



Portrait of a Girl with a Bunch of Flowers
Hans Heyerdahl (1857 - 1913), 1882



Park
Hans Heyerdahl (1857 - 1913), 1882



Portrait of Maren Christine Heyerdahl
Hans Heyerdahl (1857 - 1913), 1879



Mother of the Dying Child
Hans Heyerdahl (1857 - 1913), 1882

Works Collected by Theo and Vincent van Gogh

Paintings and Drawings

Hans Heyerdahl

The Norwegian artist Hans Heyerdahl (1857–1913) trained at various places in Europe. In Kristiania (now Oslo) he received his first lessons at the Royal Academy of Drawing and he subsequently studied at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Munich from 1874 to 1878. Immediately thereafter he went to Paris and, like many Scandinavian artists of his day, became an apprentice in the studio of Léon Bonnat.⁰¹ After Heyerdahl's move to Paris, his work was exhibited at the Paris Salon almost every year.⁰² He built up a coherent oeuvre in a recognizable style that steered a middle course between naturalism and impressionism and therefore also between the local style of his native country and the taste of the international art world in which he hoped to succeed.

The acquisition of *Park* and *Girl with a Bunch of Flowers*

In Paris, Heyerdahl became acquainted with Theo van Gogh (1857-1891) at Goupil & Cie, the art dealer who represented him from 1881 on. In February of that year, in fact, Theo had become the manager of Goupil's branch at 19, boulevard Montmartre. Of the fifteen paintings by Heyerdahl that passed through this art dealer's hands, thirteen of them were sold.⁰³ The work of Heyerdahl and other Scandinavian artists was obviously gaining in popularity in these years.⁰⁴ Theo acquired a number of works by Heyerdahl for his own collection, including the paintings *Park* and *Portrait of a Girl with a Bunch of Flowers*, which he bought from the artist (via Goupil) for 250 francs altogether.⁰⁵

Each of these paintings represents one of Heyerdahl's specialisms: landscape and portraiture. The modest panel *Park* was probably painted on a field easel en plein air in a park in Paris. It contains no reference whatever to an urban setting. The light green landscape recalls Van Gogh's later views of luxuriant gardens and parks.

Like *Park*, the girl's portrait was painted in 1882, by which time Heyerdahl had been living in Paris for several years. The girl, who looks straight at the viewer, seems a bit unsure of herself. The flowers she holds are probably daisies. The background was thinly applied with a palette knife; the light ground layer can be seen in places. On top of this, broad brushstrokes are visible. The contours of the girl, seen against the background, were kept soft; her face, on the other hand, was depicted all the more sharply.⁰⁶ This combination results in an intriguing diffuseness that demands careful scrutiny from those who wish to comprehend the painting.

Heyerdahl painted such portraits of children rather frequently. The stately pose, the presence of a single attribute (such as a cat, a plate of food or a flower) and especially the penetrating glance give these works a rather sentimental character all their own. The green background also occurs fairly often in such portraits, an example being *The Sisters*, painted several years later (fig. 1). In the painting in the Van Gogh Museum, the natural surroundings in the background are less explicit, but the patches of light on the girl's left arm and elsewhere imply that sunlight is falling through the shrubbery.



Hans Heyerdahl, *The Sisters*,
presumably 1887, oil on canvas,
46 cm × 37 cm,
Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo. Photo:
Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo

Two drawings

Theo and Vincent's estate also included two drawings by Heyerdahl: *Mother of the Dying Child* and *Portrait of Maren Christine Heyerdahl*. It is not known how or when either of these drawings was acquired. The drawn portrait of Maren Christine Heyerdahl (1854-1931) depicts the artist's wife frontally, analogous to the model in *Portrait of a Girl with a Bunch of Flowers*. The verso of the sheet bears the inscription 'To my darling Kristine' ('Til min kjaere Kristine'), which makes it clear that the work was a gift to the sitter, whom he married that year (1879). That it subsequently came into Theo van Gogh's possession is therefore remarkable. This delicate drawing is possibly the drawn *Portrait de Mme Heyerdahl* that the artist exhibited at the Salon of 1880. ⁰⁷

Heyerdahl also painted a portrait of his wife, which bears a resemblance to the woman portrayed in the drawing in the Van Gogh Museum (fig. 2) . In both works, Maren Christine Heyerdahl wears her hair up and looks directly at the viewer. Perhaps the drawing served as a study for the painting, even though the clothing differs in the two portraits and the striking necklace in the painting does not appear in the drawing.

