

Vincent van Gogh



1853-1890 | DUTCH

Buste de paysanne

M.S. Rau
FINE ART • ANTIQUES • JEWELS



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Oil on canvas | 1884-85

Overall canvas: 13 ³/₄" high x 10 ¹/₄" wide | 35 x 26 cm

Viewable canvas: 12" high x 9" wide | 30.5 x 22.9 cm

Frame: 23" high x 20 ¹/₄" wide x 2 ¹/₄" deep

58.4 cm x 51.4 cm x 5.7 cm

“

Since I have been here, not a day
has passed when I have not been
working from morning 'til night on
the weavers or the peasants.

- Vincent van Gogh

”



Few artists have altered the course of art history as profoundly as Vincent van Gogh. Artworks from his brief yet transformative Nuenen period are among the rarest and most coveted in his oeuvre. This extraordinary painting, *Buste de paysanne* from the winter of 1884-85, is one of the few peasant portraits by van Gogh still left in private hands.

By 1884, van Gogh had reluctantly joined his family in Nuenen, where he was surprised to find renewed purpose and direction for his art. He immersed himself in the local community, reconnecting with his roots and becoming especially fascinated with the town's peasant workers. Van Gogh was enthralled with their closeness to land, skilled labor and quiet endurance, admirable qualities that he felt modern urban society had lost. He noted his obsession in one of his letters to his brother Theo:

"I've become so absorbed in peasant life by continually seeing it at all hours of the day that I really hardly ever think of anything else." (Letter no. 493)

In our portrait, van Gogh's deep connection to his subject comes powerfully to life. The woman's piercing gaze is utterly mesmerizing, and the paint is thickly applied in rich, bold strokes, a revolutionary technique that would become van Gogh's hallmark. This masterwork perfectly embodies van Gogh's genius for capturing the true essence of his sitters. As he said himself, *"One must paint the peasants as if one were one of them, as feeling, thinking as they do themselves."*

Van Gogh set out to complete 50 of these peasant heads by the end of the winter of 1885-47 of which survive today. Because of their crucial importance in preparing the artist for his first groundbreaking masterpiece—*The Potato Eaters* (1885)—most of these peasant portraits are already in major museum collections around the world. The Van Gogh Museum alone owns 10, with others residing in the collections of Kröller-Müller Museum, Musée d'Orsay, National Gallery London, National Galleries of Scotland, Belgian Royal Museums, Nelson-Atkins Museum, Norton Simon Museum, Cincinnati Art Museum, St. Louis Art Museum, Kunstmuseum Bern and many more. Our portrait, *Buste de paysanne*, is one of only roughly 10 still left in private hands.



PROVENANCE

C. Mouwen, Jr., Breda, Netherlands

Kunstzalen Oldenzeel, Rotterdam

T.G.M. van Hettinga Tromp, The Hague

Mrs. H.T. Feldmann-van Hettinga Tromp, Epse, Netherlands

Private Collection, Amsterdam

Private Collection, Japan (by 1984)

Sale: Christie's New York, May 15, 1985, lot 8

Private Collection

Myron M. Kaplan, Englewood, New Jersey

Michael Altman Fine Art & Advisory Services, New York (acquired by 2006)

Private Collection, acquired from the above in 2008

M.S. Rau, New Orleans

LITERATURE

J.-B. de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, no. 170, illustrated

J.-B. de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam, 1970, no. 136a, illustrated p. 87

J. Hulsker, *The Complete Van Gogh: Paintings, Drawings, Sketches*, New York, 1980, no. 548, listed and illustrated p. 127; mentioned p. 136 (titled *Peasant Woman, Head*)

J. Hulsker, *The Complete Van Gogh: Paintings, Drawings, Sketches*, New York, 1984, no. 548, listed and illustrated p. 127; listed p. 496 (titled *Peasant Woman, Head*)

