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A PHILOSOPHY OF BLUE JOOSKE ARNOLDUSSEN

I'm sorry. This article originally wasn't meant to be this philosophical. I was just going to talk about the colour blue. But, as it turns out, Blue isn't just a colour. It's a feeling, and it has a meaning.

Blue is everywhere. When I look around the room, it's in the books on my bookshelf, the CD's in the rack and the LP's on the floor. It's the colour of the journal I write in when I feel Blue (of any kind-I'll get back to that later), and it's the colour of (the bigger part of) the map with the little white pins, pinned up on my door. More importantly, however, Blue is outside.

Blue is when you lay in the grass, gazing up at, and dreaming away underneath perfectly Blue skies. Blue is when you stare into the ocean, the big unknown, wondering what can possibly be down there. To me, Blue means unexpected and unexplored. It means endless opportunity. It means adventure.

Did I say Blue has a meaning? Apologies, I meant to say; Blue has many meanings, and they might differ from person to person, and from time to time. Blue is when you get that feeling, that feeling when something isn't quite right, but perhaps not necessarily wrong, and you can't quite lay your finger on what it is.

'Feeling Blue' is a phrase that I suppose most of us are rather familiar with. But do we all mean the same when we say this? I guess, originally, 'feeling Blue' means feeling this bit of sadness, depression, or loneliness. It's referred to in songs, books, movies, and what not. It's described as a feeling that we can't actually describe. But why? I think the reason we call it Blue, is because we simply don't know. We don't exactly know what we are feeling, and we don't know why we are feeling it. Just like we don't know what's hiding deep down in the ocean, or what might be miles, no, light years above our heads. Blue is the best we can do, as far as we can get, by describing this feeling of uncertainty. But why is uncertainty a bad thing?

I'm not saying that I've never felt Blue in the old-fashioned, almost cliché way that we all do from time to time. Because God knows I do. We all do. But I also feel Blue some other way. Perhaps a less traditional way, if you can put it like that. As I said. Blue, to me. means adventure. Whenever I feel this kind of Blue, I feel like going out and exploring. I feel like discovering places I have never been before. I feel like going places without knowing where I'll end up. My friend taught me a German word (one of the few German words I know - forgive me, my German is about as good as it gets when you order beer at the après-ski) "ferweh", that I think relates to this feeling. It means that you long for far-off places, basically the opposite of the feeling you get when you feel homesick.

Do you ever think of something, or feel something, and then relate that back to a colour? My mom and I used to do that with everything. We used to think of weekdays as colours, or numbers as colours. Or weekdays as numbers. And no, that's not just 1 through 7 in a normal order. When I feel this feeling of wanting to go away, wanting to go explore and wanting to go experience, I think it's Blue. Not just plain Blue, but the pretty kind of Blue where there's actually a hundred different colours hidden within, that only come out in certain lighting. The kind of Blue that keeps changing.

To put it simply, Blue is a beautiful metaphor for, well, a lot of things. If you're trying to talk to someone, or if you're trying to describe a feeling, or an uncertainty, or a need to go pack up your things, stuff them in a backpack, and leave on the next plane out, you now have a perfect way of describing that; "I feel Blue". And if all that was too philosophical for you, I'll let you go with a little fun fact; Blue is also the colour of sunsets. On Mars.

AN ODE TO THE DEPTHS OF BROWN

BY NOAH VINK



When we think of colors, we don't necessarily think of brown. At least, I do not. I think of the rainbow in a bright blue sky the yellow and blue in a Van Gogh painting or of suiting pink sunrise skies. Then we have the non-colors, white and black and their in-between: grev. But where is brown? It is the misfit color out of the happy bunch but is at the same time the most real of them all. Not screaming for attention, but the introvert. Not stealing the shine, but observing patiently. Are we still talking about color? Kind of. Let me tell you why I associate brown with my introverted side and why it is a color that represents calmness and peace. Why it represents the beauty that isn't seen on the first sight, maybe not even a second. Why it is often overlooked by many people, sometimes hard to appreciate, but when it's done right, it is the color that represents the connection with yourself and the rest of the world.

