

Portrait of Vincent van Gogh, 1887

Works Collected by Theo and Vincent van Gogh

Portrait of Vincent van Gogh

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

This vibrant, colourful pastel portrait by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901) depicts his friend Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) seated at a table with a glass of absinthe in front of him. According to their mutual friend Emile Bernard (1868–1941), the portrait session must have taken place at Le Tambourin, an establishment they frequented in Montmartre.⁰¹ Although Toulouse-Lautrec did not date the work, it is reasonable to assume that it originated in the first half of 1887.⁰² As it is one of the very few portraits made of Van Gogh, this lively work is quite exceptional.⁰³ And all the more so since it seems to be the only highly detailed pastel portrait Toulouse-Lautrec ever created.⁰⁴

Friendship

There is little concrete evidence of a friendship between Toulouse-Lautrec and Van Gogh aside from this portrait drawing and a letter of condolence on Van Gogh's death.⁰⁵ No correspondence has survived, and Toulouse-Lautrec, who like Van Gogh died at a young age, did not write personal memoirs.⁰⁶ However, through testimonies and other leads, a reasonably clear picture of their relationship can be pieced together. The two artists first crossed paths at the *atelier libre* ('free studio') of Fernand Cormon (1845-1924) in March 1886, shortly after Van Gogh had arrived in Paris in late February. There, Toulouse-Lautrec, along with fellow students Bernard and Louis Anquetin (1861-1932), formed a closely knit trio known for their adversarial behaviour.⁰⁷ Defying their teacher's academic principles under the influence of impressionism, these so-called 'intransigents' experimented with looser brushwork and a brighter palette, especially outside their classes.⁰⁸ Van Gogh, who stood out due to his older age, Dutch heritage and idiosyncratic nature, felt some kinship with the rebellious group. In his memoirs, Bernard described how Van Gogh 'worked tirelessly in the mornings after the nude model, with the students', and in the afternoons drew plaster copies in an almost empty studio, 'where there was only himself, Toulouse-Lautrec, Anquetin and me'.⁰⁹ Indeed, drawn studies from that time reveal that Toulouse-Lautrec and Van Gogh studied the same plaster casts.¹⁰ It was not until the autumn of 1886, sometime after Van Gogh had left the atelier in early summer, that the bond between him and the three younger artists deepened. Bernard and Van Gogh, in particular, became close.¹¹ An important meeting place for the artists was Le Mirliton, the cabaret of Toulouse-Lautrec's good friend the *chansonnier* Aristide Bruant. Toulouse-Lautrec regularly frequented the establishment in the company of Anquetin and Bernard, and it seems only natural that Van Gogh occasionally joined them.¹² In addition, according to the artist and model Suzanne Valadon (1865-1938), Van Gogh joined the weekly gatherings in Toulouse-Lautrec's studio, located around the corner from the apartment Vincent shared with his brother, Theo van Gogh (1857-1891).¹³

The fact that Toulouse-Lautrec and Van Gogh interacted with regularity is also evident in the stylistic affinities found in some of their works from early 1887. Both artists employed a similar painterly touch, characterized by short, parallel strokes, and simultaneously explored the use of thinned oil paint (*peinture à l'essence*), a technique with a matting effect that Van Gogh eventually abandoned but which would become Toulouse-Lautrec's trademark.¹⁴ Moreover, they admired the same contemporary artists, including the realist Jean-François Raffaëlli (1850-1924) and the impressionist Edgar Degas (1834-1917), and shared a fondness for prints and illustrations, such as those by the caricaturist Honoré Daumier (1808-1879).¹⁵

However, when it came to their backgrounds and characters, these two artists certainly differed. Toulouse-Lautrec was an arch aristocrat, endowed with a healthy dose of ironic humour, whereas Van Gogh, the elder by eleven years, grew up in a middle-class Brabant family and took a far more serious approach to life. Thadée Natanson (1868-1951), a confidant of Toulouse-Lautrec and editor of the avant-garde magazine *La Revue blanche*, noted that these differences in no way hindered their friendship. Van Gogh saw in Toulouse-Lautrec an infectious energy and love for the craft, while Toulouse-Lautrec was charmed by Van Gogh's simplicity and enjoyed listening to his stories about art, Holland, and his peregrinations.¹⁶ Still, it remains a matter of debate whether their friendship was truly close. Their friend and Cormon confrère Archibald Standish Hartrick (1864-1950), for instance, could not recall ever seeing the two together.¹⁷

The portrait in the café

Toulouse-Lautrec was adept at choosing a setting that reflected the personality of his model.¹⁸ In the case of Van Gogh, it seems he found the café to be a fitting backdrop for his friend. The choice is not surprising considering that in Paris Van Gogh had developed a routine of hastening to a café at the end of his workday during the so-called *heure verte*, or ‘green hour’, to imbibe one or more glasses of absinthe.¹⁹ Van Gogh himself confessed that when he left Paris for Arles in the winter of 1888 he was ‘almost an alcoholic’.²⁰ Paul Signac (1863–1935) recalled that when he visited his friend in the south, ‘the absinthes and brandies would follow each other in quick succession.’²¹ During the period when Toulouse-Lautrec depicted him, Van Gogh also portrayed himself twice in a café with a glass of liquor (fig. 1) .²² He even devoted an entire canvas exclusively to his beloved green elixir, seen from the drinker’s perspective: ↗ *Café Table with Absinthe* (1887, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam).



Vincent van Gogh, *Self-Portrait with a Glass*, January 1887, oil on canvas, 61.1 × 50.1 cm, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

The subject of alcohol consumption was of particular artistic interest to both painters. Toulouse-Lautrec, who himself suffered from alcoholism, had been exploring the naturalistic theme of the solitary drinker for some time in his art, in particular the stereotypical destitute woman whose drinking led to a life of rack and ruin (fig. 2) . His role models, Degas, Raffaëlli and Jean-Louis Forain (1852–1931), who had already frequently depicted the excessive drinking of the Parisian underclass in their paintings and prints, will have inspired him to do so (fig. 3) . Toulouse-Lautrec’s portrait of his friend Van Gogh appears to fit seamlessly into this tradition.

