

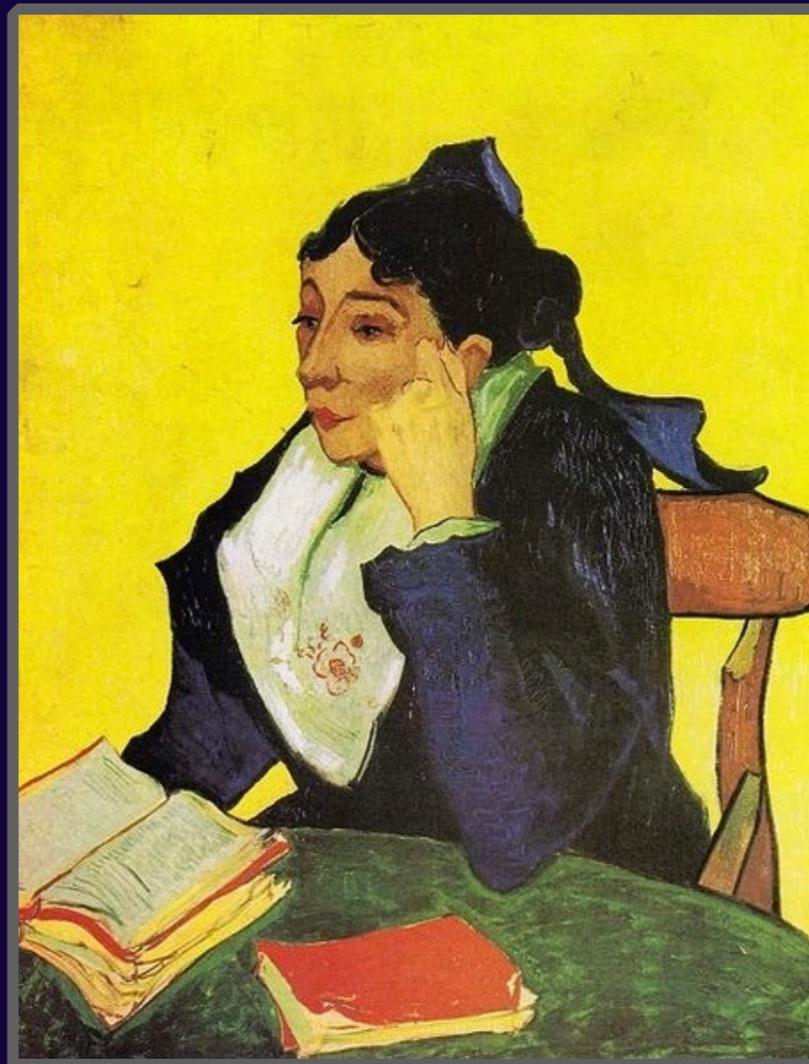
Starry Nights

The Musical

by Fred Pohlman

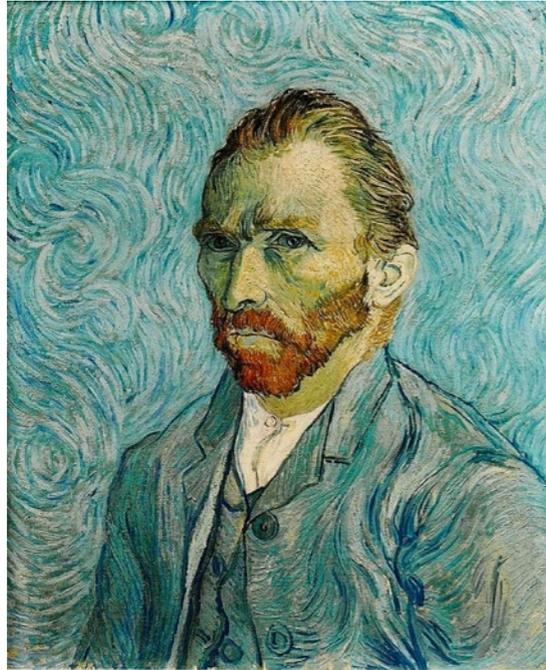
The life and Times of the Brothers

Vincent and Theo Van Gogh



Full Libretto with
Lyrics

Starry Nights



The Life and Times of the Brothers
Vincent and Theo Van Gogh

A Work for Musical Theatre in
3 Acts

By **Composer, Lyricist, Librettist**

Fred Pohlman

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Songs of
ACT I

His Memory
(Memories)

Brother

Theirs for Spring

Instrumental

The Bird in a Cage

Maria

Friendly star

Vincent

Sorrow

New Poppy

Back on the Street

Christmas Day

Kyrie

A New Day

Blue Gloves and Basket

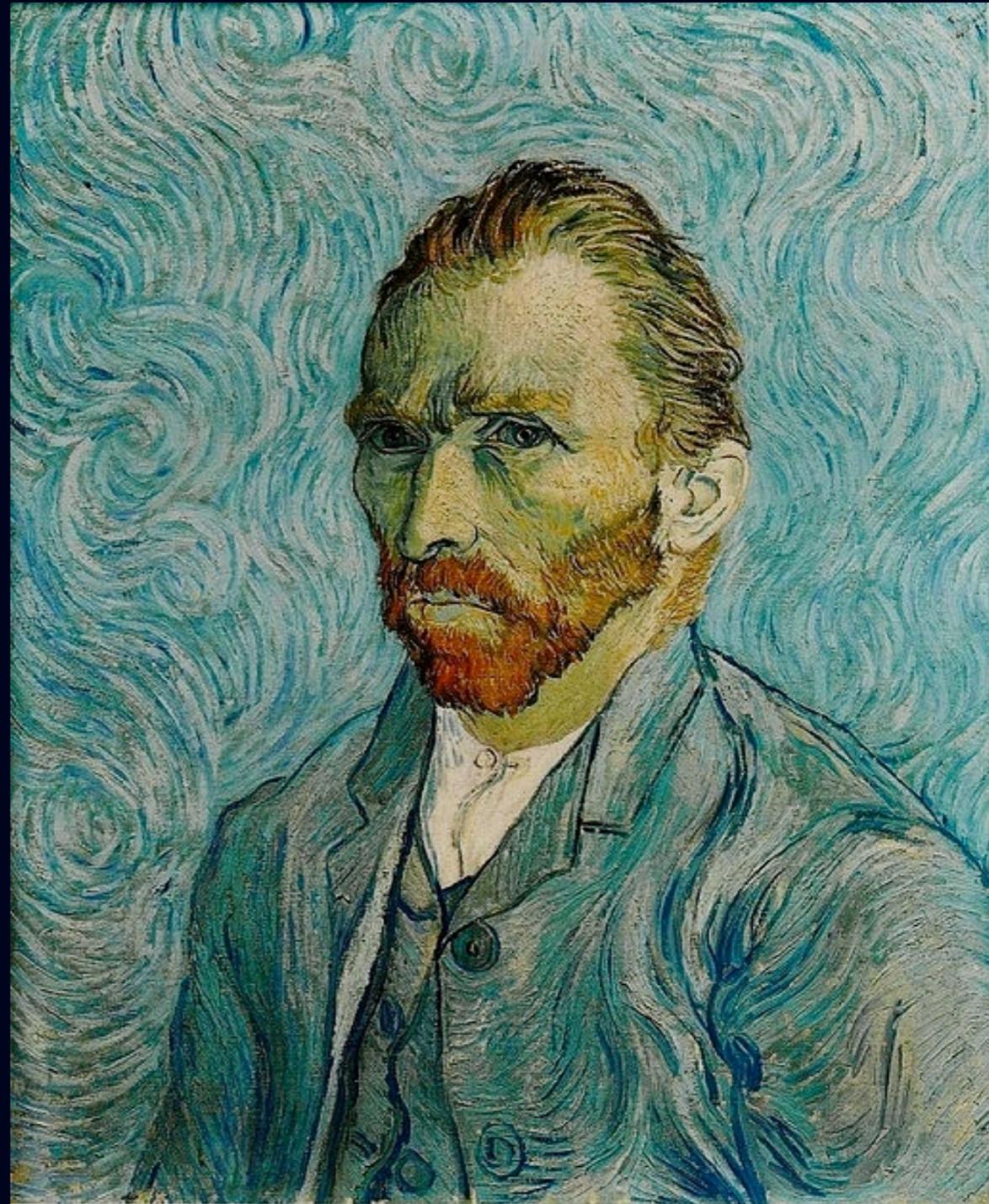
How Shall the Sun Go Down

Rain

The Letter Pt.1

Potato

Letter Pt. 2



Section 2

Read First Misc. and Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements

To my knowledge, all the Images that appear in this book are in the Public Domain and were obtained from Wiki-Commons. The Testimonies of Various Characters that appear in Act I and III which are in the Public Record and in the Public Domain, have all been modified so as to avoid any issues that might arise from any frivolous claims as to ‘individual translations’ from the original French and Dutch. There is no possible way that the text as it appears on these pages could possibly be construed as being an infringement of any copyright. All the above is true also for the Letters of Vincent Van Gogh which are all in the Public Domain. All the work contained in this Musical is Original and registered with the Library of Congress © Fred Pohlman 2014.

I also want to thank my Friends Ray Mycek who has been assisting in the proof reading of the text and providing insights as to my own oversights at times; and, my good friend Don Bellizzi for his insight and encouragement!

Regarding the Characters of Starry Nights Musical

A list of the cast of characters of Starry Nights Musical, appears online at www.fredpohlman.com, and is not included in this text. The reader should note also, that the young novice that opens Act I and appears again in Act III shall remain ‘nameless’. This is not an omission... This is deliberate and for my own personal reasons!

If the reader is perhaps questioning the appearance of certain characters, without identification, such as Anton Van Rappard, who appears in Act I, The reader should realize that the identification of such are referred to in those snippets mentioned above, that are not included or necessary in these copies.

The Characters in Act II that relate directly to the audience are identified ONLY ONCE in the Coda of Mme. Segatori’s relation to the audience at the beginning of Act II, when these characters each bow and go their way. Those mentioned in the Coda are: Bernard, Cezanne, Singac, Lautrec Seurrat and Gauguin. I have done this because when I have observed this technique of having characters relate directly to the audience, as utilized for example in the performance of the Musical ‘Ragtime’, I felt that the individual’s having to identify themselves, both distracted and detracted from the performance. ONCE is Enough!

Inclusions and Omissions

Also, please note that there are certain differences and enhancements that are included in the Director’s copies that are not included here. In the Directors copies, are included in the Appendix, scenes that, though desirable to include in the work, are not at all necessary to execute such.

I feel it is better to leave them out for now, rather than risk confusing people by having to remove them later. The final disposition whether they will appear at all in the Musical will be determined during the Work-shopping phase. They are being withheld until we can determine if there will be any issues with ‘time constraints. This Musical must not run more than two hours and forty-five minutes with intermission.

Also, the ‘meshing’ of snippets of the brothers van Gogh’s letters in correspondence, as they appear in this text in (only) Scene I, are also utilized throughout Act’s I and III in smoothing the transitions of scenes one to another. They are eliminated in this text because they would interfere with a ‘smooth’ read of the play, whereas in an actual performance, they would only serve to ‘enhance.’ Director’s copies with these additions are available on request.

On the Nature of The Musical as Biographical Fiction

The Starry Nights Musical, is a work of Biographical 'Fiction'. This fact is made 'perfectly clear' in Act III of the Musical with the 'Testimony of Adeline' Ravoux'.

Thank you... Fred Pohlman

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Starry Nights



Scene 1



Scene 1



Johanna Van Gogh Bonger as a young woman

Loc: Off to the corner and slightly below the left side of the stage (which is stage right) * we see a beautiful old woman rocking slowly in a chair and reading a letter. She is illuminated by the light of an oil lamp.

On the stage there is a furnished cell with a barred window on the second floor of the mental asylum at St. Remy.

Action: We see in the room two orderlies who are about to leave after making one final check on a bed that is to the right of a seated Vincent. Three nuns enter the room with brooms and sheets and move about frantically setting the room in order. The voices of two men climbing steps are heard discussing something over the sound of strange moans and an occasional shriek. As they near the cell we hear that the administrator seems to be choosing his words very carefully and is explaining Vincent's current state of mind to Vincent's brother Theo. At one point we see the 'Mother Superior' firmly scolding the young novice in very hushed tones. As the orderlies are leaving the nuns are finishing up. Within 10 seconds then, the Iron door to

Vincent's room is opened, and the two men appear. Theo immediately moves to his knees at his brother's side as the three nuns exit. It is obvious as they exit that the elder Nun is still upset with the novice. Theo and the Administrator are oblivious to the friction between the elder nun and the novice.

Action reiterated in more detail: We hear the voice of Vincent in voiceover from mid sentence describing his quarters at the hospital. As the voices of Theo and the administrator become increasingly audible, the voice of Vincent fades...

V.O.

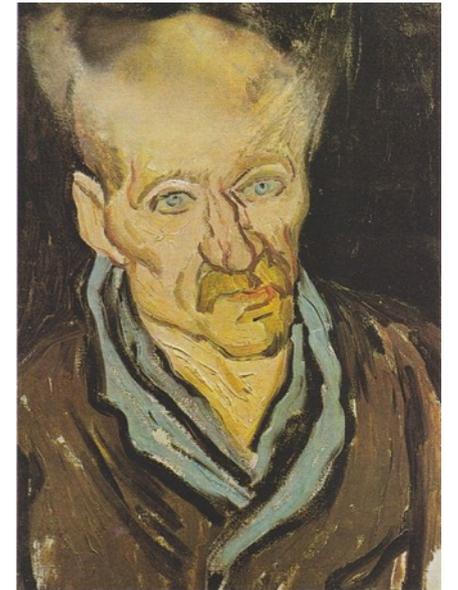
Vincent: Grey wallpaper with sea green curtains with pale roses brightened with touches of red, a very worn armchair in patches of brown, red, pink forget-me-not blue, white, cream colored, bottle green...from the barred window one can see wheat fields...(voice faded to 0)

(From the word 'armchair' his Voice is slowing fading into inaudibility over the sound of footsteps climbing stairs and an occasional moan or shriek.

Administrator: So in cases like this.... we move.... hmm...slowly.... these things take time, but at any rate Mr. Van Hook, I assure you that in the meanwhile, we shall be making every effort to see to that your brother is as.... comfortable as is possible ...under the circumstances of course...

As the door opens and they enter with the Nuns passing them... Theo interrupts

Theo: Vincent... Oh my God ...Vincent!



Vincent who has been staring out the window, let's his upper torso turn slightly and slowly looks down at his brother in silence. He appears as a beaten down despondent individual.

After a pause and realization that his brother is only minimally responsive and in fact somewhat despondent...

Theo: And what is *this*?

Theo notes the straps of a restraining sheet on Vincent's bed , that has been left behind by one of the orderlies .

Administrator: Well... Unfortunately, that is a necessary evil in these kinds of institutions. You understand it is of course.. for their own protection. Sometimes... in a fit they....

Theo: *sniffing the air.*

Administrator: Oh! and that's 'camphor'....that's also quite necessary....it has a stabilizing effect and... they sleep better, and of course ...insects and vermin, ...we need some kind of control and ..a... *Clearing throat....* Humph! ...Well, we're just getting settled in now Mr. Van Hoof and, by weeks end your brother will be quite acclimated. It's unfortunate, but the nature of your brother's condition requires that we take the utmost precaution. It's for....
In a low voice

Theo: Yes, yes... You mentioned all of that on the steps...

The young novice re-enters the room here alone this time, and places a wet package on a table and starts to unwrap it as the two men prepare to exit.

Administrator: Yes, of course..Umm well, it's late now.....and you can come back in the morning....and see your brother then.

Theo: *(going back on one knee again to Vincent..and at loss for words)*

I'll be back in the morning Vincent ...I...I won't forget you ,
.....Everything will be fine soon! I just...I...

Vincent has turned slightly and accepts his brothers embrace while remaining seated .

Administrator: We really have to go now Mr. Van Graf

Theo gets up slowly and turns to the administrator

Theo: *(after a pause)* Gogh...

Administrator: Pardon?

Theo: ...Van Gogh...the name is Van Gogh.

Administrator: Yes, of course*mumbling....*Van Hoof...

There is the sound of soft thunder...very soft thunder...and then the sound of rain begins...

*The Music commences here with the first violin softly comping the action and mood , with the opening figures of Song
'His Memory'*

Theo and the Administrator exit and we hear their voices fade to zero over the faint sounds of the asylum.

Administrator: Such terribly damp weather.... just seems like this rain will never end...?... and then before this it was so dry you'd think... *fading*

As they leave, we see the young novice has already opened the wet bundle she brought with her, revealing a beautiful bouquet of yellow flowers, which she places in a vase on the table. She addresses Vincent in a gentle calming voice.

Novice: *(In very sweet French accent)*

Voila! These should make you feel a bit better Monsieur Van Gogh...

Now whereas Vincent had been still staring despondently out the window, he has now turned slowly, taking notice of her and the flowers. After a brief pause, he suddenly, reaches out with both his hands to her and says:

Vincent: Vincent.... I am Vincent, Vood... I am a Dutchman!

Novice: *(taken aback for a second and then accepting his hand smiling)*

Vincent! ...I have always liked that name! *(then looking at the flowers)...Ahh, and you like the flowers...!*

Vincent nods with his eyes brightening!

(At the door ready to leave the room she turns with her back to the door and speaks somehow intuitively ...knowingly)

Novice: I love flowers too Vincent... I love all of nature....

She pauses before saying goodnight and turning to open the door

Novice: You know! I am thinking ...we are going to be ‘good’ friends Monsieur Vincent.

Bon nuit...sleep well...!

As the door behind her closes, the violin becomes more pronounced with emotion. The voices of the administrator and Theo have faded into the distance along with the occasional moan or shriek, and as

Vincent has again slipped into melancholy, he resumes staring out the asylum window on the verge of tears. Then, suddenly, as it seems that something has caught his attention in the distance beyond the window of his room, the beautiful aged Johanna Van Gogh Bonger rises up from her rocking chair and commences to sing the first notes of the opening song Memories,

**“There is a space beyond your windowpane
Where brothers”**

the stage(s) then separates and rolls away to stage left and stage right, and we.. (or, the stages are rotated if projectors are used)

TRANSITION TO...

Scene 1b

Song

Locs. and Actions for first two verses reflect the years from Vincent’s birth to age 18 from Parsonage to Goupil & Cie in London

See detailed description of action for song below in Appendix 1a

Note: song is reflection of earliest letters of Vincent Van Gogh to Theo.

His Memory

Johanna sings

**There is a space beyond your windowpane
Where brothers walked between the spots of rain
There memories and pages lost in time
Are brought to heart in light of verse and rhyme
To where the wick burns low
And the sunsets glow**

Transition to...