Okay, that went from 1 to 1000 fast, didn't it? Oh well, just like the rest of you all, I felt like I had had some time left since the quarantine started. But actually, I did not. I should have been working on my thesis, but since I am a huge procrastinator I rather spend my time photographing, practicing the handstand, and yes, even meditating. I had tried meditation a couple of times before and it felt like it just wasn't for me. I felt impatient and annoyed and I didn't understand what I was supposed to feel or do. But then a friend of mine added me to an actual meditation WhatsApp group (yes, those exist) in which she sent a voice-memo of some random guru. I was skeptical at first, but since I had nothing better to do anyway (or at least I just ignored all my responsibilities) I started this 20-day meditation challenge.

Day 1 - The voice memo started with peaceful music. A little melodramatic for my taste though. But then a male voice with a soft Indian accent welcomed me and instantly started a story. His voice was so relaxing, that listening to him made me calm instantly. He told a story about abundance. To be honest, I didn't know what that word meant exactly at the moment. But during those 20 days, listening to a voice-memo every day, I began to understand the meaning of the word. It translates into an old cliche: happiness can be felt every day in the smallest of moments. But cliches are cliches for a reason. They are more than true, but actually living by them is a second challenge that is not so easily done.

Instead of only meditating, the voice-memo started every session with a sort of a 'spiritual ted-talk'. For example, day two he focused on the difference between our material world (everything we can see and touch) and everything that goes beyond that. The universe, our feelings, our 'higher self'. He explained his belief, about how everything is interconnected and how we are part of something bigger, even though we can't seem to notice it in everyday life. Even though I was a bit skeptical about this 'spiritual journey' (i mean, that term itself has kind of hippie connotation to it) I somehow got a lot of satisfaction out of the guru's voice memos. His short stories were still pretty down to earth and he also focused on everyday, practical changes to make in your life to be 'happier'.

As people, we are all looking for something. Even though it is something to keep us busy and distracted from a fact that we can't deny: our mortality. I know I am a little bit existential here, but during quarantine, I noticed that I had a lot of time to think, and to overthink. My extroverted side loves to talk to people, to do a lot of things, to distract myself from the questions that keep me up at night. Why are we here and does my life have meaning? What am I going to next, does it even matter?

A question we all seem the have is how to be happy. It seems so easy, but it is the most complex question there is. If you really think about it: what does make you feel happy? It is not the likes on Instagram or the fancy job, right? Happiness is not a state of being, it is those small moments you need to pay attention to. I hear you sighing because I heard this line a lot of times before. But the 20-day meditation challenge learned me how to practice this 'appreciation skill' and instead of only saying to yourself and not doing it.

During this challenge and during quarantine I discovered my new appreciation for nature. I grew up in a village with nothing but nature all around me and I always found it boring. I wanted to go to the big cities, to fancy clubs and stores, and eat at restaurants. But boom, all of that was gone when quarantine started. I think a lot of us have been more outside than ever during the past few weeks and it makes you realize how beauty can be found just in the park around your block or in something simple as a sunset. You realize all those distractions of everyday life as working and clubbing is not what actually makes you happy. It

is the little things. And you have to practice to pay attention to them. Especially when 'normal life' will start again. When you smell the rain through your window, close your eyes and think about how nice it is. When someone smiles at you, smile back, and remind yourself how connected you feel to them. Those little reflections of positivity and happiness will take practice. It is easy to forget them, to not appreciate them, to pay attention to all the (material) things you do not have. But I am convinced that by regularly repeating these little moments of appreciation you will get a feeling of a more positive and meaningful life.

So, how has this all to do with the color brown? Well, as I see it, brown is the color of the earth, of wood, of plants and nature in general. It is a color that often overlooked but represents this calmness that we are all looking for. That feeling of peace and fulfillment. It represents our introverted self, our higher self that does not depend on our ego, but on these little moments of joy throughout the day. Brown represents the opposite of ego. It will let blue, red, and yellow steal the spotlight. Brown is okay with the way things are, it does not feel the need to scream or shout to get attention. It is a color that does not distract and is not looking for distraction either. Brown represents satisfaction and content. I want to have more brown in my life. And by paying more attention to the little moments of joy in everyday life, I hope to find





A LITTLE LIFE: A BOOK ON GROWTH AND FRIENDSHIP

BY ANNA ZWETTLER

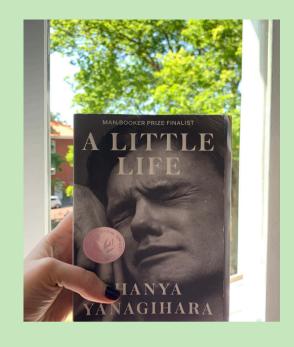
Green. It's a color that can symbolize any number of things, from powerful feelings of love and revitalization to raging envy or sickness. Whether the color activates positive or negative thoughts in your mind, green stands for one thing above all: life. When I see green, I think of personal growth and how I've learned to be independent and understand that some days need to be spent alone. I think of friendship and the security that only loyal people by my side can provide. I think of nostalgia and the reminiscing of simpler times. And I think of the days when getting out of bed in the morning isn't as easy as everyone makes it seem. These are all thoughts that fill my head on occasion and they are green.