The Dying Child

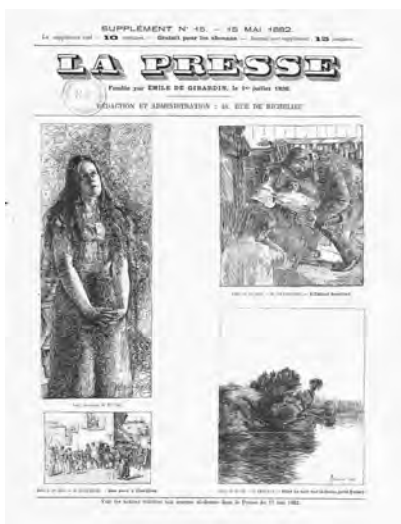
The collection's small drawing of a woman standing is related to *The Dying Child* (fig. 3), a work that Heyerdahl exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1882.⁰⁸ The painting depicts a dramatic scene – a child on its deathbed – surrounded by family members and the doctor. The woman portrayed in both the drawing and the painting is Heyerdahl's mother, for this is an autobiographical work. Heyerdahl was the eldest of twelve children, two of whom died in infancy.⁰⁹ A Norwegian article about the artist, published in 1881, refers to this: 'It is known that Heyerdahl himself witnessed this scene as a child; he is the crying boy in the foreground of the painting.'¹⁰ Moreover, 'the dying child' was a common subject among Scandinavian artists who hoped to make a name for themselves in Paris.¹¹



Hans Heyerdahl, *The Dying Child*, 1881 (dated 1882), oil on canvas, 194 × 224 cm, Musée Francisque Mandet, Riom

Heyerdahl made five versions of the scene, the first in 1881 (fig. 4); the second – the piece submitted to the Salon – also originated that year. In 1889 he painted the last version, a small variant that he sold directly to the national museum of Norway (fig. 5). Almost nothing is known about the other two versions.¹² The life-size painting that was exhibited at the Salon was rather well received, which cannot be said of all of Heyerdahl's work. For this painting he was even awarded the prestigious Grand Prix de Florence, which provided him with 5,000 francs to travel to the Tuscan city. The fact that the mother stands aloof from the deathbed elicited mixed reactions from the critics, one of whom thought this too theatrical: 'the dishevelled mother, half-dressed, turns away from the cradle and gazes heavenwards, twisting her arms in pain. A single figure mars this scene, that of the mother, for being too conventional and melodramatic.'¹³ But another critic was touched by this scene: 'the mother, who, with her hair down, casts a desolate look at the unknown and wrings her hands, is a beautiful figure that is touching, for the present, and promising, for the future.'¹⁴

The magazine *La Presse* published two drawings Heyerdahl made after the painting: one of the father bending over the dying child and one of the mother (fig. 6).¹⁵ It must be the drawing of the mother that ended up in Theo van Gogh's collection.¹⁶ The subject and the shaded passages were laid in with blue pencil, which indicates that Heyerdahl, when making the drawing, was already taking into consideration the fact that blue would hardly show up against a white background in a photomechanical reproduction.¹⁷ Over the blue pencil, Heyerdahl ingeniously applied a web of pen-strokes to arrive at the correct gradations of light and dark and shadow. The graphic character of this sheet also indicates that Heyerdahl was bearing in mind the ultimate reproduction of this drawing. A reproduction of the entire painting, likewise based on a drawing by the artist, in the magazine *L'Art* shows the woman with slightly different facial features, which demonstrates that Heyerdahl did in fact make a new drawing for each reproduction (fig. 7).



