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Dutch Police Arrest Man Peddling Forged Vincent van Gogh Painting for \$17 Million

Sarah Cascone, Friday, August 21, 2015



Vincent van Gogh, *Harvest or Harvest at La Crau, with Montmajour in the Background* (1888).
Photo: Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

Dutch police have arrested a 56-year-old man they believe was trying to sell a forgery of a Vincent van Gogh painting.

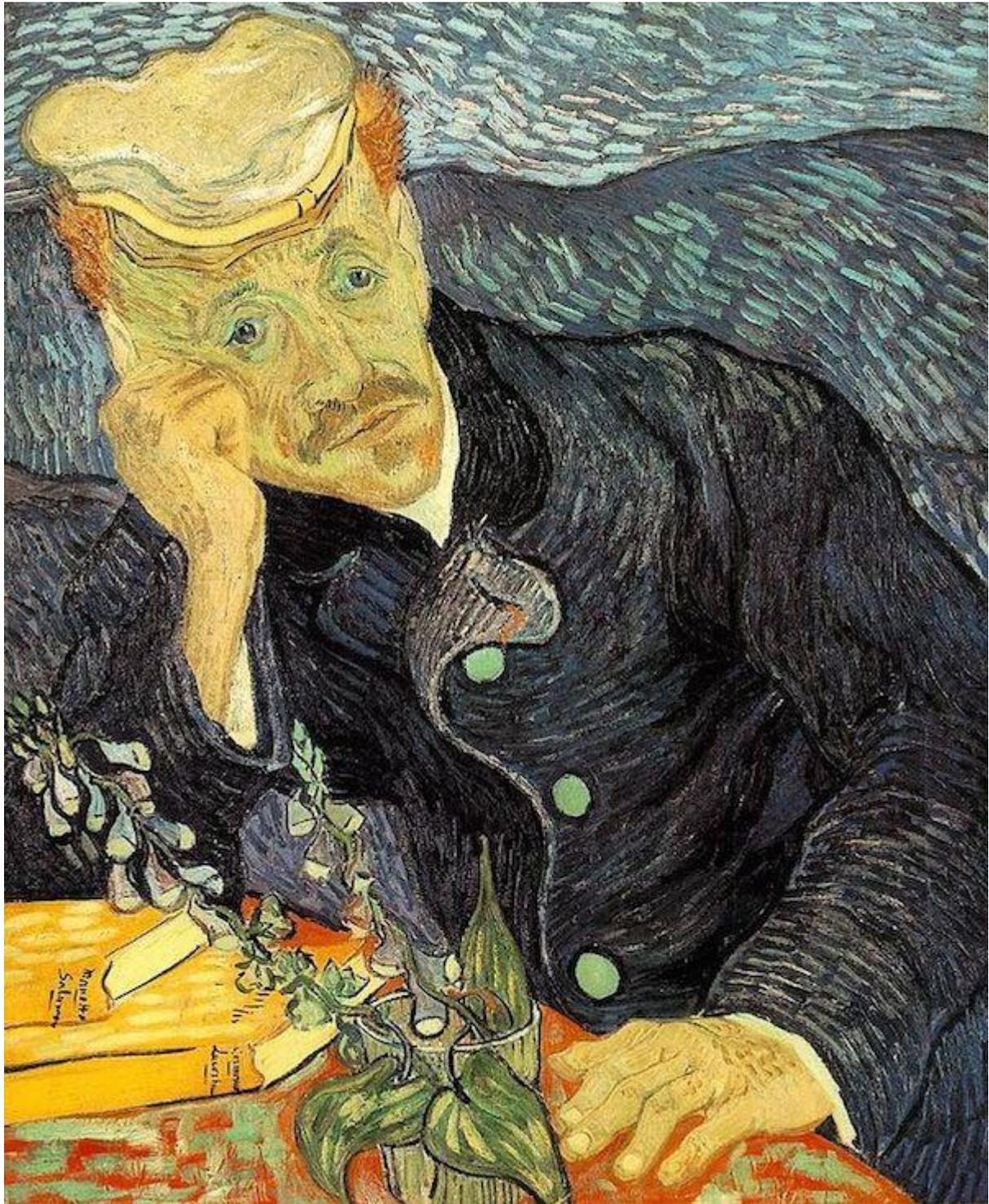
According to The [Guardian](#), the suspect was attempting to sell what appeared to be Van Gogh's [The Harvest](#) (1888), which depicts the wheat fields of Arles, France, for €15 million (about \$17 million).

He allegedly had forged documents that appeared to be from the [recently-renovated Van Gogh Museum](#) in Amsterdam, which owns the work, vouching for its authenticity. The [Associated Press](#) reports that the suspect's name is not being released in accordance with Dutch privacy law.



Vincent van Gogh, *Self-Portrait* (1887). Photo: via Wikipedia.

Because Van Gogh's works are [a rarity on the auction block](#), buyers from several countries are said to have been interested in buying the counterfeit painting. In 1990, the artist's *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* (1890) set the record for the most expensive painting sold at auction, fetching \$148.9 million. Accounting for inflation, that mark was [actually only broken this year](#), when [Pablo Picasso's](#) [Les Femmes d'Alger \(Version 'O'\)](#) (1955), sold for [an astonishing \\$141.7 million](#).



Vincent van Gogh, *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* (1890).

The most expensive painting of all time is believed to be Paul Gauguin's *Nafea Faa Ipoipo (When Will You Marry?)*, which [reportedly](#) went for [\\$300 million](#) in a private sale in February. The Qataris are [believed to be the buyers](#) of both works. Van Gogh thought very highly of *Harvest*, and [wrote to his brother Theo](#) that the canvas, which he was working on in the summer of 1888, "[absolutely kills all the rest.](#)" Art historians believe Van Gogh completed 10 oils and five drawings over a single week in June of that year.