At the beginning of this year, I read a book that encompasses this representation of green quite well, though I did not realize it at the time. The novel A Little Life by Hanya Yanagihara has it all: friendship and pain, growth and trauma and love and betraval. The narrative follows the lives of four friends who met at university in Massachusetts: Willem, an aspiring actor, Malcom, a struggling architect, JB, a witty painter and Jude, a successful lawyer. The story focuses on Jude in particular, who suffers from inexplicable health issues, such as the limp that sometimes causes him to break down in pain. After graduating, the four friends move to New York with nothing but their friendship and ambition sustaining them. Even so, Jude doesn't share anything about his past life and who he was before he met

the others. Over the years, Willem, Malcom and JB realize that Jude is living a paradox life: on the one hand he is a confident, successful litigator, yet on the other he is broken and scarred by the past traumas he not only can't speak about, but also defines himself by.

I must say, this was a book that I decided to read without giving it much thought. I had seen positive reviews floating around online, so I figured I'd give it a try, thinking it was just another popular contemporary fiction novel, which I'd like but probably wouldn't love. Little did I know what I was getting myself into. I didn't realize it until one day in January, when I was sitting in Theil building, trying not to stress about the fact that I still hadn't found an internship. I pulled out the 700-page book while looking for my lunch and my friend reacted instantly: "do you know what you're reading, Anna?" At that point, I had read maybe 100 pages and the plot was still more or less pleasant. The calm before the storm, you might say. When she showed me the long list of trigger warnings that make up the story's narrative, I had to conclude that I really didn't know what I'd just set myself up for.

I was transported into four lives that are very different from my own, yet are filled common emotions that everyone experiences. I quickly became so invested that I couldn't put the book down and cared more about the lives of the characters than what was going on



around me. The story not only made me cry when one of them suffered, but it also physically hurt me. Some parts were so graphic that I had to take a deep breath before forcing myself to turn the next page. In the end, it was the positive aspects that kept me going: the feelings of happiness and comfort that came from knowing that the characters could rely on each other, even during the lowest points of their lives. I became obsessed. I spent hours reading into the night and my sleep schedule got worse than ever. I even started looking forward to my morning commute just so I could get in a few pages before a lecture. Anyone who talked to me during these months knew that A Little Life was my current favorite topic and that I couldn't shut up about it. The moment I finished reading the last sentence, I knew how dearly I would miss the characters whom I had grown so fond of. Yet, I knew that I would never reread it. It's not the type of book you reread because the experience can never be recreated. You escape into the reality of others once and then you take a piece of what they have taught you with you to your own life. This may sound cheesy, but it's impossible to dedicate so much of your time to

people, even if they are fictional, and forget them as soon as you close the book for the last time.

Truthfully, I wouldn't recommend this novel to just anyone. I understand that this is a weird thing to say, especially because I just explained how this book took over my life, so I'm sure you would've expected me to tell you to pick up a copy as soon as you finish reading this. However, this experience, though powerful, is not one that everyone can handle. If you do want to read it, don't make the same mistake that I did. Be prepared that you are going to read about trauma in a way that will make you stop reading in shock. But you'll also have a whole new outlook on the importance of friendship and sharing your thoughts with those closest to you. And above all, you'll experience a raw, genuine and green representation of life.

ORANGE OBSESSION LARA DOMARADZKA

A representation of happiness? The most popular juice in the world? What is it exactly that makes orange a special color? I'd like to invite you to dive into this orange obsessed article and explore the world of not only the delicious fruit full of vitamin C, but also a more social significance of the color itself.

"ORANGE IS RED BROUGHT NEA-RER TO HUMANITY BY YELLOW." - WASSILY KANDINSKY

FACTS & TIPS

#1 So, let's begin with a simple question: Why is orange called orange? You must have asked yourself this question at least once. Which came first? Was the fruit named after the color or the color after the fruit? The answer is THE FRUIT. It is suspected that the word actually comes from old Dravidian languages and means 'fragrant'. This is not a surprise since oranges and more specifically orange based perfumes smell absolutely delicious. Suggestion from the author: smell good, wear orange perfume.

