most likely candidate. F 153a (JH 586) is probably no. 24

No. 15
Title Women on the land
Faille 1928/1970 - / 97
Op de Coul 97
Plasschaert potatoes
Sources Wk 14 November, p. 514 and 21 November, p. 533 (ill.); DZ-H 15 November and 22 November (ill.); NRC 22 November
Comments Own observation in the photo archives of the Kröller-Müller Museum; on the back is an Oldenzeel label and a small label marked no. 15 (fig. 6)

No. 16
Title Peasant woman from Nuenen
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul ?
Plasschaert -
Sources NRC 22 November
Comments 'There is something fanatical in the eyes of the woman in no. 16'

No. 17
Title Peasant dwelling
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul ?
Plasschaert -
Sources -

Comments Together with nos. 39 and 58 this is one of the works that definitely belonged to W. van Bakel⁵⁵

No. 18
Title Landscape with peasant dwelling
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul 187
Plasschaert -
Sources AH 7 November; RN 16 November; NRC 22 November; Kr 19 December, p. 404
Plasschaert -
Sources -

Comments 'Landscape with peasant dwelling in twilight of gold and brown. Evening-darkened cloud above roof ridge and chimney' (Kr)

No. 19
Title Small head of a woman
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul ?
Plasschaert -
Sources -
Comments -

No. 20
Title Peasant at work
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul ?
Plasschaert -
Sources -
Comments -

No. 21
Title Head of a woman, white cap
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul ?
Plasschaert light-green dress, what a woman
Sources -
Comments -



fig. 6
Labels on the back of F 97 JH 876, Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum

No. 22
Title Head of a woman
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul 134
Plasschaert red cap, green ground
Sources -
Comments Identification based on colour reproduction in Paolo Lecaldano, L'opera pittorica completa di Van Gogh, 2 vols., 2d ed., Milan 1977, vol. 1, plate IX

No. 23
Title Still life (jars and melons)
Faille 1928/1970 - / 59
Op de Coul 59
Plasschaert ornamental pears
Sources Kr 7 November, p. 356; Wk 14 November, p. 514 and 21 November, p. 533 (ill.); DZ-H 15 November and 22 November (ill.); RN 16 November; NRC 22

Comments -

No. 24
Title Peasant woman
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul pb 153a
Plasschaert en profil [in profile] to the left
Sources -
Comments On back note relating to Oldenzeel December exhibition, Rotterdam (according to auction cat. Stuttgart [Kunstkabinett], 3 May 1962, lot 128)

No. 25
Title Girl in the woods
Faille 1928/1970 - / -
Op de Coul 8a
Plasschaert document: study
Sources -
Comments Identification based on description by Plasschaert

54 All sources date from 1903.

55 See note 34. The painting 'Peasant dwelling' represents a tumbledown sheepfold, as shown by a letter from

Mrs J. Huët-Pierson to A. Tellegen-Hoogendoorn, 5 March 1965 (The Hague, RKD). The present location of the painting, which does not figure in De la Faille 1928 or 1970, is unknown

AUCTION COMPARABLES



1

Vincent van Gogh

Title	Kop van een vrouw (Gordina de Groot) (Head of a Woman [Gordina de Groot])
Description	PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED SWISS PRIVATE COLLECTIONVINCENT VAN GOGH (1853-1890)
Medium	oil on canvas laid down on panel
Year of Work	1885
Size	Height 16.3 in.; Width 12.8 in. / Height 41.3 cm.; Width 32.6 cm.
Misc.	Signed
Sale of	Christie's London: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 [Lot 00027] 20th/21st Century: London Evening Sale
Estimate	1,000,000 - 2,000,000 GBP (1,209,482 - 2,418,964 USD)
Sold For	4,842,000 GBP Premium (5,856,313 USD)



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman*
(*Gordina de Groot*)

1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 16^{7/8} x 13^{1/8} inches | 42.70 x 33.50 cm



Van
Gogh
Museum
Amsterdam

Van Gogh Museum
Amsterdam, The Netherlands



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman*

Circa 1884-1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 16^{1/2} x 13^{1/8} inches | 42 x 33.30 cm



Van
Gogh
Museum
Amsterdam

Van Gogh Museum
Amsterdam, The Netherlands



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Peasant Woman
in a White Bonnet*

1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 18^{1/2} x 13^{3/4} inches | 47.0 x 35.0 cm



Norton
Simon
Museum

Norton Simon Museum
Pasadena, CA, United States



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Peasant Woman*

1885

Medium: Oil on canvas laid on millboard

Dimensions: 16^{1/2} x 13^{1/8} inches | 46.40 x 35.30 cm



National Galleries Scotland
Edinburgh, Scotland



Vincent van Gogh | *Kop van een vrouw*
(*Head of a Woman*)