Toulouse-Lautrec often favoured a side view when portraying his models, a perspective he also applied in his depiction of his friend.²⁴ Van Gogh is pictured with a straight back and raised head, sitting at a table and leaning on his forearms, his gaze fixed on something or someone outside the picture plane. The serious expression on his face along with his distinctive nose and ruddy beard makes him instantly recognizable as Van Gogh. These same external features are seen in his numerous self-portraits, and they align with the description provided by his associate Hartrick: 'Van Gogh was a rather weedy little man, with pinched features, red hair and beard, and a light blue eye.' However, Toulouse-Lautrec's portrait went beyond being a convincing portrayal of his friend's appearance. He managed to capture the essence of Van Gogh's character while also conveying his personal vision of him. This will no doubt have been due to the fact that he knew him well. Van Gogh's overall powerful demeanour exhibits the alertness and intensity that typified him as a person.²⁵ Toulouse-Lautrec almost exclusively portrayed people from his immediate surroundings. This is precisely why, according to his contemporary the art expert Théodore Duret (1838-1927), 'he was able to capture them so well and provide not a mundane, but a true and superior likeness.'²⁶

Pastel crayon

Toulouse-Lautrec built up the colourful portrait with several layers of pastel crayon, consisting of numerous superimposed lines varying in length, shape and direction. As a base, he used prepared paper stretched on sturdy cardboard.²⁷ According to the art critic Gustave Coquiote (1865–1926), Lautrec began his portraits ‘in the middle of the figure, either at an ear, or at the nose. From there, he multiplied his hatching towards the figure, while seeking its distinctive hallmark.’²⁸ He drew Van Gogh’s head with finesse and a rich array of bright and soft hues, ranging from green to yellow and blue to orange. A pale pink bathes his forehead, nose and cheekbone. Around the head, by contrast, the composition is characterized by a more sketchy, coarse interplay of lines dominated by ochre yellow and complementary blue tones. Employing various stylistic techniques, Toulouse-Lautrec deftly made Van Gogh’s overall figure stand out from its surroundings. For instance, he accentuated contours in various places, such as with brown along his back and collar. He added emphasis along Van Gogh’s facial profile by contrasting the skin and reddish beard hair with the darker purple-blue of the bar top and the ochre yellow of the interior. A small area of shadow next to Van Gogh’s forehead also created a convincing contrast. To reinforce this overall effect, Toulouse-Lautrec framed Van Gogh’s figure with the decorative relief of the front of the bar (the only passage for which he used the broad side of the crayon) and the middle panel of the mirror. Van Gogh thus forms the true anchor point of the composition, drawing all attention.

Although pastel crayons lend themselves to painterly drawing and evenly filling surfaces, in this drawing the line predominates. Possibly inspired by Degas, who juxtaposed numerous complementary and contrasting lines in his pastels, Toulouse-Lautrec did not rub out the chalk with a stump or finger at any point and let the surface of the paper show through the entire composition.²⁹

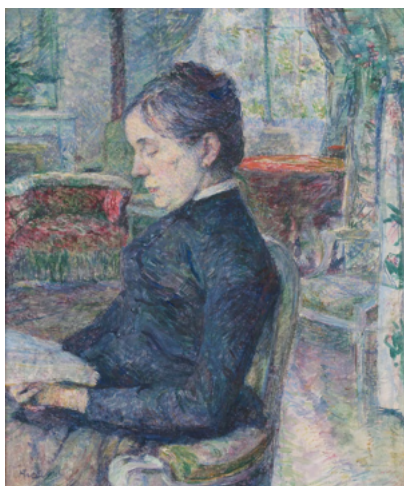
As a detailed and finished pastel portrait, this work occupies a unique place within Toulouse-Lautrec’s oeuvre. We can only guess as to what prompted him to reach for a box of pastel crayons. When drawing and sketching, he typically favoured other materials, such as charcoal, (conté) crayon, pencil and ink. He preferred using thinned oil paint for his portraits, like most of his independent works. However, the combination of pastel crayons and stretched paper enabled him to produce a representation in colour in a short time and on the spot. It is plausible that he drew the portrait in a single session during a meeting at the café with Van Gogh. Alternately, given the level of detail in the depiction, he may have drawn a layout during their encounter and then refined it in his studio.

Toulouse-Lautrec’s choice of materials may have been prompted by his artist friends. For instance, powdery pastels were Anquetin’s favourite medium. Like Toulouse-Lautrec, he portrayed one of the other ‘intransigents’ in pastel around the same time, namely Bernard (fig. 4). Bernard also explored this medium during those Paris years, though only occasionally, as in *The Hour of the Flesh* (fig. 5). Van Gogh seems to have been the only one among this small group who did not experiment with pastel crayons. However, remarkably, in the first half of 1887, he made a series of drawings and sketches using coloured crayons that bore some resemblance to his friends’ drawings, such as his [↗ Window in the Bataille Restaurant](#) (February–March 1887, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam).³⁰ It has therefore been suggested that Toulouse-Lautrec adopted Van Gogh’s drawing style in his portrait of him.³¹ Nevertheless, it is important to note that the short, erratic strokes are precisely the hallmark of Toulouse-Lautrec’s technique, whereas Van Gogh favoured bolder, tauter lines.

Toulouse-Lautrec’s remarkable ability to create accomplished portraits even in a medium less familiar to him underscores his great mastery of drawing materials. This proficiency was the result of diligent practice and the thorough training provided by his teachers Cormon and Léon Bonnat (1833–1922). The latter was a respected portrait painter in whose Paris atelier Toulouse-Lautrec took his very first academic lessons. Early on, in 1882, taking up Bonnat’s advice, Toulouse-Lautrec had effortlessly portrayed several family members in charcoal, such as his uncle Charles de Toulouse-Lautrec (fig. 6). This uncle was an amateur artist who, according to Toulouse-Lautrec, had ignited ‘the sketching spark’ (‘l’étincelle crayonneuse’) in him.³²

Place in Toulouse-Lautrec's oeuvre

Because Toulouse-Lautrec almost never dated his works and his use of pastels was relatively exceptional, the portrait drawing of Van Gogh is difficult to place within the chronology of his portraits, which constitute a large part of his oeuvre.³³ There appears to be only one other pastel portrait (*Portrait of Georges Henri-Manuel*, 1891; fig. 7) by Toulouse-Lautrec from a later period, which moreover is less elaborate. However, from both a stylistic and technical perspective, the portrait of Van Gogh bears affinity with several oil portraits Toulouse-Lautrec created around 1886–87, including the intimate profile portrait of his mother reading (fig. 8) . The composition of this painting is similar to the pastel drawing and exhibits a comparable dynamic and dense pattern of short brushstrokes.³⁴



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec,
*Adèle de Toulouse-Lautrec in
the Salon at Malromé*, c. 1886–
87, oil on canvas, 59 × 45 cm,
Musée Toulouse-Lautrec, Albi

A comparison with portraits that Toulouse-Lautrec painted of his fellow trainees Bernard and François Gauzi (1862–1933) during his time at Cormon's atelier illustrates the rapid development he underwent during this period (fig. 9 and fig. 10). His work became increasingly colourful and direct under the influence of impressionism and neo-impressionism. The impressionist brushstroke is already evident in Bernard's portrait, while the painting style is generally harmonious and seems calm on the whole. On the other hand, Gauzi's portrait presents a more fluid interplay of brushstrokes and much freer execution. In terms of line and style, it is relatively close to the portrait of Van Gogh. Although the later graphic style so characteristic of Toulouse-Lautrec has not yet reached maturity in the pastel portrait, the hand of an artist who wants to measure up to the Parisian avant-garde is clearly manifest here.

