



Study of a Martinican Woman, 1887

Works Collected by Theo and Vincent van Gogh

# Study of a Martinican Woman

## Paul Gauguin

In a letter written not long after his arrival in Martinique on 11 June 1887, Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) told his friend and fellow artist Emile Schuffenecker (1851–1934) that, artistically speaking, he was most captivated by the Black *porteuses* he saw on the island. <sup>01</sup> These women carried on their heads large baskets of sugar cane and other produce from the plantations to the markets and the harbour of Saint-Pierre, then the capital of the French colony. Gauguin soon set to work and made many sketches of the *porteuses* ‘in order to absorb their character’. <sup>02</sup> He intended, after this exploratory phase, to ‘make them pose’ for more detailed studies. <sup>03</sup> This resulted in three large chalk drawings made from life, one of which is *Study of a Martinican Woman*. The other two drawings are *Martinican Women* (fig. 1) and *Study of Martinican Women* (fig. 2) .

Gauguin used these three studies for two paintings: the figure painting *The Mango Trees, Martinique* is based on *Martinican Women*, while the painting *On the Banks of the River, Martinique* is composed of elements from *Study of Martinican Women* (from which Gauguin took the body, albeit in reverse) and *Study of a Martinican Woman* (from which he took the head and headdress, also in reverse). Both paintings became the property of Theo and Vincent van Gogh at the end of 1887.



Paul Gauguin, *Martinican Women*, 1887, pencil, black and coloured chalk on paper, 49 × 63.5 cm, private collection

## Material and technique

Like the other two large studies, *Study of a Martinican Woman* was drawn on high-quality laid paper of the type known as 'Lalanne', produced by the firm Berville.<sup>04</sup> Gauguin had already used this paper the previous year in Pont-Aven. He had probably bought a large sketchbook with sheets that could be torn out, which he took along to Martinique.<sup>05</sup> The chain lines in the paper are clearly visible because Gauguin drew on the sieve side of the sheet. He did not use the smoother side, which was actually intended for drawing.<sup>06</sup> The lines are particularly evident where the chalk was applied thickly, such as on the model's wrist. The edges of the sheet were deliberately torn to make them look ragged. This was done after the drawing was finished (possibly even after Gauguin's departure from Martinique), as is apparent from the chalk that runs to the bottom and sides of the sheet. Gauguin did this with other drawings too, such as his *Study for the painting Breton Girls Dancing, Pont-Aven (recto), Sketch of a Flower Still Life (verso)*. In his eyes, their irregularly torn edges gave them an archaic, 'primitive' appearance.<sup>07</sup>

Gauguin first laid in the contours of the head, headdress, body and arm with a thick piece of black chalk, which he applied very lightly. These exploratory lines are clearly visible in the places where Gauguin did not accentuate the contours, such as at the left edge of the headdress. At this early stage he also indicated a few shaded passages in black, as seen in the headdress and on the back. He then used black chalk to accentuate heavily most of the contour lines – those of the arm in particular. After applying these lines, Gauguin put on the colour, working precisely and with discipline up to the lines. Only in a few places does the colour impinge on the contour lines; at the end of the sleeve, for example, a bit of light blue chalk overlaps the black.<sup>08</sup> When painting Gauguin worked in the same way, laying in the contour lines before applying the colour.

The model is wearing a traditional Martinican dress known as a *douillette*, worn by many Black Martinican women. Over her dress, she seems to be wearing a wide collar. Examination of this collar under a magnifying glass reveals a smooth and shiny surface that differs from the matte surface of the rest of the sheet. On this part Gauguin probably applied a fluid medium, such as a fixative or coloured ink, which later faded. This is also indicated by the traces of dripped medium to the left of the model's raised arm. The medium Gauguin applied probably did not produce the desired effect, because he later coloured in the area with chalk. The light pink chalk visible in the collar, as well as in other parts of the dress and headdress, appears to have faded.<sup>09</sup>

