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Art - Temporary Exhibitions

In the Footsteps of Van Gogh 2015

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Seventy Days, Eighty Masterpieces



A field and bell tower in Auvers-sur-Oise. @ Dominique Martinelli

Amazingly, although Vincent Van Gogh spent only 70 days (May 20-July 29, 1890) in the town of Auvers-sur-Oise, located an hour north of Paris, he made some 80 paintings there during his last days on earth. Not surprisingly, the town has become a pilgrimage site for Van Gogh lovers, and it is now gearing up for the 2015 summer season, which marks the 125th anniversary of his death, with a series of exhibitions and events and even a new tourist office.

The real attraction for most visitors is the small, humble room under the eaves in the Auberge Ravoux where Van Gogh lived and



The Auberge Ravoux in 1890. © Institut Van Gogh

died, the victim of a self-inflicted gunshot wound that took two days to finish him off. The room has been left untouched and empty, with the exception of a single chair, the one his brother Theo sat on while keeping vigil over him during his last two days. Owner Dominique-Charles Janssens hopes to soon acquire a painting by Van Gogh to hang in the room, where the artist stacked up dozens of his works under his simple bed. Many of those paintings, which were hung on the walls surrounding his casket, were given away to friends at his funeral, held in the inn because the local priest refused use of the church for a suicide.

Another touching reminder of the close relationship between Vincent and Theo Van Gogh is their plain, ivy-covered graves side-by-side in the local cemetery. A walk there takes you past a wheat field and a number of



The graves of Vincent and Theo Van Gogh in Auvers. Photo © Paris Update