Vincent and Theo's collection

It is not known exactly how the Van Gogh brothers obtained the pastel portrait, although it is likely that Toulouse-Lautrec simply gave it to his friend. Another possibility is that an exchange took place, perhaps involving *Van Gogh's View from Theo's Apartment* (1887, Galerie Bruno Bischofberger, Zurich).³⁵ Toulouse-Lautrec was also on good terms with Theo, who, as branch manager of the art gallery Boussod, Valadon & Cie, had taken some of his works on consignment. He therefore might have presented the portrait to Theo from a strategic standpoint.³⁶ That the brothers were very fond of the portrait can be deduced from the fashionable, expensive frame that still surrounds the picture today (fig. 11). It was made by Pierre Cluzel, a highly regarded frame maker known for his work for artists such as Degas and Camille Pissarro (1830-1903).³⁷ It could well be that Theo chose the frame in consultation with Toulouse-Lautrec, as both regularly used Cluzel's services. In a note addressed to Theo from December 1887-January 1888, Toulouse-Lautrec asks him to go to Cluzel for advice on framing a study, which could perhaps refer to the pastel portrait in question.³⁸

The friendship between Toulouse-Lautrec and Van Gogh waned after Vincent moved to Arles in early 1888, but they did not forget each other. Shortly before leaving, Vincent had urged Theo to acquire Toulouse-Lautrec's painting *Young Woman at a Table, 'Poudre de Riz'* for their joint collection, a suggestion Theo acted on.³⁹ From the south of France and later from Auvers-sur-Oise, Van Gogh continued to mention Toulouse-Lautrec and his work in letters to Theo.⁴⁰ That Toulouse-Lautrec also remained interested in and respected Van Gogh is evident from an anecdote about the opening dinner of the Les XX exhibition in Brussels in 1890. When a fellow participant, Henry de Groux (1866-1930), openly insulted Van Gogh's exhibited works there, Toulouse-Lautrec rose to defend his friend, even challenging De Groux to a duel.⁴¹ The last time they saw each other was in July 1890, shortly before Vincent's death, at the home of Theo and his wife Jo van Gogh-Bonger (1862-1925) in Paris. On this occasion, according to Jo, the two friends had great fun together.⁴² In his letter of condolence upon hearing of Van Gogh's death, Toulouse-Lautrec wrote, for the first and last time, about their friendship in loving terms: 'You know what a friend he was to me and how eager he was to demonstrate his affection.'⁴³

Appreciation

Toulouse-Lautrec's pastel portrait was also important to Jo van Gogh-Bonger, who after Vincent's and Theo's untimely deaths took charge of the vast collection that the brothers had assembled. This is evident from a photograph of the living room of her house on Koninginneweg in Amsterdam, where she lived from 1904 until her death in 1925. Whereas most paintings in the room were hung in rows close together, the portrait was displayed separately and at eye level, to the right of the door (fig. 12). Besides her personal attachment to the portrait drawing, she must have found it so representative of her brother-in-law that, in addition to his self-portraits, she wished to share it with the outside world. Thus she repeatedly sent the work along with Van Gogh's paintings when she lent them to exhibitions both at home and abroad.⁴⁴ However, reviews of these exhibitions make no mention of the pastel drawing.⁴⁵ Be that as it may, the portrait was often noted in the memoirs of artist friends, dealers and critics. Although always brief, these mentions consistently praise the portrait. For instance, Hartrick called it 'a good likeness and very characteristic of its author as well', Gauzi described it as 'an admirable portrait', and Natanson deemed it a 'touching likeness'.⁴⁶

Franka Blok
January 2024

Citation

Franka Blok, 'Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Portrait of Vincent van Gogh, 1887', catalogue entry in *Contemporaries of Van Gogh 1: Works Collected by Theo and Vincent*, Joost van der Hoeven (ed.), Amsterdam: Van Gogh Museum, 2024.

[↗ doi.org/10.58802/ERNF3739](https://doi.org/10.58802/ERNF3739)

This contribution is licensed under a [↗ CC BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) licence.

 Copy citation

Object details

Portrait of Vincent van Gogh

Artist

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864 - 1901)

Date

1887

Medium

coloured chalk on wove paper on cardboard

Dimensions

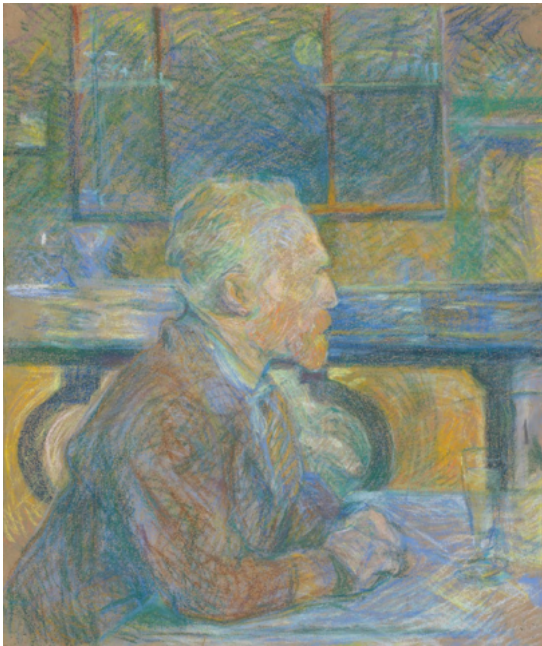
54.2 cm x 46 cm

Inventory Number

d0693V1962

Credits

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



Portrait of Vincent van Gogh

Front & Back

Provenance

Portrait of Vincent van Gogh

Acquired from the artist, Paris by Vincent or Theo van Gogh, Paris; 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 Vincent van Gogh

Brussels, Musée Royal de Peinture, *Ve Exposition des XX*, 1888, no. 8, *Étude de Profil*

Vienna, Wiener Secession, *Entwicklung des Impressionismus in Malerei u. Plastik. XVI. Ausstellung der Vereinigung Bildender Künstler Österreichs Secession Wien*, 17 January-1 February 1903, no. 183, *Porträt des Malers Vincent van Gogh*

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Tentoonstelling Vincent van Gogh*, 15 July-1 September 1905, no. a, *Pastel, door H. de Toulouse-Lautrec*

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

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Vincent van Gogh en zijn tijdgenooten*, 6 September-2 November 1930, no. 299, *Portret van Vincent van Gogh*

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Vincent van Gogh*, 14 September-1 December 1945, *Vincent van Gogh*

Brussels, Paleis voor Schone Kunsten (Brussel), *Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901)*, July-August 1947, no. 11, *Portrait de Vincent van Gogh*

