A CHRONOLOGY OF VINCENT VAN GOGH’S LIFE, ART, AND EARLY CRITICAL RECEPTION

1853 Born March 30 in Groot-Zundert, near Breda, Netherlands.


1873 Transfers to the Goupil branch in London. Over the next three years, works intermittently for Goupil in London and Paris.

Teaches at a private school in Ramsgate, a seaside town in England.

1877 Studies theology in Amsterdam.

1878 Serves as a missionary in the Borinage, a coal-mining district in Belgium.

1880 Abandons missionary work and attends the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts in Brussels.

1881 Moves to Etten and sketches peasants and landscapes.

1882 Settles in The Hague and seeks instruction from his cousin Anton Mauve.

Becomes romantically involved with Clasina Maria “Sien” Hoornik.

1883 Lives in Drenthe, North Holland, from September to December and sketches and paints rural scenery and peasants.

 Begins living with his parents in Nuenen in December.

1885 Peasant paintings culminate with The Potato Eaters of March to May.

Moves to Antwerp in November.

1886 Studies at an art academy in Antwerp from January to February.

Lives in Paris with his brother Theo from March to February 1888.
Studies at Fernand Cormon’s private studio and develops relationships with Charles Angrand, Émile Bernard, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Paul Signac, and Paul Gauguin.

Visits Impressionist and Neo-Impressionist exhibitions.

1887 Organizes an exhibition in November of works by himself and colleagues whom he calls the “Impressionists of the Petit Boulevard.”

1888 Settles in Arles in February. Gauguin arrives in October.

Exhibits three paintings at the Société des Artistes Indépendants, Paris.

Suffers a mental breakdown and slices off part of one ear on December 23, which precipitates Gauguin’s hasty departure.

1889 Voluntarily commits himself to the Saint-Paul asylum near Saint-Rémy-de-Provence in May.

Resumes painting both at the asylum and on walks through the surrounding countryside and villages. Paints Starry Night and Wheat Field with Cypresses in June.

Exhibits three paintings at the Société des Artistes Indépendants, Paris, in September.

1890 Albert Aurier publishes article “Les Isolés: Vincent van Gogh” in Mercure de France in January.

Six paintings exhibited between January and February at Les XX, Brussels, create a sensation. Artist Anna Bloch buys his painting The Red Vineyard.

Exhibits ten paintings at the Société des Artistes Indépendants, Paris, in March and April.


Shoots himself with a revolver on July 27.

Dies in his room at the Auberge Ravoux on July 29.

Theo and Émile Bernard mount improvised retrospective in Theo’s former apartment in September.

Frederick van Eeden publishes article “Vincent van Gogh” in De Nieuwe Gids.
1891 Theo dies on January 25 at the age of thirty-three.

Émile Bernard publishes article “Vincent van Gogh” in *Hommes d’aujourd’hui*.

Ten paintings and twelve drawings exhibited at Les XX, Brussels, in February and March.

Paintings exhibited at Le Barc de Boutteville, Paris, in *1er Exposition des Peintures Impressionnistes et Symbolistes* in December.


1893 *Mercure de France* publishes excerpts from Van Gogh’s letters, followed by additional publications in 1894 and 1895.

1895 Thirteen of Van Gogh’s letters published in *Van Nu en Straks*.

Ambroise Vollard organizes Van Gogh exhibition in his Paris gallery, followed by another in 1896.

1901 Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, holds *Exposition d’Oeuvres de Vincent van Gogh*, with a catalogue by Julien Leclercq.

1902 Paul Cassirer organizes first Van Gogh exhibition in Berlin.

1904 *Kunst und Kunstler* publishes “Aus der korrespondenz Vincent van Gogh.”

1905 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, exhibits 474 works from Van Gogh’s estate.

1906 Bruno Cassirer, Berlin, publishes *Van Gogh Briefe (Letters)*.

1908 Various letters published in the first in a series of articles by the Russian magazine *Zolotoye Runo*.

1910 Julius Meier-Graefe’s biography *Vincent van Gogh* is published in German.

Twenty-one paintings included in Roger Fry’s landmark exhibition *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* at Grafton Galleries, London.