Scene 1c

**Yes, I know a place beyond the city lights
Where we can sit and watch the starry night
Where memories are places made of dreams
Where winding paths descend through verdant greens
To where a streams flow
And a lone sunflower grows**

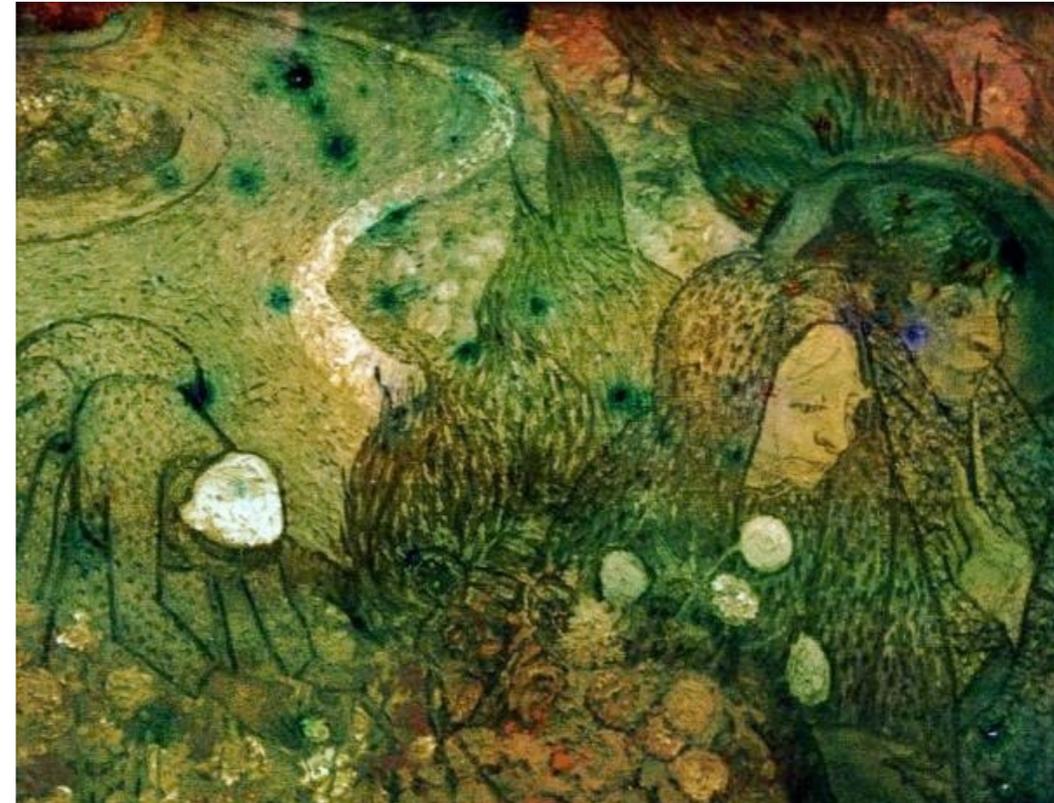
*A mature Vincent in his 20's steps out of one of the doors on the stage
and sings the chorus*

Chorus

Vincent singing

**One Life
One chance
To live your dream
To nobly bare what trials may come
To sow upon each rocky turn
Leave sweet blossoms long the way**

**So hurry now before the day is done
We still have time to catch the setting sun
The nightingale will want to sing a tune
He's waiting now beneath the waxing Moon
Where he'll render sweet songs
To us ...and tenderly
Through winding paths and pages turned
We'll listen as the candle burns
Yes we'll listen till the morning light
* As we wander through the starry night
Then we'll ride out on the wings of his
memory**



*From the asterisk *above, I.E. toward the end of the last verse of Memories, begin the background voices of Vincent and Theo in correspondence with... Dear Theo... Dear Vincent, ...Dear Theo... etc. ** See below for the actual text)*

Note: The above transition takes place in the 2 minutes and 40 seconds it takes to sing 'His Memory'. The effect is meant to convey a period of seventeen or eighteen years from the birth of Vincent until the days of his employment at Goupils & Cie London branch. The director should feel free to ad lib the actions that take place during the delivery of 'Memories'. What is written above is only a suggestion containing the elements of what would lend nicely to the scene. Obviously the logistics of executing all the above would push the limits of possibilities to the extreme. This difficult scene has to 'flow,' so

therefore execute 'only' what is possible within the physical and budgetary limits of the individual production.

**** V.O.** *Slowly raising in audibility woven together with a 'combing' effect...*

Dear Theo, so many thanks for your letter and glad to hear that you have arrived back safely. I have missed you these last these first few days and...

Dear Theo, such good news I've read in Fathers letter. I wish you luck with all my heart and I am sure that you will like it there.... Goupils is such a fine firm and...Dear Vincent, it is true what you say about Balzac, that one must read hisDear Theo... and here are the names of a few of the painters I like in particular, Sheffer, Delararoche, Hebert , Leys...

Note: The above series of "Dear Theo...(s)," woven one into the other should serve to create an 'ambient' suggestive of Vincent and Theo's world of communication by Post, and has no other purpose. The audibility must not interfere with the last verse of the song 'His Memory.'

Dear Theo

Scene 2, a, b and c



Scene 2 a

LOC: Stage Right, Vincent's room in London. Prints of various artists cover the walls. This is a seamless continuation from the last scene. There is no break or change of scenery.

Stage Left, Theo's Room at The Hague in The Nederland's

Action:As Vincent and Theo are writing from their respective homes, a postman moves between them bringing their letters each to the other. Just before the song winds down, Vincent's sister Anna enters the door to the left of Vincent. and she places fresh flowers in a vase. At the



completion of Vincent's vocal, we see their landlords daughter Eugenie pausing briefly in her passing the still open door of Vincent's room. As Eugenie catches Vincent's eye we see Vincent respond with a loving smile, while Anna then commences her narration to the audience directly.

Song Brother (Letters)

G
Brother

I've just arrived I'm with your letter here
But first just
Let me wish you Happy New Year
And may our friendship last forever
Oh.. and
Father wrote and told me of the talks you had and
How you shared your thoughts on art with him and
Mo-ther
And our sisters and
It seems (that)

A minor

So strong
Is our love
And that we are fa-mi-ly
that our hearts
lift
our eyes to
to god
and we pray...
Oh Lord

G

Let me not
Stray..
Too far from them..
And
Yes ..lad
It's good to hear you're reading Michelet'
And I'll close now
It's time to rise and meet the morning...

Bmi

So walk much
Eat lots of bread
Sleep well
And

C

Always
Your loving brother
With a handshake in my thoughts
Vincent
Gmag

Ami
Gmag

{Bmi
Well what with ,nature ,art
and po-e-try
Cmag
Mais bien tout'
If that's not enough
What is enough}

Transition to 2b

*Stepping out of the scene for a moment
Anna begins to speak highly expressively in
an aside to the audience*



Vincent's Sister Anna

Anna: It was the spring of 76 when I went to visit my brother Vincent in London—*Everything* was in bloom, it was just all so wonderful, *and*, he was in love.

Her name was Eugenie and she lived at the boarding house where Vincent and I both had rooms. She was just *so* beautiful, and everyday when Vincent and I would go for walks in the countryside his heart would just sing out in celebration of his love for nature and his love for life.

Scene 2b

Loc: *fades 'immediately' ... to: country lane.*

Action: *Vincent, is suddenly outside on a walk with his sister Anna. His eyes filled with love for nature and for Eugenie, he begins to sing...*

Song

There's for Spring

When the phases of the moon
And the almond tree in bloom
Herald the season's end
Do not the sonnet and the heart
As do the robin and the lark
They not take wing and then

For theirs to sing ere the dawn
For theirs to sing on the morn
For theirs to sing

Singing songs of love
Of longing and embrace
Rare and precious odes
Sonnets bursting pure with verses of unbounded soaring grace
Singing songs of life
Of homage to the sun
A melody of praise
A celebration rife with verses that compare to none

Yes theirs is to sing on the dawn
Theirs is to sing aft the storm
For theirs is to sing, to sing to SING....

Scene 2c

Action: As the song winds down and they again approach the rooming house, Vincent, spying Eugenie, runs ahead leaving Anna standing there watching. Eugenie runs inside the house, but just as Vincent is about to enter the door, the landlord with an embarrassed Eugenie in tow, deposits his and Anna's bags unceremoniously on the front porch. Vincent and Anna are both told to "Leave" Immediately, and Vincent is warned not to bother his daughter anymore. Anna looks toward the audience before walking toward the front porch to join Vincent...

Anna: But Eugenie was secretly engaged and Vincent didn't know, and it so broke his heart.

Anna starts to walk toward the porch but stops and turns to the audience again just to say:

Anna: Oh!!...and there's one thing more I forgot to mention—Eugenie... was Mr. Loyer's daughter—he was our landlord!

Mr. Loyer: ...and *don't* be coming around here anymore, and leave—my- daughter- *alone*.

Note: "alone" coincides with the slamming down of the two valises on the porch by Mr. Loyer

Vincent and Anna pick up their bags, the train station appears on stage right and the house in center stage is darkened. A dejected Anna explains to the audience what ensued after the incident.

Anna: And so it was that my brother Vincent and I moved to Ivy Cottage, but we separated when I found work as a lady's companion up north in Welwyn. Vincent continued on in London, but his unrequited love for Eugenie cast *such* the dark shadow of gloom on the remainder of his stay there. After Christmas he and our brother Theo became much closer, and it was also about that time that Vincent first became preoccupied with religious ideas and began to fully immerse himself in the reading of the bible. It was somehow as though he became sort of...*drunk*... with piety.

Scene fades to dark

P.C. Gorlitz

Scene 3



Loc: A boarding house.

Action: There is a communal table and we see a young Vincent well dressed entering the room from stage right, and taking a seat (stage right) at the communal table. There are other borders to his right and a woman is cooking to the far right (stage left) while a girl is serving at the table.

An older gentleman comes out from stage left and speaks to the audience, and at one point, glancing at the scene to his rear, he points to himself as a younger man seated at the communal table in Conversation with Vincent.

The Testament of P .C. Gorlitz

*The sounds of people dining at a large table in a communal kitchen.
Soft conversation below the Gorlitz monologue*

Gorlitz: I remember him quite well, Mr. Vincent Van Gogh. It was in Dordrecht that I met him at the rooming house of a corn and flour merchant by the name of Rijken, whom we used to call the ‘boss’. One day he...Mr. Rijken asked me if I would object to sharing my room with a certain Dutchman, and seeing as it was, that the boss had no other space but still wished to accommodate

him, I said that I would agree on the condition ‘that he is a suitable person.’ And so it was that I had no objection and Mr. Vincent Van Gogh and myself became fellow boarders.

As I came to know Vincent, – he preferred to be called Vincent, – it soon became evident to me that his religious feelings were *vast* and noble. It was more than just the fact that he was an Orthodox Protestant. On Sundays he would attend not only the services of the Dutch Reformed Church, but he was also to be found in attendance at the Janenist and the Lutheran and the Roman Catholic churches. Once when I inquired about it at the dinner table, he answered with a good natured smile and said:

(Turning to look at the table and himself behind him)

Vincent: “Do you think Gorlitz, that God cannot be found in the other churches?”

(Turning back to audience)

When meals were served at Mr. Rijkens, He would pray a *long* time before he’d commence to eat. He would *never* touch meat or gravy, sufficing only with a few crusts of bread...and he *never* used butter or *anything* like that. His face was often long and melancholy, but then suddenly... he would laugh, and he did so with *such* gusto and geniality that his face lit up-and the *whole* room brightened.

As time passed Vincent became increasingly more melancholy and it was apparent that he was not at all suited to his duties as bookkeeper and salesman at the booksellers, Blusse and Van Braam. His head was always filled with pious thoughts and if something came to him, he would suddenly stop everything he was doing and write it down. Quite to the dismay of Mr. Van Braam, when clients came into the store to shop for prints, instead of providing information that might lead to a sale, he would say precisely and

plainly what he thought about the artistic value of each one. He was most unsuited to business. His real dream was to become the minister of a religious parish, and *this...*obsessed him.

Vincent plodded along, pretending for the sake of his parents that he was content with his work, but when I stayed with his parents on the occasion of a job application, I informed his mother of Vincent's true disposition and of his true aspiration to become a minister of the word. When I mentioned this to Vincent, he told me he regretted it, but that it was true.

His parents then urged him to leave his situation. It was then that he moved to Amsterdam and went to live with his uncle Cor who was a rear admiral.

When Vincent left he gave me as a souvenir *L'Oiseau* by Michelet, a book he passionately admired. I know that Mr. Rijken and his wife were very fond of Vincent. They respected his deep earnestness and we all missed his gentleness. In Amsterdam he would begin to tackle Greek and Latin under the tutelage of a Mendes da Costa. We were all sorry to see him go.

Lights dim on Gorlitz and scene

Mendes de Costa



Scene 4

LOC: The house of Mendes de Costa. We see books in evidence in cases on the wall and a window to stage right. The entrance door is further stage left

*Action: Mendes is standing, looking out the window as if waiting for someone. He then turns to the audience and begins to speak. At one point * Cue, his deaf mute brother joins him, and then turns and looks out the window with his back to the audience. When he observes Vincent nearing the house, he nudges his brother Mendes, and motions that Vincent is arriving and then runs off to stage right to open the door for Vincent.*

Mendes: It was about 1877 that Vincent's uncle, the Reverend J.P. Stricker asked me if I might be willing to give lessons in Latin and Greek to his nephew in order to prepare him for the matriculation exams necessary for the university. The Reverend Stricker spoke with great affection for Vincent and his parents, though he did

forewarn me of his unusual behavior and that I would not be dealing with any ordinary pupil.

Vincent was really quite charming, and our first meeting – which is always so critical between student and teacher – was by no means unpleasant. We were very close in age, and I would say that we were ...very comfortable with each other!

I soon discovered that sincere friendship and gaining his confidence were most important in this case and so we made very rapid progress right from the beginning, but then, with the little Latin that he learned, his fanaticism took over and he immediately started applying it to translating Thomas a Kempis in the 'original'.

Everything was going well, but eventually the Greek verbs just became too much for him. He was just *overwhelmed*. No matter what I did to make the matter less tedious, it just seemed to make matters worse.

“Mendes”, he said, “do you really think such horrors are necessary for someone who wants what I want: to give poor creatures a peacefulness in their existence on earth?”

** Mendes's deaf mute brother enters here from stage left and stares out the window*

I, as his teacher, could not possibly agree, but in the depth of my soul, in my heart of hearts, I knew that he, Vincent Van Gogh, was absolutely right. I defended myself as best I could, but it was all futile.

He would always say: “John Bunyan's Pilgrims Progress is of much more use to me; as is Thomas a Kempis and a translation of the Bible; more than that... I don't need.” I went to see the Reverend Stricker I don't know *how many* times, but it was *always* decided that Vincent should give it another try.

At one point, it seems that Vincent had taken to some sort of self-chastisement as a means to setting himself straight in what he felt were his *duties*.

For example, if Vincent felt his work hadn't been up to par he would announce to me that he had taken a cudgel to bed and scourged his back, or he would punish himself by making sure he arrived well after the door had been locked at the Naval Base where he lived with his Uncle Cor; and so then, he would sleep outside, in a little wooden shack without bed or blanket, and, in the *winter* mind you.

Vincent knew that these announcements were anything but pleasant to me, and so in order to appease me, he would go out in the morning over to the Oosterbegraafplatz, where he loved to walk and he would pick 'snowdrops', preferably, from underneath the snow. I can still see him from my third floor study on the Jonas Daniel Meyerplein, crossing the wide square from the bridge over the Nieuwe Heerengracht without an overcoat – another form of self punishment – with books under his arms pressed closely against his body, he'd be holding snowdrops in his left hand to his chest – with his head cocked to the right – while his face, because the corners of his mouth drooped down, displayed that indescribable veil of sad despair.

His voice would resound in a deep melancholy low tone. "Mendes" he would say, "please don't be angry at me; I have brought you some flowers again, because you are so good to me."

It was just impossible to be angry with him; he just had such a need to help those less fortunate. He was 'consumed' by it. I even took notice of this in my own home, in the way he treated my deaf mute brother with such compassion and kindness ...and well, we continued on for a while, but it was of no use. Eventually Vincent made a move on his own and found an appointment as an evangelist up the Borinage. It was only there, that his idea of institutionalized Christianity would be forever shaken.

The Borinage

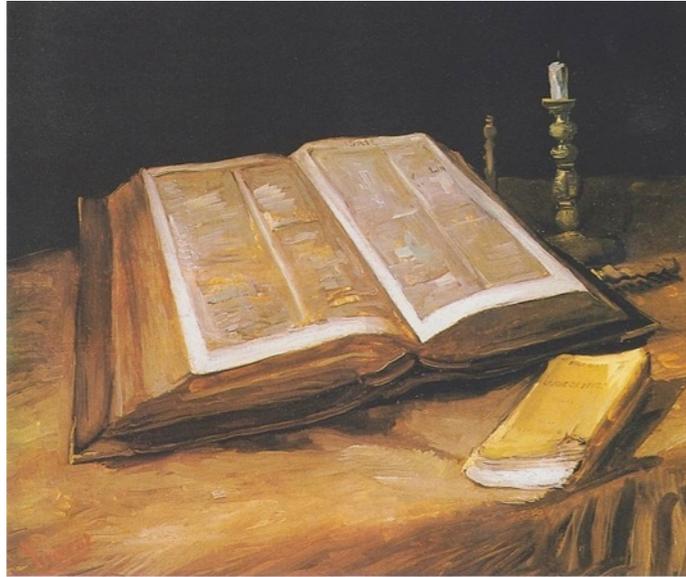
Scene 5



Scene 5

Loc: A church setting

Action: We see Vincent in front of a congregation. He is well dressed as a “dandy” preacher evangelist. He steps up to a pulpit and begins to read from a prepared sermon on “the mustard seed”. One of the Borinage miners steps out from



the congregation, and commences to speak directly to the audience. Vincent’s voice resonates in boring pious tones but is well in the background as the miner speaks.

About the middle of his painfully pious Lorem Ipsum sermon, the bored village folk are walking out of the church and we see Vincent standing alone, dejected and confused as the townspeople come and go, seemingly ignoring him.

Vincent preaching from the pulpit...

lj sdft tsd kldj lkdfg jgj fjijr

(Not included)

Miner: (In a rustic French accent behind Vincent’s sermon)

Yes I remember very well, Pastor Van Gogh. He arrived here in ...I believe it was...the winter of 78 to preach the gospel to us ...

Shakes his head

‘nd well, ... I can tell you truthfully...of all of preachers that they had ever sent up through here, Pastor Van Gogh was easily... the ‘worst’ that we had *ever* heard give sermon up at that pulpit. He would weary the congregation with long prepared sermons that he would work on *all* week long. *On* and *on*, he would go...twenty and thirty pages he’d have set before ‘im, and all that... he would have to read the better part of! And as it was..., well, no one really cared too much for ‘im one way or the other at first.

But, our opinions of him began to change the week he moved into a little shack on the north end, and commenced to live just like everyone else here... He’d be always out on his rounds ‘nd tendin’ to the poor then... and the sick...‘nd he would stay for days with them as I remember...But I think though, what really changed ‘our’ opinion of ‘im, was when one afternoon, tragedy struck over in one of the mines...that shook him! He became a *whole* different person then...

transition to

Scene 5b

An alarm sounds... a whistle...!

Music begins, (inst.) at the sound of the alarm

Loc: The entrance to a mine. Dark sooty sky. Some smoke if feasible

Action: As the alarm sounds, Vincent looks down at his “dandy” attire, which suddenly falls away from him revealing tattered and torn clothing beneath. The scene is transformed to people carrying bodies and injured and dying from the mine explosion. Vincent is tending he wounded...

*Eventually other actions may be depicted from asterisk**

NOTE: the music:

Piano is staccato and the Bass fiddles and Cellos are 'Stodgy and Dragging'

Miner: After that incident in the mine, it was as though he were a completely changed man. He gave away everything that he owned. *'Everything'*! And I can't say that he *ever* saw a bar of soap again,least whilst he remained here.

I recall his younger brother came to visit him one time. It must have been quite a shock for him to see his brother in the condition that he was in, but, still though, he persisted and carried on like that,* in rags, ministering to the poor.

When the people who sent him up here got wind of 'how' he'd been conducting his ministry, he was promptly asked to resign his evangelical position.

He went down to Cuemses then, and as I remember that's when he first took to drawing. When he returned, we'd often see him sittin' on one of those heaps (*Pointing*) drawing as he liked to do.

We never paid any attention to it though ... we thought it just a hobby ... no one took 'im seriously. I know for sure, that he went back down down to Etten then. He came back once more for a short spell ... and then, well, we never saw or heard anything of Pastor Van Gogh ever again.

Miner fades into darkness

** (The miner turns his head to the rear and nods toward Vincent dressed in rags)*



A Bird in a Cage

Scene 6



Loc: Vincent's lamp lit room, stage right. Theo is reading in his Paris apartment, far stage left.

Action: A solemn Vincent is seen writing a letter as his voice reads over the musical introduction in simple piano. His brother is seen off in the right hand corner of the stage (stage left) reading and contemplating the gravity of his brother's lament. Then, at one point, as Vincent rises up from his chair, the spotlight follows him to the darkened center stage, where a huge black birdcage descends over him. He then commences to sing 'Bird in a Cage'.

Commencing with the 5th verse, various characters enter and surround him. Among them are his former boss, Mr. Teersteeg, the neighbors and even his own father, who appear to mock and taunt him with condescending laughter. In the 5th verse, at the appropriate point in the lyric, Vincent bangs his head against the rails of the cage. In the end the cage is lifted and Vincent summarizes.

V.O. over Piano Simple'

Vincent: Dear Theo, I am writing to you rather reluctantly, because for a good many reasons, I have kept silent for a long time. To some extent you have become a stranger to me, and... I to you perhaps more than you think. It is probably better for us not to go on like that. I would not have written to you even now, were it not that I felt obliged...compelled, and be it noted, that you yourself have compelled me to.

I heard in Etten that you had sent fifty franks for me...Well...I have accepted them...with reluctance of course...and a feeling of despondency. But I have reached an impasse. and I am in trouble, what else can I do? And so, I am writing to thank you.

As you know, I am back in the Borinage. Father would rather I be near to Etten, but I refused, as I have become a more or less objectionable character in his eyes... a shady sort, and so, how could I be of any use to anyone.

...*What am I in the eyes of most people Theo? A nonentity or an eccentric and disagreeable man. Somebody who has no position in society and never will have, in short..., the lowest of the low.

Very well, even if this were true, then I should want my work to show what is in the heart of such an eccentric, of such a nobody. This is my ambition, which in spite of everything is founded less on resentment than on love...and in spite of it all, is based more on serenity than passion.