La Presse, supplement no. 15,
15 May 1882, p. 1

Heyerdahl and Van Gogh

Theo van Gogh undoubtedly visited the Salon exhibition in question. He also knew about the prize that Heyerdahl won for *The Dying Child*, judging by the reaction of his brother Vincent: 'I can well imagine that Heyerdahl is delighted by such a payment.'¹⁸ Since 1881, Vincent had been full of praise for Heyerdahl in his letters to Theo, writing that 'he seems to be such a highly cultivated man' and 'one who takes great pains to seek "proportions for the purpose of design"', and he often voiced his desire to meet him.¹⁹

Shortly before the Salon exhibition, Theo had shown Heyerdahl a version of Vincent's drawing *Sorrow* (1882, Van Gogh Museum). Heyerdahl's response was probably positive,²⁰ because several months later, Vincent sent Theo a lithograph of the same subject, intended for Heyerdahl.²¹ Heyerdahl's *Mother of the Dying Child* expresses the same feeling of despair that pervades Van Gogh's *Sorrow*. It is quite possible that Heyerdahl gave Theo the pen drawing both as a token of gratitude for his involvement in the sale of two painted versions of *The Dying Child* and as a return gift for his brother, a like-minded artist.²² Theo himself also saw Vincent and the Norwegian artist as sharing the same fate, although in doing so he conveniently ignored Heyerdahl's successful sales and the prizes he had won. As he wrote to their sister Lies in 1885: 'As far as success is concerned, he may well go the way of Heyerdahl, appreciated by a few, but not understood by the wider public.'²³ Even after Vincent van Gogh's death, his work continued to play an important role in Heyerdahl's life.²⁴

Renske Suijver
March 2023

Citation

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[🔗 doi.org/10.58802/DPMZ4956](https://doi.org/10.58802/DPMZ4956).

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Object details

Portrait of a Girl with a Bunch of Flowers

Artist

Hans Heyerdahl (1857 - 1913)

Location

Paris

Date

1882

Medium

oil on canvas

Dimensions

46 cm x 38 cm

Inscriptions

Hans Heijerdahl. Paris 1882.

Inventory Number

s0230V1962

Credits

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



Object details

Park

Artist

Hans Heyerdahl (1857 - 1913)

Date

1882

Dimensions

14 cm x 24 cm

Inscriptions

Heijerdahl

1882

Inventory Number

s0229V1962

Credits

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



Object details

Portrait of Maren Christine Heyerdahl

Artist

Hans Heyerdahl (1857 - 1913)

Location

Paris

Date

1879

Medium

pencil on wove paper

Dimensions

36.6 cm x 21.6 cm

Inscriptions

Hans Heijerdahl. [...] Paris 1879.

Til min kjaere Kristine

Inventory Number

d0668V1962

Credits

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



Object details

Mother of the Dying Child

Artist

Hans Heyerdahl (1857 - 1913)