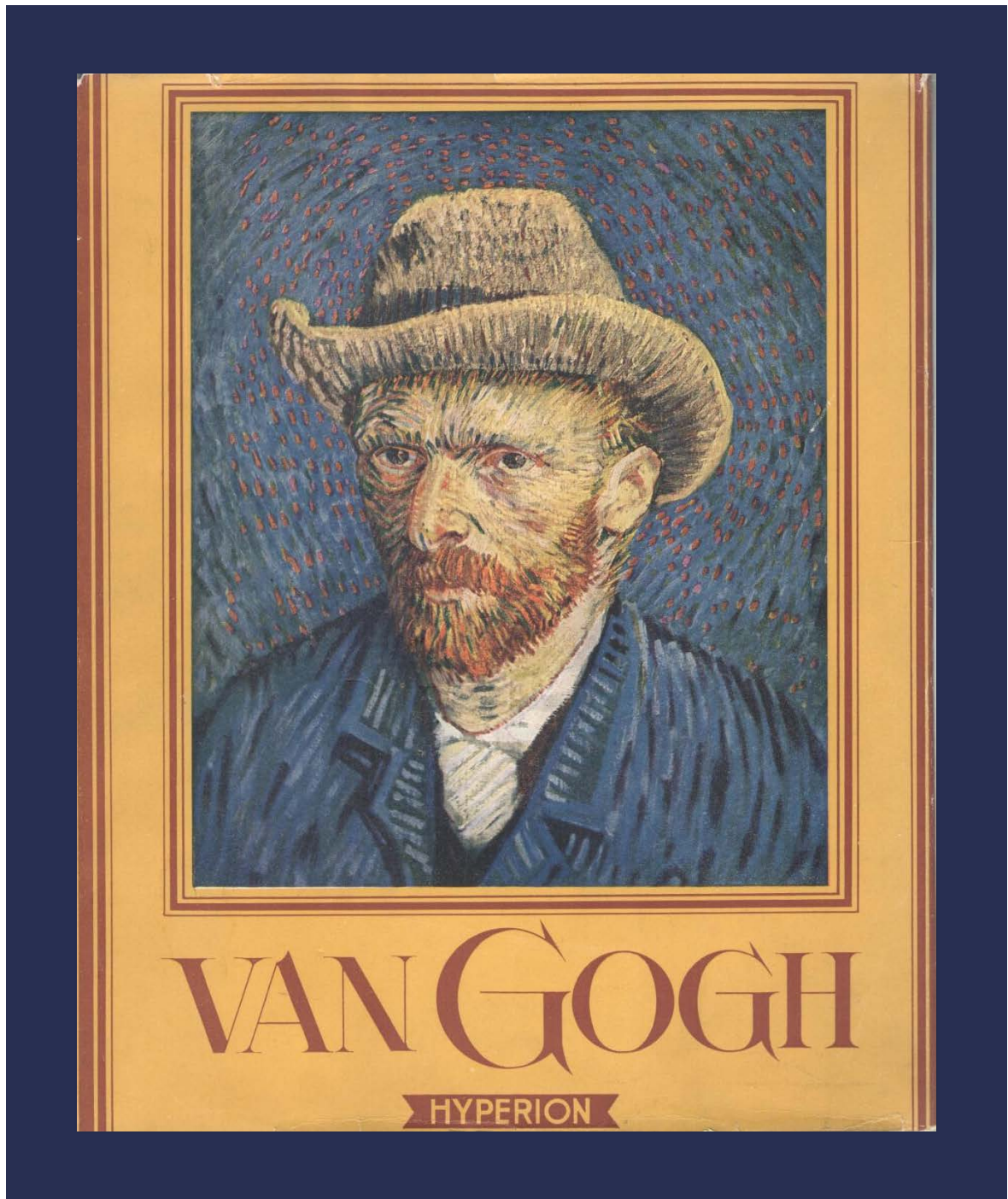
I. Walther and R. Metzger, *Vincent van Gogh: The Complete Paintings*, vol. I, 1990, illustrated in color p. 74 (in reverse) (titled *Head of a Peasant Woman with Dark Cap*)

J. Hulsker, *The New Complete Van Gogh: Paintings, Drawings, Sketches*, 1996, no. 548, listed p. 126; illustrated p. 127; mentioned p. 142 (titled *Peasant Woman, Head*)

EXHIBITED

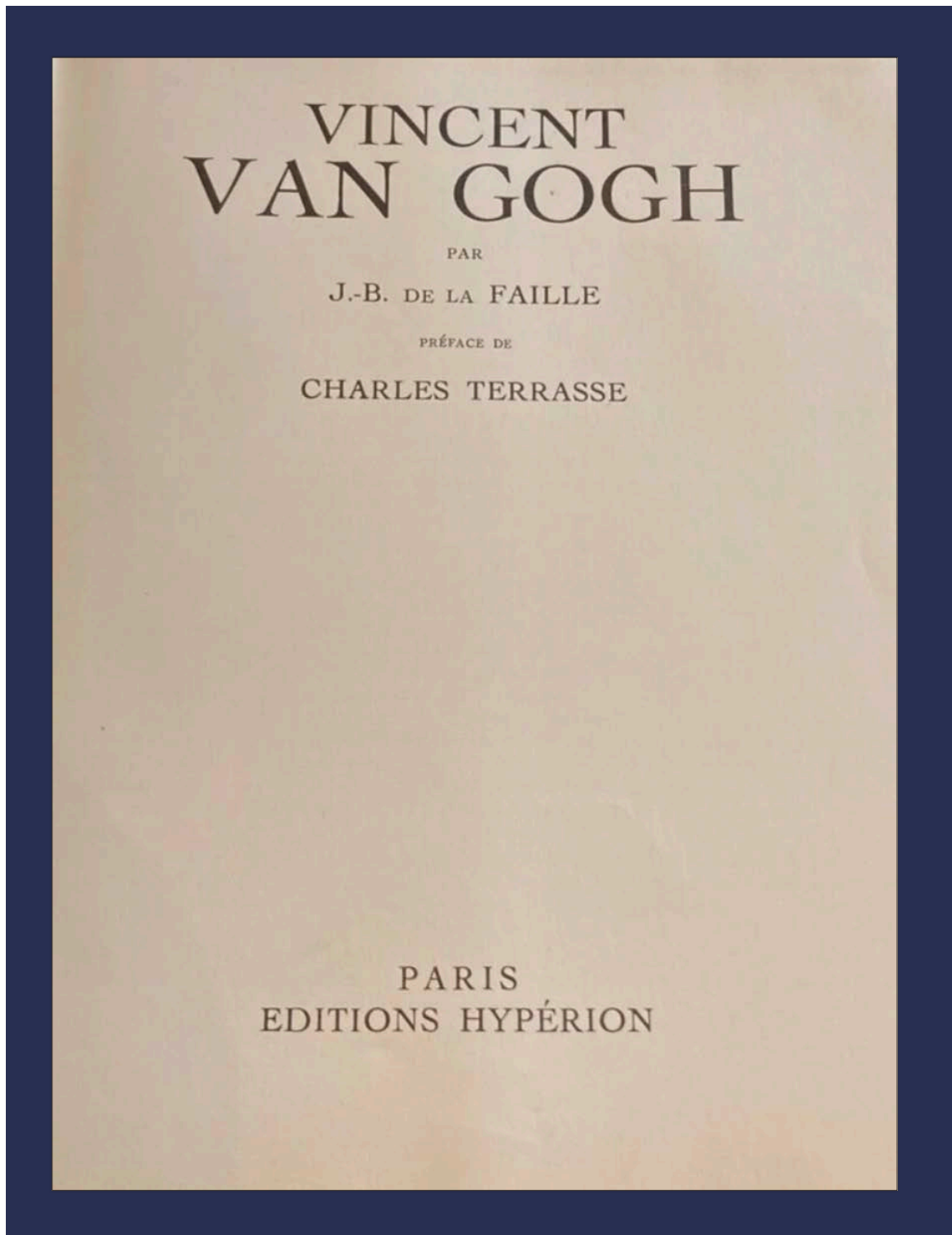
Rotterdam, Kunstzalen Oldenzeel, *Vincent van Gogh*, 1904, no. 15





