



PRESS RELEASE
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THE EY EXHIBITION VAN GOGH AND BRITAIN

27 March – 11 August 2019
Tate Britain

This exhibition is part of The EY Tate Arts Partnership, with additional support from the Van Gogh Exhibition Supporters Circle and Tate Members
Open daily 10.00 – 18.00
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Next March, Tate Britain will open a major exhibition about Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). *The EY Exhibition: Van Gogh and Britain* will be the first exhibition to take a new look at the artist through his relationship with Britain. It will explore how Van Gogh was inspired by British art, literature and culture throughout his career and how he in turn inspired British artists, from Walter Sickert to Francis Bacon.

Bringing together the largest group of Van Gogh paintings shown in the UK for nearly a decade, *The EY Exhibition: Van Gogh and Britain* will include over 45 works by the artist from public and private collections around the world. They include *Self-Portrait* 1889 from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, *L'Arlésienne* 1890 from Museu de Arte de São Paulo, *Starry Night on the Rhône* 1888 from the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, *Shoes* from the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, and the rarely loaned *Sunflowers* 1888 from the National Gallery, London. The exhibition will also feature late works including two painted by Van Gogh in the Saint-Paul asylum, *At Eternity's Gate* 1890 from the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo and *Prisoners Exercising* 1890 from the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow.

Van Gogh spent several crucial years in London between 1873 and 1876, writing to his brother Theo, 'I love London'. Arriving as a young trainee art dealer, the vast modern city prompted him to explore new avenues of life, art and love. The exhibition will reveal Van Gogh's enthusiasm for British culture during his stay and his subsequent artistic career. It will show how he responded to the art he saw, including works by John Constable and John Everett Millais as well as his love of British writers from William Shakespeare to Christina Rossetti. Charles Dickens in particular influenced Van Gogh's style and subject matter throughout his career. *L'Arlésienne* 1890, a portrait he created in the last year of his life in the south of France, features a favourite book by Dickens in the foreground.

The exhibition will also explore Van Gogh's passion for British graphic artists and prints. Despite his poverty, he searched out and collected around 2,000 engravings, most from English magazines such as the *Illustrated London News*. 'My whole life is aimed at making the things from everyday life that Dickens describes and these artists draw' he wrote in his first years as a struggling artist. He returned to these prints in his final months, painting his only image of London, *Prisoners Exercising*, from Gustave Doré's print of Newgate Prison.

Tracing Van Gogh from his obscure years in London to the extraordinary fame he achieved in Britain in the 1950s, the exhibition will show how his uncompromising art and life paved the way for modern British artists like Matthew Smith, Christopher Wood and David Bomberg. It will conclude with an important group of portraits by Francis Bacon based on a Van Gogh self-portrait known only from photographs since its destruction during the Second World War. The exhibition will provide an opportunity to look afresh at well-known works by Van Gogh, through the eyes of the British artists he so inspired. To artists like Bacon, and the British public at large, Van Gogh epitomised the idea of the embattled, misunderstood artist, set apart from mainstream society.

The EY Exhibition: Van Gogh and Britain is organised by lead curator Carol Jacobi, Curator of British Art 1850-1915, Tate Britain and Chris Stephens, Director of Holburne Museum, Bath with Van Gogh specialist Martin Bailey and Hattie Spire, Assistant Curator Modern British Art, Tate Britain. It will be accompanied by a major catalogue from Tate Publishing and a programme of talks and events in the gallery.

[Continued overleaf]

For press information contact Cecily.Carbone@tate.org.uk / Joanna.Sandler@tate.org.uk or call +44(0)20 7887 8731 / 4942. For high-resolution images visit www.tate.org.uk/press

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT THE EY TATE ARTS PARTNERSHIP

The EY Exhibition: Van Gogh and Britain is the eighth ground-breaking exhibition supported through The EY Tate Arts Partnership. This nine year partnership makes EY one of Tate's largest and longest-standing corporate supporters and this support extends to corporate memberships around the country.

Michel Driessen, Partner Sponsor of the EY Arts Programme, UK & Ireland, EY said: "Central to this exhibition is the dignity and humanity which Van Gogh applies to his subjects. Here at EY, these qualities are important to us and we believe in creating an environment in which people feel, and are, valued. This exhibition is extraordinary in its invitation to explore Van Gogh's personal struggles and achievements and encourages everyone to talk openly about these through the lens of the 21st century."

ABOUT EY

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