Date

1882

Medium

blue coloured pencil and pen in India ink on laid paper

Dimensions

24.3 cm x 9.5 cm

Inscriptions

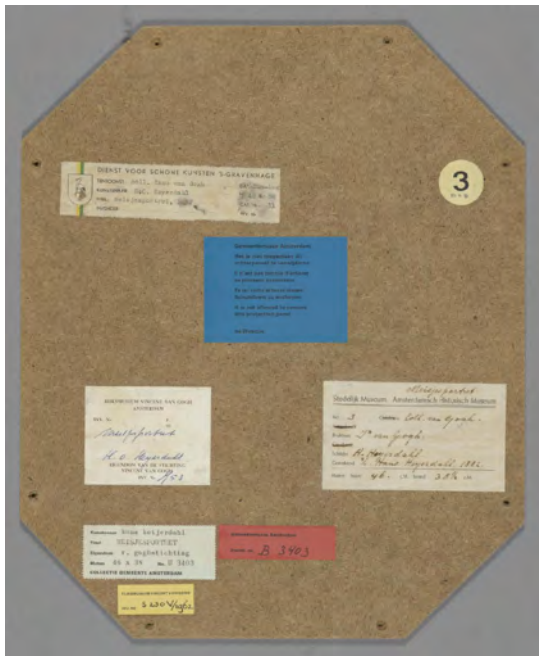
Heyerdahl 1889

Inventory Number

d0667V1962

Credits

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



Portrait of a Girl with a Bunch of Flowers
Front & Back



Provenance

Portrait of a Girl with a Bunch of Flowers

Sold by the artist, Paris to Theo van Gogh, Paris, through Goupil & Cie, Paris together with s0229V1962 for FRF 250, between 1882 and probably 1885; after his death on 25 January 1891, inherited by his widow, Jo van Gogh-Bonger, and their son, Vincent Willem van Gogh, Paris; administered until her death on 2 September 1925 by Jo van Gogh-Bonger, Bussum/Amsterdam/Laren; transferred by Vincent Willem van Gogh, Laren, to the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, Amsterdam, 10 July 1962; agreement concluded between the Vincent van Gogh Foundation and the State of the Netherlands, in which the preservation and management of the collection, and its placing in the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, to be realized in Amsterdam, is entrusted to the State, 21 July 1962; on permanent loan to the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh from the opening of the museum on 2 June 1973, and at the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, since 1 July 1994.



Provenance

Park

Sold by the artist, Paris to Theo van Gogh, Paris, through Goupil & Cie, Paris together with s0230V1962 for FRF 250, between 1882 and probably 1885; after his death on 25 January 1891, inherited by his widow, Jo van Gogh-Bonger, and their son, Vincent Willem van Gogh, Paris; administered until her death on 2 September 1925 by Jo van Gogh-Bonger, Bussum/Amsterdam/Laren; transferred by Vincent Willem van Gogh, Laren, to the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, Amsterdam, 10 July 1962; agreement concluded between the Vincent van Gogh Foundation and the State of the Netherlands, in which the preservation and management of the collection, and its placing in the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, to be realized in Amsterdam, is entrusted to the State, 21 July 1962; on permanent loan to the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh from the opening of the museum on 2 June 1973, and at the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, since 1 July 1994.

Provenance

Portrait of Maren Christine Heyerdahl

Probably given by the artist, Paris, to his wife Maren Christine Heyerdahl, Paris, 1879; Theo van Gogh, Paris; after his death on 25 January 1891, inherited by his widow, Jo van Gogh-Bonger, and their son, Vincent Willem van Gogh, Paris; administered until her death on 2 September 1925 by Jo van Gogh-Bonger, Bussum/Amsterdam/Laren; transferred by Vincent Willem van Gogh, Laren, to the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, Amsterdam, 10 July 1962; agreement concluded between the Vincent van Gogh Foundation and the State of the Netherlands, in which the preservation and management of the collection, and its placing in the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, to be realized in Amsterdam, is entrusted to the State, 21 July 1962; on permanent loan to the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh from the opening of the museum on 2 June 1973, and at the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, since 1 July 1994.



Provenance

Mother of the Dying Child

Possibly given by the artist to Theo van Gogh, Paris; after his death on 25 January 1891, inherited by his widow, Jo van Gogh-Bonger, and their son, Vincent Willem van Gogh, Paris; administered until her death on 2 September 1925 by Jo van Gogh-Bonger, Bussum/Amsterdam/Laren; transferred by Vincent Willem van Gogh, Laren, to the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, Amsterdam, 10 July 1962; agreement concluded between the Vincent van Gogh Foundation and the State of the Netherlands, in which the preservation and management of the collection, and its placing in the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, to be realized in Amsterdam, is entrusted to the State, 21 July 1962; on permanent loan to the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh from the opening of the museum on 2 June 1973, and at the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, since 1 July 1994.