#2 Every culture has their own idea about the meaning of orange. In my reality, which I'm going to describe as Western, we tend to associate orange with warmth, autumn, or even specific celebrations like Halloween. Additionally, here in the Netherlands orange is the color of the Royal Family and a major element of the Koningsdag celebration on April 27th (wear orange everyone!!!). In Eastern cultures, orange is meant to symbolize happiness, love and harmony. There is a theory that because of this symbolization, the robes of Buddhist



monks are dyed orange. Unfortunately, this beautiful theory is not true. The robes are orange because the dye is easily accessible, as it's made out of an orange flower that often grows in Southeast Asia. In the Middle East, orange and golden are associated with mourning.

#3 In the art world, the orange pigment was often highly valued as the materials it was made from were either expensive or hard to obtain. These materials included: saffron, orpiment (a mineral that the ancient romans would trade with), and turmeric. The synthetic orange pigment called chrome orange was invented, along with oil paints in portable tubes, in the 19th century. It gained popularity due to impressionist painters, such as Monet, Renoir, and Gauguin, who were actively using it in their paintings. However, it is almost impossible to talk about the color orange in art without mentioning Vincent Van Gogh, yet another Dutch native very enthusiastic about the color. He would mix his own shades of orange out of other colors to achieve a specific effect, and contrast it with other colors, for example, with multiple shades of blue.

"THERE IS NO BLUE WITHOUT YELLOW AND WITHOUT ORANGE."
- VINCENT VAN GOGH

LARA'S LITTLE ART REVIEW

It would be a shame to write an article about a color and not relate it to art. This is why I'd like to take a look at an artwork titled Orange, painted by an artist whose name already appeared in this article, Wassily Kandinsky, one of the greatest painters of the 20th century. His work aligns with the creative movement of German Expressionism and he was the leader of an artistic group Der Blaue Reiter (translates to: The Blue Rider). However, we could say that it is impossible to simply classify him under that one style. Kandinsky's cosmic works can also be described as abstract expressionist or as works that simply deserve their own category.

Apart from painting, Kandinsky studied art (and colors) from a more academic point of view. In his early days, the painter published Concerning the Spiritual in Art, a short book about how color affects our emotion and how it can help us express it. This Color Theory can also help us, as the audience, understand Kandinsky's paintings better. They all are very expressive with a multitude of colors. Some art historians argue that the painter experienced synesthesia, a condition that enabled him to expe-

rience two senses at once, for example seeing colors while listening to music. This can also be used as a tool to help us understand his work. In his Color Theory Kandinsky agrees with the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and describes orange as a lively but harsh color. Based on this we can only imagine what intense emotion the artists experienced while painting Orange in 1923.

It is surprising how much meaning there is behind colors. Afterall, orange is not the most common color observable in nature. Our ancestors might have seen orange sunsets and orange fruit, and somehow that was enough to make orange a symbol in some of the most important areas of their lives, such as: culture, religion, tradition, and art.

I'd like to conclude with a quote by Ram Charan.

"THE SKY TAKES ON SHADES OF ORANGE DURING SUNRISE AND SUNSET, THE COLOR THAT GIVES YOU HOPE THAT THE SUN WILL SET ONLY TO RISE AGAIN."





NOT JUST FOR GIRLS BY LIZE VAN LOOIJ

Pink is probably one of my favourite colours. When I am thinking of pink, I think about a happy colour. I think about sweetness. And I probably think a little bit about love, passion and romance. Even though we all know that red is the official colour of love. Pink still takes us to that place a little bit.

Initially I wanted to state that pink to me can be a bit of a controversial colour. Because, let's be honest, still not all boys can hear the work 'pink' without pinching their face and saying something like 'yuck, that's for girls'. Well, it is probably not this intense, but some boys do tend to avoid the colour pink as much as possible. I never understood this, I have never seen a girl do the same to the colour blue. Even though the blue has been initially the colour of boys. In my younger years, I would have rather walked around in a pink dress than in a blue one. Because, 'no mom, blue is for boys!'.

