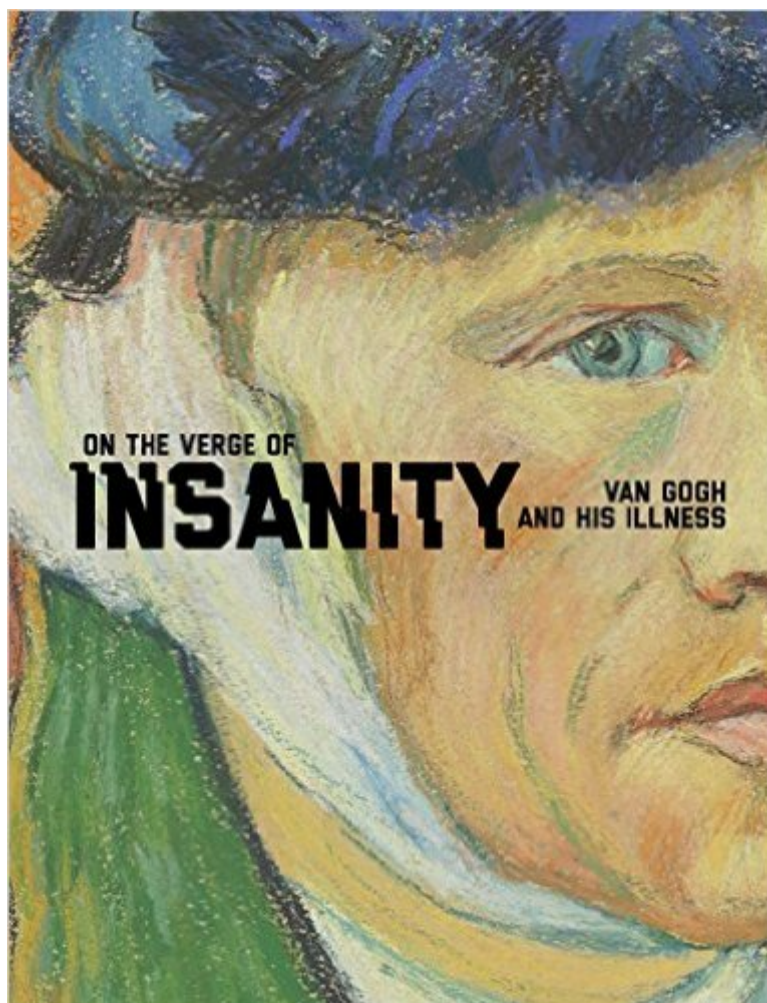


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# On The Verge Of Insanity: Van Gogh And His Illness



## Synopsis

Accompanying the groundbreaking exhibition currently at the Van Gogh Museum, this publication features new information on Van Gogh's self-inflicted wound to his ear as well as identifying the revolver that was likely used in his suicide. The mental state of Vincent van Gogh (1853--1890) has been a perennial source of discussion and conjecture since his death by suicide. Was he mentally ill or a genius? What was the precise nature of Van Gogh's illness? Did it influence his work? This intriguing publication examines how Van Gogh's mental condition revealed itself in 1888 and how he struggled with it throughout his life. Van Gogh's letters to his brother Theo, his artist friends, and his sister Willemien reveal that his primary reason for living was his art. Richly illustrated with artworks, letters, previously unpublished historical documents, and photographs, *On the Verge of Insanity* provides a nuanced and considered overview of an extraordinary man who had to cope with mental illness at a time when the symptoms were readily misunderstood and professional treatment was insufficient. The authors also offer a detailed account of the circumstances surrounding Van Gogh's death in Auvers-sur-Oise, and they review the many diagnoses that have been proposed since the artist's death.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

What a gorgeous book this is. It is filled with images of Van Gogh's work, including some I had not seen before as well as photographs and letters. It's well written and gives an account of Van Gogh's struggle with insanity through letters and accounts. It is a well-researched book put together by

someone who really loved the topic. It's printed on heavy paper and the images are reproduced with clarity and detail. This is not a biography of the painter's entire life. It only represents the last 18-months. However, reading it may inspire some to search out a full bio or at the very least the collection of letters between Vincent and his brother, Theo. It is worth adding to your book/art collection.

On the Verge of Insanity: Van Gogh and His Illness by Marije Vellekoop et. al. is a free NetGalley ebook that I read in August during a sleepless, raining, early morning. Over the series of four essays, several photographs and paintings, and an appendix full of transcribed correspondence, Van Gogh's life is laid out and analyzed more thoroughly than I've ever come across before. Careful not to make assumptions or diagnoses where they would seem necessary, I appreciated both this book's brevity and earnestness to present his life as honestly as possible, despite how short it had been.

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