## A type rather than an individual

Of the larger drawings from models that Gauguin made in both Martinique and Brittany, *Study of a Martinican Woman* is one of the few that depict a woman from the shoulders up. Gauguin's other drawings focus on the pose of the body. They display the models either seated or standing, in full or three-quarter length (fig. 3) . Even so, the *Study of a Martinican Woman* cannot be seen as a portrait. The cursory rendering of the facial features and the thickness of the lines prevent the figure in this drawing from being seen as an individual. Instead, Gauguin shows us a stereotype of a Martinican woman, with her characteristic dress and headdress of Madras cotton both depicted with a great eye for detail. In a letter to Schuffenecker, Gauguin praised the decorative quality of the 'coloured clothes' of the women of Martinique.<sup>10</sup> As already shown by the work he produced in Pont-Aven, Gauguin paid close attention to local dress.

By depicting his model as a type rather than an individual, Gauguin complied – whether or not he was aware of it – with the way Martinican women were depicted in nineteenth-century colonial photography. Just as in Gauguin's drawings, the Black women of Martinique were often photographed with their standard attributes – headdress and douillette – so that they were recognizable as Martinicans.<sup>11</sup> Many photos of women were printed as postcards with inscriptions such as *Martinique – Type et Costume Créole* (fig. 4) . The woman in this photograph was presented as typical of the female population of Martinique. Such photos served to praise Martinique to a white, male, mainly European public as a possible destination on a distant journey or even a place to which one might emigrate.<sup>12</sup>

## The fruit of Martinique

In addition to their colourful costumes, fruit often featured prominently in portrayals of Martinican women (fig. 5) . This might have been a reference to the fertility of the island. Yet such attributes could also symbolize temptation, availability and the fertility of the woman herself.<sup>13</sup> In this drawing Gauguin toyed with this symbolism, too, by having his model hold a mango close to her head. In a letter to his wife, Mette, Gauguin alluded to the connection between temptation and fruit, telling her that he had narrowly escaped eating a bewitched fruit that had been offered to him by a young Martinican woman. He had been saved from eating it by a bystander who told him that the woman in question had 'crushed it on her chest and afterwards you would surely be dealt with at her discretion'.<sup>14</sup> Gauguin's letter fits in with the then prevailing European conceptions about the seductiveness and even the danger of the *Black women of Martinique*.<sup>15</sup> The image presented in *Study of a Martinican Woman* evokes this remarkable passage from Gauguin's letter very well indeed.

## Martinique versus Tahiti

Five years later, when Gauguin was in Tahiti, he again used the mango as a symbol of fertility and availability in two portraits of Tehamana, his thirteen-year-old vahine (meaning ‘woman’ or ‘wife’ in Tahitian): *Vahine no te vi (Woman of the Mango)* (fig. 6) and *Merahi metua no Tehamana (Tehamana Has Many Parents or The Ancestors of Tehamana)* (fig. 7). In the latter work, the fruit is not so prominent, but in *Vahine no te vi* the model holds up a mango, just as in *Study of a Martinican Woman*. This suggests that in Tahiti, Gauguin reverted to symbolism he had already explored in Martinique.



Paul Gauguin, *Vahine no te vi (Woman of the Mango)*, 1892, oil on canvas, 73 × 45.1 cm, Baltimore Museum of Art. The Cone Collection, formed by Dr. Claribel Cone and Miss Etta Cone of Baltimore, Maryland. Photo: Mitro Hood

Nevertheless, *Study of a Martinican Woman* differs in important respects from the two Tahitian portraits. To begin with, the Tahitian paintings are more ambitious and they portray to a certain extent specific individuals, in contrast to the more generic woman in the Martinican drawing. Even though Gauguin presented Tehamana as representative of her culture as a whole, he did not anonymize her.<sup>16</sup> In this context the mango not only says something about the fertility of the island of Tahiti but also alludes to her personal availability, no matter how improper Gauguin’s allusion might seem from our present-day perspective.

