

# Face To Face

from page C1

Post-Impressionistic phase - beyond realism to something spiritual."

Keyes personally is taken with some of the drawings even though they're in black and white. Few of these works have been seen in America before. "Van Gogh used only the best paper, thick with texture and he applied with such force it almost

indented the paper like a relief."

**Exhibition history**

Keyes developed a fondness for van Gogh's work while living in The Netherlands, where van Gogh was born. During the time he was working on a doctorate at the University of Utrecht and after while compiling a catalogue on old Dutch master prints.

Keyes had access to the major van Gogh collections at the Van Gogh Museum and the Kröller-Müller Museum. Here, he developed an admiration for the artist. So when the second share of the gift, "Portrait of Postman Roulin," came to the museum three years ago, Keyes, as Elizabeth Allen Sheldrake, curator of European Paintings at the DIA, thought to organize an exhibition focused on the Roulin family who were favorite subjects of van Gogh in Arles in 1888. He knew Boston had two portraits of the family and Philadelphia a few. Made the Boston and Philadelphia museums became involved, the concept for the exhibition expanded to include more than 70 works that span van Gogh's tragically short 10-year career. The number of paintings and drawings in the exhibit varies depending on the venue to venue because of the fragility and the need to restrict their exposure to light. The Detroit museum shows 35 paintings and 31 drawings from the 70 works. One gallery is devoted entirely to the Roulin family. The DIA's "Self-Portrait" painted in Paris in 1887, purchased by the DIA and City of Detroit in 1922 is also in the exhibit.

"Certain portraits we couldn't get because of loan restrictions," said Keyes. "A portrait of Gachet from Paris was unavailable because of bequest restrictions. We looked for anything available and decided to focus on early career studies in The Hague (1881-1883) to set the stage for his remarkable period in France."

The only Dutch speaker from the three museums co-organizing the exhibit, Keyes, in the process of drawing together the works from public and private international collections, met with curators in The Hague and Amsterdam.

"The biggest challenge was the time restraint, when all three

institutions could take the show, working around restraints which were caused by "Van Gogh's van Gogh" in LA, and the Art Institute of Chicago and the Van Gogh Museum "Van Gogh, Gauguin: The Studio of the Self" which opens the end of next year."

Traditionally, van Gogh exhibitions were broad surveys until 20 years ago when museums began focusing on chronology with shows such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art's "Van Gogh in Arles" and "Van Gogh in St-Remy and Auvers."

"Van Gogh: Face to Face" is the first focused thematically.

"The portrait exhibit coincides with a revival of portraits in general. There have been exhibits on Renoir and Picasso's women," said Keyes. "In portraits, I think people know there's an elusive sense of what art is. Portraiture is a vehicle for a lot of artistic ideas."

Walking through this premier showing of portraits, the excitement builds. Before installing the exhibition, full-size reproductions of every work in the show were made.

"We've been dealing with a virtual exhibit for two weeks to determine the best relationship of objects," said Keyes. "The European museums have been doing this for some time. As the objects come in we replace them."

Viewers are face to face with van Gogh's drawings as they begin their walk then become mesmerized by his use of color during his time in Paris, St-Remy, Arles and Auvers. "Portrait of a Restaurant Owner" and "Woman by a Cradle" are two of the most impressionistic works from his time in Paris. The influence of Gauguin is evident in 1888 in "The Zouave." The portrait is from the period when the two artists nearly drove each other mad while living together in the "yellow house" in Arles. The final gallery features paintings from the year he spent in the asylum at St-Remy and the short period of time in Auvers before his death. The vastly differing styles of the portraits illustrate Van Gogh's tortured state of mind.

# Impact

from page C1

With the opening of Van Gogh: Face to Face, the DIA will inevitably ride along with the van Gogh phenomenon. Indeed, there's a prevailing sense the exhibit of the artist's 31 drawings and 35 painted portraits isn't the only unprecedented event worth discussing.

Along with record crowds estimated as high as 350,000, the DIA expects that the largest assembled collection of van Gogh's portraits will attract international accolades.

"Over the last decade, it might seem as if the DIA has slipped (in the eyes of the museum community), but having this exhibit goes a long way in demonstrating that we're a player," said DIA Director Graham Beal, who assumed the post in October.

Unlike 10 years ago, when the DIA was reeling from state funding cuts which led to reduced staff and hours of operation, today's direction of the museum appears quite clear.

Last April, the DIA embarked on a 10-year, \$320-million campaign to increase their endowment, exhibit space and update the museum. In less than a year, the DIA is ahead of its fund-raising schedule.

And with pieces from its permanent collection continuously on loan to museums throughout the world, the DIA has effectively translated pieces from their collection into currency.

Perhaps the greatest change in the museum, however, has been perceptual. The transfer last year of day-to-day operations from the city of Detroit to an independent body has minimized political wrangling. Only Beal's decision last November to suddenly close an exhibit of "shock art" attracted unwelcome controversy.

In the last three years, exhibits such as *Splendors of Ancient Egypt* and *Angels from the Vatican* have brought large crowds. But so other exhibit in recent museum history has the equivalent feel of a major blockbuster like the upcoming exhibit of van Gogh's portraits.

Perhaps only an exhibit of Monet's paintings or the long-awaited comeback of Elvis could stir such immediate and intense public interest.

On the surface, Van Gogh: Face to Face appears like a huge money maker. Revenue from tickets, sales of an illustrated book and exhibit-related merchandise is estimated as high as \$2 million.

