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## **Tate's watercolour is upgraded to a Gauguin**

**Double-sided work, bequeathed in 1962, had previously been attributed to the French artist's circle**

[MARTIN BAILEY](#)

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The new attribution for Study of a Tree (1887) follows research for the Van Gogh Museum's exhibition on Gauguin and his artist friend Charles Laval© The Tate

The Tate now owns a watercolour by Gauguin, thanks to the upgrading of a work previously thought to be from the artist's circle. Following research for the Van Gogh Museum's exhibition *Gauguin and Laval in Martinique* (which opens in Amsterdam today), the double-sided work on paper will be displayed as a piece by Gauguin.

Presented alongside dozens of other pages from Gauguin's 1887 Martinique sketchbooks—in what is the first detailed examination of the Caribbean output of the two artists—the new attribution is likely to be accepted by curators at the Tate.

One side of the paper is a watercolour showing a tree trunk, possibly a preparatory work for a detail in a Martinique oil painting that was never completed. The other side is a pencil sketch of a man's head. The Tate's website suggests that it might depict Gauguin himself, but it does not appear to show his facial features, and the Amsterdam exhibition describes it as portraying his artist friend Charles Laval.



Study of a Man appears on the reverse of the paper © The Tate

The double-sided work was bequeathed to the Tate by the Earl of Sandwich in 1962. He had bought it in 1931, from the collection of Paco Durrio, a Spanish sculptor who was a friend of Gauguin and received many of his works. Despite this excellent provenance, the Tate downgraded it soon after the acquisition and its website still describes it as Circle of Gauguin. “We welcome this exciting research and we will be reconsidering the attribution of the work accordingly,” a spokesman says.