What the molting season is for birds Theo, the time when they lose their feathers; setbacks misfortune and hard times are for us human beings. You can cling on to the molting season, and you can also

emerge from it reborn. But it is not as something amusing to be witnessed in a public way. Well... so be it then! I shall remain out of the way.

I am a man of passions Theo, capable of doing more or less outrageous things, which I am sometimes more than a little sorry for. Every so often I do something a little too hastily when I should have been more patient. But this being the case, what can be done about it? Am I to be considered a dangerous person, unfit for anything? I think not. Rather every means should be tried to put these very passions to good effect.

Well then, but what is your final goal you might ask? Well brother, be assured that that goal will become clearer and will emerge slowly, just as surely much as the draft becomes the sketch, which in turns become the painting through the serious work done on it.

There is an old academic school Theo, odious and tyrannical, an 'abomination of desolation' 'in short, it is made up of men who dress as it were in a suit of steel armor, of prejudice of convention. Where they are in charge, they hand out the jobs and try, with much red tape to keep them for their protégés and exclude the 'man of dreams' and the man with an open mind.

One reason I do not hold a job is that I differ from the men who hand out the jobs. It is not simply a matter of my appearance which they have so sanctimoniously reproached me with ...* it goes deeper than this, I do assure you.

Action: Vincent from about the asterisk above moves toward the center of the stage, and huge bird cage descends over him as he commences to sing..

Song A Bird in the Cage

Note: Parentheses indicate use in stage performance of the Musical and are for 'phrasing,' The song is stand alone and can be performed without them

(Theo...consider...

...A bird in the cage in the Spring
Seems content with his wage as he sings
His keepers surmise..
He's fed , he's alive
He's resigned to his fate of clipped wings

But there's something the bird has forgotten
The bird senses that something is rotten...
He knows other birds fly, but he thinks,
then why can't I....?

But then(Theo)
one day the bird comes alive with elation
He thinks,
of course ,
I shall join the migration
I shall mate
I shall nest
And then soar with the rest

(Yes, the bird in the cage somehow reasons
I shall make my escape in due season
In the cool of the night
I shall wing and take flight ...
Vincent 'speaks' the next line in bitter tones:
But the children have other plans for the bird Theo...
Continuing sung

**The children they taunt him in passing
They mock him with merciless laughter..
(various voices and laughter, mocking him)**

**{ Tsk tsk, Ohhhh...He thinks he can fly...Haha..
Huh...don't fool yerself...he's got salt on those wings..
He sings though..he's happy nuff.. }**

Continuing sung

**But then Theo..
The bird thrashes round in a rage...
'nd he bangs his head 'gainst the rails of the cage
For he is condemned to his cell
As a n'eer do well
Where he'll linger and rot till old age..**

**The cage is lifted and Vincent returns to his writing desk with V.O,
below, music continues in instrumental.**

V.O.

Vincent:

**Yes Theo... a bird in the cage in the spring
Is an old tragic tale of clipped wings...**

**But that cage Theo, that prison..., is prejudice, misunderstanding,
fatal ignorance of one thing or another, suspicion, ... false modesty.**

**Do you know what makes the prison disappear? Every deep
heartfelt affection, being friends and being brothers, and not just
loving, but loving with a sublime genuine profound sympathy. With
devotion and intelligence we must strive to know our brother better,
and yet more Theo. That will lead us to God and to unshakable
faith. This is what opens the prison, with supreme power, with some
magic force. Without these, one is as dead, but wherever affection is
revived, there life revives.**

**I have every hope Theo that these apparently fruitless struggles
are just labor pains, and that these thorns shall bear white blossoms
in due course.**

**For now I shake your hand in my thoughts Theo, and know that
it will be good to hear from you.**

Stage does not dim...The Actors remain in position

Kee Vos



Scene 7

LOC: Again the brothers Van Gogh are seen respectively stage left and right.

Actions: In the letter that Vincent is writing, heard in voiceover, he speaks of love and the wonders of being in Love. He asks his brother if he has ever been in love. At this Cue, the music starts and we see Theo put the letter down and stare out toward and above the audience and slightly stage left. The stage starts moving and we see Theo coming closer toward the front center of the stage. He is obviously dreamily introspecting on something as he begins to sing on his cue.

In the second verse, Vincent takes over the main melody and Theo answers in song. The Image is one of two brothers separated by space but very much at one in this moment of romantic introspection. Just as we enter the C section which is instrumental, we see on Vincent's side of the stage that he hands a letter to a postman. The postman walks over to yet another postman and hands him the letter, which is then handed to Theo. Anna then enters through a door at stage left of Theo. A V.O. then begins in Vincent's voice as Theo is silently reading a part of the letter on the wind down of "Maria". Anna then takes the letter from Theo and after a moments perusal, takes the 'lead' in singing one of the harmonies of the melody of "Maria" which has become the main melody of "A Friendly Star". As they continue to sing, the Brothers are joined on the stage with their sister Anna, in singing together arm in arm. The music comes to a fantastic emotional crescendo as the three embrace each other.

V.O. Vincent;

Theo, there's something I want to tell you though it may not be news to you. I want you to know that I fell very much in love with our cousin Kee Vos this summer and that I can find no other words for it other than, 'it is just as if Kee Vos were the closest person to me and I the closest person to Kee Vos', and it is in those words that I put it to her. She replied that her past and her future remained as one and the same to her and that she could never return my feelings, and so I found myself in a tremendous dilemma. Should I resign myself to that, 'never, no never,' or consider the matter as unsettled, persevering with good heart and not give up?

Well old chap, I chose the latter, and to this day I do not regret my decision. Of course I am up against Father who says I am breaking family ties, * but I think that I shall not provide grist for those 'never no never' mills, and that they should rather go bankrupt. You were in love once Theo. What was here name...? **



Intro commences from asterisk* Theo commences to sing from double asterisk **

Song

In the first verse below Theo leads and Vincent answers

In the second verse Vincent leads and Theo answers

Maria

Mariiii...aa

Maria, that was her name

Marii...aa

A child, so fair and tame (without blame)

Marii...aaa

I know, she was your first

Marii...aa

Those feelings that she nursed

Forever

They are forever you should know

Not ever

Don't ever let them go

**

Vincent takes lead

2

Forever

Will I remember how we cried

Forever

Those feelings deep inside

No Never

Would I have thought that it would end

Not ever

Will I ever love again.

Trio

Vincent and Theo

Then

Anna enters and

Song morphs to 'Friendly Star' over a brief V.O.

V.O. Vincent;

...Theo, did I tell you about the storm I saw? The sea was yellowish, especially near the shore. The rain poured down in slanting streaks from immense grey clouds and there was a streak of light on the horizon.

That night I looked from my room over the town with its turrets, mills and slate roofs, and there against the dark night sky ...there was but 'one' single star... but a 'beautiful', large, 'friendly' one. None of us will ever forget that view...

Trio

A Friendly Star

Anna begins to sing 'A Friendly Star' as she takes up the new melody in first position. There is no Break in the music. Timing very important here.

A single bright and friendly star

A friend indeed is what you are

A brother and a shining light

A beacon in the darkest night

A friend in more than word and deed

You're someone there in time of need

Just when I think I've lost the way

A brother's there to save the day

With each trial.. that comes anew

My brother's there to pull me through

A guiding light that I might see

A helping hand to welcome me

**One day I shall remember and
I shall repay your kindness friend**

Here, at the Coda, Theo sings 'Maria'

Vincent 'forever' and Anna her last words of the verse...

Action: As the song ends here with a Grand crescendo, we see the three siblings in reunion hugging each other, and then the scene fades to darkness as we enter the V.O of the next scene.

Rejection

Scene 8



Piano Simple'

LOC: The home of Kee Vos and the Rev. Stricker and finally to the streets of Amsterdam and a little hotel at the train station.

Action: V.O. with Vincent's voice reading from the letter describing the visit to the Rev. Stricker.

Vincent has arrived at the home of Kee Vos . Her parents tell Vincent that Kee is not there. He puts his hand in a candle flame to show he is strong. They stop him and tenderly relate Kee's feelings in song.

Vincent starts the song with the 'Never not Ever' promise that he feels Kee has made to him.

Vincent: V.O.

Theo, I don't know if I've already written to you about 'exactly' what happened to me in Amsterdam. I went there thinking perhaps that that: 'no, never, not ever' will thaw, with the weather being so mild and all.

And so, one fine evening I lumbered along the Keizersgracht looking for the house, and indeed I found it.

Naturally I rang the doorbell (*voice fading to zero db*) and was told....

Action: Vincent enters stage right and approaches a cottage that we see from the side. After he rings the bell Mrs. Stricker answers. She

turns her head halfway round briefly as if to signal the family that there is a problem. (Cutaway view of the house that the family is at dinner.) Kee , the Rev. Stricker , his cousin Jan and a guest, who are at the table all look at each other and Immediately Kee takes here cue to leave with a hand signal from the Rev. Stricker. He wipes his mouth and goes to join his wife at the front door. He has also signaled to the housekeeper to take away Kee's plate. Kee is now seen exiting the back door (stage left) where she remains with her head cocked as if listening to what is transpiring inside the residence. Vincent seems to sense immediately that something is wrong and that they are hiding something from him.

Bell ringing.. and door opens

Mrs. Stricker: Vincent.. (Turning her head slightly to signal that Kee be ushered out of the dining room) what a pleasant surprise ... It's Vincent...

Vincent: Auntie M

Mrs. Stricker: We were just having dinner...but come in ...please please...come in

Rev. Stricker : (joining his wife at the front door) Vincent.... lad! What are you doing here in Amsterdam? You should have written, and told us you were coming. We would have been prepared for you. Come in, come in. I see you have no coat;.....you'll wind up with a terrible catarrh! Really, there's quite a chill in the air...

Vincent enters and makes with the brief formality of greeting his cousin Jan and another guest who disappear immediately leaving just the Rev., his wife and Vincent alone. There is an awkward tension....

Vincent: But... where is Kee?

Rev. (feigning confusion)... Mother, where is Kee?

Mrs S.: Kee is out

Another awkward moment ensues and Rev. J.P.S turns Vincent's attention to his professorial cousin

Rev.: Vincent, did you know that your cousin attended the Exhibition at Atri last week?

Vincent: Oh, I've heard only good things from Teersteeg

Professor: Yes, it was most rewarding, nothing like I expected
After hemming and hawing for about 30 seconds...

Professor:....um...if you'll permit me, I'll have to excuse myself for just a moment..

*The professor exits, and then little Jan nervously runs off leaving Vincent alone with Kee's parents,
Awkward silence*

Rev. and Mrs. Stricker: Vincen.. *(They both start to speak at once and then catch themselves..)*

Rev.: *(Sighs, and then, firmly and directly)* Vincent, I was just on the verge of sending you a letter! if you'd like, I'll read the letter out for you! *(starting to read after a pause)*. Dear Vincent, I am....

Vincent interrupts

Vincent: But where is Kee ?

Rev. Stricker: Actually Vincent,..... she left the minute that she heard you were in town.

Vincent: *(chagrined...stunned...)*.... Let me hear then or not, I don't care much either way.

The Rev. Stricker starts to read and Vincent sits on the arm of a sofa. Mrs. Stricker smiles patronizingly at Vincent. It is yet another awkward moment.

Vincent 'suddenly' places his hand in a candle flame...The Rev. notices and reacts.

The Rev. Stricker:.. ...Vincent.... what are you doing *(now in a loud voice...alarmed)*...Are y... you Crazy?

Mrs. Stricker: *(shreiking...)* Oh my God...'Vincent'!

Rev Stricker: Get some butter.....quickly!

The maid rushes to the table to fetch the butter and then they apply first aid...Vincent starts to sing as if weeping as they wrap his hand in a cloth..

Vincent: But.. never, not ever, I heard her to say..

The Strickers sing

Song
Trio with chorus
Vincent

Vincent....

But never, not ever I heard her to say...

Strikers:...

Three simple words, she's expressed her dismay

It should all seem so clear

There's no mystery here...

can't you see, Vincent

my dear...

Oh Vincent dear Vincent oh why can't you see

For all you might give,

your reason to be

Is as naught in her eyes

It should seem no surprise..

You're in love with a minister's child

Oh Vincent dear Vincent

She knows how you feel...

Though it stings to the heart,

in time you will heal

You will see in the end

You can always be friends

You'll survive to find love again

Chorus

Love is a rose
A delicate prose
So much more than an art
Sometimes sweet sometimes tart
Some find it a
Thorn to the heart

Oh Vincent Dear Vincent oh what shall we do
This trial, this ordeal that you're putting us through...

You've your own self to blame

You're just fanning the flames

Have you no sense of remorse, of your shame ...

As the song closes with instrumental refrain, we see that Vincent has spied Kee hiding at the rear of the house. He runs off toward the back of the house stage left, but she dashes and brusquely exits the back door. As Vincent turns around, the Reverend Stricker and his wife both put their hands on Vincent's shoulders to console him.

As the song closes with simple piano variation we see the location is now suddenly a foggy rainy street at night. The rejected Vincent is being escorted to a hotel by the Reverend Stricker and his wife. We hear the voice of Vincent reading from the letter describing his departure into the night and the tender treatment he received from Kee's Parents.

This scene is continued into Scene 9 where the V.O should conclude and a second V.O begin..

V.O. Vincent:

So as it was we continued and every once in a while Auntie M would utter some Jesuitical work, and I got all steamed up, but I did not pull any punches and although anyone else in J.P.S.'s mood would have said 'God damn you'... he did not, and so I shifted my ground and took a little. In the end they asked me if I would like to stay the night, but I told them "if Kee leaves the house the minute I come to town, I don't think that this is the right moment then."

And then Uncle and Auntie, those two old people went with me through the cold, foggy, muddy streets and they did indeed take me to a very good and very cheap hotel. I absolutely insisted on their not coming, but they absolutely insisted on showing me. And you see, I found something very human in that and it calmed me down a great deal....

The scene fades to darkness here ...

Sien

Scene 9



Scene 9

NOTE:

This scene is highly transitional in that it is only a matter of dimming the theatre lights to execute this scene. And so the V.O. from the last scene simply continues into this one...

Piano simple'

From scene 8 reiterated.

LOC: *Between the Stricker residence and the good cheap hotel. Foggy streets of Amsterdam, and then abruptly: a darkened space.*

Action: *As Vincent has been brought to his place of boarding by the Rev. and Mrs. J.P.S., head down in shame, he is drawn aside as they leave. (Technically scene begins 'here' ...) We now see him with what appears to be a much older woman in 'Sillouette.' She is a lady of the evening, but one who tries to make ends meet outside of her daily routine of washwoman. We see them in embrace in her humble flat. The mood and feel is very bohemian. They speak in low tones beneath the V.O.*

NOTE: *This scene is projected 'live' on the 'back' of the screen* in 'silhouette', (*scrim substitute), so as to facilitate the setting up of Scene 10.*

Vincent:V.O.

And so Theo, as I told you that as far as I'm concerned even my secrets are no secrets... well, I'm not taking that back. Think of me what you will Theo, but whether you approve or not does not really affect the issue. And as to that: "never no never" 'I thought to myself... "I would like to be with a woman for a change." But, said I to myself then: "you said 'she and no other' and now you want to go to another woman? But that's unreasonable isn't it? Isn't that illogical...?" And my answer to that was: "who is the master, Logic or I? Does logic exist for me, or do I exist for logic?" And I made up my mind that I *cannot*, will not, may not live-without love. I am only a man of passions; I *must* have a woman!

I had in the circumstances fought a battle with myself, and in that battle some of the things concerning one's constitution and hygiene, that I have come to know more or less through bitter experience, gained the upper hand. One cannot forgo a woman too long with impunity, and I do not believe that what some call God and others the Supreme Being and others nature, is unreasonable and pitiless, In short I came to the conclusion: I want to see whether I can find a woman.

And, my goodness,... I found a woman! By no means young, by no means beautiful, nothing special if you will. Ah, but perhaps you are a little curious. It was not the first time that I was unable to resist that feeling of affection, that special affection of love for those women who are so damned and condemned and despised of the clergy from the lofty heights of their pulpits. Well, I do not damn them, I do not condemn them, and I do not despise them.

That woman was good to me, very good, very dear, and *very* kind in a way that I shall not even tell my brother Theo, because I strongly suspect that my brother Theo has had a similar experience. Tant mieux pour lui.

Did we spend much money? No, because I didn't have much, and I said to her,

"Look...you and I don't have to make ourselves drunk to feel something for each other, you had best put what I can spare in your

pocket”; and I wish I could have spared more, for she was worth it. And we talked about everything, about her life, about her miseries, about her worries, about her health, and I had more exhilarating conversation with her than, for instance, than with my learned, professorial cousin Jan.

The * **clergymen** call us sinners brother, conceived and born in sin...Bah! What confounded nonsense that is. Is it a sin to love ...to feel the need to love... not to be able to live without love? I consider a life without love a sinful and immoral state. For me the god of the clergy is as dead as a * **doornail**.

*From the ‘Cue’ word * clergyman above, the silhouettes fade and the intro to Song ‘Sorrow’ commences as the next scene is immediately illuminated.*

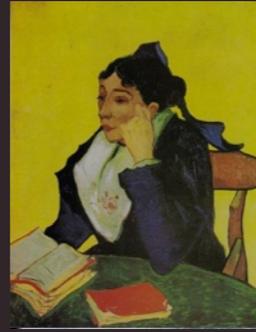
*Sein’s vocal begins with the word * ‘doornail’!*

Reiterated at the commencement of the action of following scene...

Note: the transition to the next scene is made possible through the use of ‘different actors’ to execute the above scene in silhouette. Their never being seen in full light in this scene, allows for Vincent and Sein to seemingly appear ‘out of nowhere’ in the following scene.

Sorrow

Scene 10



Scene 10

Loc: A Street in Nuenen. **NOTE:** I have deliberately used the drawing of Vincent of 'Diggers on Noordstraat' because the image of the building in the background appear almost exactly as I had pictured the street for this scene. Just a coincidence that I happened to find it this evening while looking for an appropriate plate for scene 13.

Action: There are ladies of the evening vending their wares on the local stroll. One is particularly wretched and obviously somewhat pregnant. Her mother accompanied by Sein's brother, trying to stay out of view of the clients, prod her out onto the street with a closed parasol. There are various 'types' of men curiously surveying the lady's wares. Off to the right side of the stage (stage left) is a tottering drunk with a fiddle and also a vender of some kind of hot street food for those who would like a little snack with their entertainment. As her mother pushes a somewhat reluctant Sien out into the street, she begins singing in broken toned Nederlandish cockney in interplay with the drunken fiddler. At the chorus, her plea for mercy, is of a 'virtuous' quality musically.

Vincent enters from stage left, at the second verse, and can be seen walking up the street. Crossing the stage he spies a particularly lewd banker type getting a little too familiar with Sein. As the cad starts to lift her dress with his cane to get a better look at her legs, and, just before she moves into the chorus with the phrase: (lift my knickers too), Vincent grabs the cane out of the Dandy's hand and raises it over his head as if to strike him if he doesn't move on. As Vincent turns to hear Sein's plea for mercy, (please taste my wares I pray thee) the scene immediately fades to the inside of a house (preferably via revolving stage or the parting of scrims) to Sein immediately disrobed, and set into the crouching position depicted in Vincent's famous work

titled "Sorrow" (photo right). As Vincent is tending her, the pregnant Sien sings the last verse out of the tub in a crouching position.

Note: As Vincent bends over to care for Sein in the scene transition from street to Sein's house, the mother and brother seem to follow them in tow reluctantly, with angry and embarrassed looks on their faces. Sien's little daughter enters the scene as all enter the house. She is ushered away immediately by her mother and Sein's brother, as she had been trying to get a good look at the new visitor. She will appear in the next scene to sing about this "New Poppy."

I will reiterate here: from the last scene. The music intro begins with the word 'clergyman,' Sein begins singing with the word 'doornail' from the previous scene's V.O. The full stage is suddenly illuminated revealing the new scene.

Song Sorrow

It seems these days a
girl must have a
livelihood
So as a seamstress and
a cutter I must make
do...
So I beg you don't
begrudge me
try to understand, be
kind
For it is in sorrow that
I do the things I do...



Yes, sometimes a bit more is required with the price of pins and things

**(with) Times being rough and all.. with what they are...
And so for only just one guilder I'll sew your britches up like new..And for just one more I'll lift my knickers too...**

Sein' falls to her knees in supplication as her dress falls away

Chorus;

Please taste my wares I pray thee ...

I need a man, someone to save me

I need a man yes,

I need someone strong...

Someone to right this wrong

Yes sometimes the best of folk will fall upon hard times

And with a paltry pittance must make do

So I beg you don't begrudge me

Try to understand, be kind

For it is in sorrow that I lie with the likes of you.