Paris, Orangerie des Tuileries, *Toulouse-Lautrec. Exposition en l'honneur du cinquantième anniversaire de sa mort*, May-August 1951, no. 90, *Vincent van Gogh*

Albi, Musée d'Albi, *Toulouse-Lautrec, ses amis et ses maîtres. Cinquantenaire de la mort de Toulouse-Lautrec*, 11 August-28 October 1951, no. 137, *Vincent van Gogh*

Antwerp, Zaal Comité voor Artistieke Werking, *Vincent van Gogh*, 7 May-19 June 1955, no. 9, *Portret van Vincent van Gogh*

Philadelphia (Pennsylvania), Philadelphia Museum of Art, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, 29 October-11 December 1955, no. 11, *Vincent van Gogh*

Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, 2 January-15 February 1956, no. 11, *Vincent van Gogh*

Mons, Museum voor Schoone Kunsten, *Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). Son art et ses amis*, 22 March-5 May 1958, no. 104, *portrait de vincent v. gogh*

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, February 1960, no. 151, *Portret van Vincent van Gogh*

Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum, *Collectie Theo van Gogh*, April-May 1960, no. 151, *Portret van Vincent van Gogh*

London, Marlborough Fine Art, *XIXth and XXth Century European Masters*, June-July 1960

Paris, Institut Néerlandais, *Les amis de Van Gogh*, 9 November-17 December 1960, no. 83, *Portrait de Vincent van Gogh*

Munich, Haus der Kunst, *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, 17 October-17 December 1961, no. 135, *Bildnis Vincent van Gogh*

Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, 29 December 1961-25 February 1962, no. 135, *Bildnis Vincent van Gogh*

Albi, Palais de la Berbie, Musée Toulouse Lautrec, *Centenaire de Toulouse-Lautrec*, June-September 1964, no. 23, *Portrait de Vincent van Gogh*

Paris, Musée du Petit Palais, *Centenaire de Toulouse-Lautrec*, October-December 1964, no. 23, *Portrait de Vincent van Gogh*

Stockholm, Nationalmuseum (Stockholm), *Toulouse-Lautrec*, 26 December 1967-3 March 1968, no. 10, *Vincent van Gogh*

Humblebaek, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, 23 March-21 April 1968

Paris, Orangerie des Tuileries, *Vincent van Gogh. Collection du Musée National Vincent van Gogh à Amsterdam*, 21 December 1971-10 April 1972, no. 112, *Portrait de Vincent*

Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario, *Vincent van Gogh and the Birth of Cloisonism*, 24 January-22 March 1981, no. 117, *Portrait of Vincent van Gogh*

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, *Van Gogh en zijn Franse vrienden. Het cloisonisme als stijl 1886-1891*, 9 April-14 June 1981, no. 117, *Portret van Vincent van Gogh*

Paris, Musée d'Orsay, *Van Gogh à Paris*, 2 February-15 May 1988, no. 122, *Portrait de Vincent van Gogh*

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, *Theo van Gogh 1857-1891. Kunsthandelaar, verzamelaar en broer van Vincent*, 24 June-5 September 1999, no. 161, *Portret van Vincent van Gogh*

Paris, Musée d'Orsay, *Theo van Gogh 1857-1891. Marchand de tableaux, collectionneur, frère de Vincent*, 27 September 1999-9 January 2000, no. 162, *Portrait de Vincent van Gogh*

Washington, National Gallery of Art, *Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre*, 20 March-12 June 2005, no. 88, *Vincent van Gogh*

Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, *Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre*, 16 July-10 October 2005, no. 88, *Vincent van Gogh*

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, *Van Goghs brieven. De kunstenaar aan het woord*, 9 October 2009-3 January 2010

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, *Van Gogh aan het werk*, 1 May 2013-13 January 2014

Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Résolument Moderne*, 9 October 2019-27 January 2020, no. 63, *Portrait of Vincent van Gogh*

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, *In the Picture. Kunstenaarsportretten*, 21 February-30 August 2020, *Portret van Vincent van Gogh*

Literature

Portrait of Vincent van Gogh

- *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van schilderijen door Vincent van Gogh*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam) 1905, niet gepagineerd
- Théodore Duret, *Lautrec*, Paris 1920, pp. 40-41
- Gustave Coquiote, *Lautrec ou quinze ans de mœurs parisiennes, 1885-1900*, Paris 1921, pp. 121, 207
- Emile Bernard, 'Souvenirs sur Van Gogh', *L'amour de l'art* 5 (December 1924), p. 394
- Archille Astre, *H. de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Paris 1925, p. 81
- Maurice Joyant, *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1864-1901: peintre*, Paris 1926, pp. 58-59, 262
- Archibald Standish Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage through Fifty Years*, Cambridge 1939, p. 50
- J. Lassaingne, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, Paris 1939, pp. 13, 24, 46
- Gotthard Jedlicka, *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Zurich 1943, p. 63
- Hans Ludwig Cohn Jaffé and W. Munsterberger, *Vincent van Gogh: een documentaire tentoonstelling*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Stedelijk Museum) 1945, p. 3
- Thadée Natanson, *Un Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Geneva 1951, p. 164
- François Gauzi, *Lautrec et son temps*, Paris 1954, pp. 28-29
- Douglas Cooper, *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Amsterdam 1956, p. 68
- Henri Perruchot, *La vie de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Paris 1958, pp. 136-37
- Abraham Marie Hammacher, *Vincent van Gogh: Selbstbildnisse*, Stuttgart 1960, p. 8
- Willem Sandberg and Hans Jaffé, *Kunst van heden in het Stedelijk*, Amsterdam 1961, no.

384

- Jacqueline Bouchot-Saupique and Suzanne Kahn, *Centenaire de Toulouse-Lautrec*, exh. cat., Albi (Palais de la Berbie, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec) / Paris (Musée Petit Palais), Paris 1964, no. 23, pp. 36, 39–40
- Bengt Dahlbäck and Pontus Grate, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, exh. cat., Stockholm (Nationalmuseum) 1967, no. 10, p. 22
- M. G. Dortu, *Toulouse-Lautrec et son œuvre*, 7 vols., New York 1971, vol. 2, no. 278, pp. 122–23, referred to as ‘Vincent van Gogh’
- Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov, *Vincent van Gogh and the Birth of Cloisonism*, exh. cat., Toronto (Art Gallery of Ontario) / Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum), Toronto 1981, no. 117, pp. 40, 332
- Evert van Uiter and Michael Hoyle (eds.), *The Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 1987, no. 2.784, p. 495
- Françoise Cachin et al. (eds.), *Van Gogh à Paris*, exh. cat., Paris (Musée d’Orsay) 1988, no. 122, pp. 320–21
- Gale B. Murray, *Toulouse Lautrec: The Formative Years, 1878–1891*, Oxford 1991, pp. 136–38
- Richard Thomson, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, exh. cat., London (Hayward Gallery) / Paris (Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais), London 1991, p. 135
- Frank Milner, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, London 1992, pp. 46–47
- Gale B. Murray, *Toulouse-Lautrec: A Retrospective*, New York 1992, p. 108
- Ronald de Leeuw, *The Van Gogh Museum: Paintings and Pastels*, Zwolle 1994, pp. 106–7
- Bernard Denvir, *Vincent: A Complete Portrait: All of Vincent van Gogh’s Self-Portraits, With Excerpts From his Writings*, Philadelphia 1994, pp. 112–13
- Geneviève Monnier, *Pastels: From the 16th to the 20th Century*, Geneva 1995, pp. 60–