J.-B. de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, no. 170, illustrated





J.-B. de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, no. 170, illustrated





170. HALF-LENGTH STUDY OF A PEASANT-WOMAN F. 136b.

Nuuen period. 1885. Canvas on wood, 35 by 26 cm.
T. G. M. van Hettinga Tromp collection, The Hague. Oldenzeel Art Gallery, Rotterdam. C. Mouwen Jr collection, Breda.

J.-B. de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, no. 170, illustrated



J.-B. de la Faille

The Works of Vincent van Gogh

His Paintings and Drawings

Reynal & Company

In association with William Morrow & Company

J.-B. de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam, 1970, no. 136a, illustrated p. 87



F 128 129 129a 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 136a

of about 40 painted studies of heads
COLLECTION Sale London [Christie], 6-10
December 1968, nr 52
Present owner unknown

F 133 [H 160] HEAD OF A PEASANT WOMAN:
RIGHT PROFILE

Canvas on panel 39,5 × 30 [15½ × 11¼]
Compare F 133, drawings F 1178 and F 1185 [same
model]
Nuenen December 1884 or shortly later
LETTERS 390 [mid-December] See F 80
LITERATURE Vanbeselaere 1937, pp 291, 342, 415:
March 1885; belongs to a series of heads against a
light background; close in style to F 70 of
February-March
COLLECTION The Hague, G.J. Nieuwenhuizen
Segaar Art Gallery [acquired 1946]

F 134 [H 143] HEAD OF A PEASANT WOMAN:
HALF PROFILE TO THE LEFT

Canvas on panel 38,5 × 26,5 [15½ × 10½]
Compare F 135, F 136 and drawing F 1170 [same
model]
Nuenen December 1884 or shortly later
LETTERS 390 [mid-December] See F 80
394 [February 1885] and 395 [1 March] See F 69
LITERATURE Vanbeselaere 1937, pp 293, 344, 415:
April-June 1885; close in technique to the sketch
for THE POTATO EATERS, F 77 recto, of April
COLLECTION Paris, Musée National du Louvre,
inv nr RF 1954-20, cat Impressionistes 1959, nr 142

F 135 [H 142] HEAD OF A PEASANT WOMAN:
RIGHT PROFILE

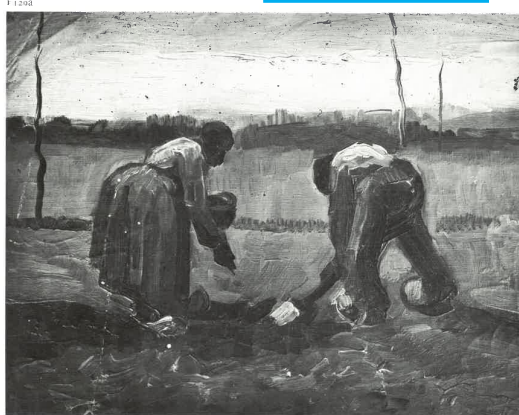
Canvas on panel 37,5 × 24,5 [14½ × 9¾]
Compare F 134, F 136 and F 1170 [same model]
Nuenen December 1884 or shortly later
LETTERS 390 [mid-December] See F 80
394 [February 1885] and F 395 [1 March] See F 69
LITERATURE Vanbeselaere 1937, pp 290, 342, 415:
March 1885
COLLECTION Cincinnati, The Cincinnati Art
Museum [gift of Mr and Mrs John J. Emery], inv
nr 1962-15