Alternate chorus

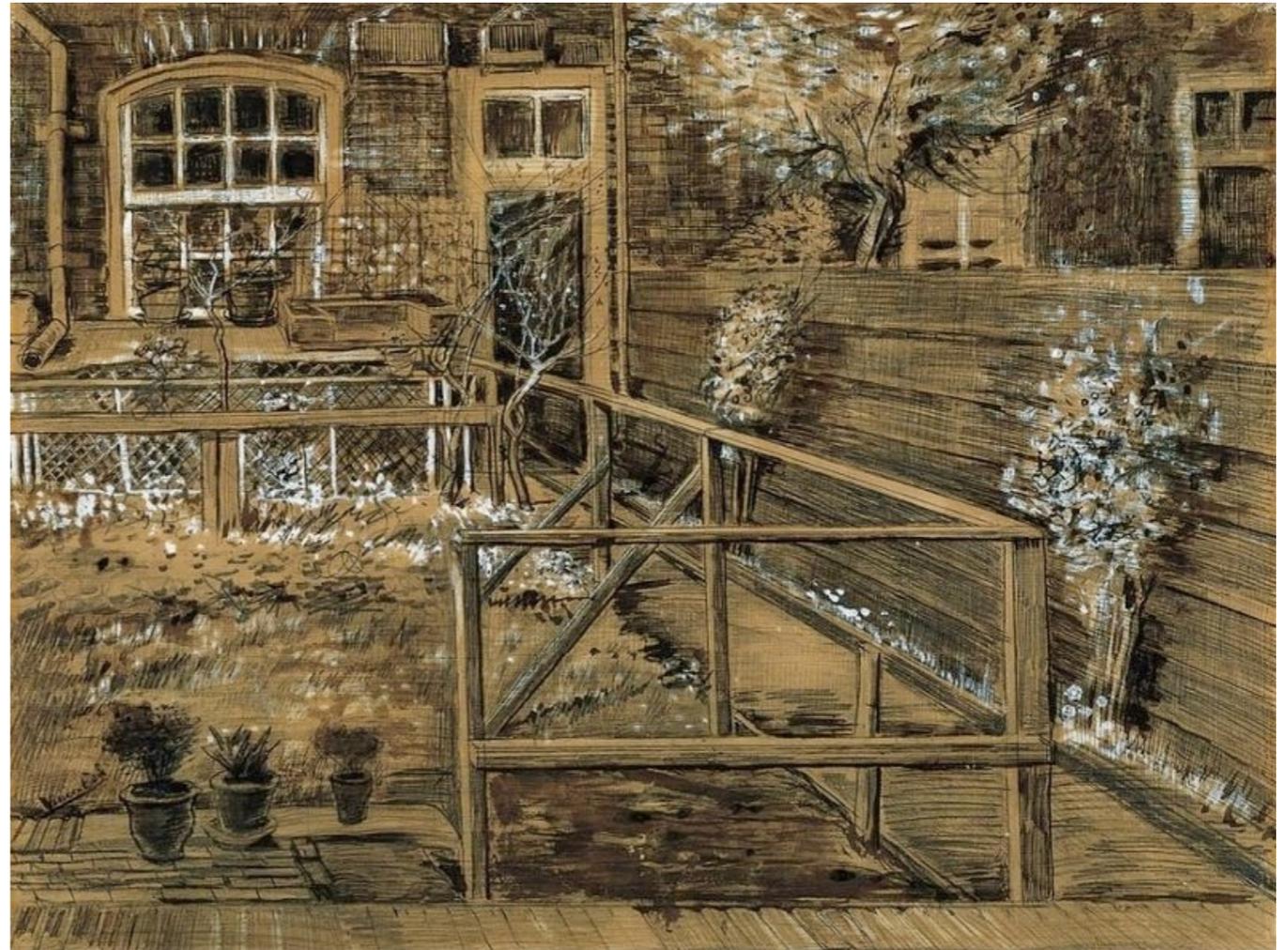
I need a man someone to guide me

Take pity on this child inside me...

I need someone to take me by the hand

Someone who'll understand.

Scene morphs into following scene and VO of next begins...



New Poppy

Scene 11



Scene 11

Loc: A room in the house of Vincent and Sien.

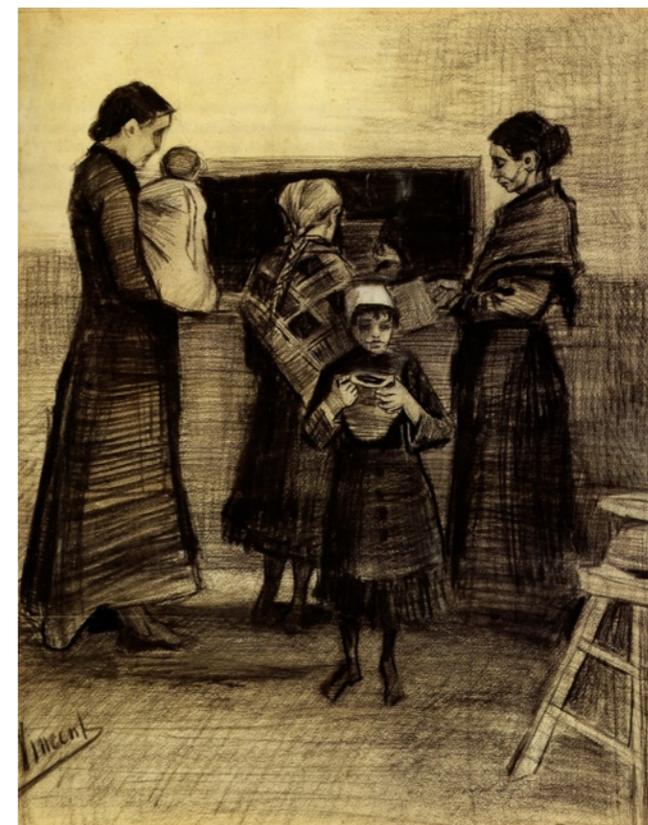
Action: Vincent and Sien are seated on the floor in an alcove at stage right. As he has been sketching Sien's daughter and the sleeping newborn. (See drawing) Sien's little girl gets up from her position to fetch something near the front of the stage. She picks it up, and then turns to the audience and starts to recite in soft whispering wondrous tones like any little girl would about the New Poppy that Momma has brought home. She is positioned just slightly stage left and glances at them before she faces the audience and begins to sing-recite. It becomes obvious that she has become accustomed to horrible abuse at the hands of her former 'Poppys', and is very pleased and enthusiastic about this 'New Poppy', who "Is not like the rest." At the final chorus cue, which is only instrumental, she runs up and re-joins the scene in her role as the perfect model for Vincent's study. The Scene darkens and the stages rotates to Scene 12



Note: VO begun in last scene over simple piano which leads up to 'New Poppy' intro at Cue* below. Sien's daughter commences her recitation after the word 'childlike'.

V.O.

At this moment Theo, I am sitting with the woman and the children. When I look back a year I see there is a great difference. The woman is stronger and stouter, and has lost much of her rough edge and agitated air. The baby is the loveliest healthiest merriest little fellow imaginable; and as for the poor little girl—you can see from the drawings that her former deep misery has not been diminished, and so I often feel anxious about her, but still,* she is 'different' from last year. Then she was in a very bad state. Now she is already looking more childlike.



Song

New Poppy

Things don't go so swell with my Mum's new beaus these days..

As new poppies' are ...

One's like the rest I guess..

New poppies come ...

and new poppies go

But this new poppy's different though

He's not like the rest

He's passed my test

He knows all of birds and owl's nest and things
His pipe smells just like burning cherry wood and

He can blow smoke rings

Sometimes when he works he sings

He is smart and has read *real* books

He knows how to draw real good...and, even though he tries

and he tries and he tries

...he cannot cook..

He knows where hidden treasures are

His says they're on the moon and stars

We walked with him once in the rain
he knew *all* flowers by their first name

When my mum waxed cross with him and said we had to go..?

I heard him not once complain

She shot a look at me though...take the paint off the cupboard it
would

All I did was ask when we could go again

Chorus;

I think he loves my mum and he will stay..

Last night I saw him pray

He wept until his face turned red

Then he asked for some tart named grace and a bunch of daily
bread

When he raised his eyes and spied me looking

I went to hide...

I thought he'd beat me like the others did

He came into the room and I feared as he

raised his hand above my head...

But ...

he just came to tuck me in my bed

Chorus:

I asked,

if he had to go

could he take me...

He said that ... though this could never be..
that in his heart of hearts there'd *always* be

A special place for a little girl

And that little girl was the likes of me

Yes this new poppy's different

He's not like the rest

He's passed my test...

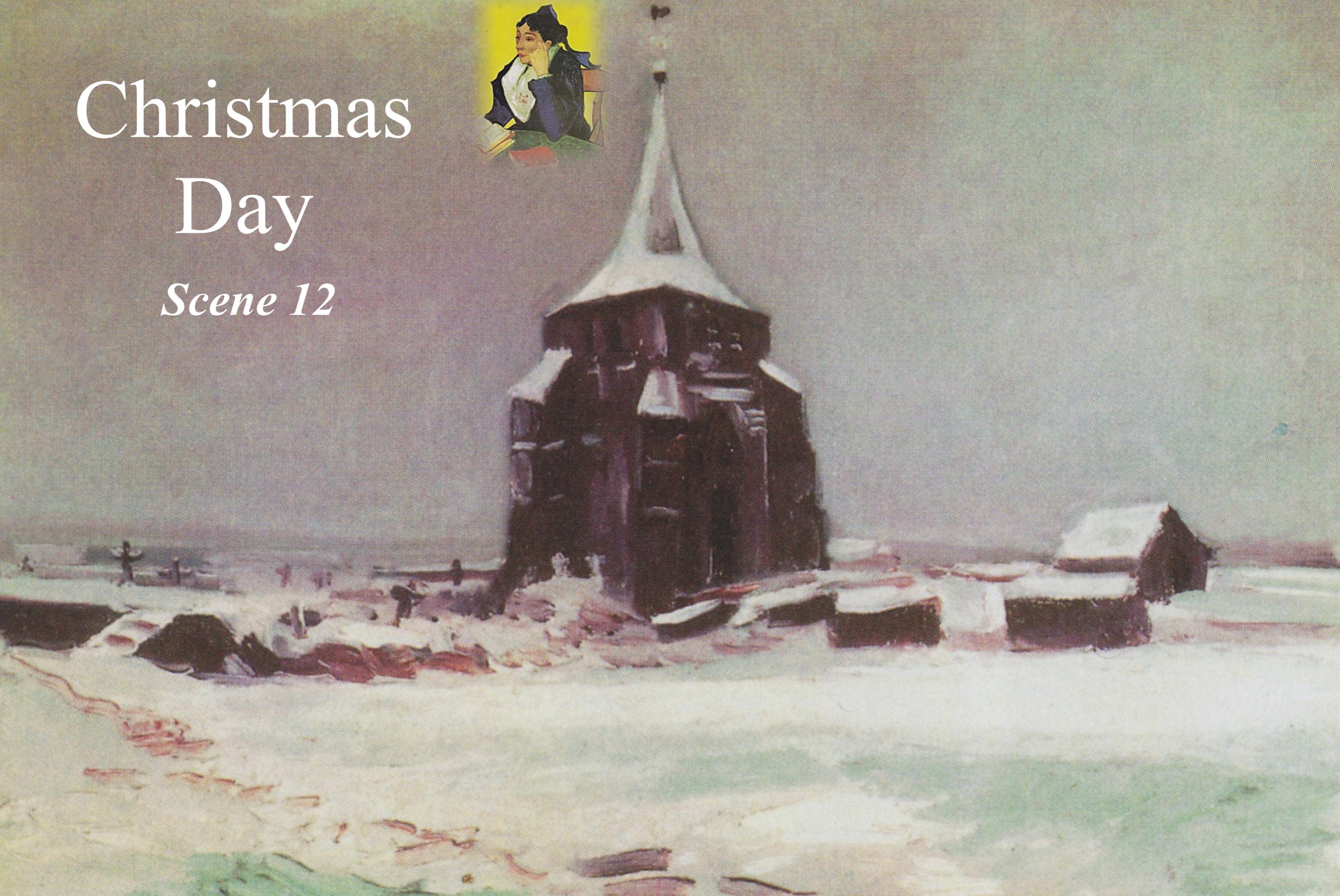
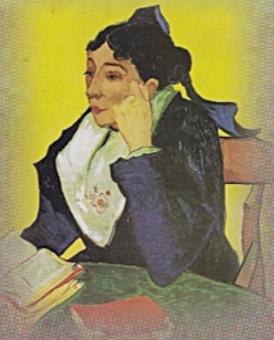
Action: Just a brief moment before an instrumental version of the chorus which is also the Coda of the song 'New Poppy,' Sein has gotten up and quickly moved toward the right side (stage left) of the stage. Passing the little girl at that instant coinciding with the onset of the instrumental chorus, she pats her on the butt as if to say, "get back to work." The little girl immediately runs up to Vincent and hugs him and then takes her position by the cradle. In this version, we can see the final drawing in projection on the scrim in the background.

Version 2: In this version, the little girl runs back as Vincent and Sien are getting up from their positions, She looks at the drawing of herself, smiles and they both walk off to the right of the stage (stage left) as Vincent casually places the sketchpad on an easel facing the audience. In both versions, Vincent is smoking his pipe. This is very important to the mood of the scene.

As the scene darkens, we hear the voices of Vincent's sisters opening the following scene with the song 'Christmas Day'

Christmas Day

Scene 12



Scene 12

Christmas Day

LOC: *The household of Vincent's parents on Christmas Day.*

Action: *The comings and goings of Christmas Day with all the Van Gogh family present. Each verse is followed by the action described in it. The song 'Christmas Day which is sung by Vincent's Sisters is paused and modulated one half step on each verse. The effect should be Comic-Tragic. The a cappella singing has begun on the fade of the last scene...*

Song

Christmas Day

Sung by Vincent's sisters

Gathered here on Christmas day
All in finery arrayed
Daughters all and favorite sons
Deck the halls except for one

We see the Family of Vincent dressed for the Sunday Christmas service. They are slowly going to the table, served by Vincent's mother. Vincent enters at the beginning of the second verse. He is dressed in a big shaggy fur vest and old baggy pants with evidence of paint on them.

Father speaks (reeks) of piety
Brother has no sympathy
Mother's mired in a bog

Treats brother like a shaggy dog

Vincent having entered the room goes to take a seat on the sofa. His mother immediately reprimands him..

Mother: No... not there

Vincent gets up and goes to sit on a chair and again ..

Mother: Vincent...please...

Finally Vincent goes and sits on a wooden chair at the table

The verse continues now modulated in key

Christmas is a kickball game
Fingers wag and point in shame
Father fights to take the floor
Tries to even up the score

Father: (sarcastically) Well, so nice of you to join us Vincent. Hmmm!!! I see you're not dressed yet for church...

Silence...

Father: Well,... Where are the new trousers I bought for you Vincent ?

Vincent: *Silence..he is writing or sketching something.*

Father: Vincent ...Please...pay attention...it's Christmas Day. We go to church as a family and...

Vincent: (suddenly) I'm not going to church with you father...

The family is now restless. We hear the sound of silverware rustling and see that the sisters are feeling the effect of this dysfunctional behavior.

Father: Vincent..., we go to the service as a family! I am the Pastor here ..there are certain things expected of us and...

Vincent: I will not be a hypocrite father..., the god of the church and the clergy has no meaning for me anymore...

Theo: Vincent...

The tension is very thick now with Anna excusing herself from the table

Father: *(after a cold pause)* Well it seems that not much means anything to you any more Vincent. First you lose your job, then you try to take up with your cousin Kee, breaking family ties. Mauve is fed up with you.... and now you're taking up with prostitutes... You'll be bringing them in the house next.

Vincent: She is not a prostitute father, she is 'destitute'... a victim...!.You see this is what I mean about hypocrites

Father: and now, I'm a hypocrite Vincent? Don't force me to take actions that I...

Vincent: What actions father?

Father:I'll have you sent to the Gheel,Vincent, so help me.... I will

Anna: Pleeeeeeze ...don't fight..!

Music continues;

**Christmas chimes and sleigh bells ring
With merriment and mirth we sing
But in the seasons final call
Father wins, he owns the ball**

We see father and son in standoff and then..

Vincent: I'll fight you for all I'm worth father...for all I'm worth

Father: Very well then...we'll go without you. ..You do remember how to find the door..?

**So off to church we go again
Without our favorite brother and
In Irony and disarray
We celebrate our Christmas day**

As the family files out and off to church, the scene ends with heads down and a feeling of resignation and shame hanging in the air.

Fades to darkness

*Intro Music of Scene 13 song Shevenigen Green strikes up during
fade...*

Back on the Street

Scene 13



Loc: *In the house of Sien's mother and then suddenly at a fair.*

Action: *To the Instrumental intro of Song "Back on the Street" the scene opens in the kitchen of Sien's mother. Her brother is also present and they are both seated at the kitchen table, with Sein's brother going through the pockets of Vincent's trousers. As Sein is moving about the kitchen preparing for an outing to a fair, her mother and brother are expressing their disapproval of Vincent in: no uncertain terms. When Vincent arrives, we are exiting the sixth or seventh verse and the stage suddenly breaks away to:*

Loc 2: *country fair where*

Action: *Vincent is holding the toddler in one arm and the hand of Sien's little girl in the other. Sien is moving through the crowd and has fallen into step in exposing her legs and strutting her 'Victorian stuff' to the rhythm of the piece. Now, as her mother and brother look on approvingly Vincent is seemingly overwhelmed with Sein's sudden vulgar display.*

All is very dreamlike, and Vincent is absolutely dazed.

Intro begins....The music is 'roiling' the Mother... furious...

Mother: (angrily) **Mud and paint on everything.... Have you no shame?**

Brother:(softly and methodically) **Blue..Red..Hmm....here's some yellow...(Going thorough Vincent's pockets)**

Sien: **Vincent's an artist mother why can't you....**

Mother: **An artist....I'll tell you what kind of an artist he is..**

Brother: *going through Vincent's trousers, holds them up with the pockets exposed inside out)* **Violet, Chartreuse...but I never see no green. Where- is- the green? ...There's NO Green!**

Mother: **He's a 'vagabond' ,... he earns 'nothing'!**

Sien: **Mother he ..Mother, ... you have no heart**

Mother: **music of Intro more pronounced here). No Heart?.You mean no heat, ...don't you? We're *freezing* to death**

Brother: *(Softly and cynically)* **There's no money for 'char' Sister....**

Mother: **And the larders empty....don't tell me I have *no heart*.. I have a 'good' heart, I- just- can't- eat- dreams!**

Song
Back on the Street
Sheveningen Green

Mother Speaks (not sings) 'melodically' in time with the music

Well, your suitors before
They brought gifts and fine treats
The larder was full
And the children had meat

Now we're all in a pickle
And we're facing defeat..
We were *much* better off
With you walking the street

**

This artist, this Vincent
His work it lacks sheen
He's no sense of color
He can't seem to earn beans

Let him sully his hands
Give up his big dream
And earn some old fashioned
Sheveningen Green

**

Brother sings
But we're not all that helpless
You've still got good legs
There's no need to reduce
your poor mother to beg

So to hell with the tubs
Admit it.. we're beat
You're worth more on your back
Than you are on your feet

Mother and Brother can alternate lines

So let's reason good sister

Let's not play the fool

*

*About here, we see the stage filling with fair goers and Vincent joining
the action holding the baby as Sien dances about flashing her 'wares'
until the fade out...*

Your mother knows best

We're not being cruel

In the name of God's mercy

Just give us a week..

We'll have you down on your back

And back on your feet

*Music fades here directly to Requiem theme of next scene, with
Vincent head down releasing the children...*

Drenth



Scene 14



Drenth

LOC: *The peat bogs, which are the Heath of Drenth*

Action: *We see Vincent on the barge with his VO over the Instrumental. As he sings in the chorus of the Requiem Kyrie, his tone is solemn. As he is mourning the demise of his relationship with Sien in the V.O., he remarks on an old woman with a child and compares her to Sien and then admits Sien's incurable nature. At the same*

time he speaks of the awesome beauty and loneliness on the Heath. All characters sing in the chorus.

Song

Kyrie

*To be sung softly and firmly with
Round tones and
Profound solemnity*

Kyrie Eleison 3x

Christe Eleison 3x

Kyrie Eleison 3x

Narrative over Instrumental

V.O. *Read in Solemn tones*

I am writing to you Theo from the remotest corner of Drenth where I have arrived following an endless passage by barge through the heartland. I don't think I shall be able to do justice to the countryside because words fail me, but imagine the banks of the

canal as miles and miles of say Michel's or Th. Rousseau's, Van Goyens or de Konicks. Level planes or strips that grow narrower and narrower as they approach the horizon.