Expenses for the 66-portrait show, however, are far from modest. The portraits have been loaned from 26 museums, including the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam and from co-organizers, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. In addition, the DIA has extended its hours, increased staff, and has embarked on a marketing blitz to hype the exhibit.

Whatever revenue remains after expenses, said Beal, will be earmarked to fund future exhibits and the general operating budget for the museum.

"We're going into this being happy if we break even," said Beal, who served as director at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, where 70 paintings from the Van Gogh Museum were on exhibit last May.

"On a basic level, a blockbuster is about logistics and traffic flow, and a reminder to people that we're here, and the museum is easy to get to."

With more than 100,000 tickets already sold and interest intensifying, Beal's concern about breaking even sounds more like pre-game jitters.

It's anticipated that 600 people per hour could see the show. "There will be a chain reaction," said Tara Robinson, exhibition coordinator at the DIA.

"People who don't usually come to the museum will come to the exhibit."

Some contend that while blockbuster exhibits attract big crowds, they can also promote only familiar work of known artists. The concern is that lesser-known artists and challenging art is overlooked. But the commercial side of any major exhibit is part of modern-day realities, said Robinson.

"Museums that wish to survive have to make money," she said. "We have to make money in a combination of ways - charitable, on our own enterprise, grants, membership."

**BIRMINGHAM BLOOMFIELD ArtCenter**  
**WINTER TERM 2000**  
TRY OUR WINTER WORKSHOPS AND CLASSES

**REGISTERING NOW FOR SESSION II**  
**MARCH 6 - APRIL 22**

ART HISTORY	MIXED MEDIA	PORTFOLIO PREP
AUTO DESIGN	MINI PAINTING	YOUTH CERAMICS
CALLIGRAPHY	PARTS	YOUTH CERAMICS
CERAMICS	PHOTOGRAPHY	YOUTH JEWELRY
CHINA	POLYMER CLAY	YOUTH MIXED MEDIA
DESIGN	PRINTMAKING	YOUTH PAINTING
DRAWING	SCULPTURE	YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHY
ENGLISH	ART TRIPS & TOURS	YOUTH SCULPTURE
JEWELRY	WATERCOLOR	ADULT & CHILD

BIRMINGHAM BLOOMFIELD ART CENTER  
1516 SOUTH GRANDVIEW ROAD  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48009

(NORTHWEST CORNER OF 14 MILE & GRANDVIEW RD.)  
WWW.BARTCENTER.ORG  
(248) 644-0866

SPONSORED BY THE OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC! NEWSPAPERS

**JOB SEARCH**  
**Tip Of The Day**

with  
**Job Coach**  
**Larry Goldsmith**  
on the net at  
**www.WPON.com**  
or turn your radio dial to  
**WPON AM Radio 1460**  
Monday - Friday at 5:45 p.m.  
bestjobsecurity.com  
Job Coach Larry Goldsmith  
(248) 569-5377

Vote for  
**Five**  
by Tenn

March 10-May 6  
Hilberry Theatre  
Tickets \$11-\$16, Group Discounts  
Call (248) 569-5377

**St. Mary's College "Classics on the Lake"**  
Sponsors: All Long Ford / Observer & Eccentric! Newspapers / Edward BMW / MM/Carroll Services, Inc.

**"The French Connection"**  
A cabaret performance with singers Julia Broholm and Deanna Relyea and Jerry DaPitt, pianist/musical director/arranger... A revue of great songs from and about Paris by Jacques Brel, Cole Porter, Noel Coward, Edith Piaf, Michel Legrand, Kurt Weill and others.

Call (248) 683-1750 for Tickets: \$15 adults, \$10 children 12 and under  
VISA, MasterCard, American Express accepted

**WALTONWOOD**  
Redefining Retirement Living  
Experience the pleasure of independent living.

Take comfort in this elegant community that offers the ultimate in independent living. Choose from one or two-bedroom luxury apartments with kitchens and patios or balconies. Enjoy our fitness center, hair salon, activities, transportation and more. We offer everything you need to live in style with extras such as prepared meals, housekeeping and laundry. Just minutes away from shopping, dining, golf and other pleasures. Call today for more information about our exciting new community or visit our website at [www.waltonwood.com](http://www.waltonwood.com).

**Waltonwood at Twelve Oaks**  
Visit our new center at:  
27475 Huron Circle  
(248) 733-1500  
adjacent to Twelve Oaks Mall

Waltonwood communities offer the finest in independent living and assisted living. Call today for a personal tour:

- Brookhaven Hills (248) 922-2222  
3250 Walton Blvd.
- Royal Oaks (248) 540-4400  
3450 N. Huron Hwy. Ste. 200
- Canfield Park (248) 540-5400  
2000 N. Canfield Center Rd.

**Results 2000**  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ANTHONY ROBBINS

<b>ANTHONY ROBBINS</b> "Creating the Coolest Moments"	<b>DONALD TRUMP</b> "The Art of the Deal"	<b>JOAN LUNDEN</b> "A Lady's Got the Best of the Best"	<b>GEO. H. NORMAN SCHWARZKOPF</b> "Success in Leadership"
<b>SANFORD</b>	<b>BRIAN TRACY</b> "The Art of the Deal"	<b>SUGAR RAY LEONARD</b> "Speed of Light"	<b>THE GOIN</b> "The Art of the Deal"

What will you invest for a full day with these Masters?

**Call Today! 800-598-9488**

Save now for details! 800-598-9488

Monday, May 10, 2000 8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Palace of Auburn Hills • Detroit, MI