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Vincent Van Gogh

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A piece of art can tell us a lot more than we expected. It has meaning, emotion, or even a story behind it. Understanding some hidden message of these arts, can fulfill or explain what's missing in the history. Each pieces of art has an artist behind it. And among all the artists, there is the great one, the one whose art is most accepted by the world. Some of these artworks could worth like million dollars. However, not all artists became rich or had a good life for their artwork, Vincent Van Gogh was one of the unlucky kinds. During his life his paintings were not valuable; it was only after his death that his paintings became priceless.¹ His most important contribution to mankind was his style of art, but people during his lifetime did not understand or support him at all. Vincent Van Gogh was an unfortunate genius painter.

Vincent Van Gogh's life began in Holland in the year of 1853. He loved art since he was a child, that's why he became a painter since his early life. But before that, he was a clerk, art salesman, and preacher². He actually started his career as a painter at the age of 23. He tried to sell his painting, but that did not work quite well.³ The colors he used in his work actually reflect his life. When he was depressed or disappointed, the tone of color tended to be darker than usual. But after he had gone to Paris and met some other artists like Edgar Degas, Paul Signac, and Paul Gauguin,

¹ "Vincent Van Gogh Fun Facts." *Vincent Van Gogh Gallery - Welcome!* Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <http://www.vangoghgallery.com/misc/fun_facts.html>.

² "Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) | Thematic Essay | Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History | The Metropolitan Museum of Art." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art - Home*. Web. 14 Feb. 2012. <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/gogh/hd_gogh.htm>.

³ "Vincent Van Gogh." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh>.

he changed his tone of color. His paintings in Paris most likely have lighter tone of color; this style of art is called Post Impressionism.⁴ His brother, Theo, helped him a lot, since he did not make much money from selling his painting.⁵ His painting did not get any attention from people at that time. Later Vincent Van Gogh moved to Provence because of lower cost of living and wanted to get away from all those criticism people made about his artworks. His life there was tough. Later he found out he had some mental illness. He got some treatment from Dr. Paul Gachet in Auvers-sur-Oise, where he painted "Portrait of Dr. Gachet"⁶. His life now came to the saddest part, which result in shot himself with a gun. And that ends the life of this great artist at the age of 37. Obviously, he spent all of his life dedicated to art, but people did not understand. The result is the harsh, tough and terrible lifetime of this great artist.

One of his famous paintings is now worth \$82.5 million, which is "Portrait of Dr. Gachet".⁷ Even though his painting became so valuable today, but surprisingly "Portrait of Dr. Gachet" was first sold for only 300 francs.⁸ During his lifetime he did not really make much money from selling his painting, but the painting became famous after his death. During Vincent Van Gogh's lifetime, people were used to the kind of art that pursue the perfection of the reality. People usually have a self-portrait painting that is very alike to the owner, hang up in their home in order to show the

⁴ "Vincent Van Gogh's Impact on Art." *Vincent Van Gogh Gallery - Welcome!* Web. 14 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.vangoghgallery.com/misc/impact.html>>.

⁵ "Vincent Van Gogh." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh>.

⁶ Vincent Van Gogh Painting Portrait of Dr. Gachet - TheArtistVincentvanGogh.com." *The Artist Vincent Van Gogh Art and Biography - TheArtistVincentvanGogh.com*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.theartistvincentvangogh.com/vincent-van-gogh-painting-portrait-doctor-gachet.htm>>.

⁷ "Top Ten (10) Most Expensive Paintings Of All Time W. Pics." *Karemar*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.karemar.com/blog/top-ten-most-expensive-paintings-all-time-w-pics>>.

⁸ "Portrait of Dr. Gachet - Mysteries of History - U.S. News Online." *US News & World Report | News & Rankings | Best Colleges, Best Hospitals, and More*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/doubleissue/mysteries/portrait.htm>>.

financial status. This kind of art was very popular at that time. On the other hand Vincent Van Gogh's style of art, Post Impressionism, is totally different from that⁹, which is why it did not really get the attention from people at that time. It is not even close to what people like. People at that time probably were narrow-minded too, they do not want to accept or understand new style of art. Only after his death, people understand the art of Post Impressionism; they now understand the beauty of it. That's probably not the only reason how the painting became so valuable. The death of Vincent Van Gogh also affects the value of the painting. Since Vincent Van Gogh is death, there would be no more new painting painted by Vincent Van Gogh. This means his painting became limited edition. So that's why his paintings became priceless.

Expressionism is a new type of painting influenced by Vincent Van Gogh in late 19th – Early 20th century. This is accepted as a big impact to the whole world of modern art. He is also one of the best in modern art.¹⁰ Before, artists were so busy trying to paint as close as possible to the reality. This new type of painting does not pursue the perfection of the reality of the object, but tend to show a person's perspective, or how a person perceives that object. That's why objects in this type of painting are usually distorted, swirling, and swaying.¹¹ We can see that "Starry Night", Vincent Van Gogh's most famous example of Expressionism, the color in this painting has an intense feeling. The sky is swirling in the middle of the painting. Houses and mountain do not look like how they looked like in reality, but we all still

⁹ "The Art Story: Post-Impressionism Movement." *The Art Story: Modern Art Movements, Artists, Ideas and Topics*. Web. 14 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.theartstory.org/movement-post-impersonism.htm>>.

¹⁰ "Expressionism - Expressionism Art." *Oil Paintings Reproduction - Canvas Oil Painting Reproductions For Sale*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.huntfor.com/arhistory/C20th/expressionism.htm>>.

¹¹ "The Art Story: Expressionism Movement." *The Art Story: Modern Art Movements, Artists, Ideas and Topics*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.theartstory.org/movement-expressionism.htm>>.

recognized them. With this type of painting combined with brushstroke from Vincent Van Gogh, which is very beautiful itself, together then we have this masterpiece of artwork.

Not only the style of art that he contributed to the world. His life has become the inspiration for other artists as well. His dedication to art is far beyond than what we could imagine. Spending a whole life to present something people refused, is what makes him different. His lifetime artwork taught other artists to be unique and self-confident. This is what other artist learned from Vincent Van Gogh, but that's not it. His style of art had made an impact to the new generations. It fulfilled the subject of art, by giving more variety in style of art. People can studied his style of art and adapt or come up with something. Without Vincent Van Gogh, art today might not be as rich as it is today.

We can see that Vincent Van Gogh had many contributions to mankind. Without Vincent Van Gogh, we would probably still have the old style of art, perfection of the reality, no different in art. Vincent Van Gogh's expressionism was like a revolution to the modern art, just like an iPhone being the revolution of all phone. With all these revolution and changes, it is leading us closer to the definition of perfection. Vincent Van Gogh definitely deserved a better life than what he had. Everyone should be thankful for what he contributed to the world.