This evening the heath was uncommonly lovely. The sky was of an inexpressibly delicate lilac white, the clouds not fleecy, for they were joined together more, but in tufts covering the whole sky in tones of more or less lilac grey white, with a single small break through which the blue gleamed. Then at the horizon, a glorious red streak....

You should see Theo, the barges drawn by men, women, children, white or black horses, all laden with peat, in the middle of the heath, just like the ones you see in Holland, say on the Rijswijk towpath. There are sheepfolds and shepherds more beautiful than those in Brabant.... *Slight pause in VO...A church bell ringing here with figures coming into light. This should be reminiscent of Millet's Angelus!*

*VO continues....*Sometimes Theo I think with a great deal of melancholy of the woman and the children. And believe me, I truly would, that they were provided for. One could say that it is the woman's fault, and it would be true, and yet I feel that her adversity will be greater than her fault. I knew from the start Theo that her character had been tainted, but I had hoped that it could be reformed, and now? I am no longer able to reminisce and still ponder any of the good I once saw in her. I am more and more convinced that she is too far gone. But that conviction only increases my sense of pity, Theo, which gives way to a feeling of melancholy, and if it is for no other reason, it is because it is not in my power to help matters.

Slight pause in VO...

I have seen some superb figures in the country here, striking in their sobriety. A woman's breast for instance, that has that heaving movement that is the exact opposite of volupte', and sometimes, when the creature is old or ailing, this can arouse compassion or respect. And when I see a poor woman like that on the heath, with a

child on her arm or at her breast, my eyes grow moist and I am reminded of 'her'. But her weakness, her slovenliness, I can't help but to add to the likeness for, I know that she is no good...and that I have every right to do as I am doing. I know now that I could not stay with her there, and also that I really could not take her with me, and that indeed that what I did was sensible, wise, whatever you like, but that does not alter the fact that it cuts right through me when I see a poor little figure like that, feverish and miserable...and it melts my heart....

Stage slowly fades to darkness

Margot Begemann

Scene 15 a



from both sides of the stage, and then disappear as the song commences.

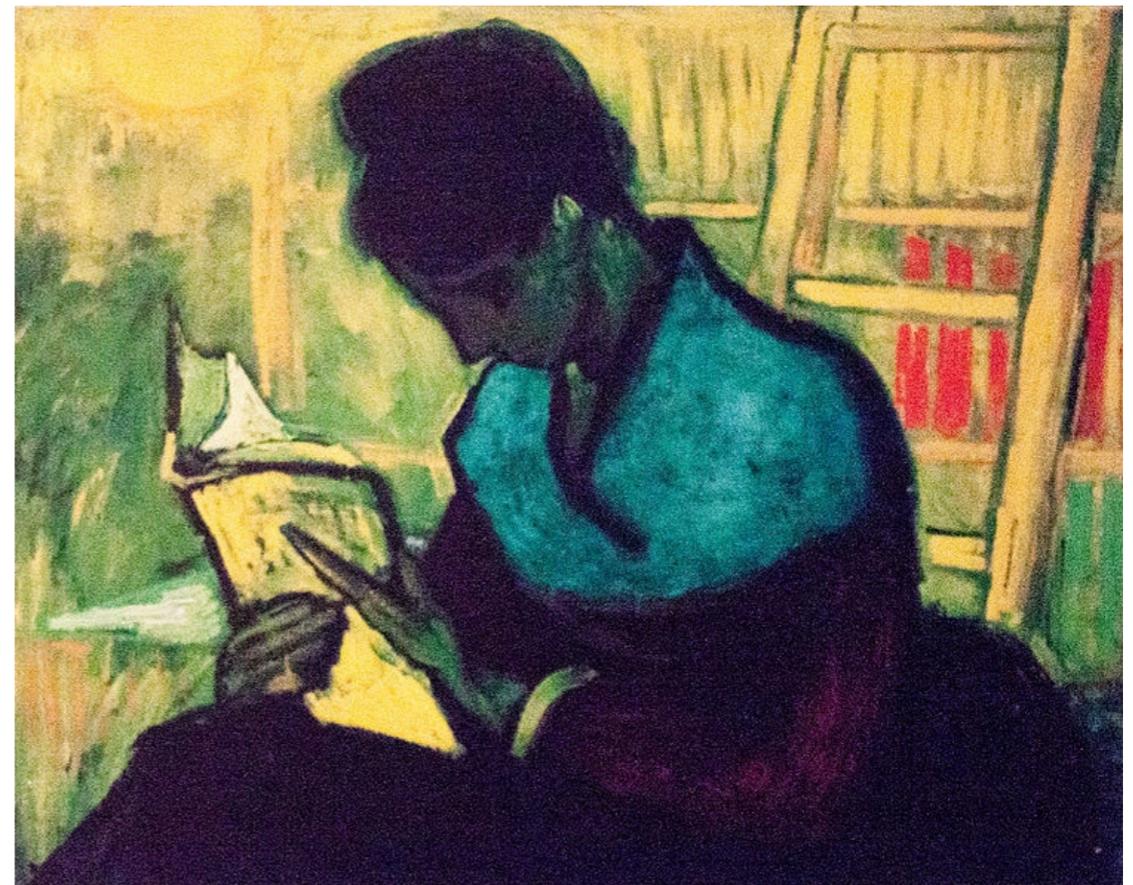
Loc: a garden between two houses

Action: Vincent's friend Van Rappard steps out of the shadows and describes to us the situation as it stood upon Vincent's return from Drenth.

We learn that Vincent has discovered the "girl next door"; literally that is!

Van Rappard: When Vincent returned from Drenth he was destitute, broke and his relationship with Theo was strained by what Vincent perceived as Theo's failure to even attempt to sell any of his work. Vincent was tired of feeling like a beggar receiving a monthly handout and he suffered further humiliation by having to move in again with his parents. To make matters worse, our own friendship was under a lot of strain, with Vincent feeling that I was too critical of him and that I did not understand his work. His only relief was in his new found interest in the girl next door. Her name was Margot Begemann. As it was, Margot's life was no bed of roses either. She had five wicked sisters, and so it was that when she and Vincent finally got together, it was as a new day for both of them.

Action: At the musical intro we see Vincent and Margot coming together in embrace in the garden that separates their two houses. Vincent's parents and Margot's sisters are looking on disapprovingly



Song
A New Day
Duet

Alas a new day
The sky has opened
Now have verses replaced
The once vacuous space
Where two hearts once lie shattered and broken

Verse
The clouds have broken
The sun is shining
Now the hills are arrayed
In a lovely display
And the Lilacs have come out of hiding

Instrumental Verse

Verse
Now night has fallen
The sun has left us
The magnificent sight
Of the heavens tonight
Is enough to have left the moon breathless

Action: (continuing) Over the instrumental chorus-coda of 'A New Day', Margot's mother and sisters come out and sing: Nyeah Nyeah Nyeah, Nyeah, Nyeah Nyeah, like a little child making fun of Margot and Vincent's song. Both Vincent and Margot are seemingly oblivious to the onlookers (Mother and sisters). They now sing in trio, Vincent to the audience, Margot, to herself dreamily and the Mother overlooking the whole scene from stage left.

Song
(transitional)

Trio
Blue Gloves and Basket

Mother's part
Sang gruffly with a Nederland cockney

Mother's part
Nyeah nyeah nyeah,
Nyeah nyeah nyeah

With blue gloves and
basket
He takes it to task
That he will paint all things

A curious fellow
Obsessed with bright
yellow
And other strange things

Vincent's part
Sung sweetly and firmly



1.

(Vincent) A' Delacoix

Must man aspire to learn
Must loathe and shun fame
and stay near to the flame
that deep within burns

2.

If a man be a man
He must take a stand
He must clarify things

Margot's part
Sung sweetly

Chorus
I go to him ever so gen-ti-ly
How could he know the joy he brings to me
And is it all so wrong
And am I such a fool
To think that this could be

Loc: Same

Action: At this juncture it seems that Vincent has made up his mind about what appears to be another impossible situation, and so turns to leave. This action takes place over the Instrumental Coda of 'Blue Gloves' which also serves as the 'lead in' to the next song. On her cue, Margot suddenly exclaims in verse; "Away... make them all go awaaaay..."

Song

How Shall The Sun Go Down

Make them all go 'way...
The deed is done the hours late
There's nothing more to say
Their spell has cast our lives to fate
The world that we once knew

Is folding crumbling into sand
And now this mourning due
Has caught up with our promise'
Just hold me close my friend...
That we might love
this one last time again

Don't hide your love from me
The wolves, the ravens compass near
What be is what must be
They've stole the moon and disappeared
What was rendered in the night
Must surrender now and face the sun
And embrace the morning light
They've left us nowhere but to run
Now hold me dear...
Say you care

Chorus 1

Without your love how shall the sun go down
Without your love where shall the moon be found
Without you love how shall the world spin round
Where shall I be without your love
Without your love how shall the robin sing
Without your love how shall my heart take wing
Without your love what might the morrow bring
How shall I live without your love

Hold me, kiss me, don't leave me hopeless,
Now say you'll stay..
Make the sun go away

Chorus 2

Without your love now shall the nights wax long
Without your love,

Long shall the veil be worn
Without your love how shall I carry on
How shall I live without your love

*As the song goes out instrumentally Margot collapses in the garden.
Van Rappard relates to us exactly what ensued.*

Action: *We see Margot faint and then Vincent move to her side. Suddenly we hear the bells of funerary as Van Rappard relates to us that Vincent's father had died suddenly.*

Loc: *2 at the Gravesite*

Action: *the Van Gogh Family, Vincent, Theo, their Mother and sisters all standing in the rain as the casket is lowered. Vincent sings "Rain." The song begins after Van Rappard finishes speaking. There is a burst of rolling thunder that coincides with the introductory minor chord that opens the song. The casket is lowered on the final verse*

...continuing

Van Rappard: And so it was that an impossible situation went from the bad to worse. Margot had gotten a hold of some poison and ingested it in the garden. Vincent attended to her for the next several weeks, and although Margot recovered, still she had succumbed to the intrigues of her mother and sisters. Vincent described her now as a "fine Cremona violin with a bad repair," and so then, as distraught as Vincent was, he made the decision to move on without Margot.

But before any of this came to pass, his mother took a terrible fall and broke her leg. Vincent cared for her and nursed her nearly back to health and then ...the Rev. Theodorus Van Gogh, his father, died unexpectedly.

Scene part 15b

Action: *We see the action described above with Vincent's mother having fallen and Vincent at her side assisting her in walking and then we see his father fall clutching his heart as Van Rappard says "his father died unexpectedly"*

Note:

*On the chorus marked with *, the casket is lowered slowly into the ground. All are weeping as Theo and Anna nearly hysterical go to touch the casket one last time. They are restrained by the others.*

Song Rain

The sound of thunder...and then rain

Vincent Sings

If life were just a game

Some excuse they lived in vain

I might understand

If only just a farce

Not some passing through a flame

I might believe it then

Believe that

Life was just a tryst

Some boat some coach some train they missed

Believe that there was nothing left

But for to grieve for them

But life is so much more than a simple rite

Of passage through an open door

Far from a farce and a denial

It is a privilege and a trial

That sometimes waxes sore

**But
With love
We are made whole as
'Healed'
And as are the flowers
Of spring so then revealed
With every precious
cold sweet drop
of
Rain that pours**

**Rain
So sweet the rain
Rain
So cruel the Rain**

Casket is lowered here...

*** Chorus**

**But (though) in the final tolling bell
We're as a tree that's cut and felled
We are not as
Men undone
For every seed as yet unborn
Is as a page as yet un-turned, unread
(Is still a page)
As yet a war un-won
But though perhaps with love
And just some rain
Those seeds
Are rendered
Whole and then
Their essence brought to
Flower and revealed
Beneath the sun**

**Rain
So gently fall he rain
Rain
So welcome the rain**

The stage is darkened to the sound of soft thunder and falling rain...

The Letter



Scene 16



Scene 16 a through c

The Letter

Very rapid transition to:

Loc: Nuenen Studio, Theo's residence in Paris and Vincent's whereabouts in a continuously changing scenario that follows the images in songs 'The Letter' and 'The Potato Eaters'. These include



images from the residences in Nuenen and Antwerp, and morphing images such as diggers digging, weavers weaving and peasants posing for the painting entitled "The Potato Eaters" See note below*

Actions: In this scene, we see three residences on stage at once with a postman coming and going between them. The Letters are moving between Vincent And Theo and Anna and Will. This movement of the postmen continues throughout the piece and is interrupted only by the Song 'Potato Eaters'. The postmen resume their deliveries again when 'The Letter' continues.

Vincent gets up finally as they are singing well into third and forth verses and is seen working on models in Nuenen and then Antwerp. The final note is a letter delivered to Theo. Theo looks toward the audience and reads the short note announcing Vincent's imminent arrival in Paris. Theo appears 'stunned' when he reads that Vincent will be at the Louvre in Paris at Two O'clock the next day.

**NOTE:*

The stage action is continually moving to suggest the quick passage of time as it is reflected in each verse. So therefore Vincent sings the FIRST verse from his residence, stage right, Theo stage left. By the SECOND verse we see sister Wil and Vincent's Mother reflecting their actions as described in that verse. In the THIRD we see a parade of diggers, sowers and weavers etc. etc. until we finally see Vincent with his bags packed heading for the train. The finale' of Act I is that Vincent is on the train, with Theo, Will, and Anna saluting the audience as they sign out with "The Hannebeeks and Rooses send regards."



Van Rappard: Eventually Vincent and Theo worked out an arrangement that was satisfactory to both of them. Their friendship was renewed with a pact whereby Theo might consider Vincent's work his own, in exchange for a monthly allowance he would send to his brother. Vincent then took to working at a feverish pace and with a renewed vigor, and as he had made the acquaintance of a family of Potato diggers, he commenced what he considered to be his first serious success at capturing the essence of peasant life. Eventually the Catholic priest in Nuenun interfered in Vincent's work by convincing the local peasants not to sit for him anymore. After a season he went to Antwerp to study at the school of fine arts for a while only to become discouraged there too. Finally he went off to Paris to live with his brother. I received a few letters from him, but then our correspondence ceased abruptly, and I never saw Vincent again.

The intro to the song begins with Van Rappard's final monologue. a string quartet or two violins and piano.. VERY...uplifting.... Vincent commences to sing at the end of the monologue. Anna and Wil sing harmony commencing with the chorus and they sing the second chorus on the wind down of the song!



Song

The Letter
(With song
'Potato Eaters' combined)

First just a word about your letter last
Which I read yestereve
For the contents of which are in safe receipt
I thank you brother heartily

And just to clarify again
The matter has been settled and
The work is yours to do with now..
and as you should so please...
Now, our sister Anna said she heard from
Wil, and that she wrote just to say...
That Mother now receives the best of
care, since Father up and passed away
Her leg has now completely healed
Your brother works with fervent zeal
And the work will soon be salable and
we'll make up for lost time



Chorus

I drew two diggers and a sower twice and a girl with a broom
I drew a shepherd leaning on a crook
A weaver weaving at his loom

Of peasants now I have
drawn fifty heads
Church tower and that
old dab drying shed
And if you could, a bit
more Ingress with
My order next time

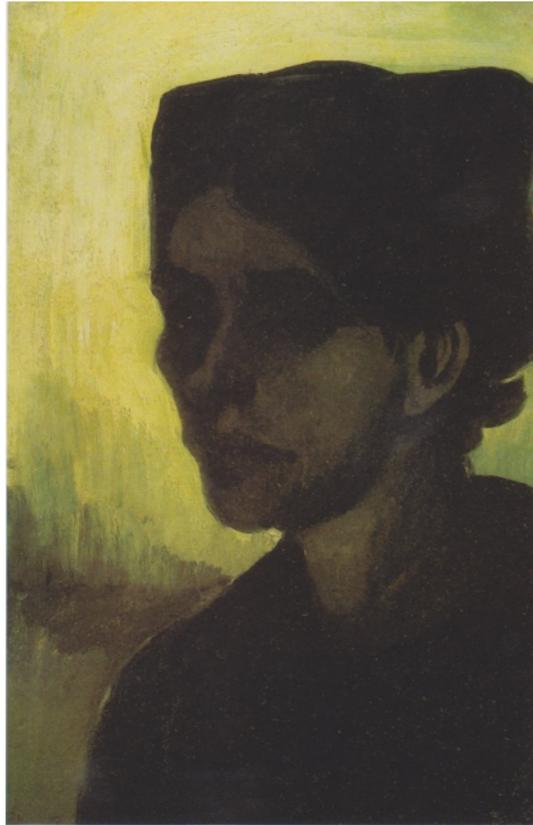


*Loc: The actual painting
of the 'Potato Eaters'*

*Action: Here the Music
modulates to the key of C#
from C and Song, 'Potato*

Eaters' commences with the new 'set' suddenly visible. One of the potato eaters steps out of the scene, as Vincent appears to have set the famous painting back on the easel in front of them to continue on the work. The short V.O. by Vincent (below) is read during the intro. At the end of the second and the beginning of the last verse, two of the

women get up from the table and carry steaming trays of potatoes out to the audience. After serving a few people in the front rows, and with the audience having been invited to ‘partake’, they continue up to the lobby of the theater. The INTERMISSION is now palpable.



Vincent

V.O. over the musical Intro:
 Theo, I have finally completed ‘The Potato Eaters’, mostly from memory and from those studies that I have accumulated of peasants heads, and Theo, I think it is ‘damned’ good.

What I have tried to bring out is that these people eating potatoes by the light of their oil lamp, have dug the earth with the very same hands that they are now putting into the dish, suggesting manual labor, and a meal honestly earned....

17b

Song

(Potato eater steps up to face the audience and begins to sing in rough strained tones...)

A Potato

A potato ‘is’...

A noble Fruit

It lendeth pride, and more..

To those it suits

In sooth this humble seed

Doth fully fill our needs

And lend us dignity

It’s a treat with curds

Mashed fluffy light...

Boiled or baked, they are

A sheer delight

And for those in the cheap seats

We have prepared this treat

Of humble vegan meat

So stay on tonight

Partake with us

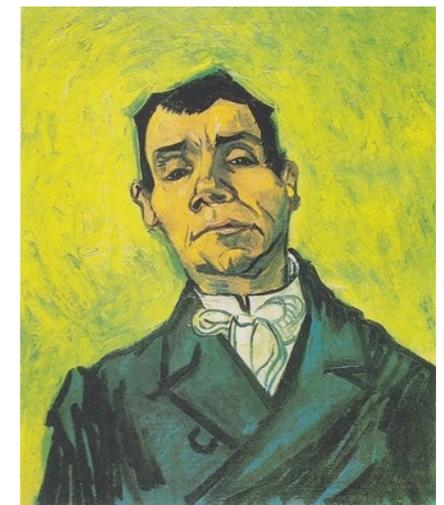
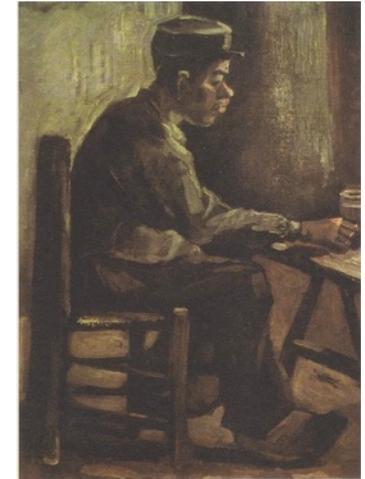
We’re serving baked , you see ...

We’ve made a fuss

Just know, with honest hands

That we have worked the land

For “this” God’s gift to man



NOTE: at the asterisks *** the women rise and bring the trays of potatoes up to the lobby

Action: *Continuously morphing action resumes to mirror the actions of the song 'The Letter.'* So now, with the potato eaters having handed out a few servings of 'baked' to the audience in the front rows, and having proceeded to the lobby, the key is modulated to D, as we resume with 'The Letter'

We continue with the parish priest, now seen at the door of the cottage admonishing the peasants, and them turning away from Vincent in shame. Finally the song culminates with Vincent, valises in tow on his way to Paris, and, a surprised Theo receiving notification via Post of Vincent's imminent arrival. The Sisters Van Gogh take out the song with a final chorus.

Scene 17c
Continuing...