F 136 [H 141] HEAD OF A PEASANT WOMAN:
RIGHT PROFILE

Canvas on panel 40 × 30 [15½ × 11¼]
Compare F 134, F 135 and drawing F 1170 [same
model]
Nuenen December 1884 or shortly later
LETTERS 390 [mid-December] See F 80
394 [February 1885] and 395 [1 March] See F 69
LITERATURE Vanbeselaere 1937, pp 293, 344, 415:
April-June 1885; close in technique to F 77 recto of
April. V. W. van Gogh, The Complete Letters of
Vincent van Gogh, 1958, letter 435a; the model is
identified as Sine de Groot
COLLECTION Paris, Dufresne Art Gallery

F 136a [formerly F 136bis; H 170] HEAD OF A
PEASANT WOMAN WITH DARK CAP: FULL
FACE

Canvas on panel 25 × 26 [13½ × 10½]
Compare drawing F 1176, reproduced with letter
389 [same model]
Nuenen December 1884
LETTER 389 [14 December] 'Enclosed you will find a
few scribbles of the heads I am working on...'
LITERATURE Not in Faille 1928 or Vanbeselaere
1937
COLLECTION Amsterdam, Private Collection



J.-B. de la Faille, *Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam, 1970, no. 136a, illustrated p. 87



THE COMPLETE VAN GOGH

Paintings · Drawings · Sketches

Jan Hulsker

HARRISON HOUSE/HARRY N. ABRAMS, INC.
New York

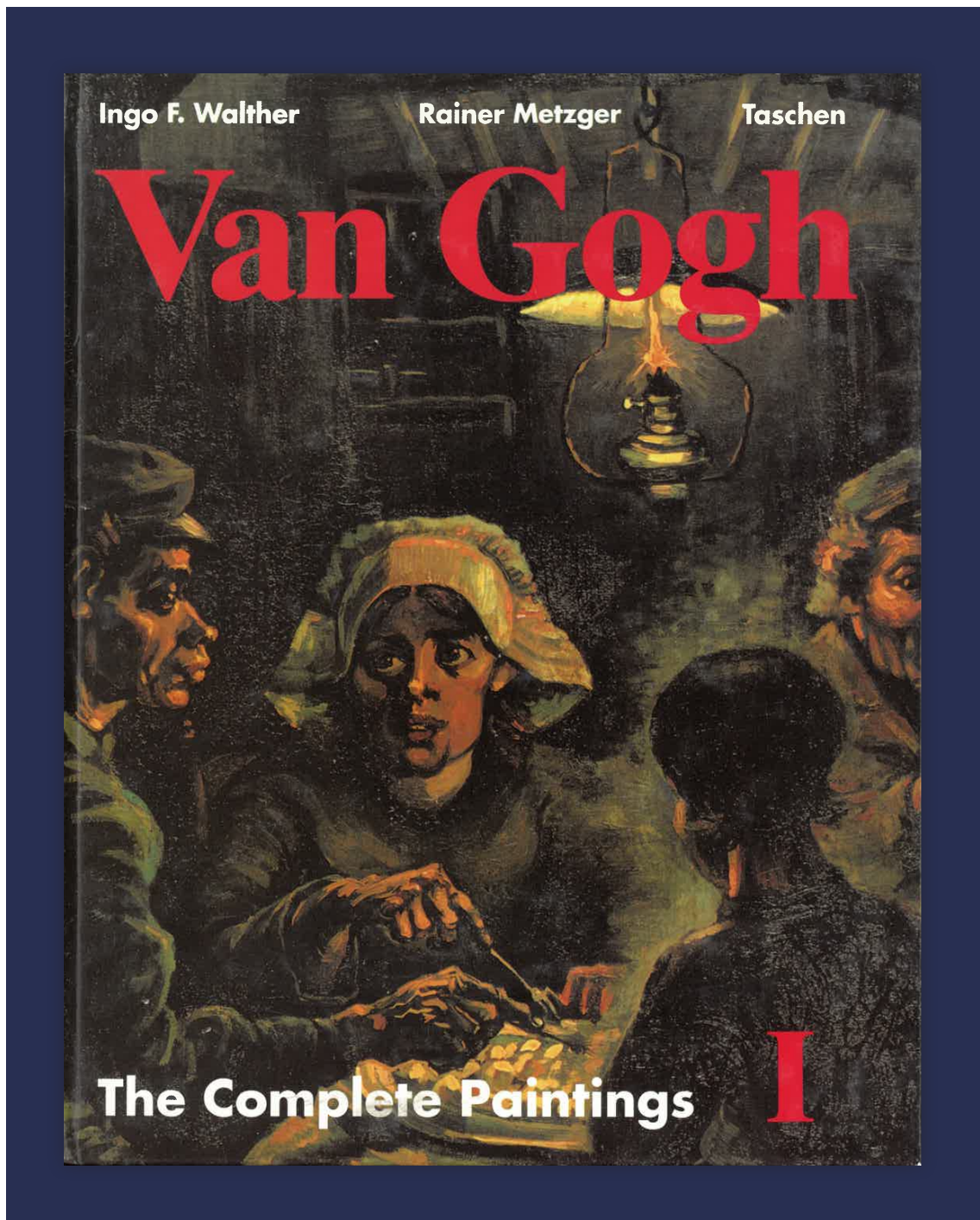
J. Hulsker, *The Complete Van Gogh: Paintings, Drawings, Sketches*, New York, 1980, no. 548, listed and illustrated p. 127; mentioned p. 136 (titled Peasant Woman, Head)