Exhibitions

Portrait of a Girl with a Bunch of Flowers

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *De verzameling van Theo van Gogh : met uitzondering van de werken van zijn broer Vincent*, 31 March-11 May 1953, no. 31, *Meisjesportret*

The Hague, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, *De verzameling van Theo van Gogh : met uitzondering van de werken van zijn broer Vincent*, 11 June-2 August 1953, no. 31, *Meisjesportret*

Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum, *De verzameling van Theo van Gogh : met uitzondering van de werken van zijn broer Vincent*, 5 September-15 November 1953, no. 31, *Meisjesportret*

Mons, Museum voor Schoone Kunsten, *Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). Son art et ses amis*, 22 March-5 May 1958, no. 95, *portrait de jeune fille*

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, 29 January-29 February 1960, no. 56, *Meisjesportret*

Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, 12 March-29 May 1960, no. 56, *Meisjesportret*

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, *Theo van Gogh 1857-1891. Kunsthandelaar, verzamelaar en broer van Vincent*, 24 June-5 September 1999, no. 157, *Portret van een meisje met een boeket*

Paris, Musée d'Orsay, *Theo van Gogh 1857-1891. Marchand de tableaux, collectionneur, frère de Vincent*, 27 September 1999-9 January 2000, no. 100, *Portrait d'une jeune fille avec un bouquet de fleurs*



Exhibitions

Park

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *De verzameling van Theo van Gogh : met uitzondering van de werken van zijn broer Vincent*, 31 March-11 May 1953

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, *Kiezen voor Vincent. Portret van een familiegeschiedenis*, 10 February-10 April 2023



Exhibitions

Portrait of Maren Christine Heyerdahl

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *De verzameling van Theo van Gogh : met uitzondering van de werken van zijn broer Vincent*, 31 March-11 May 1953



Exhibitions

Mother of the Dying Child

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *De verzameling van Theo van Gogh : met uitzondering van de werken van zijn broer Vincent*, 31 March-11 May 1953, no. 32, *Vrouw (staande)*

The Hague, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, *De verzameling van Theo van Gogh : met uitzondering van de werken van zijn broer Vincent*, 11 June-2 August 1953, no. 32, *Vrouw (staande)*

Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum, *De verzameling van Theo van Gogh : met uitzondering van de werken van zijn broer Vincent*, 5 September-15 November 1953, no. 32, *Vrouw (staande)*

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, 29 January-29 February 1960, no. 57, *Vrouw*

Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, 12 March-29 May 1960, no. 57, *Vrouw*



Literature

Portrait of a Girl with a Bunch of Flowers

- Theo van Gogh, letter to Lies van Gogh, Paris, 13 October 1885. Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), b0903V1962
- Receipt for two paintings by Goupil & Cie to Theo van Gogh, c. 1882–c. 1885. Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), b1332V1962
- Evert van Uitert and Michael Hoyle (eds.), *The Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 1987, no. 1.270, p. 351; BVG08057 a–l
- Ronald de Leeuw, *The Van Gogh Museum: Paintings and Pastels*, Zwolle 1994, p. 83; BVG14126
- Chris Stolwijk and Richard Thomson (eds.), with a contribution by Sjraar van Heugten, *Theo van Gogh, 1857–1891: Art Dealer, Collector and Brother of Vincent*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum) / Paris (Musée d'Orsay), Amsterdam & Zwolle 1999, p. 160; BVG14736
- Lisa Smit and Hans Luijten (eds.), *Choosing Vincent: From Family Collection to Van Gogh Museum*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum), Bussum 2023, p. 22; BVG26545



Literature

Park

- Vincent Willem van Gogh, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, exh. cat. Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam 1960, no. 55
- Evert van Uitert and Michael Hoyle (eds.), *The Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 1987, no. 1.269, p. 351; BVG08057
- Ronald de Leeuw, *The Van Gogh Museum: Paintings and Pastels*, Zwolle 1994, p. 83; BVG14126
- Chris Stolwijk and Richard Thomson (eds.), with a contribution by Sjraar van Heugten, *Theo van Gogh, 1857-1891: Art Dealer, Collector and Brother of Vincent*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum) / Paris (Musée d'Orsay), Amsterdam & Zwolle 1999, no. 34, pp. 38-39, 157; BVG14736
- Lisa Smit and Hans Luijten (eds.), *Choosing Vincent: From Family Collection to Van Gogh Museum*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum), Bussum 2023, pp. 23, 24; BVG26545



