

Current Issues in 19th Century Art – Van Gogh Studies 1 / Edited by Chris Stolwijk.--(Van Gogh studies).--Zwolle: Waanders Publishers; Amsterdam: Van Gogh Museum, 2008.--208 p.: ill.--ISBN: 978-90-400-8350-1: €45,00.



Van Gogh Studies 1 is the first in a series of scholarly collections examining the art of the late nineteenth century. The series' goal is to publish current research of diverse viewpoints about the life and work of Vincent van Gogh and his contemporaries. The authors of the seven papers elaborate upon and sometimes contradict prior research and assumptions, and analyze the context of work by and reception of major artists of the period, unearthing some intriguing new information in the process.

Robert L. Herbert examines Henry Nocq's 1894 survey in *Le journal des artistes*, and the responses published in his *Tendances nouvelles* regarding the state of decorative arts in France. Louis van Tilborgh deconstructs several sources to determine exactly when Van Gogh studied in Cormon's studio, pointing out past inaccuracies from previously trusted sources.

June Hargrove looks at Paul Gauguin's sculptural work, and its differences from his contemporaries. Joan E. Greer writes about the intentions behind the Belgian periodical *Van Nu & Straks'* publication of selected letters by Van Gogh in 1893, three years after the artist's death.

David W. Galenson and Robert Jensen take a critical look at Harrison and Cynthia White's popular 1965 publication about the rise of the market for modernism, citing some possible inaccuracies of the authors' perception of the end of the Salon system and the beginning of individual and dealer-promoted artist exhibitions.

Elise Eckermann writes about Gauguin's disappearance from critics' attention when he left Paris in 1895 for Tahiti, and his attempts to achieve recognition thereafter. Finally, Caroline Boyle-Turner writes a fascinating account of a recently discovered well on Gauguin's former property in the Marquesas, which was excavated in 2000; the paper includes a summary of the objects found in the excavation and their relevance to the artist's working and personal life.

This book is illustrated throughout with excellent reproductions in color and black and white that accompany each paper. Also included are charts depicting important statistics relevant to the content of the papers, such as data about the artists appearing in the Salon, their ages, and number of appearances and works in each exhibition. The book contains biographies of the authors, all esteemed established scholars in the field, and an index of proper names and illustrations.

The topics and chronology of the content transition easily between writings. *Van Gogh Studies 1* appeals to both scholars and graduate students in the field of nineteenth-century art history and modernism. This work is also accessible for an undergraduate audience.

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