The Letter modulated now to D major

...Now the parish priest has caused an awful stir
and the models won't sit

This Jesuit has now forbidden them..
and all the peasants here were forced to quit
Now I've broken ties with Van Rappard
know that your brother's working very hard
'nd that I've broken ties with Anton Van Rappard
and with a handshake in my thoughts,
regards to Teerstig and Wil

The remittance of your letter last it seems
has all but been spent...
and has gone for Models, brushes, tubes ,
and the Landlord now
demands the rent
so all in all with what's been said
black coffee and some crusts of bread

will have to do until such time
as your next post comes through
* (To E flat)

In Antwerp here I have enrolled in
the School of fine Arts
The students here are quite a lively bunch,
The instructors' just old fossil farts
They say that putrid dogs like me
Will never earn their sympathies
Just as well ,
they can go to hell
for all that I care

*

Yes in Antwerp here with sketches , one
earns a bit in the streets
But times are hard, and Galleries close ,
and so the best of artists face defeat
I'm tired of drawing plaster casts
The money here goes much too fast
You can find me at the Louvre tomorrow
between 12 and 3...

Repeat
(to F)
Diggers
Hannebeeks



Curtain



ACT II

Songs

Monday Afternoon Class

Bienvenu

The Dutchman is Crazy

Exercice au Fusain

Parisians

Segatorri

Was it Wrong

Our Friend Henri

Good Year for the Vintners

Gauguin's Lament

The Lady and the Painter



Monday Afternoon Class with Cormon

Scene 1

LOC: The Lobby and Intermission areas of the theatre

ACTIONS: At, or a few moments before the play would ordinarily resume onstage, there appears in the lobby a mobile group of musicians and Cormon's assistant. She commences to sing a song called "Monday Afternoon Class with Cormon." This amazingly bubbly figure is preparing for that class on what she says is: shaping up to be 'a lovely spring afternoon.' All present in the intermission areas are now aware that the action is about to begin onstage and that they should be getting back to their seats. As they do so they see in evidence both in the theatre lobby and the aisles near the front of the stage, actors in costume sketching, going over their notes and discussing class, completely oblivious to the audience in the lobby of the theatre. The mood is very much a combination of the feelings expressed in the impressionist paintings of that era. Starting with the second verse, the characters Monique, Cormon, Vincent and some of the more well known of Cormon's students ...(Lautrec etc.) appear in the lobby and make their way through the crowd and into the theatre and on to the stage. When Vincent appears dressed in a purple zinc workers smock covered with paint and carrying a wet painting under his arm, he is seen sketching something, seemingly oblivious to the world around him. In verse three when Cormon's assistant shouts out the words "Cast Properly frocked?" Vincent is immediately flanked by



Gentlemen in High Hats whom he gets paint all over as he passes through their midst. ALL...are now making their way into the theatre as Cormon's assistant begins the forth verse.

During the playful 'Mozart like' vocal trills of the chorus at the end of the tune, Cormon's assistant expresses shock and guffaws at the naughty behavior (butt pinching etc.) of the students entering the theatre. This is a setup for the fourth song of Act II, which will constitute Scene 2c. The audience should now be elated and the mood absolutely glorious. Just as the audience is almost all seated, Trumpets herald a welcome to Cormon's class.

...

Cormon's assistant commences ACT II in theatre lobby with:

Song

Monday Afternoon Class With Cormon

First Monday in May

Clouds going away

Sun framing the day

And wouldn't you know...

It's going to be a lovely spring afternoon

Birds singing a song

Fresh dressed and adorned

All set to perform

And preparing for...

Our Monday afternoon Class with Cormon

*

**You'll Meet lovely Monique
Bear Cormon's critique
But hold onto your seats
You're in for a treat...
But first the birds ...are gonna sing ...
a few tunes**

**Then with Ink flowing in lines
Add fruit of the vine
We'll reach for the sublime...
With our Monday afternoon
Class with Cormon**

*

Below Not sung...called out in the lobby to all stage personnel ...

**Cast ... Properly frocked?
OK....Let's tittle and jot!
We're under the clock...
Now...ready or not
Act Two... is just about ...
to begin**

Below, addressed to the audience

**Now for those not in the know
This is the *fun* part of our show
Its called 'linear flow'
We're going to give it a go...
With our Monday afternoon
Class with Cormon.**

*

continuing sung.....

**Yes it's the first Monday in May
Clouds going away
Sun framing the day
And it's going to be
a lovely spring afternoon**

**We're fresh dressed and adorned
Birds singing a song
And now we're 'all' singing along
For our Monday afternoon class with Cormon**

CHORUS

Coda

In vocal trills... Very Mozart like

Trumpets commence for song 'Bienvenu'

Cormons', Attelier



*Scene
2a, b, and c*



Scene 2 a

Cormon's in Paris

LOC: A workshop for artists in Paris.

ACTIONS: Students coming to and fro, readying for class, sing the welcome song 'Bienvenue'. They are setting up their easels and preparing for Cormon's entrance. This scene is seamlessly connected to the previous scene.

Song Bienvenue

(Heralding Trumpets)

**Bienvenue al atelier de Fernand Cormon
Bienvenue al atelier de Fernand Cormon**

**Chorus
In classes here
We are
The ones
In charge
We're thee a-vant-garde**

**Life is but a play
Work just gets in the way
Art is here to stay
Here everyone
Wins**

**So if you think you're smart
Go with the fine arts
Hard work is for old farts (fart sound)
The fun now be-gins**

**Bienvenue al atelier de Fernand Cormon
Bienvenue al atelier de Fernand Cormon**

Chorus

**When Cormon's here
We play it cool
Be-hind
His back
We make our own rules**

**Be that as it may
Everyone be gay
Let the music play
To art without end....
INST.
Let- the- fun- be-gin**

Transition to *Scene 2b*

The Dutchman is Crazy

Loc: Same as above

Action: AS Vincent enters wearing a blue zinc workers smock, all heads turn at the queer site of this Dutchman that gets more paint on

the passerby than he does on the canvass. The other students follow him around behind his back, pantomiming him as they sing...

“The Dutchman is Crazy.”

Song

The Dutchman is Crazy

Recited musically and expressively behind Stodgy Trombones and Tuba

The students are ‘gossiping’ about Vincent in verse!

He polychromes the passerby
with bold impasto pasty
then looks at you with beady eyes
and if that’s not enough...

The way he reeks of turpentine
‘ts enough to make one hazy
it’s a wonder that he’s not gone blind..
The Dutchman must be crazy

He tried to kiss me in the hall
Thank god he only grazed me
He bruskiy clipped my derriere’
That beast should be ashamed

When he heard me laughing hind his back
I thought that he might chase me
Perhaps the Dutchman’s just gone mad
Perhaps the Dutchman’s crazy

Inst.

(with pantomime)

He gets his paint on everything
This Dutchman 's much too wasty
He’s spread out all across the floor
There’s no room left to play

The way he licks those brushes clean
They surely must be tasty
He’s the strangest sight I’ve ever seen
The Dutchman must be crazy... **crazy**

The Dutchman is Crazy is Crazy...

is **CRAZY!!!!** (reverberating)

out of control. (Note: Due to the complexity of the scene, the description of the action continues after the song... p.65)

Transition to Scene 2c

Action: On the Musical cue which is the Introduction of Classe' de Cormon, enters Cormon and the young woman who is Cormon's assistant. She is in her late twenties or early thirties and wearing spectacles with dark frames. She is wearing an artist's smock when she enters and her hair in a severe French bun. She is obviously quite pretty. The class seems to quiet in fearful respect for her. She has a pointing stick.

As the instrumental musical introduction commences, she relates the day's assignment to the class in sync with the music. The students on the left will prepare their exercise, which will be from the book, 'Exercise au Fusain.' When she mentions that those on the right will be working with a live model, the model steps out onto the stage from the rear clutching a sheet in front of her and then she proceeds to another small stage about three quarters of the way to the rear in the middle of the stage. When Cormon's assistant says "commence", the class begins.

Cormon accompanied by his assistant, then start to review each student's work in passing. Immediately silent pandemonium breaks out behind their backs. The boys start chatting with the girls and someone goes up to the Model and starts to do a closeup drawing of her 'derriere' much to her dismay. Lautrec walks over at one point and in animated gestures is seen discussing and critiquing the drawing with that artist that drew it. When Cormon and his assistant finally get to Vincent who has all his work spread out on the floor like a linoleum salesman, Cormon looks down at him in passing, but then does a 'double take' as he gets a grip on himself. As he then continues on, rolling his eyes and shaking his head he turns again to check on Vincent, but then suddenly realizes what has been going down behind his back and realizes that the entire class is completely

Action in sequence...detailed:

Cue: Musical Introduction of "Class de Cormon"

On musical cue, from rear stage left Cormon's assistant walks up to the podium just left of rear center stage and begins to speak broken English mixed with French, in a musical fashion. Cormon stands quietly at her right as she faces both audience and students. She welcomes the students and then begins to explain the assignment. When she reaches the chorus, she sternly cracks the pointer against



the podium and demands that the students repeat what they have just heard. The students comply... Exercice au Fusain

Song

Spoken musically in French and broken English

Exercice' au Fusain

Bon jour
Bienvenue
Tout present'
Aujourd'hui'
Va commence'
La classe
De Cormon
A la gauche
We will work
Wis'model,
jeune Monique
On ze right ...
Exercisse au fusain
Repettez moi'
On ze right
We will sketch
From ze what?
Exercise'
From ze what?
Exercise au fusain
on ze left
We will draw
Dit moi'
La model juene Monique
A. Subject to..?
The critique of Cormon

B.



C. Commence.....

Note: When 'Monique' is mentioned she steps out from the rear and mounts the Model's platform, and faces stage right in profile. This reiteration is I believe a necessary clarification.

Action continuing: As Cormon's assistant steps down from her podium to join Cormon on his left, silent pandemonium breaks out behind them. As they pass the various students in silence against the musical background, Cormon gives the appearance of a

pompous windbag as he briefly critiques each student's work with his expressive eyes. To his rear we see that a student from stage right has walked over to the model Monique, and begun sketching her at very close proximity. As Lautrec comes from the left to join them we observe that it seems that they are in an animated discussion about what he is drawing..namely , Monique's semi-nude torso. At one point Lautrec is offered something to drink from the other student, but shakes his head, No, no, no, and then pulls out his own little snifter of brandy and sips on that. The model who is obviously embarrassed, looks to her rear at what is happening, clutching the sheet in front of her with ever more desperation. At a certain point, Lautrec goes back to his easel and the student that had been drawing Monique's butt has apparently said something to charm her and made her smile as though flattered...

Now, meanwhile, as Cormon and his assistant have been perusing the work of the different students, they suddenly come upon Vincent,

who is seated on a stool with his pipe in his mouth and his drawings laid out all over the floor. As Cormon and his assistant pass Vincent who is oblivious to them, Cormon does a double take in astonishment, at the spectacle which Vincent has created around him.

*Cormon's assistant has now become aware of the chaos in the studio...and commences two sets of three guffaws * trilling musically in sync, both with Cormon's 'double and triple takes and also with various little 'vulgar happenings that she is slowly becoming aware of around them.*

Then suddenly, coinciding with the second take by Cormon, at Vincent's work, Monique is suddenly coaxed onto her back in a copulatory position so that her legs are seen to be flailing in the air with the student having apparently mounted her. Here Cormon's assistant vocalizes her second set of musical guffaws, and then, just at this moment, (the third take) Cormon turns around for one more glance at the strange sight of Vincent, and then witnesses the pandemonium that has broken loose behind his back. This is accompanied by his assistant's third guffaw... His assistant then turns to the audience and remarks...

'Voila toute, une Classe de Cormon'

and the music takes us out.

Finally just after Cormon 'loses it', and the students scatter, we see someone post a sign ATELLIER CLOSED...the scene fades into darkness...

NOTE: These musical guffaws (very Mozart like) coincide with Cormon's double and triple takes. This sequence must be 'precisely choreographed so as, to synchronize the three vocal 'trill's sung by Cormon's assistant, to Cormon's triple take, and also three trills to correspond to her reaction to those events that have come to pass behind both of their backs.

** The guffaws themselves are to be expressed as rather more of an 'embarrassed shock' the effect should be 'comical.'*

Parisians

Scene 3



Jean Baptiste Camille Corot
Agostina Segatori

Scene 3

Loc: Paris streets

Action: To the a cappella we see the streets of Paris open up to the brightening lights. The actions performed are exactly those described below, i.e. we see Bourgeois Parisian men acting a bit foolish in their pursuit of the coy Parisian ladies... The ladies, are pleasantly annoyed.

Song Parisians

Grown men
Act like
Little
Babies
Teasing
Coy Par-
-isian ladies
Morn to night
It's cherche la femme
Pleasure first
So... Parisian

*The Segatori begins to sing 'directly' to the audience. When she gets to the phrase * "another 'artist'" she raises her hands to make quotations marks.. "...", with her fingers. There is a bit of sarcasm in her voice, but just for this line.*

It was about that time of year in Paris
That the ladies are perused and harassed
One brother was heartbroken

The other most outspoken
I shan't forget the ver' first time he spoke..
And I thought..

Another Ar...'tist'.. *
Wants to hang his things
Here at my Café
Du Tambourine...

*

Now Theo was in love with one Johanna
A lovely lass from Holland, most well mannered
But when his birdie flew
He didn't have a clue
Poor Theo found himself in quite a stew

Of this Dutchman I must first of all confess
With his brushwork and technique I was impressed
He was a total beast in bed and nothing less
And he treat me like a woman...

A Woman.....

*

And though it was not love...
it was not bad
He said I was the best he'd ever had.
I know it for a fact...
I drove him mad..

*

But more of this when we return a wee bit later
With the story of the Lady and the Painter
OR... (Director's choice)
Though there's more to share, for that..a wee bit later
We'll return then with 'The Lady and the Painter'

*

Ahhh but all of that...can wait
And so for now... we'll celebrate

we toast...
the artist's closest friends...

Tanguy
Seurat
Bernard
Signac
Lautrec
Gauguin
All Parisian

Action: As the Litany of artists above is sung, each artist in turn bows to the audience with the exception of Emile Bernard who steps forward and speaks directly to the audience over .. Transitional Theme 'The Way Things Were Back Then.' This serves as their introduction in following scenes.

Note: Scene can continue on to 'The Apartment' scene or go directly to 'Tanguy' Scene in another version not included here.
The final decision depends on the result of the workshopping of these two possibilities in preproduction.

Song

'The Way Things Were Back Then'

(Transitional and Background
Piece)

...

The Night Cafes,
The strolls along
The moonlit quays
You'd say..
I love your way and when...
I took your hand

You'd say
One day
We would recall...
The way things were back then
The moon the stars the Paris streets
Our triumphs and defeats..
Though....
Not for
all tastes
(a) Bit-ter
Sweet blend...
The way things were...
Ahhh Paris then...!

Emile Bernard:(Speaking to audience over the Transitional Piece)

And so as Vincent was just getting settled into his new lifestyle, his relationship with Theo it seemed, had been slowly taking a turn for the worse. The apartment on the Rue Laval, was cramped enough when Vincent moved in, but with his work quickly filling all of the physical space there, it was becoming a veritable maze of sorts. Theo and his friends were quickly learning that even to just be in the presence of an artist such as Vincent could leave, one with a sense that they were all... walking on eggs!

Scene fades too..

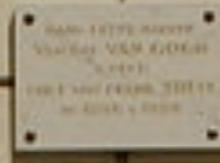
The Apartment

Rue de Laval

Scene 4



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Scene 4

LOC: The apartment of Vincent and Theo in Paris on Le Rue Laval

Action: Vincent is just returning home to the apartment and walks in on Theo and some of his friends. (Door is stage right) There is a brief altercation and the guests abruptly leave. Theo argues with Vincent and they sing the Duet 'Is It So Wrong'



The sound of gregarious laughter and chatter in the apartment.

Guest: You are so right Theo to say such a thing. If it weren't for ...

Sound of the key in the door. Laughter and chatter fade to silence as it opens

Enters: Vincent from stage right in his painters smock carrying a canvas and some other things.

Theo: Vincent...

Vincent continues on and scurries to an alcove on stage left. Theo rises up and follows.

Theo: (to his guests) Excuse me ... one moment..

The group continues nervously laughing...as Theo scurries off to the front of stage left and into that space which is Vincent's room.

Theo: in hushed tones...Vincent.... don't you even bid us good evening anymore.? Come inside..

Vincent looks half the way to where Theo is standing,and pauses briefly before speaking

Vincent: I am sorry ... I... had a long day...

Theo: Please Vincent.....

Vincent sighs and accompanies Theo back into the living area where he is received with a mix of reactions...

Vincent: good evening everyone...I'm sorry, I...

Guest: Oh that's all right Vincent... no need to apologize... we can see you've been working hard..

Guest No. 2 : And Vincent, how are things going at Cormon's?

Vincent; (sincerely) Quite well I'd say ...

Theo: (To Andreas Bonger) Andreas, see if you can find your sister... oh here she is... *turning to Vincent...* Vincent, I'd like you to meet a very good friend of mine , this is Andreas....Andreas Bonger and

Johanna: Johanna...I am Andreas' sister

Theo:..(*tongue tied and bedazzled staring at Johanna*) ...: Johanna...

Andreas: Very pleased to meet you Vincent , I have admired your very beautiful gladioli , and I've heard so much about you .

Johanna: Very pleased to meet you too Vincent... I am just seeing your work for the first time. I am very impressed with it..

Vincent: Well, Thank you both very much and...pleased to make your acquaintance...

Guest; ... (*staring at one of Vincent's portraits*) Vincent, I was wondering ...if you had anything a bit more... hmmm...'pastoral'... might I say?

Vincent: (*straight-faced*) Well..., perhaps next time you come I... will have painted some nice.. little sheep on a chocolate box for you ...

Guest: *harangued* ...Humph...!

Guests wife: ... actually... it ...it 's late and we really should be leaving...

Vincent; Oh no... No, it's only 7...

Guest: No, me too. I really have to be up in the morning....

Theo: Ohhh...Well..., so sorry you all have to leave so soon...

Small talk chatter and good byes.

Theo: Well thank you so much for coming ...and Andreas.....Johanna.....

Johanna: Good night Vincent... Theo...

Andreas: We'll speak Sunday Theo.... and Vincent, hope to be meeting you again soon....

Vincent; Have a good evening everyone...!

Door closes and Vincent quickly moves back toward the alcove..

Theo: (*after an uncomfortable silence..In agitated tones*)... Vincent... why is it you can't be more civil with my friends?

Vincent: I am civil Theo...as civil as any real man ought be under the circumstances.

Theo: You come on like a brute in their eyes Vincent ...can't you... that remark about sheep on chocolate boxes...

Vincent: 'Brute'?... Brutally honest...! Isn't that more like it Brother?

(Music commences here)

Theo: I have a right to have a life Vincent...

Vincent: And the girl Theo.?

Theo: She's going back to Amsterdam ...tonight...!

Vincent...I think that perhaps ... you are in love little brother! ...Theo... If you want me to leave...

Song commences

Song

Is it Wrong

Duet
Vincent and Theo

Theo

Is it wrong, so very wrong
That I should have a life
Someone to call my own
That I might find someone
Is that so cruel

Is that so strange...so very wrong
Someone to love to have, to hold
Someone to cherish me

(Instrumental)* *Movement between the verses*

Is it wrong so very wrong
That I would somehow find the moon...
That I should find someone to fill my life,
That in my heart,
that love should bloom
Is it unfair
That I should find someone to hold
Someone to care

Vincent

is it wrong so very strange
that I should deign, somehow
to dare to find..
make my own way..
that I should strive
'become.....'
to find myself..
that I should seem to go astray

Am I a fool
because I dare to dream..
to reach the stars
is that so strange...so very wrong...

No..not..please
Not Pa-tro-nize me
Please ..
Just go...go gooo away....

(Below, at the final held note of the instrumental Coda,)

Vincent:... OK... I'll Lea.....

Theo: No Vincent, ... 'I'll' leave!

** Action: during the instrumental reiteration of the verse, the brothers are each seen packing their valises, but in the end, it is Theo who actually leaves...*

Lights fade on the apartment and Vincent, and a Park is revealed...

Johanna Dear

Scene 5



Loc. a park

Action: As the previous scene fades, a forlorn Theo is revealed singing to himself in the park! He is like a lovesick puppy!



Song **Johanna Dear**

Out walking in the rain
the scent of sweet Begonia
a distant passing train
a burning need to know you
or was that just some cab horse
trotting down the
cobbled

Paris Street

Out walking in the park
The thought that I might see you
Then dancing in the dark
A burning need to need you
I am as lost within
The memory
Of your fragrance
And of your kiss
Johanna dear

Chorus

What Life?
Would our's to share
Be
One
To have
To hold
Together... we'd grow old

Now sleepless through the night
So aching, tossing, turning
I felt it was so right
The moment was a burning
Or was I much too forward
Was I bold in that
I went to her too soon

Each night beneath the stars
I think about you longing
As I wonder where you are
My heart is filled with song and
I am as helpless

as a kitten
In the holding
of your arms
Johanna dear

I am as lost within the memory
Of the moment and
Of your charms
Johanna dear

Loc. 1. Morphs from Park to the front of the 'little jewel shop' of Pere' Tanguy on the Rue Clauzel in Paris. 2. We move from street view to an interior view at the end of Pissaro's monologue

Action: Pissaro steps out onto the stage and relates the situation as it stood after Theo's temporary leave of absence from the apartment. We learn that Vincent has made some extraordinary friends and has also become involved with a beautiful former artist's model with whom he has made an 'arrangement' of sorts to exchange pictures for meals.