J. Hulsker, *The Complete Van Gogh: Paintings, Drawings, Sketches*, New York, 1980, no. 548, listed and illustrated p. 127; mentioned p. 136 (titled Peasant Woman, Head)





I. Walther and R. Metzger, *Vincent van Gogh: The Complete Paintings*, vol. I, 1990, illustrated in color p. 74 (in reverse) (titled *Head of a Peasant Woman with Dark Cap*)





Head of a Peasant Woman with Greenish Lace Cap
 Nuenen, February-March 1885
 Oil on canvas, 38 x 28.5 cm
 F 74, JH 648
 Otterlo, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller



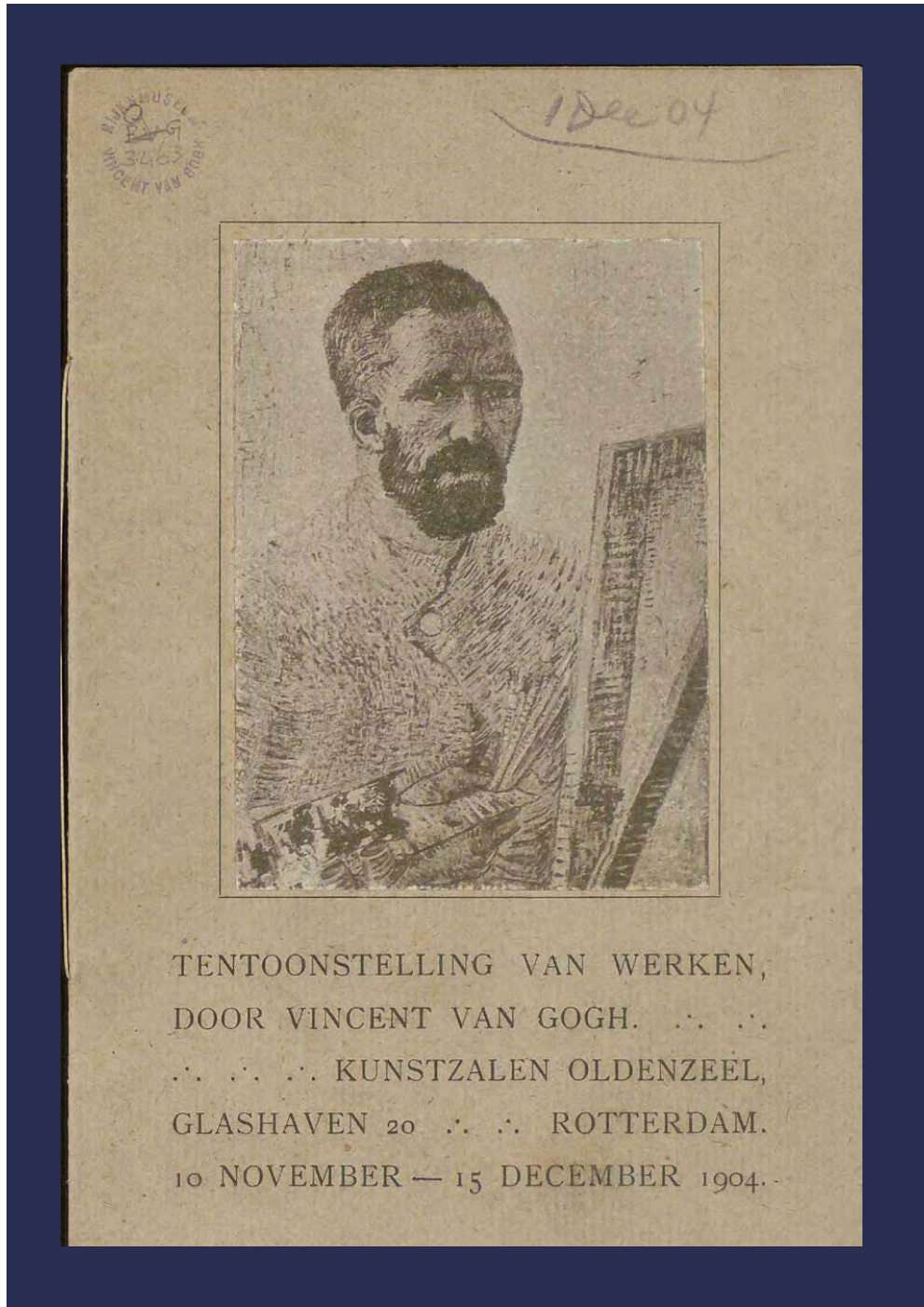
Head of a Peasant Woman with Dark Cap
 Nuenen, December 1884
 Oil on canvas on panel, 35 x 26 cm
 F 136a, JH 548
 Japan, Private collection
 (Christie's Auction, New York, 15. 5. 1985)

van Gogh appropriated all his subjects complete with contexts. He found them in total, finished units which had to be grasped overall if he was to give deeper attention to the details. He was plainly unskilled, and this absence of skill made it impossible for him to take a descriptive approach to things; but this absence was compensated by an expressive vigour that enhanced all his shapes and forms and made sheer energy into an aesthetic quality. In every new work, van Gogh laid bare the roots of his creativity.

