

# Van Gogh Poets & Lovers

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Most of our films include – and benefit from – art historians, curators, institutional directors. But my view is that anyone can have a view about an artwork and frequently those views can offer us new and thought-provoking insights. Thus, we decided to focus on the staff of the National Gallery in London as I have made several films about Vincent van Gogh and from different points-of-view, but when the National Gallery London revealed to us that they were staging the biggest ever Van Gogh exhibition in the UK, I was instantly intrigued. How would it differ from other exhibitions? What works were being brought together? What new ideas will it reveal?

The curators spoke passionately about how the exhibition will focus on Van Gogh's mastery of paint, his developing style and obsessive imagination formed by what he encountered in the south of France during his latter years. This is arguably Van Gogh's most productive and recognisable period and when his art really reflects on his passion for life and vibrant originality. The ambition of the exhibition's scale promises to be rich with new ideas and fabulous works of art, rarely seen before in one space.

During his years in Arles and San Remy, Van Gogh became consumed with telling stories in his art, turning the world around him into colourful, idealised spaces and symbolic characters. Poets and lovers filled his imagination and desires. In part, this is what caused his notorious breakdown, but it didn't hold back his creativity as he produced masterpiece after masterpiece, revolutionising his own style and, in turn, changing art forever.

**David Bickerstaff**



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