61

- Eva Medgen *et al.*, *In Perfect Harmony: Picture + Frame 1850–1920*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum) / Vienna (Kunstforum), Zwolle 1995, pp. 172–173
- Richard Thomson, Chris Stolwijk and Sjraar van Heugten (eds.), *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. 162, pp. 161, 163
- Cornelia Homburg *et al.*, *Vincent van Gogh and the Painters of the Petit Boulevard*, exh. cat., St. Louis (Saint Louis Art Museum) / Frankfurt am Main (Städel Museum), St. Louis 2001, pp. 20, 27, 213, 220
- Richard Thomson, Phillip Dennis Cate and Mary Weaver Chapin, *Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre*, exh. cat., Washington, DC (National Gallery of Art) / Chicago (Art Institute of Chicago), Washington, DC 2005, no. 88, pp. 17, 69, 82, 256
- Elizabeth Easton and Jared Bark, “‘Pictures Properly Framed’: Degas and Innovation in Impressionist Frames”, *The Burlington Magazine* 150 (September 2008), pp. 605–6
- Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, *Vincent van Gogh: The Life*, London 2011, pp. 551–52
- Nienke Bakker, *Van Gogh and Montmartre*, Amsterdam 2011, pp. 66–67
- Nienke Bakker, ‘Een avond met Van Gogh in Montmartre: muzikale en kunstzinnige ontmoeting’, *Luister* (September/October 2011), p. 19
- Ella Hendriks and Louis van Tilborgh, *Vincent van Gogh Paintings*, 2 vols., Amsterdam & Zwolle 1999–2011, vol. 2: *Antwerp and Paris, 1885–1888* (2011), pp. 319, 322

- Jane Kinsman and Stéphane Guégan, *Toulouse-Lautrec: Paris and the Moulin Rouge*, exh. cat., Canberra (National Gallery of Australia) 2012, pp. 12, 59, p. 61 n. 21
- Ann Dumas and Marina Ferretti Bocquillon, *Van Gogh in Paris*, exh. cat., London (Eykyn Maclean) 2013, p. 20
- Jaap Versteegh, *Fatale kunst: Leven en werk van Sara de Swart (1861-1951)*, Nijmegen 2016, p. 45
- Martin Bailey, *Living with Vincent van Gogh: The Homes and Landscapes that Shaped the Artist*, London 2019, p. 106
- Anne Roquebert, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, Paris 2019, pp. 54-55, 57
- Sjraar van Heugten, Helewise Berger and Laura Prins, *Van Goghs intimi: vrienden, familie, modellen*, exh. cat., Den Bosch (Het Noordbrabants Museum), Zwolle & Den Bosch 2019, pp. 76-77
- Christopher Lloyd, *Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Drawings*, London 2019, pp. 266, 270

Letters

Portrait of Vincent van Gogh

- Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, letter to Theo van Gogh, Paris, December 1887 or January 1888, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation) b916aV1962, published in Herbert D. Schimmel and Gale B. Murray (eds.), *The Letters of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Oxford 1991, no. 156, p. 122 n. 2

Figures



Fig. 1

Vincent van Gogh, *Self-Portrait with a Glass*, January 1887, oil on canvas, 61.1 × 50.1 cm, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

Fig. 2

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *At Grenelle: Woman Drinking Absinthe*, 1886, oil on canvas, 55 × 49 cm, Museo Botero, Bogotá

Fig. 3

Jean-François Raffaëlli, *Drinking Absinthe*, 1880, oil on canvas, 32 × 50 cm, unknown collection

Fig. 4

Louis Anquetin, Study for the painting *The Interior at Bruant's: Le Mirliton*, c. 1887, pastel on cardboard, 73.2 × 60 cm, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam



Fig. 5

Emile Bernard, *The Hour of the Flesh (L'Heure de la viande)*, 1886, pastel and gouache on paper, 125 × 170 cm, private collection

Fig. 6

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Charles de Toulouse-Lautrec*, 1882, charcoal and estompe (smudging) on paper, 60 × 46 cm, private collection

Fig. 7

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Portrait of Georges Henri-Manuel*, 1891, pastel on board, 45 × 48 cm, private collection



Fig. 8

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Adèle de Toulouse-Lautrec in the Salon at Malromé*, c. 1886-87, oil on canvas, 59 × 45 cm, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec, Albi

Fig. 9

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Emile Bernard*, 1885, oil on canvas, 54 × 44.5 cm, Tate. Photo: Tate

Fig. 10

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Francois Gauzi*, 1886, oil on canvas, 46 × 38 cm, Emil Bührle Collection, on long term loan at Kunsthaus Zürich

Fig. 11

The drawing *Portrait of Vincent van Gogh* in the frame made by Pierre Cuzel

Fig. 12

Interior of Jo van Gogh-Bonger's house at 77 Koninginneweg, Amsterdam, 1925-26, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam. Photo: Bernard Eilers