Literature

Portrait of Maren Christine Heyerdahl

- Vincent Willem van Gogh, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Stedelijk Museum) 1960, no. 58
- Evert van Uitert and Michael Hoyle (eds.), *The Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 1987, no. 2.711, p. 482; BVG08057

Literature

Mother of the Dying Child



- Anonymous, 'La Presse-Salon', *La Presse*, 14 May 1882
- Evert van Uitert and Michael Hoyle (eds.), *The Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 1987, p. 483; BVG08057 a-l
- Ronald de Leeuw, *The Van Gogh Museum: Paintings and Pastels*, Zwolle 1994, p. 83; BVG14126

Figures



Fig. 1

Hans Heyerdahl, *The Sisters*, presumably 1887, oil on canvas, 46 cm × 37 cm, Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo. Photo: Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo



Fig. 2

Hans Heyerdahl, *Maren Christine Heyerdahl*, 1881, oil on canvas, 55 × 46.5 cm, private collection. Photo: Trond E. Aslaksby



Fig. 3

Hans Heyerdahl, *The Dying Child*, 1881 (dated 1882), oil on canvas, 194 × 224 cm, Musée Francisque Mandet, Riom



Fig. 4

Hans Heyerdahl, *The Dying Child*, 1881, oil on canvas, 59.5 × 70 cm, Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo. Photo: Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo



Fig. 5

Hans Heyerdahl, *The Dying Child*, probably 1889, oil on canvas, 25.5 × 24.5 cm, Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo. Photo: Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo

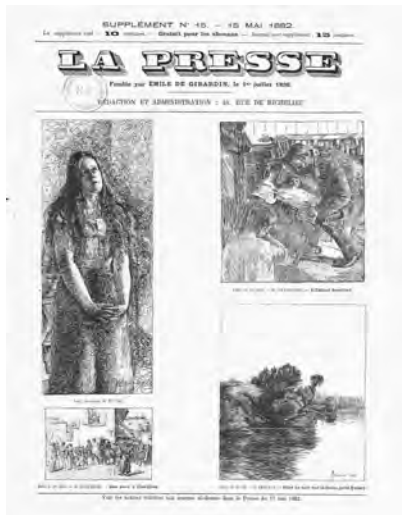


Fig. 6

La Presse, supplement no. 15, 15 May 1882, p. 1



Fig. 7

L'Art: revue hebdomadaire illustrée 8 (1882), part 3, before p. 174

Footnotes

- 01 Trond Aslaksby, *Hans Heyerdahl, 1857-1913*, exh. cat., Åmot (Stiftelsen Modums Blaaifarveværk) 1981, pp. 126-28; Maite van Dijk, 'Foreign Artists versus French Critics: Exhibition Strategies and Critical Reception at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris (1884-1914)', diss., University of Amsterdam 2017, p. 118.
- 02 See [↗ 'Base Salons 1673-1914'](#), accessed 6 March 2023.
- 03 Goupil Stock Books 10 and 11, Getty Provenance Index, accessed 6 March 2023.
- 04 Chris Stolwijk and Richard Thomson (eds.), with a contribution by Jraar van Heugten, *Theo van Gogh, 1857-1891: Art Dealer, Collector and Brother of Vincent*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum) / Paris (Musée d'Orsay), Amsterdam & Zwolle 1999, pp. 81, 200 n. 83. Other Scandinavian artists represented by Goupil include the Swedes Alfred Wahlberg and Hugo Salmson.
- 05 Receipt for two paintings from Goupil & Cie to Theo van Gogh, c. 1882-c. 1885 (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), b1332V1962). In addition to these works, there was a painting by Heyerdahl that left the collection, according to Stolwijk, Thomson and Van Heugten 1999, p. 153.
- 06 With thanks to René Boitelle, paintings conservator Van Gogh Museum, 13 October 2020.
- 07 Musée d'Orsay, [↗ 'Portrait de Mme Heyerdahl'](#), 'Base Salons 1673-1914', no. 4954, in the section 'Dessins, cartons, aquarelles, pastels, miniatures, vitraux, émaux, porcelaines, faïences', accessed 6 March 2023.
- 08 Musée d'Orsay, [↗ 'L'Enfant mourant'](#), 'Base Salons 1673-1914', accessed 6 March 2023. The Salon des artistes français opened on 1 May 1882; it is not known when it closed; [↗ 'The Dying Child'](#), accessed 6 March 2023.
- 09 Aslaksby 1981, p. 126.
- 10 Andreas Aubert, 'Kunst. Heyerdahl', *Dagbladet*, 19 December 1881, p. 1; Trond Aslaksby, *Hans Heyerdahl (1857-1913): Fra Paris til Åsgårdstrand*, exh. cat., Tønsberg (Haugar Vestfold Kunstmuseum) 2000, pp. 124, 155 n. 20. This was also noted in a review of the Salon published the following year: '[It] has the poignant feeling of a real-life oeuvre. Never was that word more true. It is actually a memory of his own childhood that the Norwegian artist has retraced. It is himself he painted as the child seen three-quarter-length in the foreground; it is his panic-stricken mother' ('A le sentiment poignant d'une oeuvre vécue. Jamais le mot ne fut plus en situation. C'est en effet un souvenir de sa propre enfance, qu'a retracé l'artiste norvégien. C'est lui-même qu'il a peint dans l'enfant vu à mi-jambes au premier plan; c'est sa mère affolée'), Paul Leroi, 'Salon de 1882. XXXII', *L'Art: revue hebdomadaire illustrée* 8 (1882), p. 171.
- 11 Van Dijk 2017, pp. 118, 120, 121, 123.
- 12 Aslaksby 1981, p. 58. One of these two versions is to be found in the collection of Heyerdahl's descendants. I am indebted to Hans-Martin Flaatten for this information.