Note: We may interject again here the 'theme' The Way Things Were Back Then"...but it is not necessary.... A simple piano version with do nicely...

Pissaro: And so , albeit only temporarily, Theo left for Amsterdam, but when things didn't work out for him with Andreas' sister, he returned to Paris, and the brothers then moved into a *much* more spacious apartment on the Rue Lepic.

The truth of the matter was though that Theo had fallen head over heels in love with Andreas' sister, and when his proposal for marriage was rejected, went about like a lovesick puppy for most of the time that he and Vincent roomed together.

As the brothers' situation started improving, Vincent began taking his meals at a place called the Café du Tambourine' which

was owned by a beautiful former artists model we all called the 'Segatori'. The meals were supposedly in exchange for a few paintings, but everyone knew they were having an affair.

More importantly though, Vincent started to more and more make the acquaintance of some of the greatest artists in France, and this all took place at this little shop (gesturing) on the Rue Clauzel run by this 'wonderful' little old man we called 'Pere' Tanguy. He sold oil colors, canvass and brushes and collected the works of these artists who would trade their paintings for the supplies they so desperately needed.

See.... there... (*Pointing at Pere Tanguy placing one of Vincent's paintings in the window*)

Come... Let's go inside with Pere' Tanguy...

I happen to know that they're expecting a *very* special friend to arrive at *any* minute now....

Seamless transition to....

Pere' Tanguy



Scene 6

Reiterating....

LOC: We see straight on the shop of Pere' Julian Tanguy, a dealer in artist's colors. He has stepped outside his shop to observe the view of a painting he has just placed in the window.

Action: Pere' Tanguy speaks directly to us with enthusiasm about Vincent's 'gladioli' and invites us into the shop. As the windows of the shop move off to the sides of the stage, we see revealed the shop's interior. Tanguy returns to work. Others are seen anxiously awaiting the arrival of their friend Henri Toulouse Lautrec. Paul Gauguin and other well known artists are present also.



At Tanguy's

One of Tanguy's assistants commences to sing on * cue below

We see the 'little jewel shop' as it is called on the Rue Clauzel. Inside is the proprietor the Pere' Tanguy, Theo Van Gogh, Pissarro, Paul Gauguin and others. Gauguin is walking around looking at some of works in the shop.

Gauguin ; these are ... ? Gesturing toward Vincent who is busy painting...

Tanguy; yes.. yes they are Vincent's , all these are Vincent's...

Gauguin : Hmm... very beautiful.... and I see you're very prolific Van Gogh.... I'll never understand what you see in those old shoes though, you're wasting your time with that stuff.... and you're going to have to lighten that pallet of yours...really!

Vincent who continues painting in silence with pipe in mouth , seems to approve of Gauguin's criticism.

Tanguy: Well Paul, Vincent has spoken very highly of your work and....

They are suddenly interrupted by a fellow looking out the back window:.. Whhoooo he's coming he' coming * Cue

Some of those present start dancing around and singing in joy...

Song

Our Friend Henri'

Lock the door and draw the shade
Break out the best Champagne
Tonight we're going to have a ball
At Café Du Tambourin
Pop the corks, don't be shy
Be sure the drinks are free
Tonight we're going to celebrate
here comes our friend Henri'
strike up the band
here comes Toulouse'
let the music play
we'll sing and dance
the whole night long
until the break of day
we'll drink and fight
till morning light
then bring the ceiling down
just the way we always do
When Henri' comes to town

So if your seeking quick amour
Or (just) only want to dance
du Tambourine is just the place
where you can find romance
every night we raze the roof
to well past two or three
with the kind assistance of
our bold amice Henri'
so grab a girl they want to dance

just ask one don't be shy
they are the very very best
that fifteen francs can buy
but the food and drink
are on the house
tonight we're dining free
tonight we party
till we're soused
thanks to our friend Henri'

Inst.

Music continues with instrumental, as Henri enters the back door. He does a little hat and cane routine and then ...

Henri: Is ...she ..La 'haute' voix? (*the big mouth*)

Tanguy: She is in the back ...come in ..

Henri takes 4 bottles out of a bag he is carrying. The group goes wild with joy..

Group: Ahhh!!

Henri: Voila

Someone says: The Beaujolais nouveau

Henri: Well, let's see what you all think.

Enters Tanguy's wife with bread and cheese on a platter. Watching Henri pour as the others grab for the food.

Wife: (*Having observed Henri's concern with the pending opinions*)
Don't worry little man, ...they will drink from the pisswoir and they will not know the difference.

Tanguy: (*curtly*) could you bring some more glasses Please...

Wife: See? They are on it like hungry dogs...no one pays for anything here..

Action: Tanguy's wife walks over to Lautrec and looks 'directly' down over the top of his head and stares directly into his face which, is staring directly up at hers and she says:

Mme. Tanguy: If it were not for me 'little man'...none of them would ever eat...and they would all starve!

Tanguy: (*angrily*) And if it were not for the 'little man'...YOU... would never drink , and have always to be sober.

As Henri is pouring, they all take a glass and he says 'cheers'...They drink and several are taken aghast at the unexpected bitter taste.

Henri; (*embarrassed*) Well..., there was very little rain this year... and... then always so cloudy anyway.

Gauguin takes a good belt as do some of the others finishing off their glasses and holding out for yet another. Tanguy's wife takes it 'all' down in one draft.

Wife:...after a brief pause to swallow...
.....It's not all that bad.... we've had worse.

Gauguin: I remember eighty four.. that's when the vines went bust. That was an awful year...

Song

A Good Year for the Vintners

*On the cue '84', the piano accompanies Gauguin as he leads off with 'Vintners'
Each takes a turn singing and at the end they all sing.
Tanguy's wife sings out the last chorus*

(Gauguin sings)

Eighty four

That's when the vines went bust

It was an awful year

That was when I up and left my Mette

The markets fell

And the sun just seemed to all but disappear

**Ah but memories of days of finer wine can take us back too
times sublime..**

It was a bust that fall

And the press ran foul with gall

**(though) that was still a good year for
the vintners as I recall**

Chorus

**Memories of roses and sweet wine they say
Will carry us through dregs, put bitter times at bay
no not for all is it a time of woe and cold dismay**

For one day we shall recall

**That when the press ran foul with gall
They were still good years for the Vintners
They were still good years for the Vintners
after all**

(Pissaro sings)

Sour grapes...

They are too often passed for that which once was sweet

How often will
the heavy heart been taken
With the raunchy scent of Madame Rothschild's feet
But fruit once felled need pass not
'neath fair maidens tread
To please the heart once bled...it's said
One day we shall recall
(That)When we were down to the bare walls
They were still good years
For the vintners
They were still good years for the vintners
all in all..

(Mme. Tanguy)

Fragrant vine
That fickle bird of youth
Doth pass away too soon
One season doth the sun appoint for ripeness
Then leaves us nothing more than
Shriveled prunes
But not all are sore displeased with fallen fruit from dry
and withered vine it seems...
No, it's no big a bust for all,
When the fruit is flat and small...
It's still a good year for the vintners
It's still a good year for the Vintner after all

(Lautrec sings)

Pity not those whose bold 'nd merry cup must suffice with short or absent legs

Pity not those whose bold yet merry cup
Must suffice
With short or absent legs
For there are those who find the very deepest pleasures

In the sultry mists of e'en the *worst* rejected dregs
No, there's no need succumb to shame
For acts of God still bless
'some'
..just the same
And there are those that
Still' walk tall...
When the tavern bill is ...less than small...
It's still a good year for the vintners
It's still a good year for the vintners
After all

(Each in turn sings and then 'all' at cue *)

I propose a toast ... to every painters life...,
An end to misery
That someday we might retire and buy a vineyard
Then we'll paint the town and let the press run free
And if our labors yield is less than perfect fruit
We shall not sell the field
For then we shall recall
That our life has been a ball
'cause they're all good years
When you're the vintner
*Yes, they're ALL good years
When
'YOU'RE'
The vintner
After all

(Chorus In French Mme. Tanguy)

Souvenir des roses et du bon vin....dit-on
Nous ...porterons en de meilleur temp...
Mais pas pour tous, est-il un temps de malheurrrrr.....

*Third line of chorus, again culminates in the 2 minor on the word 'malheur', but now modulates up one half step at the end of the phrase to become the 'root' minor chord of song:
'Gauguin's Lament'*

Lights dim with 'immediate' transition to...*

**Note: it is not even necessary to dim the lights if the transition is thoughtfully executed in the artistic sense. Since the principles of the scene are effectively already present on the stage the transition is more a matter of projection, lighting and the clever movement of a few props. The immediate appearance of the Narrator of the next scene -Artist Camille Pissaro - relating to the audience over the spectacular Coda of the previous song, should serve to overwhelm the audience.*

Gauguin's Lament



Scene 7

Action continuing: LOC: A bistro

Action: Pissarro steps out to the front of the stage and starts to speak directly to the audience over the intro to "Gauguin's Lament" which seamlessly connects with the fade of the last song in the Tanguy scene. Gathered at the table behind him, are Gauguin, Vincent, Theo, Bernard, and Signac; five in all, with Pissarro joining them at the conclusion of his testimony...

Pissarro: entering from stage right 'directly' addressing the audience from just 'right' of 'stage left'....

Eugene Henri 'Paul Gauguin' began his career as a banker in Brittany. By the time he was twenty-five years of age he had already put away the tidy sum of forty thousand francs and was living "The Life". He married a beautiful Danish woman, a Protestant Clergymen's daughter by the name of Mette, and they went on to eventually have five children. Gauguin first took up painting as a hobby and would paint on Sundays and holidays. He went on like that for ten years...but... his muse it seems, would have none of it! She wanted *everything*, and demanded that he change his life to suit her.

He surmised that managing his affairs in the art world might not really be that much different from managing affairs at the bank, and so..... well, let 'him' take it from here...

As Pissarro gestures revealing the unfolding scene behind him, the spotlight is now on the great painters present at the front table with the great artist: Paul Gauguin. As Pissarro makes his way to join them, Gauguin commences his lament in song.

Song

Gauguin's Lament

Gauguin relates how he came to take up painting and finally abandoned the markets only to discover he could not at all make it in a cut throat world of art dealers.

Gauguin

We were so bold in those first years...
We went forth with naught to fear
A banker's dream we lived
But with the small fortune then.... that we'd acquired...
Soon the bourgeois lifestyle had us mired...

Then one day, then called my muse
With brush and oil I was amused
I wanted to be free..
I deigned dare to paint, to sculpt.. to mold
I would liberate my savage soul...

At first I dabbled in my free time ,
And this consumed my days of leisure...
But my muse she wanted more, much more
And she would demand that I would please her
No peace of mind had I...
It was written now so plainly clear..
We would venture forth ... for just two years

First chorus

Who'd think that life would bring to bare
Such misery and cold despair
That Godless men might hold the keys
That might unlock one's destiny

In Paris, in that first year, we were still young, and so naive,
B't we had our dreams, I'd persevere and so I deigned to take my leave...

We were so foolish then...
The moon and stars were in our eyes ... ('nd well)
That next winter came as some surprise...

We scrimped, we could not save
We were as impoverished souls
depraved
yet to my muse I was enslaved
Soon we'd have six mouths to feed....
And so I hit the icy Paris streets....
'till my shoes
were frozen,
to my feet

Chorus

Who'd think that it might come to this
A pause before deaths cold abyss
That heedless men would lie in wait
Like wolves and jackals at truth's gate..

Who'd think when all was said and done
That the war within man's soul was won
That still were battles left to wage
To work to play out on life's stage ...

Chorus 1b

Amice' Gauguin, you are not among that lot
that we have so despised of men
You should know that we feel,
Humbled, ...blessed
and proud to call you friend
(All together they sing)

To give our best and nothing less
This is our calling and our quest
to give our whole ... embrace
To reach the stars
to accept that bitter cup
to partake of the divine
to submit unto the press
live no day without a line
This is our.....our...

de donner notre cœur notre âme de notre tout ..
à soumettre vers la presse, d'affiner et de répandre *

**to give our heart our soul our all.. to submit unto the press, to refine, and to
pour out*

Note" Temporary verse. not meant to rhyme in French

*As the song now winds down it resolves to climax in C major instead
of the A minor. The musical effect is that it reveals these great painters
in a moment of sublime bonding and their commitment to
'no compromise'
in their aspiration to the very highest ideals of Fine Art.*

the lights dim...

Cafe Du Tambourin'

The Lady and the
Painter

Scene 8



Scene 8

Café Tambourin

The Lady and the Painter



Loc: A 19th century Parisian Cafe' with tables shaped like tambourins

Action: A painting exhibition is going up at the Café du Tambourin in Paris. Vincent is seen busily hanging his paintings of Japanese prints on the Cafe walls there.

Seated is the Mme .

Segatori, a former artist's model and proprietor of the cafe. She is relating to the audience directly about her life experiences. She tells us that life has not quite been the same since she met this "painter." As the Greatest artists of the era come and go in the background she relates to us the Paris 'scoop' and then makes clear that she has put away her bad feeling for those who could not at all appreciate her fine points, and so then: relates to us the nuances of her tryst with her 'Painter'...Vincent!

In the last verses of Je Taime, Vincent cannot stand it anymore and goes over and smothers her in sensual kisses. She brings the audience 'straight up' to her level in a feverish pitch as she concludes song "Je Taimme", in Piaf like tones.

Song

Je 'Taime

The Lady and the Painter

All these days

I sit alone

the people come, they go..

The whole world seems

to just stare at me...

That's my life here in this windowed café gallery

And all these 'artists' want to make the scene...

Here at 'my' Café Du Tambourine'

Well , now on the 'Boulevard'...

there are those that I have pleased...

Though I have born with their insults

beyond fair measure

If you want the Paris Poop...
Well, I 've got the scoop
and so,
I will now relate the deeds
of these most uncouth...

Of Degas.... he was a brute,
and much too bold..
For SeurattI was too gay,
and much too cold
For Bernard ...to old
For Renoir....To Flat
For Corot'.. passe'
for Monet.....to FAT...
Now tell me...
how's a girl supposed to work
For dogs like zat..?
Ahhh but all that was when...
They used to say of me
You'll never tame her...
This of course was all...
Before the lady met her
painter
He dazzles me with his brush
'nd never fails to pleasure me..
He just seems to have
this need to somehow *treasure* me
And when he 'thrusts'
it's as though he deigns
to somehow 'measure' me...
yet still so discreetly though...
He'll often lift my skirt...
And then whispers to me
till it hurts...

Ahhh Je Taime'...

**Vous etre tout... mon desiree'
Vous etre mon femme'
Mon cherie..
Vous etre la fleur
de la Boheme'**

*

**So be it told then
that it took one bold Dutch painter
to succeed then where the rest
all failed to tame her..
and so acquaint her then...
with love...**

**So now at the risk of seeming somewhat vain
I'll indulge my painters sweet refrain...**

Ahhh Je Taimme'...

**Vous etre mon petit' fleur
(over and over...Je Taimme')
with variations ad lib in French)**

Action: We see the police enter the Café du Tambourine and put up a 'CLOSED' sign.

Vincent is inaudibly arguing with the Gendarme about the paintings on the wall. The lights dim and when Bernard gets to the part of his monologue where he mentions Vincent stealing back in the dead of the night we see dimmed almost to darkness, the Cafe Tambourine's back door being pried open. Vincent with an accomplice enters, and then hastily grabs his things from the walls. They then flee the way they came.



*Finally we see Vincent, with Theo and Bernard at the Train Station
As the train pulls out, we see Bernard looking back in reflection over
VO.*

V.O...Bernard:

And so it was, it came to pass that the Tambourine' went to ruin in just a few months time. The police boarded up the place.

Vincent, had to break in one night just to remove his painting from the walls.

As to Theo and Andreas' sister Johanna ...they were falling in love, and so it was that Theo just wanted to live alone now, Vincent decided that it was finally time to pack up and leave for the South.

Theo and I walked with him that night to the Gare du Nord and saw him off. I still remember, as we waited for the train to pull out of the station, I could not help but think that I had made the acquaintance of a 'mighty' artist...Little did I know that I would never see my good friend Vincent alive again.

As Bernard and Theo look back, they fade into shadow...stage goes dark and we hear the Music of the a cappella commencing Act III...



SONGS OF

ACT III

Book of Hours

Rachael's Song

One More Spring

Promenade

Pathétique'

Cicadas

The Valiant

Je Suis

No More These days

Calling the Gendarmme

Johanna Dear

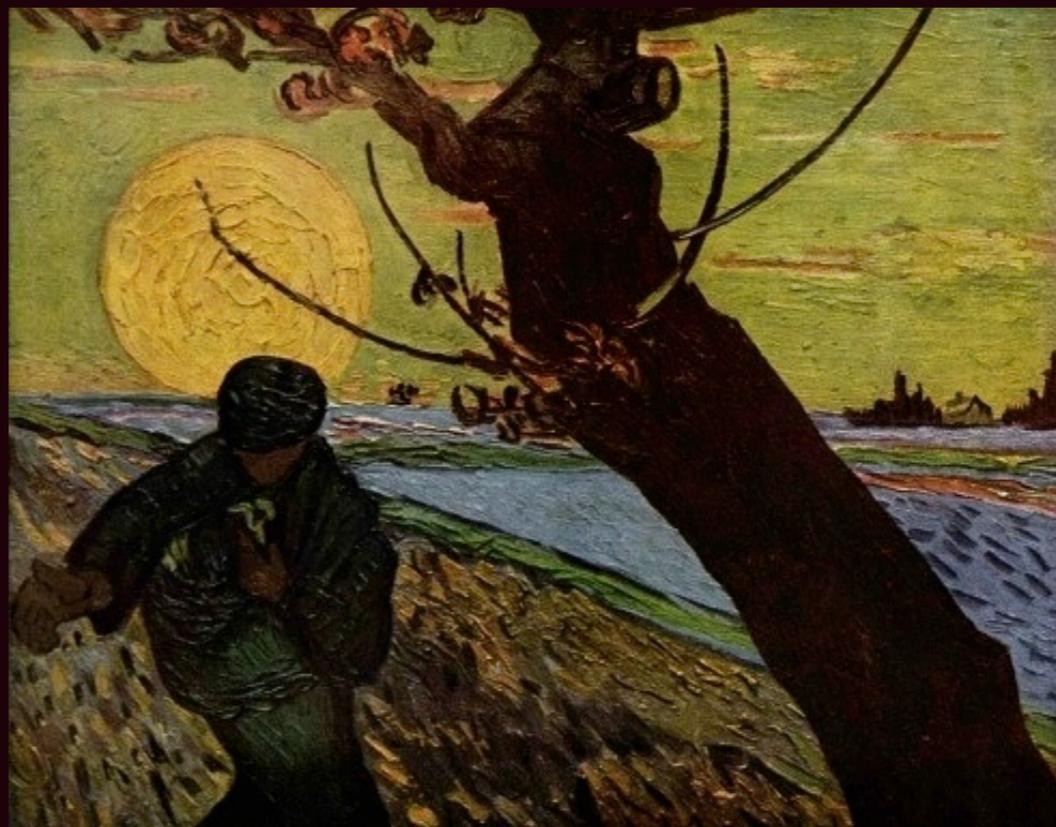
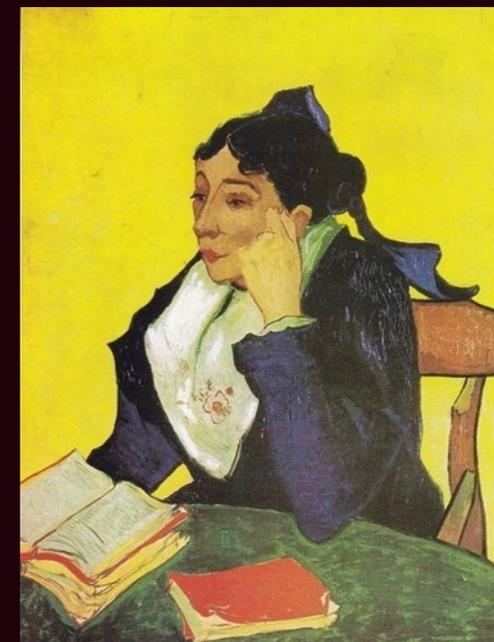
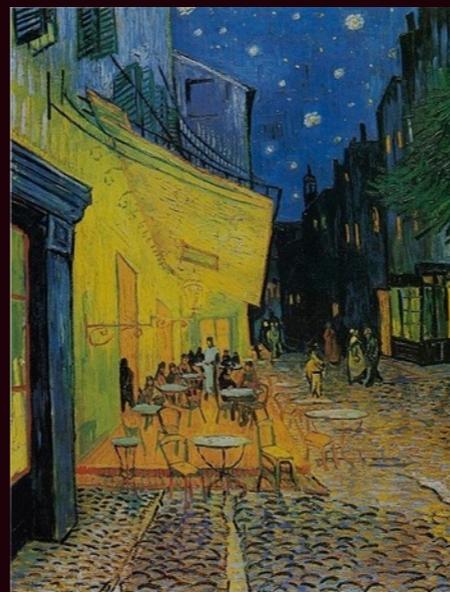
Starry Night

Our Family

Sweet Blossoms

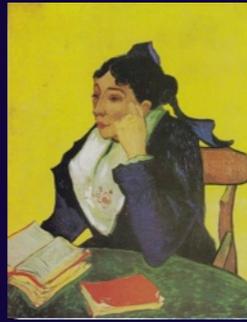
The Mistral

Ici Reopse'



Book of Hours

Scene 1a, b,
and c



Scene 1a

Loc: *The grounds near the gate of the asylum at St. Remy*

Action: *We hear the sound of children playing beyond the asylum gate, but we do not see them. ...There are others of the asylum meandering about in pajamas and seated in chairs with nuns and orderlies there to assist the more confused among them. A seated Vincent, attended by his nameless 'novice' friend is staring out beyond the gate at the little children playing in the distance. His friend has brought him something. The mood is one of a pleasant sunny Sunday 'visiting' day at the asylum.*

Chorus hums a cappella

Novice: (pouring something for Vincent) I don't know Vincent...I never really thought about it...Do you really think that Saint Peter maybe stole the boat?