Footnotes

- 01 Emile Bernard, 'Souvenirs sur Van Gogh', *L'amour de l'art* 5 (December 1924), p. 394; Anne Rivière (ed.), *Émile Bernard, propos sur l'art*, 2 vols., Paris 1994, vol. 1, p. 242: 'He was a regular at the *Tambourin*. [...] Lautrec even painted a beautiful pastel portrait of Vincent there that is still kept by Madame Théodore Van Gogh.' ('Il fréquenta donc assidûment le Tambourin. [...] Lautrec y fit même au pastel le beau *portrait de Vincent* que garde encore Madame Théodore Van Gogh.') It is uncertain whether Bernard's recollection is correct; he is known to have been in error more often. No photographs of the interior of Le Tambourin exist, although thanks to Van Gogh's portrait of its owner, Agostina Segatori (1887, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), inv. no. s0017V1962), we know that the tables looked like tambourines. Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov suggested that for this portrait Van Gogh may have been sitting in the restaurant area, which had ordinary tables. See Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov, *Vincent van Gogh and the Birth of Cloisonism*, exh. cat., Toronto (Art Gallery of Ontario) / Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum), Toronto 1981, p. 332. Given the general character of the café interior drawn by Toulouse-Lautrec, other establishments in Montmartre also qualify.
- 02 Van Gogh visited Le Tambourin regularly in the first half of 1887 (until his understanding with the owner Segatori came to an end in July). If Bernard's recollection is correct, the drawing dates from this period. See Welsh-Ovcharov 1981, p. 332. Van Gogh's contemporary François Gauzi also dates the work to 1887. See François Gauzi, *Lautrec et son temps*, Paris 1954, p. 28. Moreover, their contemporary Archibald Standish Hartrick recalled that Toulouse-Lautrec made the portrait around that time. See Archibald Standish Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage through Fifty Years*, Cambridge 1939, p. 50. The stylistic kinship with other works will be discussed further below and see Gale B. Murray, *Toulouse Lautrec: The Formative Years, 1878-1891*, Oxford 1991, p. 137.
- 03 Other befriended artists who portrayed Van Gogh are Horace Mann Livens (1886, whereabouts unknown), Lucien Pissarro (*Van Gogh in Conversation with his Brother Theo*, 1887, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), John Russell (*Portrait of Vincent van Gogh*) and Paul Gauguin (*Vincent van Gogh Painting Sunflowers*).
- 04 Toulouse-Lautrec usually made his portraits with (diluted) oil paint. Another pastel portrait is known, but it is less elaborate: *Portrait of Georges Henri-Manuel* (1891, private collection). See M. G. Dortu, *Toulouse-Lautrec et son œuvre*, 7 vols., New York 1971, vol. 2, p. 378. The number of pastel drawings by Toulouse-Lautrec can be counted on two hands, as evidenced in an inventory of Dortu's oeuvre catalogue. During the period when he made Van Gogh's portrait, he occasionally used pastel chalk to sketch. Fully fledged drawings emerged only later, but then he used oil and chalk in addition to pastel, such as *At the Cirque Fernando, Rider on a White Horse* (1887-88, Norton Simon Art Foundation).
- 05 See n. 44.
- 06 We know that they corresponded after Van Gogh's departure from Paris in February 1888. In fact, in his letters Van Gogh refers to an unknown letter addressed to Toulouse-Lautrec. See Vincent Van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, on or about Friday, 16 March 1888 7 [585]: 'On Sunday I'll write to Bernard and Lautrec because I solemnly promised to' ('J'écris dimanche à Bernard et à de Lautrec puisque j'ai formellement promis. je t'enverrai d'ailleurs les lettres').
- 07 The lesser-known Paul Tampier (1859-1940) was also a student at Cormon's atelier and briefly part of the small group.

- 08 Welsh-Ovcharov 1981, pp. 25, 27. In April 1886 there was a confrontation between the rebellious students and Cormon, upon which the latter temporarily closed his atelier. After the summer, only Toulouse-Lautrec and Anquetin returned. See Murray 1991, p. 84.
- 09 Emile Bernard, 'Des relations d'E.B. avec Toulouse-Lautrec', *Art Documents*, no. 18 (March 1952), in Rivière 1994, vol. 1, p. 318: 'He worked tirelessly in the mornings after the nude model, with the students, and in the afternoons from antique gods, alone in the empty studio where there was only himself, Toulouse-Lautrec, Anquetin and me' ('Il travaillait sans relâche le matin d'après le modèle nu, avec les élèves, l'après midi à des antiques dieux, seul dans l'atelier vide où il n'y avait que lui, Toulouse-Lautrec, Anquetin et moi'). Bernard describes that this took place in the autumn of 1886, but this is not correct, as Van Gogh left Cormon's atelier in June 1886. See Louis van Tilborgh, 'Van Gogh in Cormon's Studio: A Chronological Puzzle', in Chris Stolwijk (ed.), *Van Gogh Studies*, 3 vols., Amsterdam & Zwolle 2007-12, vol. 1: *Current Issues in 19th-Century Art* (2007), pp. 53-66.
- 10 See Marije Vellekoop and Sjraar van Heugten (eds.), *Vincent van Gogh: Drawings*, 4 vols., Amsterdam 1996-2007, vol. 3: *Antwerp and Paris, 1885-1888* (2001), pp. 138-76.
- 11 The two met again in autumn 1886, in the shop of the paint dealer Père Tanguy, after which they became fast friends. See Bernard, 'Vincent van Gogh', *Les hommes d'aujourd'hui*, no. 390 (1890), in Rivière 1994, vol. 1, p. 26.
- 12 Theo and Vincent van Gogh's collection included a number of editions of *Le Mirliton*, the in-house magazine of Bruant's cabaret of the same name (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), inv. no. TS 2439a-h). The earliest copy dates from 29 December 1886 and, interestingly, contains for the first time an illustration by Toulouse-Lautrec: *The Quadrille of Louis XIII's Chair at l'Élysée*. See Louis van Tilborgh et al., *Vincent van Gogh: Paintings*, 2 vols., Amsterdam & Zwolle 1999-2011, vol. 2: *Antwerp and Paris, 1885-1888* (2011), p. 75 n. 107. Other evidence for this is Toulouse-Lautrec's drawing *The Refrain of Louis XIII's Chair at Aristide Bruant's Cabaret* (1887, Hiroshima Museum of Art), in which Van Tilborgh identified Van Gogh in the company of Toulouse-Lautrec and Anquetin. See Marije Vellekoop et al. (eds.), *Japanese Prints: The Collection of Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 2018, p. 17.
- 13 The recollection is as follows: 'I remember Van Gogh coming to our weekly gatherings at Lautrec's. He arrived carrying a heavy canvas under his arm, put it down in a corner but well in the light, and waited for us to pay some attention to it. No one took notice. He sat across from it, surveying the glances seldom joining in the conversation. Then, tired, he would leave, carrying back his latest work. But the next week he would come back, commencing and recommencing with the same stratagem.' As quoted in Susan Alyson Stein (ed.), *Van Gogh: A Retrospective*, New York 1986, p. 87, excerpt from Florent Fels, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris 1928, p. 136: 'Je me souviens de Van Gogh venant à nos réunions hebdomadaires chez Lautrec. Il arrivait, portant une lourde toile sous le bras, la posait dans un coin, mais bien en lumière, et attendait qu'on lui manifestât quelque attention. Personne ne le remarquait. Il s'asseyait en face, surveillant les regards, se mêlant peu à la conversation. Puis lassé, partait, remportant sa dernière œuvre. Mais, la semaine suivante, il revenait, commerçant et recommençant le même manège.'