- 13 Fourcaud, 'M. Heyerdahl - M. Marc Aurèle', in *Le Gaulois: littéraire et politique*, 2 June 1882, p. 3: 'la mère échevelée, à demi-vêtue, s'éloigne du berceau, et les regards au ciel, tord ces bras douloureusement. Une seule figure vient déparer cette scène; celle de la mère, par trop convenue et mélodramatique.'
- 14 Edmond Jacques, 'Le Salon. X', *L'Intransigeant*, 21 May 1882, p. 2: 'But the little boy - the brother of the sick infant - in a nightshirt, whom one sees from the back, is a well-painted passage, in a sober note, and the mother, who, with her hair down, casts a desolate look at the unknown and wrings her hands, is a beautiful figure that is touching, for the present, and promising, for the future.' ('Mais le gamin - le frère du malade - en chemise, qu'on aperçoit de dos, est un moreau bien peint, dans une note sobre et la mère qui, les cheveux dénoués, jette vers l'inconnu un regard désolé et dont les mains se tordent, est une belle figure qui touche, pour le présent, et promet, pour l'avenir.')
- 15 The article ('La Presse-Salon', *La Presse*, 14 May 1882, p. 3) confirms this by referring to 'The reproduction in facsimile and after the original sketches of the exhibitors' ('La reproduction en fac-similé et d'après les croquis originaux des exposants'). Although 'croquis' could suggest that these were preparatory sketches for the painting, this appears to refer to a preparatory drawing for the reproduction, given that the drawing scarcely differs from the painting; the method used is another indication - as can be gleaned from what follows. Another article (Leroi 1882, p. 171) also contains a reproduction of the entire painting, based on a drawing by Heyerdahl.
- 16 Remarkably, a drawing by Ernest Quost that later ended up in Theo's collection also served as the basis for the reproduction of a Salon painting in *La Presse* in 1886. See the [entry](#) on *Garden with Hollyhocks* and *The New Season*.
- 17 With thanks to Nico Lingbeek, paper conservator Van Gogh Museum, 3 December 2020.
- 18 Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, 22 June 1882 [↗ \[239\]](#): 'Ik kan mij best begrijpen dat Heyerdahl in zijn schik is met zoo'n beoening.'
- 19 Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, 2 April 1881 [↗ \[164\]](#) and Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, 1 May 1882 [↗ \[222\]](#): 'hij een zoo veelzijdig ontwikkeld mensch schijnt te wezen' and 'iemand die zich veel moeite geeft om "verhoudingen voor teekening" te zoeken'.
- 20 Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, 1 and 2 June 1882 [↗ \[234, incl. n. 11\]](#). Theo had two variants of *Sorrow* that he could have shown to Heyerdahl, one of the first three that Vincent had made and a later version; both versions are unknown. See also letters [↗ \[222\]](#) and [↗ \[248\]](#).
- 21 Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, 16 or 17 November 1882 [↗ \[283, incl. n. 4\]](#). The impression given to Heyerdahl is unknown.
- 22 Goupil Stock Book 10, [↗ page 165](#), row 2, stock no. 1371, 6 May 1881, and Goupil Stock Book 10, [↗ page 175](#), row 6, stock no. 15525, 29 June 1881, ; see also Andreas Aubert, 'Fra Kunstforeningen', *Morgenbladet*, 4 December 1881, p. 1: 'This last painting must also go there (to art dealer Goupil), just as an earlier, smaller version of the same motif.' ('Også dette sidste Billede skal gaa did (til kunsthandleren Goupil), ligesom allerede en tidligere Udgave i mindre Maalestok af det samme Motiv.')
- One of the works sold by Goupil is probably the 1881 version in the collection of the Nasjonalmuseet. The identity of the other work is unclear. I am indebted to Hans-Martin Flaatten for this information.