However, today I would not even think twice about if I don't look to boyish in my blue t-shirt. So my thought was, why can us girls have stepped away from the highly commercialized distinction between blue and pink, while boys still hold on tight to the thought that pink is too girly. But I had never taken

into consideration that colours often have multiple associations. Take for example red. This can be seen as the colour of love, but on the other hand also as the colour of power, which has not that much to do with love. In this way, it is not just the boy/girl association with the colour pink that makes boys dislike the colour. It is much more about the other associations that are made with the colour. Like the association with candy or chewing gum (you know the really sweet pink ones that make your teeth fall out), barbies and also the slight association with love and romance. But when you think of blue you will probably have a more neutral association like water, the ocean, maybe calmness, and even denim. Those are things that do not necessarily have an association with manliness. Where love, romance, passion and sweetness can have an association with femininity and girliness. And maybe it is also the fact that over the last few years the colour pink has found its way back into the fashion scene.

So when I think about it in this way, it is not the colour that is the problem. The problem is the association made with the colour. I blamed the colour pink, when actually society, which is saying that it is not cool yet for boys to be associated with femininity, is the one to blame.

THE SHADES OF PURPLE

BY TABEA NORDHAUSEN

If you were looking for an adaptation of 50 shades of grey, I am sorry in advance to tell you that this article will disappoint you then. Luxury, wealth, royalty and mystery are words usually associated with the color purple. Purple combines both the calmness of blue and the fire of red. The calmness of blue can be found in lighter shades of purple, while the fire of red can be found in darker shades. The title "50 shades of purple" is only applicable because there are 50 shades of purple that exist, probably even more.

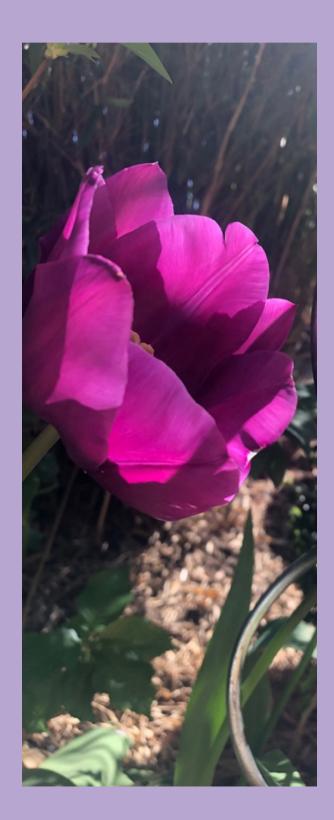
As quarantine forced most of us to go back to our home country, I am realizing how much I took for granted. I grew up in a small town in Germany, which I started to hate when I got older and I swore I would leave, move into a big city and never come back. Since coming back here in March, I realized how much calmer the life on the countryside is. I actually found myself missing waking up to the noise of lawnmowers or the sound of birds chirping. Now that I am here for almost a month, I cannot understand how I disliked living here that much. Obviously, I had my reasons and looking back, they were legitimate. But nothing compares to being with your family, in the house you grew up in and seeing all the little things you enjoyed as a kid. Playing outside with your friends for hours, going on a walk in the forest or just exploring the small town with the same people living there, that always lived there.

Back to the color purple, I link living here to both shades of purple. Red and blue. Red as in the way I used to love my life here as a kid and how much of myself can still be found in this place. Blue to finally coming back and realizing how much I actually love this place and coming to terms of having spent most of my life here.

On the other hand, I always find myself missing Rotterdam and my friends. It is like my second home now; my friends are like my second family. Coming there, not knowing anyone and being really quiet, I had my troubles. Luckily, I met so many amazing people who were patient enough to get to know me and become my second family.

I think quarantine is a unique opportunity to think about your life, where you are from, what you might miss in your life and how to get it or get it back. For me, I realized how much I missed writing in my mother tongue and writing small paragraphs about stuff that is not related to anything major. Paragraphs that are only written for me.

This is the time to try new things or just recover from university or work and get used to this new way of life we have to adapt to until we can start living normally again. This new life of shades of purple, blue and red. There are red and blue days, but together they become purple, making it a luxury to be alive.





THE DEATH OF RED

ANNA WIVEL BOUCHARD







When it was first announced that the theme of our 3rd edition of the EmbrACE magazine of this academic year was going to be Colour, and that we were all supposed to choose a colour to write about, I jumped at the opportunity to write about one of my favourite colours, the vibrant red. The colour red is has many associations, for example emotions such as love, passion, anger, or things such as different types of berries, Pennywise the Clown or different types of clothing. Nevertheless, I surprisingly found nothing much to write about. Most, if not all, topics regarding the colour red have been exhausted to the point where all I wrote was a mere repetition of other articles, and considering the universities strong rules on plagiarism, I decided against it.

