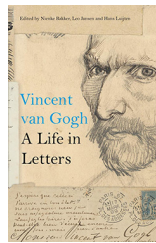
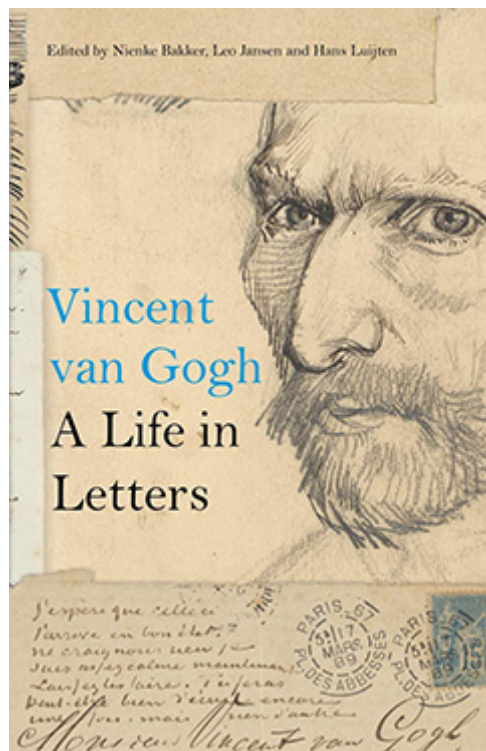


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## Vincent van Gogh A Life in Letters edited by Nienke Bakker, Leo Jansen, and Hans Luijten



What I found especially interesting about the book [\*\*Vincent van Gogh A Life in Letters\*\*](#) edited by [\*\*Nienke Bakker, Leo Jansen and Hans Luijten\*\*](#) published in September 2020 by **Thames & Hudson, Ltd** is that Vincent's story is not told by someone else, rather his life deftly unfolds by Vincent himself through his letters to his brother Theo van Gogh (1857 - 1891) providing the reader with new insight into the mind and world of the artist.



Much has been written about the **Dutch post-impressionist painter Vincent Willem van Gogh** (1853 - 1890) including the biographical novel *Lust for Life* written in 1934 by American writer Irving Stone (1903 - 1989), which was later made into a film by the same name in 1956 starring Kirk Douglas as the artist. As an art lover I have long been interested in the works by Vincent von Gogh and read the Irving Stone book many years ago.

In the book, ***Vincent van Gogh A Life in Letters*** edited by **Nienke Bakker, Leo Jansen, and Hans Luijten**, there is a preface which introduces the reader to a bit of background history of the van Gogh family then delves into the letters from Vincent to his brother Theo that begin on June 24, 1880 and conclude with his last letter dated July 23, 1890 providing great insight into the lives of both brothers and their interaction with one another. It should be noted that Vincent van Gogh died on July 29, 1890, so the final letter takes on greater significance and strength.

It is through reading Vincent's letters which were translated into English, and through his sketches and paintings that he often included in his letters to his brother, that I felt that I had come away with a newfound knowledge and appreciation of Vincent van Gogh after reading the book.

The letters not only provide a fascinating introspective of his life, but they also demonstrate how his work was progressing over the duration of the 10 years that comprise the correspondence. Vincent's vivid

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descriptions enable the reader to clearly visualize his progress of learning to create colors and developing his artistic style to his thoughts behind each of the illustrations included in the letters.

Like so many artists, Vincent van Gogh was misunderstood, and his work was unappreciated during his lifetime, yet that did not deter him from pursuing his passion and creating a prodigious and impressive body of work. During his lifetime he sold little to nothing (one painting); today his paintings are not only highly regarded and valued, they sell in the multi-million-dollar range. As an example of the value of Vincent van Gogh's paintings in today's market, his *Portrait of Doctor Gachet* sold for \$82.5 million US dollars on May 15, 1990, almost 100 years after Vincent's death.

If you love the art of Vincent van Gogh and would like to know more about the man behind the magnificent works of art, be sure to pick up a copy and read this impressive book, *Vincent van Gogh A Life in Letters* edited by Nienke Bakker, Leo Jansen, and Hans Luijten. This 448-page hardcover book with 85 illustrations also makes a wonderful gift.

Until next time, keep enjoying and supporting the arts.

***Vincent van Gogh A Life in Letters*** edited by Nienke Bakker, Leo Jansen, and Hans Luijten, published by Thames & Hudson, Ltd. in September 2020. Hardcover, 448 pages with 85 illustrations: \$39.95, ISBN-10: 0500094241, ISBN-13: 9780500094242

The book is available in bookstores and online, including [Amazon](#) and [Thames & Hudson](#).

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