Circa 1884-1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 15 x 11^{1/8} inches | 37.90 x 28.40 cm



Kröller-Müller Museum
Otterlo, The Netherlands

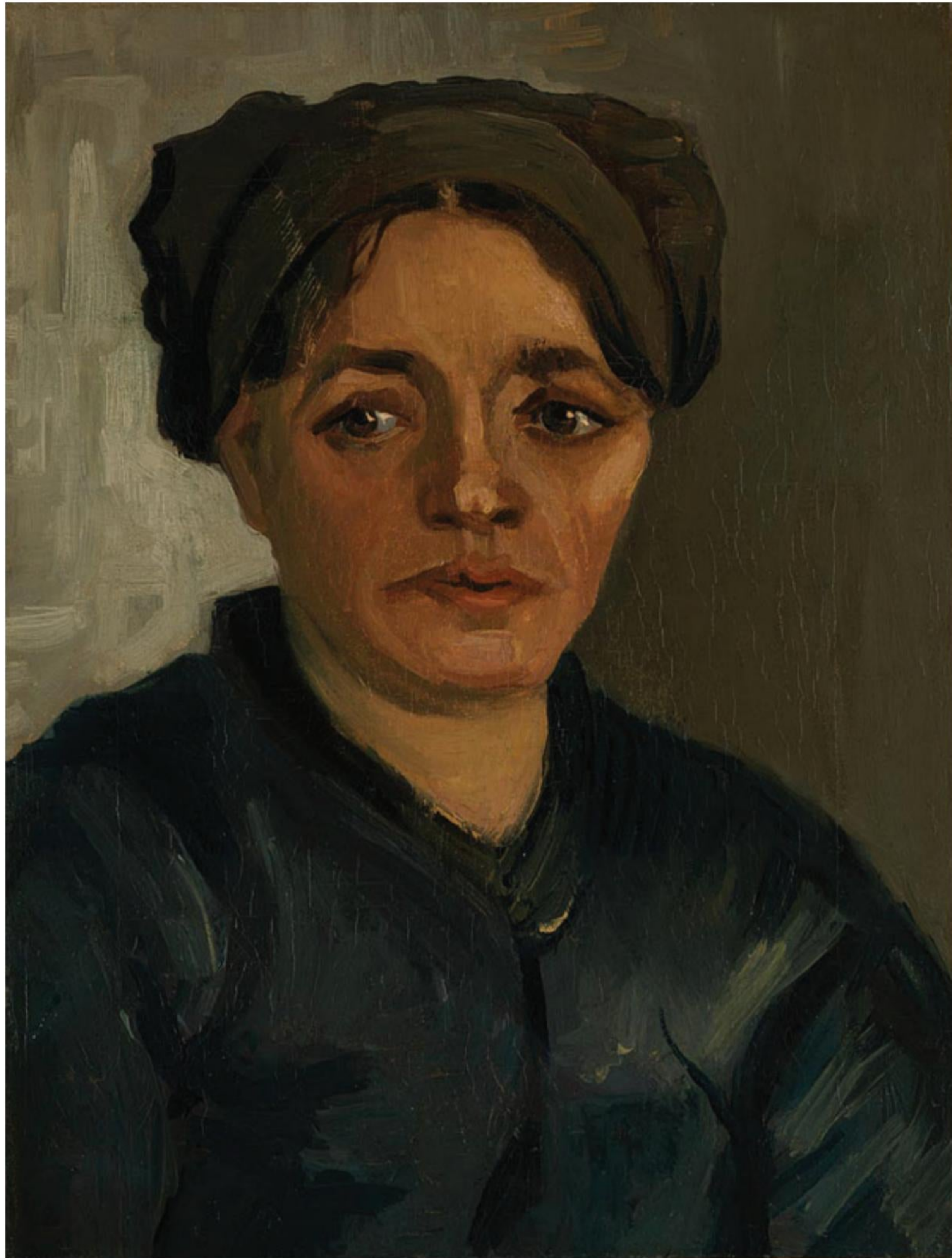


Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Peasant Woman*

1884

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 15^{7/8} x 12 inches | 40.30 x 30.5 cm



THE
NATIONAL
GALLERY

The National Gallery
London, England



Vincent van Gogh | *The Potato Peeler*
(Reverse: *Self-Portrait with a Straw Hat*)

1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 16 x 12^{1/2} inches | 40.60 x 31.80 cm



**THE
MET**

Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York, United States



Vincent van Gogh | *Peasant Woman Cooking
by a Fireplace*

1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 17^{3/8} x 15 inches | 44.10 x 38.10 cm



**THE
MET**

Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York, United States



M.S.  Rau
FINE ART • ANTIQUES • JEWELS

msrau.com | 504-826-8856