- 23 Theo van Gogh, letter to Lies van Gogh, 13 October 1885 (Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), inv. no. b903V1962): 'Wat het succes aan gaat, zal het hem mogelijk gaan als Heijerdahl, geapprécieerd door enkelen, maar niet begrepen door het grote publiek.'
- 24 In 1905, Heyerdahl, together with fellow Norwegians Christian Krohg, Frits Thaulow and Erik Werenskiold, visited the 21st exhibition of the Société des artistes indépendants, which featured a retrospective show of forty-five works by Van Gogh. The exhibition also included eight works by Heyerdahl himself, mostly views of Montmartre (*Société des artistes indépendants: catalogue de la 21me exposition, Paris 1905*). Heyerdahl applauded Van Gogh's decorative style and perspective, and emphatically stated that he found Van Gogh's work 'the best paintings of the exhibition' ('de beste billederer paa udstillingen') (Christian Krohg, 1905, quoted in Aslaksby 1981, pp. 28–29). At the end of his life, Heyerdahl also traded in art, sometimes in collaboration with the art merchant P. H. Matthiesen. The authenticity of Heyerdahl's stock in trade was frequently doubted, however. He bought a number of supposed Van Goghs that he sold on for a good price: 'Yesterday morning I bought the third and largest Van Gogh for a relatively quite high price – washed it yesterday and last night – this morning I sold it with an exceptionally good profit.' ('Igaar formiddag kjøbte jeg noksaa relativt dyrt den tredie og største Van Gogh – vadsket den igaar og inat – i Formiddag solgte jeg den med enestaaede god Avance.') Hans Heyerdahl to P. H. Matthiessen, probably spring 1913, quoted in Aslaksby 2000, pp. 62–63, 66 n. 68, letter no. 9, Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo. With regard to the auction of Heyerdahl's estate, a critic later wrote: 'I will not vouch for the authenticity of the two Van Goghs that are on display, I'd rather put my head on the block that Van Gogh was never near the 10 pictures that are now for sale under his name.' ('Jeg vil ikke indestaa for egtheten av de to van Gogher, som er utstillet, jeg vilde snarere lægge mit hoved paa blokken paa, at Van Gogh aldri har været i nærheten av de 10 billeder, som nu falbys under hans navn.') Jappe Nilssen, 'Auktion over Hans Heyerdahl Malerier', *Dagbladet*, 28 January 1915, p. 1, quoted in Aslaksby 2000, pp. 149, 152, 159–60 n. 68. Heyerdahl's surviving relatives still have a few alleged Van Goghs in the collection, but it is unclear at present whether these works are authentic. With thanks to Trond E. Aslaksby and Hans-Martin Flaatten, Heyerdahl biographers, October 2020