The personal dimension is less evident in the Martinican drawing, where there is a greater distance between the artist and the individual depicted. Gauguin’s understanding of Martinique was superficial: owing to his short stay there, he did not become acquainted with the local inhabitants as he did in Tahiti. *Study of a Martinican Woman* shows that Gauguin, in exploring the island and its population, was in search of a certain ‘type’, which was in keeping with the colonial approach and its attendant pictorial tradition.

## Fifty francs from Theo van Gogh

When Gauguin left for Pont-Aven in late January 1888, roughly three months after his return from Martinique, he took along the drawing *Study of a Martinican Woman*. In June of that year he received a gift of 50 francs from Theo van Gogh (1857-1891), who had been acting as his dealer since December 1887.<sup>17</sup> In return he gave Theo *Study of a Martinican Woman* and *Study for the painting Breton Girls Dancing, Pont-Aven*. Gauguin noted in his sketchbook that Theo van Gogh had received drawings (dessins) in return for the 50 francs, without specifying the works in question.<sup>18</sup> The line of reasoning presented below explains why this 'exchange' must have involved the drawings mentioned above and not any of the other three drawings by Gauguin in the collection of the Van Gogh brothers.<sup>19</sup>

In August 1888, Gauguin gave the two drawings intended for Theo van Gogh to Emile Bernard's mother, who was visiting her son in Pont-Aven and was supposed to give the drawings to Theo when she returned to Paris.<sup>20</sup> *Study of a Martinican Woman* and *Study for the painting Breton Girls Dancing, Pont-Aven* are the only Gauguin drawings in the collection of Theo and Vincent van Gogh that were not made or used as preparatory drawings in Arles, where Gauguin spent ten weeks with Van Gogh after his stay in Pont-Aven. The other Gauguin drawings the brothers obtained were all left behind in Arles by the artist.<sup>21</sup> So it stands to reason that these are the only drawings that could have been given to Bernard's mother in Pont-Aven.

## A well-considered present

Gauguin no doubt chose *Study of a Martinican Woman* for Theo because the Van Gogh brothers had shown great appreciation for his Martinican work. After all, they had already acquired two Martinican paintings: *The Mango Trees, Martinique* and *On the Banks of the River, Martinique*. Moreover, Gauguin might have thought that *Study of a Martinican Woman* would interest the brothers because it had served as a preparatory study for *On the Banks of the River, Martinique*. Combined with *Study for the painting Breton Girls Dancing, Pont-Aven*, these drawings, chosen by Gauguin, can be seen as a set of souvenirs of Martinique and Pont-Aven, the remote regions where he had worked. In this way Theo was given, in these two drawings, an overview of Gauguin's recent sojourns and his artistic activities in those places.

Remarkably, Gauguin intentionally tore the edges of the two drawings he chose for Theo. He probably did this to underscore his 'primitive' disposition as an artist<sup>23</sup> - an image he increasingly promoted after his return from Martinique.<sup>24</sup> Deliberately marring drawings of models from 'primitive' places must have been an experiment that enabled Gauguin to investigate the extent to which both the content and the appearance of a sheet reflected on him as an artist. It was important to him that Theo - who was, after all, his dealer, and in touch with potential clients - understood how he wished to fashion his image.