The colour red is such a prominent part of our society, we see it on logos, flags, lips, clothes, TV and just about every facet of life, however that is all that the colour red has become. The colour red has become a mere way of drawing someone's attention and hoping that they will focus upon what is beyond the red. Logos pull you in to look at the product, clothing pulls you in to look at the person behind the clothes, and films want to convey an emotion, a topic which is well covered (trust me I did the research). The truth of the matter is that red used to have a deeper meaning, however it has become nothing more than a symbol, and a pretty dull one at that. All the other colours of the rainbow are growing in depth and symbolism day by day, with Sheldon Cooper even trying out the phrase "You look positively orange with loneliness" on the sitcom The Big Bang Theory.

The colour red has become nothing more than it was hundreds of years ago, it still symbolises the same things. The colour green not only represents nature, it now represents a heavy debate upon the environment and pollution and a world which we must save. Blue now represents the technology which we hold in the palm of our hands as if extensions to the human body itself. The colour pink now represents the suppression of billions of women and the feminist fight. The colour red, unless you count the code red level emergency we are facing with the coronavirus, represents all the same things, tension, love, anger, blood and some ruby slippers, the colour red has come to a stale mate.

In fact, the colour red has becoming nothing but a statement. The power of a red dress, as shown by Audrey Hepburn, Julia Roberts and Jessica Rabbit, is a power which cannot be understated. The power of the colour red is also one which many political parties have known, unfortunately, however that is beside the point. The girl in the red dress from the Matrix, for instance, is the perfect embodiment of how red has the unbelievable power to reel one in due to brightness and boldness, but once again, that is it. A piece of red attire is just like a logo, it gets the attention of the eye, but the red does no more. Thus the question remains, has the colour red died.

Refer<mark>enc</mark>es:

The Wizard of Oz (1939) Funny Face (1957) The Matrix (1999)



Y E L L OW



Stuck at home, thinking of the colors that make me happy I think of the bright color yellow. It being the sun that, thank god, is shining outside or the cute little bees on my balcony. The painting Sunflowers by Vincent van Gogh has really captured the feeling of yellow to me. It is so much more than just a static painting, there is depth and vitality in it. The first time I saw them the Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam it did not linger with me but when I saw it the second time the colors of the flowers managed to resonate. The more you look the more you see. It is impressive that the painting is able to do that considering the fact that in its original state the colors were even lighter, contrasting even more. For instance, the core of the flower on the right used to be light purple instead of blue and the petals a more radiant yellow. Still, the picture is bright and feels like it was painted just a few seconds ago.

At the time, the late 1880's, paintings of flowers where in popular demand and, needless to say, getting a flower to model for you was more attainable than having to portray a person. At the time flowers were Van Gogh's muse. He went and started with his first study on sunflowers in Paris '87, close up trying to capture its details. Van Gogh arranged an exposition in a small restaurant with his work and those of some colleagues. A friend of him, a well-known painter, Paul Gaugain, appreciated them and his admiration reassured Van Gogh the work was, in fact, expectational. He continued his yellow paintings in the South of France and invited Gaugain in his house there. According to the letters Vincent wrote back then, he was anxious for his arrival, rearranging furniture and working hard on the promised (six) sunflower paintings he would make for his bedroom. When his friend finally arrived, they worked and painted together. Both so inspired that not the rain could stop them



from finishing their projects. Gaugain made a beautiful portrayal of his friend working in ecstasy, capturing him and his signature colors. However, their friendship did not work out, Vincent's mental health detoriated and the commented on his portrait by Gaugain: "it is certainly I, but it's I gone mad". Their friendship soon ended by emotions running high and heated arguments, joylessly followed by Van Gogh's infamous episode where he cut of his own ear. This was the start of multiple hospitalizations and sickness for him. The painting originally intended for Gaugain was the only one of the flower collection staying in Vincent's family after his death. Later being bought by the National Gallery in London and slowly paving the way for his international reputation.

Even though this story surrounding his Sunflowers is a sad one, it does lets us know that the same way that there are highs, there are lows. This particular low did leave the way for interpretation. Do you feel the realistic radiance of the flowers or is it more of a manic portrayal? Does it matter? Van Gogh's life story (this just being a small part of it) gives his work another perspective for the better or for worse.



Van Gogh's Sunflowers Illuminated: Art Meets Science

Ella Hendriks

Marije Vellekoop



