

Van Gogh at ARKEN

From 1 September 39 works by Vincent van Gogh are on view at ARKEN. The special exhibition *VAN GOGH* focuses on the famous artist's work, spirituality and view of nature, and is the first major exhibition dedicated to Van Gogh's paintings and drawings in Denmark for more than 50 years.

On 23 December 1888, when Vincent van Gogh cut off most of his left ear during a psychotic episode, he was still entirely unknown as an artist. He had no idea that this violent action would help define the framework for the mythmaking and world fame that would later surround his life and art – and which today flourish unabated. A less well known but quite crucial dimension in Van Gogh's life, however, is his religiosity.

The divine in a blade of grass

Early in life Vincent van Gogh lost his faith in the church as an institution. But he did not lose his faith in God, and he was convinced that he could do good deeds by creating beautiful paintings. Through 28 paintings and 11 drawings ARKEN's special exhibition *VAN GOGH* shows how Van Gogh, with his depictions of southern French wheat fields, sun-baked olive groves and Dutch harvest workers, wanted to express the divine in nature and in humanity – amidst a time of upheavals when faith was under pressure from modern philosophy and science. With vibrant brush strokes and energetic colours he imbued even the smallest blade of grass with his very own understanding of spirituality.

Groundbreaking works

Van Gogh spent only ten years of his life as an artist, from 1880 until his death. During that short time, in intense, fervent works, he was able to develop an original visual language that expressed his personal, spiritual approach to nature and the creation of pictures. By unfolding his subjective view of the profound spirituality of nature in painting, Van Gogh took pioneering steps towards the modern. Van Gogh's works are at once deeply personal and have a huge, universally human appeal.

The first major Van Gogh exhibition for 50 years

It is more than 50 years since it was last possible to see a major Van Gogh exhibition in Denmark. All 39 works in ARKEN's exhibition are on loan from the Dutch Kröller-Müller Museum's unique Van Gogh collection, and with the exception of a single work have never before been shown in Denmark. For the exhibition a richly illustrated catalogue is being published, in which a variety of gazes – from the researcher's to the author's – offer insight into Van Gogh's visual world.

Van Gogh contextualized

Alongside *VAN GOGH*, ARKEN will be showing an exhibition which, taking its cue from Van Gogh, has been given the title *Starry Nights*. The exhibition presents works from ARKEN's collection that draw lines from Van Gogh's art to the art of our own time, and which overflow with references to the hidden spiritual dimensions of nature.

The special exhibition *VAN GOGH* runs from 1 September 2018 to 20 January 2019.

Throughout the exhibition period the museum is open in the evenings until 21:00 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The exhibition has been organized in collaboration with the Kröller-Müller Museum, The Netherlands.

The exhibition is supported by the foundations *Augustinus Fonden* and *Aage og Johanne Louis-Hansens Fond*.



For further information please contact:
Head of Communications Marie-Louise Dunker
Tel. +45 40 87 27 47
E-mail: marie-louise.dunker@arken.dk

Press Coordinator Lea Bolvig
Tel. +45 30 45 67 18
E-mail: lea.bolvig@arken.dk