Joost van der Hoeven  
March 2023

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**Object details**

Study of a Martinican Woman

**Artist**

Paul Gauguin (1848 - 1903)

**Date**

1887

**Medium**

coloured chalk with traces of ink or fixative on laid paper

**Dimensions**

35.8 cm x 27 cm

**Inscriptions**

P. Gauguin

**Inventory Number**

d0664V1962

**Credits**

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



Study of a Martinican Woman

Front & Back



### Provenance

#### Study of a Martinican Woman

Handed over by the artist, Pont-Aven to H elo ise Bernard-Bodin to deliver to Theo van Gogh, Paris in return for a gift of FRF 50; delivered by H elo ise Bernard-Bodin to Theo van Gogh, probably early December 1888; 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

### Study of a Martinican Woman

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Moderne Kunst Kring: Ouwrages de peinture, sculpture, dessin, gravure: exposée au Musée Municipal Suasso*, 6 October-7 November 1912, no. 17, *Tête de négresse (dessin)*

Antwerp, Feestzaal Meir, *L'art contemporain*, 29 April-28 May 1922, no. 276, *Vrouwenhoofd (Martinique) gekleurd krijt / Têtes de femme (Martinique) pastel*

The Hague, Museum Mesdag, *Zonder titel [Presentatie in het museum]*, April-May 1926, *Negerin*

Basel, Kunsthalle Basel, *Paul Gauguin 1848-1903*, July-August 1928, no. 160, *Negerin, La Martinique*

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Vincent van Gogh en zijn tijdgenooten*, 6 September-2 November 1930, no. 167, *Negerin*

Basel, Kunstmuseum Basel, *Ausstellung Paul Gauguin zum 100. Geburtsjahr*, 26 November 1949-29 January 1950, no. 107, *Kopf einer Negerin*

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. 27, *De negerin*

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. 27, *De negerin*

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. 27, *De negerin*

Antwerp, Zaal Comité voor Artistieke Werking, *Vincent van Gogh*, 7 May-19 June 1955, no. 387, *De negerin*

Palm Beach (Florida), Society of the Four Arts, *Paul Gauguin 1848-1903*, 4 February-4 March 1956, no. 27, *The Negress*

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, 29 January-29 February 1960, no. 43, *De negerin*

Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, 12 March-29 May 1960, no. 43, *De negerin*

Paris, Institut Néerlandais, *Les amis de Van Gogh*, 9 November-17 December 1960, no. 43, *La négresse*

Stockholm, Nationalmuseum (Stockholm), *Gauguin i Söderhavet*, 5 March-10 May 1970, no. 5, *Negress*

Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, *Paul Gauguin: Paris, 1889*, 4 October 2009-18 January 2010, no. 52, *Head of a Woman, Martinique*

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, *Paul Gauguin. De doorbraak naar moderniteit*, 19 February-6 June 2010, no. 52, *Kop van een negermeisje (Tête de femme, Martinique)*

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, *Gauguin en Laval op Martinique*, 5 October 2018-13 January 2019, no. 77, *Hoofd van een vrouw uit Martinique*

Paris, Musée d'Orsay, *Le Modèle noir, de Géricault à Matisse*, 26 March-21 July 2019, no. 189, *Tête de femme, Martinique*



## Literature

### Study of a Martinican Woman

- Äke Meyerson, 'Van Gogh and the School of Pont-Aven', *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 15 (1946), p. 142 n. 1; TS 536 c
- Jean Leymarie, *Paul Gauguin: Watercolours, Pastels and Drawings in Colour*, London 1961, no. 5, p. 12; BVG01637
- Willem Sandberg and Hans Ludwig Cohn Jaffé, *Kunst van het heden in het Stedelijk*, Amsterdam 1961, no. 389; s.p. T01180
- Georges Wildenstein, *Gauguin, I: catalogue*, Paris 1964, no. 299, pp. 110-11; BVG21532 I
- Mette Bodelsen, *Gauguin's Ceramics: A Study in the Development of His Art*, London & Copenhagen 1964, pp. 72, 166-67; BVG05145
- Ronald Pickvance, *The Drawings of Gauguin*, London 1970, p. 23; BVG00076
- Bengt Danielsson *et al.* (eds.), *Gauguin i Söderhavet*, exh. cat., Stockholm (Etnografiska Museet / Nationalmuseum) 1970, no. 5, p. 82; BVG01644
- John Rewald, 'Theo van Gogh, Goupil and the Impressionists', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 81 (January-February 1973), pp. 35, 63 n. 81; TS 1119
- Karen Kristine Rechnitzer Pope, 'Gauguin and Martinique', diss., University of Texas 1981, no. 25, pp. xiv, 312; BVG04859
- Evert van Uitert and Michael Hoyle (eds.), *The Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 1987, no. 2.96, p. 382; BVG08057
- Jean Loize, *Comment le peintre Paul Gauguin fit une merveilleuse découverte de la Martinique: ses tableaux, dessins de 1887, estampes, etc.: comment ce séjour écourté, avec Charles Laval, fera épanouir tout son art jusqu'au Pacifique*, Le Carbet 1990, pp. 70-71; BVG24770

