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Images available upon request.

Becoming Van Gogh: Only in Denver
DAM brings together 70 works by the famed artist to reveal key steps in his artistic evolution

(Denver, Colo.) – Becoming Van Gogh, an in-depth exploration of Vincent van Gogh’s unconventional path to becoming one of the world’s most recognizable artists, will be on view at the Denver Art Museum (DAM) from October 21, 2012, through January 20, 2013. The exhibition examines critical steps in the largely self-taught artist’s evolution through more than 70 paintings and drawings by Van Gogh, along with works by artists he responded to. Organized by the DAM and curated by Timothy J. Standring, Gates Foundation Curator of Painting and Sculpture at the DAM and Louis van Tilborgh, Senior Researcher of Paintings at Amsterdam’s Van Gogh Museum, Becoming Van Gogh brings together loans from more than 60 public and private collections from across Europe and North America to tell the story of a number of key formative periods throughout the artist’s career.

“This is a unique opportunity for our audience to discover how Van Gogh arrived at his iconic style and gain new insights into his influences,” said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. “We are thrilled to bring together an exhibition that will give visitors new insight into one of the world’s greatest artists.”

By focusing on the various stages of Van Gogh’s artistic development, Becoming Van Gogh illustrates the artist’s initial foray into mastering draftsmanship, understanding the limitations and challenges of materials and techniques, learning to incorporate color theory and folding a myriad of influences, including other artists, into his artistic vocabulary. No other exhibition has focused so intensely on Van Gogh’s personal growth and progression in his journey toward his own personal style.

Becoming Van Gogh will take visitors on a journey through the artist’s stylistic development via his dramatic paintings and drawings. Throughout each section, critical developments in his personal style are called out, illustrating how Van Gogh’s well-known signature form developed. The exhibition begins with a focus on how Van Gogh imbued his early works with energy and verve as he strove to master drawing with graphite, ink and washes; how he begin to understand color with watercolor paintings; and how he began to test his skill with oils on canvas. Van Gogh turned all of his creative energies towards mastering the tools that would enable him to render the visual world as he saw it by learning as much as he could about the formal elements of art, color theory, painting techniques, compositional methods and more.
Visitors will see Van Gogh’s artistic maturation through works created after his arrival in Paris. His Parisian period, from 1886 to 1888, is perhaps the crucial period of his professional career because his artistic temperament shifted from works focused on social subject matter to works driven largely by aesthetic and artistic concerns. This, the heart of the exhibition, is the period when he strove to attain a considerable degree of artistic self-confidence by responding to the stylistic and ideological shifts of the Parisian art world happening at the same time. During this eventful two-year period, Impressionism mounted its eighth—and last—official group exhibition, Seurat startled the world at the annual exhibition Salon des Indépendants with his use of divisionism in the painting Un Dimanche après-midi à l’Île de la Grande Jatte, Signac and Pissarro followed his example with a softened variant known as pointillism, Bernard launched a salvo of synthetism and Toulouse-Lautrec recorded the bohemian culture of Montmartre.

Acutely aware of these avant-garde trends and working closely with artists such as Émile Bernard and Paul Signac, Van Gogh both experimented with and eventually transformed these styles into something wholly personal and unique. During this time Van Gogh met and interacted with many of these artists, all of whom are represented by significant works in the exhibition.

“This exhibition demonstrates Van Gogh’s conscious decision to commit himself as an artist,” said exhibition curator Timothy Standring, pointing out that the man best known for his paintings also tried out other careers—including an assistant art dealer and minister. “His work was systematic and rational as he sought to arrive at his personal style, not simply the result of emotional outbursts of creativity.”

_Becoming Van Gogh_ is a special ticketed exhibition. An audio guide is available for an additional fee. DAM members have the first opportunity to purchase discounted tickets starting August 1, 2012. Tickets go on sale to the general public August 15, 2012. For information or to purchase tickets please visit [www.VanGoghDenver.com](http://www.VanGoghDenver.com).

**Media Resources**


Exhibition Overview: [http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/becoming-van-gogh](http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/becoming-van-gogh)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum](http://www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum)

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**Exhibition Credit Line**

_Becoming Van Gogh_ is organized by the Denver Art Museum. The exhibition is funded by Helen K. and Arthur E. Johnson Foundation; Wells Fargo; Sotheby’s; and Sill-TerHar Motors, Aston Martin, Lamborghini, Maserati. Additional funding is provided by Telemundo Denver and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. Promotional support is provided by 5280 Magazine, CBS4 and The Denver Post.

The Denver Art Museum is located on 13th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock Streets in downtown Denver. Open Tuesday–Thursday, Saturday–Sunday 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.–8 p.m., except the final Friday of the month January–October when the museum stays open until 10 p.m. for the _Untitled_ event; closed Mondays, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Admission for Colorado residents: $10 adults, $8 seniors and students. Admission for non-Colorado residents: $13 for adults, $10 for seniors and students, $5 for visitors aged six to eighteen, free for children under 6. General museum admission is free the first Saturday of each month, thanks to Target and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Additional ticket may be required for special exhibitions. The Cultural Complex Garage is open; enter from 12th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock or check the DAM website for up-to-date parking information. For information in Spanish, call 720-913-0169. For more information, call 720-865-5000 or visit [www.denverartmuseum.org](http://www.denverartmuseum.org).

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