1911 Ambroise Vollard, Paris, publishes *Letters de Vincent van Gogh à Émile Bernard*.

1912 Sixteen works appear in the Sonderbund exhibition in Cologne.
1913 Sixteen works appear in the Amory Show in New York, Chicago, and Boston.

Margaret Irwin publishes *How Many Miles to Babylon*, the first of many semi-biographical novels about Van Gogh that make extensive use of his letters.

Houghton Mifflin, New York and Boston, publishes *The Letters of a Post-Impressionist . . . Correspondence of Vincent van Gogh*.


1914 *Brieven aan zijn broeder*, edited by Johanna van Gogh-Bonger, is the first to publish Van Gogh’s letters in full; editions in Dutch and German.

Paul Cassirer, Berlin, organizes exhibition in May and June.

1916 Theodore Duret publishes *Vincent van Gogh*; revised editions in 1919 and 1924.

1921 Julius Meier-Graefe’s *Vincent*, a monumental two-volume biography, is published in German and English.

1922 Karl Jaspers’s psychiatric study *Strinberg und Van Gogh* proposes that Van Gogh suffered from schizophrenia.

Jutaro Kuroda’s biography and art analysis *Wan Gogu* is published in Japanese.

1923 Leicester Galleries, London, organizes the first of several Van Gogh exhibitions.

1924 Hermann Kasack’s *Vincent: Drama in 5 Acts* is one of many popular plays based on Van Gogh’s life.

1925 Walther Riese’s article “Über den stilwandel bei Vincent van Gogh” in *Zeitschrift für die Gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie*, and the book *Vincent van Gogh in Der Krankheit* argue that Van Gogh did not suffer from schizophrenia.

1926 Edgard Leroy’s article “Le séjour de van Gogh à l’Asile de Saint-Rémy-de-Provence” in *Aesculpa* discusses Van Gogh’s life at the Saint-Paul asylum.

1927 *Vincent van Gogh* exhibition at Otto Wacker’s gallery, Berlin, ignites an international scandal over the inclusion of a large number of forgeries.
1928 J.-B. de la Faille publishes *L’Oeuvre de Vincent van Gogh: catalogue raisonné* in four volumes.

Edgard Leroy’s psychological study *La folie de Vincent van Gogh* includes information from the Saint-Paul asylum files and concludes that Van Gogh suffered from hereditary epilepsy.

1929 *Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, Van Gogh* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, attracts over 100,000 visitors.

1930 J.-B. de la Faille’s *Les faux van Gogh* identifies numerous forgeries.

1932 Ryuzaburo Shikiba publishes *Vincent van Gogh: His Life and Psychosis* in Japanese and English, a book that includes a selection of Van Gogh’s letters.

1934 Irving Stone’s *Lust for Life*, a fictional biography based on Van Gogh’s letters, is reprinted multiple times from 1934 to 1936; published in numerous languages, including English, German, French, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Latvian, Finnish, and Hebrew.

1935 Museum of Modern Art, New York, holds a major retrospective organized by Alfred H. Barr that also travels to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the accompanying catalogue publishes a selection of Van Gogh’s letters.

Edward Schindeler’s article “Van Gogh’s ‘Insanity’” in *Museum of Modern Art Bulletin* describes Van Gogh’s illness as “psychic or masked epilepsy.”

1937 *Vincent van Gogh: A Play* is performed at the Pasadena Playhouse.

1939 *Self-Portrait Dedicated to Gauguin*, one of many Van Gogh paintings removed by the Nazis from German museums during their purge of degenerate art, sold at Gallerie Fischer auction in Lucerne for $40,000.

1956 *Lust for Life*, starring Kirk Douglas and Anthony Quinn, is the first of many popular films released. The screen play is based on Irving Stone’s novel but incorporates readings from Van Gogh’s letters.