PAINTINGS: NUENEN 1885 74

I. Walther and R. Metzger, *Vincent van Gogh: The Complete Paintings*, vol. I, 1990, illustrated in colour, p. 74 (in reverse) (titled *Head of a Peasant Woman with Dark Cap*)





Rotterdam, Kunstzalen Oldenzeel, *Vincent van Gogh*, 1904, no. 15



14. Zittende vrouw.
15. Vrouwtje, half figuur.
16. Staande wever.
17. Stilleven met klompen en kruik. *Chardin*
18. Vrouwekop en profiel.
19. Woningen in den avond.
20. Vrouw met bezem.
21. Weg met hooge boomen.
22. Zittende vrouw voor open deur.
23. Spittende vrouw.
24. Wever.
25. Vrouwekop met roode muts.
26. De maaltijd. *Decamp*
27. Staand vrouwtje.
28. Stilleven met bloempot en kwasten.

Rotterdam, Kunstzalen Oldenzeel, *Vincent van Gogh*, 1904, no. 15



AUCTION COMPARABLES



Vincent van Gogh
Kop van een vrouw (Gordina de Groot) (Head of a Woman [Gordina de Groot])

oil on canvas laid down on panel
Height 41.3 x Width 32.6 cm.
Height 16.26 x Width 12.835 in.
1885

28 February 2023 over 3 years ago

Christie's London

20th/21st Century: London Evening Sale – [Lot 00027]

est. 1,000,000 - 2,000,000 GBP **4,842,000** GBP Ⓢ

est. 1,209,482 - 2,418,964 USD **5,856,313** USD Ⓢ



Vincent van Gogh
Wever naar rechts gekeerd (Weaver Facing Right)

oil on canvas laid down on panel
Height 36.8 x Width 45.2 cm.
Height 14.488 x Width 17.795 in.
1884

09 November 2023 over 2 years ago

Christie's New York

20th Century Evening Sale – [Lot 064 B]

est. 2,000,000 - 3,000,000 USD **5,495,000** USD Ⓢ



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NEWS ART MARKET

Dutch Museum Acquires Van Gogh Work For \$9M

By David Guido Pietroni On Oct 21, 2024



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The **Noordbrabants Museum** in the Netherlands has bought a van Gogh painting for an impressive €8.6 million (\$9.34 million).

Titled '*Head of a Woman (Gordina de Groot)*', the 1885 painting by **Vincent van Gogh** is one of his lesser-known works. Nonetheless, the rise in the artist's popularity in the last decade contributed to the hype around every single work by his hands. Now, the Noordbrabants Museum, located in 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands, has acquired another of his works. The museum bought the painting from London-based collector **Daniel Katz** for \$9.34 million, one of the most expensive van Gogh works ever sold.



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman*

March 1885

Medium: Oil on canvas on wood

Dimensions: 16^{5/8} x 13^{3/4} inches | 42.2 x 34.8 cm



Van Gogh Museum
Amsterdam, The Netherlands



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman*

March 1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 17 x 14^{1/4} inches | 43.5 x 36.2 cm