- Ronald de Leeuw, *The Van Gogh Museum: Paintings and Pastels*, Zwolle 1994, pp. 124-25; BVG14126
- Douglas W. Druick *et al.* (eds.), *Odilon Redon, 1840-1916*, exh. cat., Chicago (The Art Institute of Chicago) / Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum) / London (Royal Academy of Arts), Chicago 1994, p. 172; BVG11025 a
- Daniel Wildenstein, Sylvie Crussard and Martine Heudron, *Gauguin: premier itinéraire d'un sauvage: catalogue de l'œuvre peint (1873-1888)*, 2 vols., Milan 2001, vol. 2, p. 343. Referred to as 'Tête de Martiniquaise'; BVG16564 II
- Heather Lemonedes, Belinda Thomson and Agnieszka Juszcak, *Paul Gauguin: The Breakthrough into Modernity*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum) / Cleveland (Cleveland Museum of Art), Ostfildern 2009, no. 52, pp. 78, 80, 238; BVG20913
- June Hargrove, *Gauguin*, Paris 2017, p. 87; BVG24803
- Maite van Dijk and Joost van der Hoeven (eds.), *Gauguin and Laval in Martinique*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum), Bussum 2018, pp. 94, 104-5, 155, 171; BVG25201
- Isabelle Bardon *et al.*, *Le modèle noir, de Géricault à Matisse*, exh. cat., Paris (Musée d'Orsay) 2019, no. 189, pp. 248-49; BVG25403

# Figures



**Fig.1**

Paul Gauguin, *Martinican Women*, 1887, pencil, black and coloured chalk on paper, 49 × 63.5 cm, private collection



**Fig. 2**

Paul Gauguin, *Study of Martinican Women*, 1887, pencil, black chalk and pastel on paper, 41.5 × 53.2 cm, private collection



**Fig. 3**

Paul Gauguin, *Breton Woman*, 1886, black chalk and pastel on paper, 48 × 32 cm, The Burrell Collection, Glasgow.  
Photo: © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection





**Fig. 4**  
*Martinique - Type et Costume Créole*, postcard, n.d, Musée régional d'histoire et d'ethnographie de Martinique, Fort-de-France, Benoit-Jeannette Collection



**Fig. 5**  
*Martinique*, postcard, n.d, Musée régional d'histoire et d'ethnographie de Martinique, Fort-de-France, Benoit-Jeannette Collection



Fig. 6

Paul Gauguin, *Vahine no te vi* (*Woman of the Mango*), 1892, oil on canvas, 73 × 45.1 cm, Baltimore Museum of Art. The Cone Collection, formed by Dr. Claribel Cone and Miss Etta Cone of Baltimore, Maryland. Photo: Mitro Hood



Fig. 7

Paul Gauguin, *Merahi metua no Tehamana* (*Tehamana has Many Parents or The Ancestors of Tehamana*), 1893, oil on canvas, 75 × 53 cm, The Art Institute of Chicago, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Deering McCormick.

