



Bohème Magazine Online

March Cover Artist Jan van Gogh

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Bohème Magazine is honored to introduce you this month to the artwork of painter and sculptor Jan van Gogh. Working in paint, glass and bronze, Jan follows his own voice and vision while recalling the memory of his illustrious relative.



Jan van Gogh at Work

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BM: How exactly do you relate to Vincent van Gogh?

JvG: Because I'm trying, during my creation, to keep a distance from the history of Vincent, and by that to maintain a neutral position from which my mind is shaping my ideas, it is rather the outside world that point me to a resemblance. My surroundings and the media are the ones to notice the striking resemblance. These resemblances started to become obvious during my training as an artist at the academy of arts, in the writing of poems and letters, and in the frequent exchange of ideas with fellows from other countries, especially from the East. Also, inviting these fellow artists, who have a more difficult situation than we in Western Europe, is part of this exchange of ideas in the spirit of Vincent van Gogh (yellow house idea). The choice of colour (palette) during painting and the way of painting refer to the handwriting of Vincent.

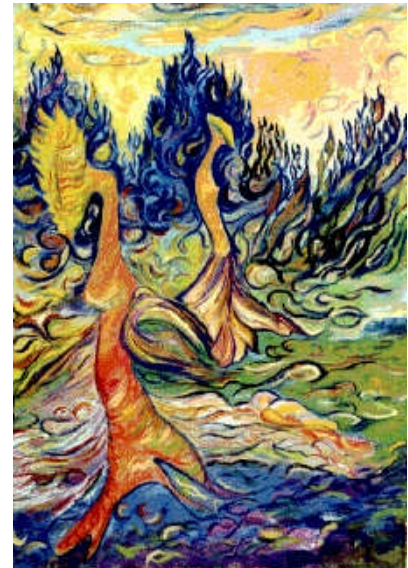
BM: How has your name helped or not helped you in your artistic career?

JvG: During my study at the academy of arts I sometimes got opposition because of my name. In a later stadium, and especially in the style of painting, more and more people noticed a genuine expression of Vincent's handwriting. It can help to get attention to my work, but it always puts it in a tight frame, and works and expressions that are more personal to me, like sculptural art in glass and bronze, which to do not fit so well in the general picture, tend to be moved into the background. Although the symbolism is there also in this sculptural work, people find it harder to see that expression.

BM: How has Vincent van Gogh influenced your work if at all?

JvG: It is more a clarification in the character of my inner processes of life, and also a translation of my imagination during my creations. In Vincent's work I find many parallels with my own expression, like his emotional load, his bonding with the socially deprived, his struggle for human rights and especially the rights of women, the conservation of mother Earth and likewise.

BM: When did you start painting and what made you decide to pick up art?



"Desire"
Oil on Canvas



"Karpatschka Westna"
Oil on Canvas

JvG: From my early youth, I have been moved by dance, music, and theatre. I used to cut and paste paper into 3-dimensional objects, often with enigmatic and incomprehensible shape. I made sketches from landscape and rocks, which I had never seen before. Later, trees and nature gained an important role in my life and inspiration. I made sketches of the roots of trees in a surrealistic way, like giant feet for the big trees, as if to keep them from collapsing. My love for nature became deeper and deeper. In autumn, I collected many leaves with their seasonal colours, and strangely shaped branches which had fallen from the trees. I was dreaming and writing poems, dedicated to the trees of our nature, as if they were close friends and relatives, persons like us. The expression in art has grown from my musical education.

BM: How would define your style?

JvG: Because people always put me in this tight frame, let's say Modern Vincentism. I can't help it, that is what they make of it. Due to my avalanche of ideas and technical skills, and my somewhat chaotic character, it is an everlasting struggle to limit my style, let alone to mark the borders of my style and themes. Nevertheless I can roughly split the sources of my inspiration into three groups, and so designate the style and themes: 1) the power of our nature, in which the borders of mother Earth, the protection of mother Earth is concealed as symbolism; 2) the rights of the women, which conceal human rights; 3) dance, which hides all symbolic elements. Represented in all disciplines, but above all in glass, in abstracted images, distortions, shapes and twinkling reflections.