Van
Gogh
Museum
Amsterdam

Van Gogh Museum
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

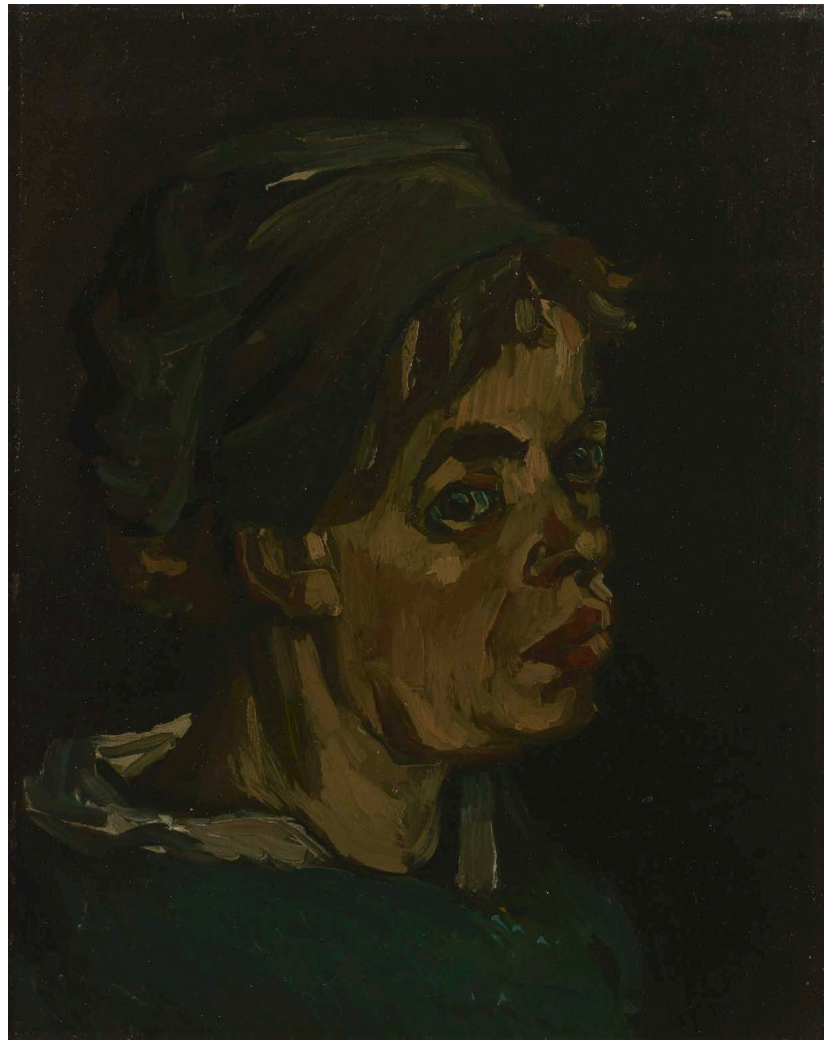


Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman*

March-May 1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 16^{5/8} x 13^{3/4} inches | 42.2 x 34.5 cm



Van
Gogh
Museum
Amsterdam

Van Gogh Museum
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

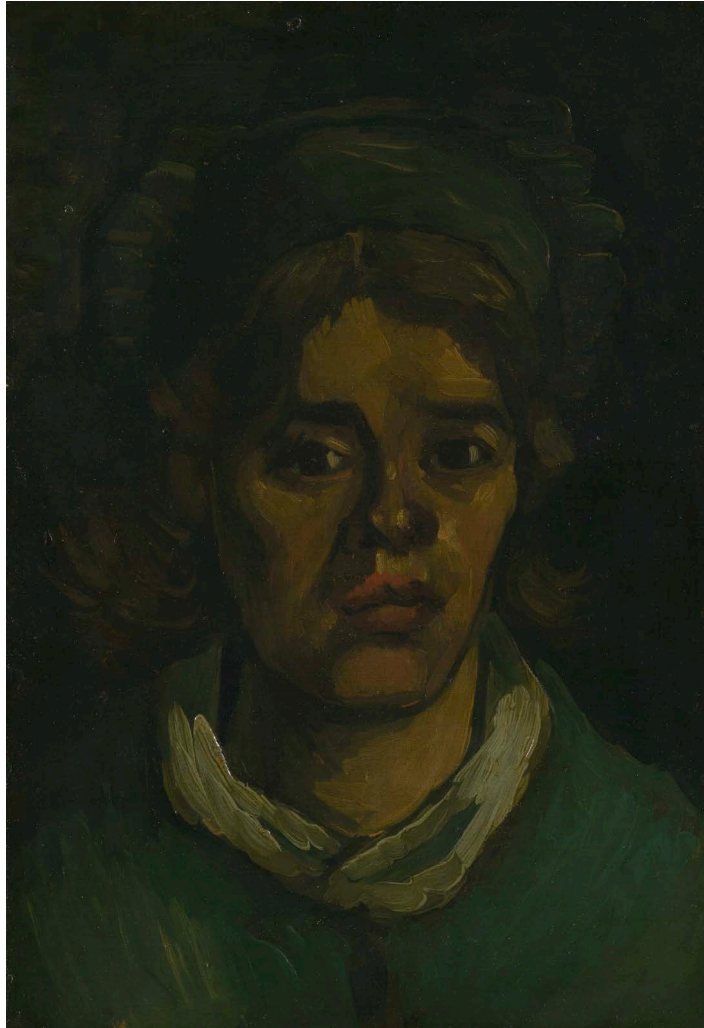


Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman*

March-May 1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 17^{1/4} x 11^{7/8} inches | 43.8 x 30 cm



Van
Gogh
Museum
Amsterdam

Van Gogh Museum
Amsterdam, The Netherlands



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman*

1884-1885

Medium: Oil on canvas on panel

Dimensions: 14 x 10 inches | 35.7 x 25.3 cm



Kröller Müller Museum
Otterlo, The Netherlands



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman*

1884-1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 16^{3/4} x 13 inches | 42.5 x 33.1 cm



Kröller Müller Museum
Otterlo, The Netherlands



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Woman in White Cap*

1884-1885

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 17^{3/8} x 14 inches | 44 x 36 cm



Kröller Müller Museum
Otterlo, The Netherlands



Vincent van Gogh | *Tête de paysanne hollandaise*

1884

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 15 x 10^{1/4} inches | 38.3 x 26 cm



Musée d'Orsay
Paris, France



Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Peasant Woman*

Circa 1884

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 15^{7/8} x 12 inches | 40.3 x 30.5 cm



