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**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**  
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Since the opening of the Vincent van Gogh Exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art on November 5, 1935, more than 100,000 persons have seen it. As the Exhibition will be on view through January 5, it is expected that the total attendance will rise considerably above that figure.

A number of theories have been advanced to account for the tremendous popularity of the great modern Dutch artist. In the opinion of Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum, van Gogh's popularity is just what the artist himself would most passionately have desired. "Again and again," said Mr. Barr, "van Gogh wrote of his desire to make pictures for laborers, peasants, miners, weavers, fishermen, postmen, seamen and shopkeepers--in short, for the great aesthetically naive public. It is the central miracle of van Gogh's artistic career that with such an evangelical desire for popularity he never for a single moment compromised with the popular taste of his time--which was then even more lazy, conventional, and unadventurous than it is now.

"Of course, the books written about van Gogh's sensational and unhappy life have increased the public interest in his art--but the books themselves would never have been written had not van Gogh been first of all a great artist. That he should also be a popular artist--probably more popular today than any other artist of the past or present - is really remarkable when one recalls that he has been dead only fifty years.

"Why are van Gogh paintings popular? One is tempted to say that his popularity depends on those very qualities which shocked and puzzled people not only during his lifetime but for thirty or forty years after his death. For it is only recently that his gay, decorative, exaggerated color, his tortured drawing, his flat, unconventional perspective and the direct and passionate emotionalism have attracted rather than repelled the general public. Only a few years ago, for instance, the art critic of the leading morning paper of one of our large cities wrote: 'Van Gogh was a crazy galoot ..... whose paintings ..... at their worst resemble the crude elemental

"expressions" which nit-wits affix to sidewalks, barn doors and elsewhere - especially elsewhere.' Ironically enough this season--less than ten years after the criticism was written--a museum of that very city will act as willing host to a guest exhibition of van Gogh's art!

As an indication of the fact that van Gogh's work itself is the cause of his popularity--and the interest aroused in the tragic life of the artist due more to the appeal of his art than vice versa--the Museum presents a number of interesting facts and figures:

1. Shortly after the War, reproductions of the paintings by van Gogh and his great contemporaries began to appear in large numbers. The following figures refer to the number of paintings issued in the larger, more expensive reproductions. When cheaper prints are included, the figure for van Gogh is increased to 120. Seurat, 1; Gauguin, 11; Monet, 21; Renoir 30; Cézanne, 34; van Gogh, 47. Even the extremely popular Maxfield Parrish reproductions number only 37. It is impossible to estimate the number of prints of each sold, but the number of paintings reproduced is a clear indication of the relative popularity of each artist's work. It is notable that all but two or three of the van Gogh color reproductions were made between 1922 and 1933, and although there has been an increase in the recent sale of van Gogh reproductions it has not been disproportionately great in the past year alone.

As nearly as can be ascertained from figures obtained from print dealers, the three most popular color reproductions in the world during the past quarter-century have been: September Morn by Chabas, Portrait of the Artist's Mother by Whistler, and Sunflowers by van Gogh.

2. The Meier-Graefe biography of Vincent van Gogh was first published in Munich in 1918. There were two more German editions and in 1922 an English edition was brought out in London and Boston, republished in 1926, and followed in 1928 by the inexpensive popular edition of Payson and Clarke. In the fall of 1933 a single-volume American edition of the Meier-Graefe biography was published by Harcourt, Brace and Company and was a Literary Guild choice for December of that year. The sale of this American edition has more than doubled in the two months (November and December) since the van Gogh Exhibition has been on view at The Museum of Modern Art.

The great popular success of Irving Stone's novel about van Gogh, Lust for Life, began with a ten-thousand-volume printing and rose into best-seller lists almost from the date of publication. Although it has maintained its popularity exceedingly well, the publishers report a decided spurt in sales since the opening of the van Gogh Exhibition, necessitating two reprints of the novel. Public and circulating libraries also report a great increase in the demand for books on van Gogh during the past two months.

After the van Gogh Exhibition closes at The Museum of Modern Art Sunday night, January 5, it will be sent at once to the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, Philadelphia, where it will open January 13. It will then be seen at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, from February 17 to March 16; at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, from March 23 to April 20; and at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, from April 27 to May 25.