"Sunflower"
Sculpture in Bronze

BM: Which artists have influenced you the most?



JvG: It would not be just to name only one artist, therefore some names: Monet, by his colourful and romantic compositions; Vincent, by his strong expression and symbolism; Toulouse Lautrec, by his strong, characteristic and graphical expression of dance and music and the Bohemian life; Prevsner, a famous Russian/French physicist who made marvelous sculptural/monumental work with a strong architectonic view (constructivism, wing-like motives); Pablo Picasso, for delivering us Artists from the yoke of forced realism, creating room for freedom in the artist's expression.

BM: Tell us about your sculptures.

JvG: Creating sculptures, and shaping their form and appearance in one's mind, is a longer and more arduous way than creating paintings. My glass/bronze sculptures arise in the aftermath of the writing of a

"Borinage (de Macasse)"
Oil on Canvas

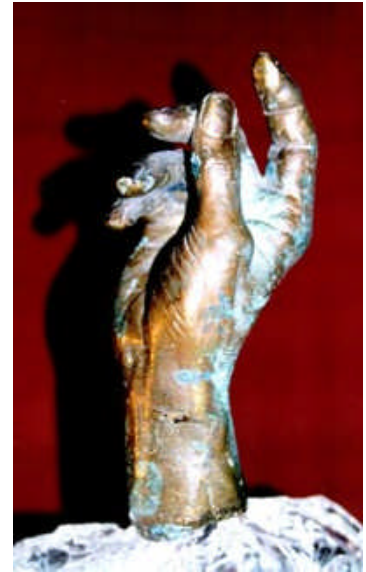
poem. I try to transform the entanglement of man and nature in a philosophical way. The symbolism in every sculpture outlines the materialisation of the message that I intend to convey. Light, the mate of glass, reflects in every sculpture, like a tango between mankind and nature.

BM: In your paintings, how would you define your usage of colours and brushstrokes?

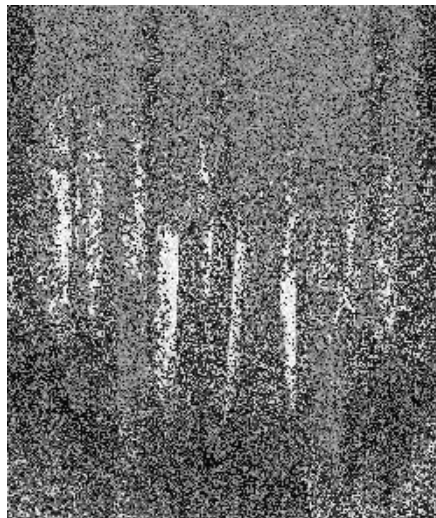
JvG: You tell me. I wouldn't know. It just comes naturally.

BM: On a spiritual or personal level, what do you try to express in your artwork?

JvG: I want to make a statement, an accusation against the rape of nature, and the rape of cultural values. Because I'm deeply involved in the beauty of nature, I express a feeling of protecting the precarious, I am deeply hurt in my feelings when violence is used against society or nature. I exuberate in my feelings when I'm wandering like a nomad through hills and mountains, when I'm experiencing the sparkling streams of water and springs, the landscape of wild nature. This urges me to start painting and sketching. I then want to flush out this secret language on canvas, the magical power of nature, of dewdrops in the morning, lighted like crystals in the first rays of a new day (see my sculpture "sundew" for instance). The blue force, of the sky that stretches over all, the credo in my art.



"Gesture"
Sculpture in Bronze



"Icicles"
Sculpture in Glass

BM: Of your own paintings, which one is your favourite and why?

JvG: The painting "Auvers-sur-Oise," (see *this month's cover*) which has symbolism in the fraternisation of two willow trees, with the church depicted as an anchor in the background. The events and history about Vincent and his brother draw me to this place, Auvers-sur-Oise, France, the extending landscape stretching out before your eyes with the fields. Still the crows flap around, like dark spots on a painting. On the other side of the field, at the old church, still the brothers Vincent and Theo lie, shrouded in ivy and everlasting green, everlasting spring, forever bound together in brotherly love.

You can see more of Jan van Gogh's paintings and sculptures at <http://www.thedigitalgallery.nl/vgalbumeng.htm>.

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