THE
NATIONAL
GALLERY

The National Gallery
London, England

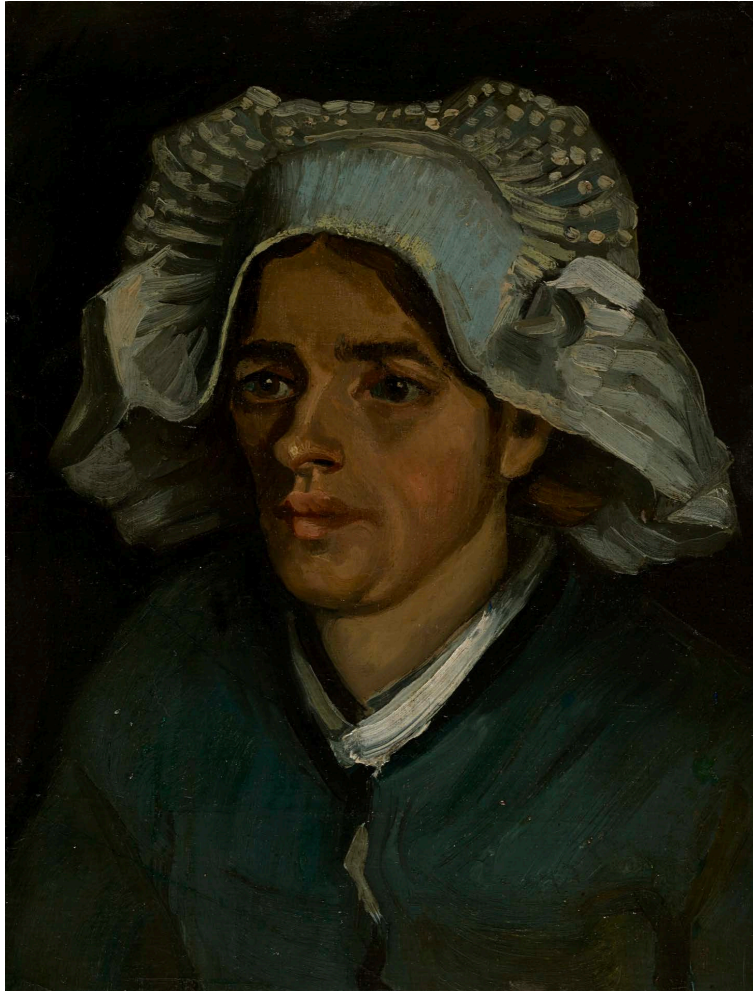


Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Peasant Woman*

Circa 1885

Medium: Oil on canvas on board

Dimensions: 18^{1/4} x 13^{7/8} inches | 46.4 x 35.3 cm



The National Galleries Scotland
Edinburgh, Scotland

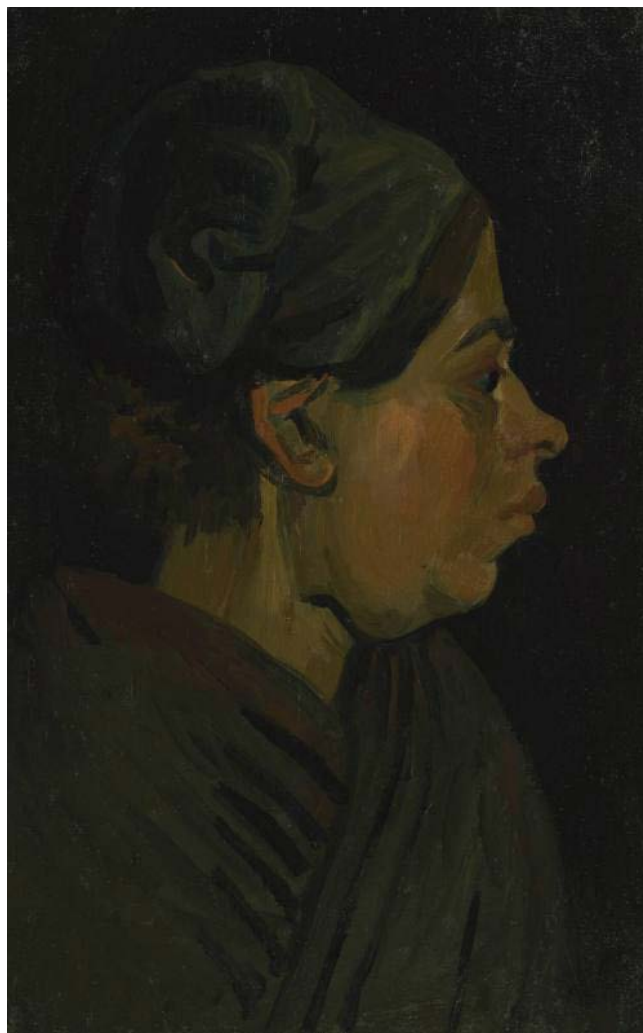


Vincent van Gogh | *Head of a Peasant Woman*

Circa 1884

Medium: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 14^{3/4} x 9^{1/2} inches | 37.5 x 24.1 cm



cincinnati  art museum

Cincinnati Art Museum
Cincinnati, OH, United States



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