- 14 Who exactly influenced whom remains subject to debate. Van Tilborgh argues (in Van Tilborgh 1999–2011, vol. 2: *Antwerp and Paris, 1885–1888* (2011), p. 76) that Van Gogh's work at the time changed mainly under the influence of Toulouse-Lautrec: 'His sudden conversion to *peinture à l'essence*, his decision to portray café life and his imitations of compositions from Japanese prints seem inconceivable without that artist's [Toulouse-Lautrec's] example.' Roos Rosa de Carvalho adds that the influence of others, such as Degas and Raffaëlli, also impacted his changing painting technique and interest in naturalistic themes, and that he and Toulouse-Lautrec embarked on a joint quest. See Fleur Roos Rosa de Carvalho, 'Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec and Van Gogh: The Use of Diluted Paint', in Marije Vellekoop *et al.* (eds.), *Van Gogh's Studio Practice*, Amsterdam & Brussels 2013, pp. 345–49.
- 15 Cornelia Homburg *et al.*, *Vincent van Gogh and the Painters of the Petit Boulevard*, exh. cat., St. Louis (Saint Louis Art Museum) / Frankfurt am Main (Städel Museum), St. Louis, MO 2001, p. 25.
- 16 Thadée Natanson, *Un Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Geneva 1951, pp. 161–63.
- 17 Hartrick 1939, p. 50: 'Though I cannot remember seeing Lautrec in the company of Vincent, I know they foregathered, and about this time Lautrec made his well-known Pastel Portrait of Vincent.' Hartrick started at Cormon's in mid-November 1886 and presumably met Toulouse-Lautrec there. He first met Van Gogh at John Russell's studio around the same time.
- 18 Anne Roquebert, 'Portraits', in Richard Thomson, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, New Haven, CT 1992, pp. 132–33.
- 19 *L'heure verte* took place from about 17:30 onwards, when Parisians moved from one café to another on the boulevards to drink absinthe. See Wilfred Niels Arnold, *Vincent van Gogh: Chemicals, Crises, and Creativity*, Boston 1992, p. 103; Jad Adams, , *Tate Etc.*, 1 September 2005, accessed October 2023. According to the writer H. P. Hugh, it ended around 19:30, 'but on the hill [of Montmartre] it never ends.' 'The two Montmartres', *Paris Magazine* (June 1889), quoted in Van Tilborgh 1999–2011, vol. 2: *Antwerp and Paris, 1885–1888* (2011), p. 319.
- 20 Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, 3 October 1888 [↗ \[694\]](#): 'When I left you at the Gare du Midi, very upset and almost ill and almost an alcoholic as a result of overdoing it' ('Lorsque je t'ai quitté à la gare du Midi bien navré et presque malade et presqu'alcoolique à force de me monter le cou').
- 21 Fels 1928, p. 176: 'After days spent in the sun, in the scorching heat, back in the city, without a home, he would sit on the terrace of a café. And one absinthe and cognac followed another.' ('Après des journées entières passées en plein soleil, dans la chaleur torride, de retour en la ville, sans foyer, il s'installait à la terrasse d'un café. Et les absinthes, et les cognacs se succédaient.')
- 22 Van Gogh painted over one of these two self-portraits with a still life with sunflowers (*Sunflowers Gone to Seed*, 1887, Kunstmuseum Bern). See Van Tilborgh 1999–2011, vol. 2: *Antwerp and Paris, 1885–1888* (2011), pp. 274–77.
- 23 Also during this period, he created [↗ the portrait of Agostina Segatori](#), seated in Le Tambourin with a glass of beer (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam). See Van Tilborgh 1999–2011, vol. 2: *Antwerp and Paris, 1885–1888* (2011), pp. 319–23.
- 24 See, for example, portraits and genre scenes from around the same period, such as *Portrait of Jeanne Wenz* (1886, Art Institute of Chicago), *At Grenelle: Woman Drinking Absinthe* (1886, Museo Botero, Bogota) and *Adèle de Toulouse-Lautrec in the Salon at Malromé* (c. 1886–87, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec, Albi).

- 25 Some commentators have asserted that Van Gogh's posture in this work indicates his engagement in tense debate, in line with characterizations by certain of his contemporaries. See, for example, Abraham Marie Hammacher, *Vincent van Gogh: Selbstbildnisse*, Stuttgart 1960, p. 8: 'hands lying restlessly before him' ('handen liggen rusteloos voor hem'); Frank Milner, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, London 1992, p. 47: 'his hand abstractedly playing [...] seems absorbed, possibly in discussion'; Richard Thomson in Richard Thomson, Phillip Dennis Cate and Mary Weaver Chapin, *Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre*, exh. cat., Washington, DC (National Gallery of Art) / Chicago (Art Institute of Chicago), Washington, DC 2005, p. 69: 'the revealing tension in his hands suggests a determined debater'.
- 26 Théodore Duret, *Lautrec*, Paris 1920, p. 38: 'Since those he had pose for him belonged to his immediate circle, and he had the time to understand and get to know them, he was able to capture them well and provide not a mundane, but a true and superior likeness' ('Comme ceux qu'il faisait poser appartenaient à son entourage immédiat, qu'il avait eu le temps de les pénétrer et de les connaître, il a pu les bien saisir et en donner non une banale, mais une véritable et supérieure ressemblance').
- 27 With thanks to Nico Lingbeek, paper conservator, Van Gogh Museum, September 2023. It is possible that the paper was already stretched when Lautrec bought it. Such 'pastel panels' were available ready-made in the shops.
- 28 Gustave Coquiote, *Lautrec ou quinze ans de mœurs parisiennes: 1885-1900*, Paris 1921, p. 125: 'Lautrec often began his portraits with the utmost imagination, that is to say in the middle of the figure, either at an ear, or at the nose. From there, he multiplied his hatching towards the figure, while seeking its distinctive mark. Recognizing the style each time, it can be asserted that Lautrec created a fresh layout for each portrait.' ('Lautrec commençait souvent ses portraits avec la plus extrême fantaisie, c'est-à-dire par le milieu de la figure, par exemple, ou par une oreille, ou par le nez; et, parti de là, il multipliait ses hachures dans le sens du caractère, et en cherchant par conséquent le stigmat-type. Et si l'on reconnaît chaque fois le style, on peut bien avancer que Lautrec réalisait, pour chaque portrait, une nouvelle mise en page.')
- 29 With thanks to Nico Lingbeek, paper conservator Van Gogh Museum, June 2023.
- 30 For his use of coloured wax crayons in 1887, see Birgit Reissland *et al.*, "'Permanent, Water-proof and Unequalled for Outdoor Sketching": Van Gogh's Use of Wax Crayons', in Vellekoop 2013, pp. 401-2.
- 31 For example, see Henri Perruchot, *La vie de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Paris 1958, p. 136; Welsh-Ovcharov 1981, p. 332; and Welsh-Ovcharov 1988, p. 320. Murray contradicts this, see Murray 1991, pp. 137-38: 'It is more likely that as students and newcomers to the avant-garde, who had reached, respectively, a crucial point in their artistic development, they simply responded in similar ways to the influences of a shared environment.'
- 32 Anne Roquebert, *Toulouse-Lautrec*, Paris 2019, p. 30; and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, letter to Charles de Toulouse-Lautrec, Paris, May 1881, in Herbert D. Schimmel, *The Letters of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, Oxford 1991, p. 49, no. 59: 'I am carrying on, and I hope you'll be pleased, since you're the one who lit the sketching spark in me' ('Enfin je radote et j'espère que cela vous fera plaisir puisque c'est vous qui avez allumé en moi l'étincelle crayonneuse').
- 33 Toulouse-Lautrec virtually never dated his works, nor did he always bother to sign them. In the 1880s, moreover, his work was hardly ever exhibited or reviewed. This hampers a clear analysis of his artistic development in this period.

