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Bonilla y Asociados
desde 1950



Título: Van Gogh Up Close

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Precio: \$960.00

Editorial:

Año: 2012

Tema:

Edición: 1ª

Sinopsis

ISBN: 9780300181296

This sumptuously illustrated book offers a completely new way of looking at the art of Vincent van Gogh, by exploring the artist's approach to nature through his innovative use of the close-up view. Focusing on the last years of the artist's career—from 1886 until his death in July 1890—an international team of leading scholars in the field examines Van Gogh's radical approach to the close-up and sets it in the context of contemporary and historical references, such as his hitherto unrecognized use of photography and his fascination with the Old Masters and with Japanese art and culture.

One hundred key paintings dating from his arrival in Paris in 1886 to the end of his career show how Van Gogh experimented with unusual visual angles and the decorative use of color, cropping, and the flattening of his compositions. In some paintings he zoomed in on a tuft of grass or a single budding iris, while depicting shifting views of a field or garden in others. Van Gogh: Up Close not only reveals how these paintings became the most radical and innovative in the artist's body of work but also demonstrates that, far from being a spontaneous or undisciplined artist, Van Gogh was well aware of the history of art and was highly conscious of his efforts to break new ground with his work.