## Footnotes

- 01 Paul Gauguin, letter to Emile Schuffenecker, beginning of July 1887, in Victor Merlhès (ed.), *Paul Gauguin et Vincent van Gogh, 1887-1888: lettres retrouvées, sources ignorées*, Taravao 1989, pp. 39-42: 'What delights me the most are the figures and every day there is a constant coming and going of black women, dressed up in coloured clothes, with graceful movements of infinite variety.' ('Ce qui me sourit le plus ce sont les figures et chaque jour c'est un va et vient continuel de négresses accoutrées d'oripeaux de couleur avec des mouvements gracieux varies à l'infini.')
- 02 Ibid.: 'At the moment I'm limiting myself to making sketch after sketch, in order to absorb their character, and then I will make them pose.' ('Actuellement je me borne à faire croquis sur croquis afin de me pénétrer de leur caractère et ensuite je les ferai poser.')
- 03 Ibid.
- 04 The other Martinican sheets have a 'Lalanne' watermark. This sheet was cut from a larger one, the remainder of which probably bore the watermark.
- 05 Harriet Stratis, 'Drawing with Purpose: The Graphic Production of Gauguin and Laval in Martinique', in Joost van der Hoeven and Maite van Dijk (eds.), *Van Gogh Museum Studies 3: Gauguin and Laval in Martinique*, forthcoming.
- 06 With thanks to Nico Lingbeek, paper conservator Van Gogh Museum, 10 November 2022.
- 07 See *Study for the painting Breton Girls Dancing, Pont-Aven (recto), Sketch of a Flower Still Life (verso)* for a more detailed discussion of this.
- 08 With thanks to Nico Lingbeek, paper conservator Van Gogh Museum, 10 November 2022.
- 09 Ibid.
- 10 See n. 1.
- 11 Rémi Poindexter, 'Images of Martinique in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in Van der Hoeven and Van Dijk (eds.), forthcoming.
- 12 Ian Gregory Strachan, *Paradise and Plantation: Tourism and Culture in the Anglophone Caribbean*, Charlottesville, VA 2002, pp. 5-6.
- 13 Jacqueline Couti, *Dangerous Creole Liaisons: Sexuality and Nationalism in French Caribbean Discourses from 1806 to 1897*, Liverpool 2016, p. 133.

- 14 Paul Gauguin, letter to Mette Gauguin, Saint-Pierre, 20 June 1887, in Victor Merlhès (ed.), *Correspondance de Paul Gauguin: documents témoignages: tome premier, 1873-1888*, Paris 1984, no. 127: 'I can promise you that here a white man has difficulties keeping his clothes intact, because Potiphar wives are not lacking here. Almost all are of a colour ranging from ebony to the matte white of the black race, and they go so far as to bewitch the fruit they give you in order to seduce you. The day before yesterday a young Negress of 16 (indeed pretty) had just offered me a guava, split open and flattened at the top. I was going to eat it once the young girl had left, when a sallow lawyer who was there took the fruit out of my hands and threw it away: You are a European, sir, and do not know this place, he said. One mustn't eat a fruit without knowing its provenance. This fruit, for example, has a spell; the Negress has crushed it on her chest and afterwards you would surely be dealt with at her discretion. I thought this an awful joke.' ('Je te promets qu'ici un blanc a du mal à conserver sa robe intacte car les dames Putiphar ne manquent pas. Presque toutes sont de couleur depuis l'ébène jusqu'au blanc mat de race noire et elles vont jusqu'à opérer des charmes sur des fruits qu'elles vous donnent pour vous enlacer - Avant-hier une jeune négresse de 16 ans (ma foi jolie) vient m'offrir une goyave fendue et pressée sur le bout. J'allais la manger une fois la jeune fille partie lorsqu'un avocat jaunâtre qui se trouvait là me prend le fruit des mains et le jette: Vous êtes Européen monsieur et ne connaissez pas le pays me dit-il. Il ne faut pas manger un fruit sans connaître la provenance. Ainsi ce fruit a un sort; la négresse l'a écrasé sur sa poitrine et surement vous seriez à sa discrétion après - Je croyais une atroce plaisanterie.')
- 15 Couti 2016, pp. 123-36.
- 16 Elizabeth Childs, 'Gauguin's Portraiture in Tahiti: Likeness, Myth and Cultural Identity', in Cornelia Homburg and Christopher Riopelle, *Gauguin Portraits*, exh. cat., London (National Gallery) 2019, pp. 148-53.
- 17 Paul Gauguin, letter to Theo van Gogh, c. 15 June 1888, in Douglas Cooper (ed.), *Paul Gauguin: 45 lettres à Vincent, Théo et Jo van Gogh: collection Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam, The Hague & Lausanne 1983, no. 3: 'I thank you for sending 50 francs and I'm embarrassed to reply to this and I can only wait to offer you something. When I'm back, you may choose for yourself.' ('Je vous remercie de votre envoi de 50f et suis embarrassé pour y répondre et je ne puis qu'attendre pour vous offrir quelque chose. Quand je serai de retour vous choisirez vous-même.') Theo was never able to choose for himself, so Gauguin chose for him.  
See the 'Carnet Huyghe', p. 225, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. The 'Carnet Huyghe' is the sketchbook that Paul Gauguin had with him when he was staying with Van Gogh in Arles. The facsimile edition published by René Huyghe in 1952 is titled *Le Carnet de Paul Gauguin*.
- 18 See the 'Carnet Huyghe', p. 225, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. The 'Carnet Huyghe' is the sketchbook that Paul Gauguin had with him when he was staying with Van Gogh in Arles. The facsimile edition published by René Huyghe in 1952 is titled *Le Carnet de Paul Gauguin*.
- 19 See n. 22 for the other three drawings.

