



SunFlowers
By Vincent Van Gogh

Vincent Van Gogh was born on March 30th, 1853 in Groot-Zundert, Netherlands and had passed away in 1890. As an artist, Van Gogh was influenced by impressionism, Japanese prints, and Jean-Francoise Millet. Van Gogh's style was of Post-Impressionism and was very expressive. He produced landscapes, portraits, interiors, still lifes and cityscapes. Van Gogh's work later influenced many Expressionist artists. His life story is just as famous as his art.

This particular painting was titled Sunflowers (Still life: A Vase with fifteen flowers). It was part of a series of sunflower paintings done by Vincent van Gogh. It was painted in the year 1888 with the method of oil on canvas. Its size is approximately 92.1 x 73cm - 36 x 28 Inches. He had painted these sunflowers after leaving his native Holland for the south of France with the dream of starting an artistic community. His reason for painting the sunflowers was to decorate a "Yellow House" that his friend Paul Gauguin rented in Arles, France. He and Gauguin worked there in France between October and December 1888.

The series of sunflower paintings was made possible by the innovations in manufactured pigments in the 19th Century. Without the vibrancy of the new colors, such as chrome yellow, Van Gogh may never have achieved the intensity of Sunflowers. The dying flowers are built up with thick brushstrokes (impasto). The impasto evokes the texture of the seed-heads. The sunflowers are at varying stages in the life cycle, from withered and wilting to vibrant full bloom, which represent the shortness of life.

Van Gogh produced a replica of this painting in January 1889, and perhaps another one later in the year. The various versions and replicas remain much debated among Van Gogh scholars. The 'Sunflowers' is one of the most popular paintings in the National Gallery, and the most often reproduced on cards, posters, mugs, tea-towels and stationery. It was also the picture that Van Gogh was most proud of. Van Gogh was a famous Dutch artist who had influenced many artists after him. Today his work is shown in many museums and his talent still succeeds to astonish many viewers.