- 34 Other stylistically related works from this period include *Ballet Dancers* (1885–86, Art Institute of Chicago), *Portrait of Suzanne Valadon* (1885, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires), *Portrait of Suzanne Valadon* (1886–87, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen), *The Quadrille of the Louis XIII Chair at L'Élysée Montmartre* (1886, private collection) and *Madame Juliette Pascal* (1887, private collection).
- 35 Welsh-Ovcharov 1988, p. 94 n. 2. Welsh-Ovcharov argues that it is not certain whether this was the painting that was indeed in Toulouse-Lautrec's possession. If it was, he possibly obtained it in exchange for the pastel portrait and/or the panel *Two Prostitutes in a Café* (1885–86, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), inv. no. s0275V1962r).
- 36 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, pp. 137, 163.
- 37 On the back of the frame is a sticker of Cluzel, whose shop was located at 33 rue Fontaine-Saint-Georges, the same street where Toulouse-Lautrec lived. Theo often relied on Cluzel for the framing of works of art that he traded. For Vincent's work, on the other hand, he had frames made by Père Tanguy, who charged only 10 francs each, 30 francs less than Cluzel, for example, asked for the frame of Redon's *In Heaven or Closed Eyes*. See Van Tilborgh, 'Framing van Gogh: 1880–1890', in Eva Medgen *et al.*, *In Perfect Harmony: Picture + Frame 1850–1920*, exh. cat., Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum) / Vienna (Kunstforum), Zwolle 1995, pp. 170, 172; and Roos Rosa de Carvalho's entry on *In Heaven or Closed Eyes*. For additional technical details about the frame of Toulouse-Lautrec's portrait of Van Gogh, see Elizabeth Easton and Jared Bark, "'Pictures Properly Framed": Degas and Innovation in Impressionist Frames', *The Burlington Magazine* 150 (September 2008), p. 606.
- 38 Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, letter to Theo van Gogh, December 1887–January 1888, in Schimmel 1991, p. 122, no. 156. Schimmel suggests that Toulouse-Lautrec may be referring to Van Gogh's pastel portrait here. Murray adopts this assumption and concludes, presumably because of the dating of the letter, that the work was framed in preparation for the Les XX exhibition in Brussels in February 1888, where she believes it may have hung under the title 'No. 8 Study in profile' ('Nr. 8 Étude de profil'). See Murray 1991, pp. 131, 137 n. 56. However, there are no sources to prove that the work was exhibited there.
- 39 See Receipt of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec to Theo van Gogh for 'Poudre de Riz', 12 January 1888 (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), inv. no. b1156V1962).
- 40 See letters [↗ \[585\]](#), [↗ \[588\]](#), [↗ \[595\]](#), [↗ \[620\]](#), [↗ \[637\]](#), [↗ \[663\]](#), [↗ \[898\]](#).
- 41 De Groux called Van Gogh's *Sunflowers* 'laughable' ('exécration'). Quoted in Madeleine Octave Maus, *Trente années de lutte pour l'art*, 1884–1914, Brussels 1926, p. 100. This did not end in a duel, as De Groux apologised and was suspended by the committee. Signac was also present, and declared that if anything happened to Toulouse-Lautrec, he would avenge him. Signac was chosen by Les XX to replace De Groux. John Rewald, *Post-Impressionism: From van Gogh to Gauguin*, London 1978 (revised edition), pp. 346–47.
- 42 Jo van Gogh-Bonger, *Brieven aan zijn broeder*, 3 vols., Amsterdam 1914, vol. 1, pp. LXII–LXIII: 'Toulouse-Lautrec, who stayed to have lunch with us and had the biggest laugh with Vincent about an undertaker's assistant, whom they met on the stairs' ('en Toulouse Lautrec, die bij ons bleef dejeuner en met Vincent de grootste pret had over een croque-mort, dien zij op de trap waren tegengekomen').

- 43 Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, letter to Theo van Gogh, 31 July 1890, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), inv. no. b1276V1962 (translated in Ronald Pickvance, *A Great Artist is Dead: Letters of Condolence on Vincent van Gogh's Death*, Zwolle 1992, p. 114): 'Vous savez quel ami c'était pour moi et combien il a tenu a me le prouver.'
- 44 For example, in 1896 to the Gronings Oudheidkundig Museum for the first large-scale exhibition on Van Gogh in the Netherlands (21-26 February 1890), and in 1903 to the Secession in Vienna ('Entwicklung des Impressionismus in Malerei u. Plastik', 17 January-1 February 1903). See Hans Luijten, *Jo van Gogh-Bonger: The Woman Who Made Vincent Famous*, London 2023, pp. 174, 209; and W.J.H. Leuring, letter to Jo van Gogh-Bonger, 5 March 1896; Franz Hacke, letter to Jo van Gogh-Bonger, 27 November 1902; and Wilhelm Bernatzik, letter to Jo van Gogh-Bonger, 5 March 1903, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation), inv. nos. resp. b1259, b3939 and b3940.
- 45 Murray suggests that Van Gogh's pastel portrait (along with other works by Toulouse-Lautrec) could also have been exhibited at the Les XX exhibition of 1888 in Brussels, under the title *Study of a Profile (Étude de profil)* (no. 8). See Murray 1991, p. 131. However, neither Theo nor Vincent is mentioned as the owner in the exhibition catalogue, while the *Woman at a Table, 'Poudre de Riz'*, purchased by Theo, does have his name listed: 'a M. Van Gogh'. See *Catalogue de la Ve Exposition des XX*, Brussels 1888. Moreover, Toulouse-Lautrec titled many of his works at the time 'étude', and frequently made profile portraits.
- 46 Hartrick 1938, p. 50; Gauzi 1954, p. 28 n. 1: 'In 1887, Lautrec painted an admirable *Portrait of Vincent Van Gogh*, which is now in the collection of the painter's nephew' ('Lautrec a peint en 1887 un admirable *Portrait de Vincent Van Gogh*, qui se trouve aujourd'hui dans la collection du neveu du peintre'); Natanson 1951, p. 164: 'However, in its timidity, the sketch, which seems to have almost faded, remains a touching likeness and retains elements that count!' ('Cependant, combien, dans sa timidité, l'ébauche, qui paraît presque avoir déteint, demeure une apparition émouvante et retient d'éléments qui comptent!')