- 20 A misunderstanding had arisen because Bernard's mother thought that the drawings had been given to her as a present. See Paul Gauguin, letter to Emile Bernard, third or fourth week of November 1888, in Merlhès 1984, no. 182: 'I'm really embarrassed to reply regarding the two drawings that your mother has been keeping. They are not mine but belong to Van Gogh, who sent me 50 francs this summer for a drawing. They have to be handed over to him. I don't understand how your mother could have interpreted as a present the task with which she was entrusted.' ('Je suis bien embarrassé de vous répondre pour les deux dessins que votre mère a conservés [sic]. Ils ne sont pas à moi mais sont à Van Gogh qui m'avait envoyé 50f cet été pour un dessin. Ils sont donc à lui remettre. Je ne comprends pas que votre mère ait pu interpréter dans le sens d'un cadeau la commission dont elle s'était chargée.')
- 21 The drawings that Gauguin made in Arles and left behind with Van Gogh are Study with Portraits of Camille Roulin and Portrait of Madame Ginoux (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco), both drawn from life. Gauguin also left behind Study of a Woman Seen from the Back. Even though Gauguin had made this drawing in Pont-Aven, he must have had it with him in Arles, since he used it for the painting *In the Full Heat* (*En pleine chaleur*) (1888, private collection), which can be dated with certainty to his Arles period.
- 22 See the entry for *On the Banks of the River, Martinique*.
- 23 Vojtěch Jirat-Wasiutyński, 'Decorative Fragments: Paul Gauguin's Presentation of His Own Drawings', in Nancy Bell (ed.), *Historic Framing and Presentation of Watercolours, Drawings and Prints*, Worcester 1997, p. 54. See also the entry for *Study for the painting Breton Girls Dancing, Pont-Aven (recto), Sketch of a Flower Still Life (verso)*.
- 24 Thus Gauguin later wrote to Theo: 'You know that I am of Indian [and] Incan descent, and everything I make is affected by that.' ('Vous savez que j'ai un fond de naissance Indien, Incas, et tout ce que je fais s'en ressent.') Paul Gauguin, letter to Theo van Gogh, 20 or 21 November 1889, in Cooper (ed.) 1983, no. 22.