Vincent: (after taking a sip) Oh my God...what is this? This is not grape juice dear...I see that I am corrupting you ...I 'know' this now for a certainty...

Novice: I took it from the sacristy Vincent...they will never miss it...and you are not corrupting me, It's for you to get better...This is good for the nerves... in moderation...

Vincent: And that boy yesterday..? ...you like him !

Novice:... Vincent .I..I..I'm a nun Vincent. I don't look at boys...

Vincent: And my pipe?...

Novice: I just wanted to try it Vincent...I needed something to calm me after killing all those cockroaches in your room. It's not a sin you know....I don't think.!

Vincent: That's not corrupting you?

Novice: OK Vincent.... maybe a *little*.. you are corrupting me. You confuse me sometimes, but you make me laugh! ...You and Eugenie are the only ones here who make me laugh !

Vincent:...(Sighing)... None of it is a sin dear...these are the thoughts of men...Not of any god (*Vincent is staring out now at the children...not visible*)
Sound of children laughing, playing.. up 1 or 2 DBa long pause...

Novice: You love children so Vincent... don't you?

Vincent:You're a child yourself dear...and yes, of course I love children. ...They can be so cruel though...
Another pause, and the sound of the children up another db...more raucous

Novice:Vincent,... tell me more about Rachael...you were in love with her..?... She had many children?

Vincent: She was a victim...like so many...she was...

The children in the distance are changing their tone now...the Intro music of Book of Hours has begun...

Now the sound of children laughing,...mocking in thick French accent... "Whore...Whores....Prostituuutes..."

Novice: ..Vincent... Vincennnttttt!

Suddenly we hear the V. O. of Vincent in a letter to his brother ...



Scene 1b

Vincent

V.O. “*Theo, I want to introduce you to a Msr. Patience Escalier — a sort of ‘man with a hoe’, an old Camargue oxherd,*”

He steps forward from the shadows of stage left, and starts to recite ‘Book of Hours’ on cue.

Action; *As the sound of the children comes in over the intro, the Novice takes Vincent’s arm, and holds onto it as though she is his only anchor on the storm within him. She is on the verge of tears as we hear the voice of Patience Escalier begin to recite Book of Hours. He is slowly illuminated on stage left*

Loc: *the location has now changed. With the dimming of the lights on Vincent and the little Novice in the asylum yard, we see now a street in Arles in front of the Maison du Tolerance No. 10, a brothel.*

Action: *there are children in the street in front of the steps of the brothel. They are laughing at and mocking two little sisters who are to*

the right (stage left) of the steps. One is playing a concertina in accompaniment while her sister dances like a little ballerina. The children mocking them and pointing are a little older and well dressed, while the sisters are in rags. Other people pass and look on the ragamuffin sisters in derision.

At one point, entering from stage left, Vincent ,who is carrying a large loaf of bread and some cheese, sees the girls situation and so shoos away the other children. He squats down so as to be at eye-level with the sisters, and then the concertinist comes over to him first, followed by the little ballerina, both of whom are crying. He offers them the bread and cheese at the end of verse 2, and puts what few paper francs he has into the hands of the children. Vincent and the children are silently ‘acting out’ what Patience Escalier is relating in the Recital of ‘Book of Hours’.

*Recited by
Patience Escalier’,*

A Wise Old man of the Fields

Note: All actions and song follow ‘immediately’ from Scene 1a...

Song Book of Hours

*Azucena, Dulce pan, little flower, Golindrina
Now c’mon, you’re all just children ,
Now you know that they were just teasing
Oh, but now you knew that all along
Why, I come here every morn...
Why, in your melodies I’m bound
Somehow at once
Both lost and found
In all the provinces of France,
We’ve never heard such lovely sound
No come on my little angel...
let’s put away that silly frown..
And let’s see that lovely little smile*

That's all the talk around this town

Turning to the little Ballerina

And you're her sister? What's your name?

Might you be a ballerina?

That was *you* dancing to the tune

Of your sister's concertina!

And those 'grand' pirouettes

Those I ne'er shall forget

'nd Ahhh ..but for the chance

Just to have the ver next dance'

I'd sell all my silly paintings

I'd give all the wine in France

And that reminds me little one

I'm so rude, did I forget

I know you're schedules tight..

But hmm ...

have we taken lunch as yet?

Girasol , Golindrina

Precious flower

Book of Hours

Know at once

You are the pride

and the bride

Of *all* sun showers

And that

Your style and your grace...

They, transcend both time and space

That the sun the moon and stars God made

To frame your little faces

And Oh ..my little angels

Before I go my way again...

Could you brighten up this old man's world today

'could you sing and dance for him again?

Action: As *Book of Hours* winds down it 'becomes' Rachael's song. We see Rachael enter from the right side of the stage. The children immediately hide the loaf, the cheese and the money behind their backs. Rachael steps up to them and demands politely but firmly in song that Vincent unhand her children.

Scene 1c

Rachael's Song I

R

Excuse me my good man

But if you would,

I pray...

The child unhand?

V

Behold,

I meant the child no harm

There is no guile, no lech in me

I only meant to help...to t....

R

...Be that as it may

We will be on our way

I have here mouths to feed

Behold,

The hour's

late

The Madam calls

My Johns await ...

INST...

Action: A despondent Vincent who feels that he has been misunderstood goes and sits on the curb to the right of the stage (stage left) of the brothel steps facing the audience with his head bowed low, as Rachael goes to take her children in hand, and ascend the brothel steps. On the Musical cue, Rachael discovers the cheese, the loaf and the money. She is seen in pantomime to ask of the children "Where did this come from"? They point to Vincent sitting on the curb. Rachael closes her eyes and puts her open hand to the side of her face

as if to say. "Oh my God...what have I said and done to that poor wonderful man"?

All of this being precisely timed with the music, she steps down to the curb and kisses Vincent on the cheek and hugs him from behind. The door of the brothel opens behind her and the stern Madame directs the children inside, and then Rachael follows a few seconds later. Vincent, taken by surprise does not fully turn to see her till she and the children are almost in the door. The scowling Madame finally closes the door as the music suddenly changes to the profoundly sad a cappella intro of:

'One More Spring.'

As the intro of the song continues, we see that Rachael has entered the brothel and disappeared, only to reappear at the front window to the left of the stairs. All the other windows already open, reveal those other ladies of the evening displaying their wares. Rachael leans out and commences to sing this beautiful duet with Vincent.

Song

One More Spring

Once I dreamed a dream
A wondrous dream had I,
My God could all provide
Someone to have to hold
Someone to rescue me

And yea behold!
One early morn in spring
A prince...me held
But then, before I knew...
I found his seed
inside of me

Chorus
And just when you think
You found true love
And the spring will never end
You wake up to an early frost

Before you know...
You're on the street and then...

V. And once I had a dream...
A pilgrim's path I'd tread
A simple waif with child...
The woman I would wed
A family we would be...

And would you know
As Dreams of Spring they go
My dream
it too came true
For a while my garden grew

But dreams they come
And dreams they go
And every spring comes to an end
Sometimes the rain just falls so hard
You swear you'll never dare to dream again

Here the brothel door opens and the one little sister, the concertinist, comes down and hands Vincent some of the bread and cheese that he might himself eat. This is done to the haunting vocal chorus that was also the intro to 'One More Spring'. Just before it would normally resolve however, the key modulates and Vincent and Rachael continue in duet...

But I still dream sometimes
Yes...
sometimes I dream...I do
And perhaps you'll say..
Well ...he's only just some fool
And while that well may be..

Still only just the thought
Of one more spring
Still sets my soul to burn
Still sets my heart to wing...
Chorus
And though years and tears
Like rain may fall
And winter never seem to end

I 'll bide my time for
One more spring
And one more chance....

To live...
my dream again....

Action : As The music reaches a climax and the English Horn takes us out over the swelling Tympani and Cymbal, Vincent scurries off to Stage Left and the scene morphs to 'Gauguin's Arrival' ...

Gauguin
in Arles
Scene 2



Scene 2

LOC: *The Yellow house in Arles*

Action: *Over the simple piano comp, Vincent is hurriedly attending to last minute details and fidgeting about in preparation for the arrival of Paul Gauguin. Vincent's friend Roulin the postman has just dropped by on his rounds. Gauguin arrives, there is small talk and then Vincent and Paul discuss the trip and future plans.*

Instrumental Comp

Vincent: *rattling off a list of things in French as he straightens the paintings on the wall.*

Roulin: *My God Vincent...you're running around like a woman.... One would think you were going to 'marry' the man ...*

Vincent: *One has to make a good first impression...and such short notice..... I was beginning to think he wasn't going to come at all.*

Roulin: *But Vincent, really....*

Vincent: *how does this look?...*

Roulin: *Everything looks fine Vincent...just don't feed him any of your cooking and everything will be all right I am sure... Oh....! I think this is he coming now...*

Action: *Vincent opens the door...Gauguin, having not even had a chance to knock, is taken aback a bit startled but then enters. The two have a moment of fraternity as Roulin looks on. Vincent then introduces his friend Roulin who announces that he must get back to work at the train station. Roulin leaves, and the duo is together alone for the first time.*

They discuss Sundry, the Bullfights, and the way things will be and the way things were...

Vincent: *Amice Gauguin...Paul!*

Gauguin: *Vincent...(laughter and a moment of fraternity)*

Vincent: *Well, you look to be in great health, not like a man with a liver complaint... Oh... (with Roulin looking on)*

Gauguin: *... As well as can be expected Vincent ...Oh, and this MUST be...!*

Roulin: *..Roulin is the name..*

Gauguin: *..Ah!.. Your Self and the Madam are already quite famous, seeing as you are mentioned so often in Vincent's letters... you fit quite well the description.*

Vincent: *A head like Socrates, wouldn't you say Paul? ...and, a mind to match...*

Roulin: *.. And we have heard so much about you 'also' good sir... and that you are a great poet among painters.*

Gauguin: *Well, perhaps Vincent has exaggerated a bit on that length.. he does go a bit overboard at times you know..!*

Roulin: *Let me just bid you a welcome to our fine town. We may not have much, but we're happy to take half our pay in sunsets here. And now with due respect Msr. Gauguin*

Gauguin: *You can call me Paul ...Please...!*

Roulin: ...I must get back to the station, so I will bid you adieu...It has been a real honor meeting you Paul, and again, I hope you will enjoy your stay here in Arles... Please know that Vincent has gone all out to make your stay as comfortable as possible here. Perhaps we'll all have dinner together sometime soon...

Gauguin: It's been a pleasure to finally meet you..

Vincent: and my regards to Madame Roulin...

ACTION: Roulin leaves and the two continue on in greetings and discussion of life in Arles.

Gauguin is walking around the room looking at Vincent's paintings and things.

Gauguin: Well Vincent...I see that your palette has lightened. Your brother told me...but...this I didn't expect...

Gauguin has stopped before a painting of Sunflowers

Gauguin: I must say Vincent, I am indeed 'impressed'...these are ...truly beautiful...

Vincent: thank you Paul...I am very pleased that you like them . There are more like them up in your room.

Gauguin: And who might this be?

Vincent: That is one 'Madame Ginoux,' keeper of the night café that sustained me here during some quite rough times...She will sit for me again...

Gauguin looks at Vincent expectantly...

Vincent : She would be flattered ...come with me next time.

Gauguin : And I see that you have been to the Bull fights...Ah!

Gauguin is unpacking his fencing foils now. He twirls one in the air.

Gauguin: ...I can't wait...

Vincent: If you've never been to one, prepare yourself well ahead of time Paul! It's very brutal!

Gauguin: humph! You surprise me Vincent! Where is the savage in you?

Vincent: It just seems so senseless to me Paul.

Gauguin: Why should it seem so senseless Vincent.. ? Are we not all brutes underneath the skin?

I'll say it again Vincent, we have to feel and recognize the savage that lies buried deep within our own heart and soul.

Vincent: I think we should rather be slaying the bull within our own selves..

Gauguin: And then again..Is it not our duty as men to slay that beast as it presents itself in our fellow man ? And too, It's about survival Vincent; and anyway...it's all symbolic!

Changing the subject...And Theo...and the girl?...he is still madly in love I suppose !

Vincent: I think things are going a bit better now for them both. The lass seems to have come around in her thinking...

Gauguin;.. I hear wedding bells Vincent...I think before you know you'll be an uncle!

Gauguin: Vincent I see already that you've done a lot here ...you've gone to great expense...

Vincent: We have Theo to thank for this Paul..

Gauguin: ...Yes ...Theo! He has reassured me as to the arrangement of finances that you mentioned in your letters..and so we will be free of 'angst'...!!!

Vincent: La route est dégagée maître Gauguin *

Gauguin bows his head in response to Vincent's deference

Vincent: Well.. Paul...we've got a lot of work ahead of us...We're going to have to live like monks that immerse themselves in a Spartan existence for weeks at a time, and then head off to the brothel for a bit of relief.

* *The road ahead is clear Master Gauguin*

Instrumental Theme

The way things were back then...

But for now Vincent, speaking of hard work, and good times to come...Living like a monk and visiting the brothel....

The mood again gregarious.

What do you say... we do the town?..We slay the bull later...

***ACTION:** As the 'Transition' piece "The Way Things Were Back Then" come to a spectacular conclusion, the camaraderie between Vincent and Paul continues with them pantomiming the slaying of a Bull. Paul Gauguin picks up his cloak and waves it out in front of Vincent who comes at him with his forefingers pointing away from his head. They do this in a high spirited friendly manner three times (as the music permits), and on the third pass, with Vincent's horned head facing the audience, Gauguin produces his saber and pretends to slay*

*the Bull (Vincent). Of course as Paul Gauguin thrusts at Vincent with the saber, he at the last moment artfully turns it away. Vincent plays dead, but when Paul continues, now taking hold of Vincent's ear ** as if to cut it off *, Vincent opens his eyes wide in shock and surprise, as Gauguin smiles devilishly toward the audience.*

This moment 'precisely' coincides with the final note of the introduction of the Song 'Promenade.' Madame Ginoux simultaneously steps out from the shadows on the right of the stage (stage left) and commences to sing as Vincent and Paul Gauguin go into darkness ...

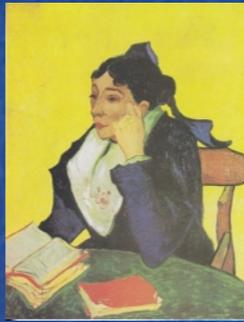
Directors take note: the final moment of this scene must be absolutely strictly choreographed and coordinated with the musical director. The dramatic effect this will elicit, not only sets the mood for the disintegration of the Relationship between these two artists, but also is the first suggestion to the audience of the real story behind Vincent's missing earlobe. The actions of this sequence will be mirrored again later when Gauguin confronts a razor wielding Vincent in a latter scene. Details and diagrams can be found in the appendix of the Directors copy.

* *As it is the tradition of Matadors to sever the ear of the bull in victory.*

** *Vincent's head is at the level of Gauguin's midsection just above the waist. They are 'both' directly facing the audience.*

Promenade

Scene 3a and b



Scene 3

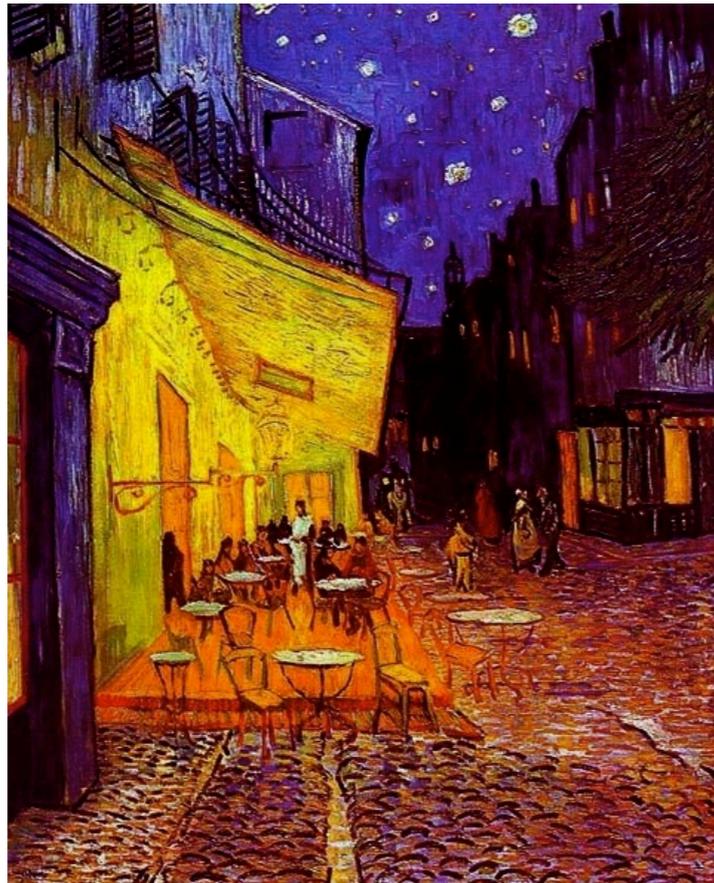
Arles

Loc: the streets of Arles

Action: In the faded light of the previous scene and as the lights are again brightened we hear the Magical intro of Promenade and the voice of Mme Ginoux' singing. Eventually the sound of children singing also.

We see all of the actions of the song on stage, I.E the Arlesiennes promenading in their little communion

dresses, Pere Vuillard selling peanuts with a big 2 centimes' sign on his little stand. There is a small crowd gathered around a gent with a steam powered motorcar that he can't seem to get started, a late 1800's style bicycles is in evidence. The mood is "Sunday in the town of Arles



on a beautiful spring day.” By mid song, we see Vincent walking through the scene observing all. When it seems that Vincent has been caught up on the mood of the day and he reaches out to touch one of the passing children’s hands, her mother abruptly pulls the child away, and we move directly into song ‘Pathetique’

Song Promenade

Arlesiennes

In Provence
To the south

There’s a very pretty yellow house
Where live two painters
Of sunflowers

And of sidewalk cafes
Strolling there
All in white

To the passerby’s delight
Les Arlesiennes fill the air
With their voices so gay

Strolling up
Strolling down

Promenading through the town
Singing praise to the sun’s golden rays
And all on Oh, such a lovely spring day here in Arles
Promenade mes Arlessienes
Promenade

Holding hands
Arlesiennes

Promenading past the place du Champ
(See them) In their pretty little dresses passing there
On the Place Lamartine

On the grand
Boulevard

There’s the little stand of Pere Vuillard
There he’s selling peanuts for the very silly sum
Of just two centimes
Strolling here

Strolling there
The scent of laurel in their braided hair
And it's just like a mid summers dream
Oh! Excuse me... my heart just took wing little ones
Carry on mes Arlesiennes
Promenade
Promenade mes Arlesiennes
Promenade..

As Vincent has reached out to the child and been rebuffed by the parent...The scene is now

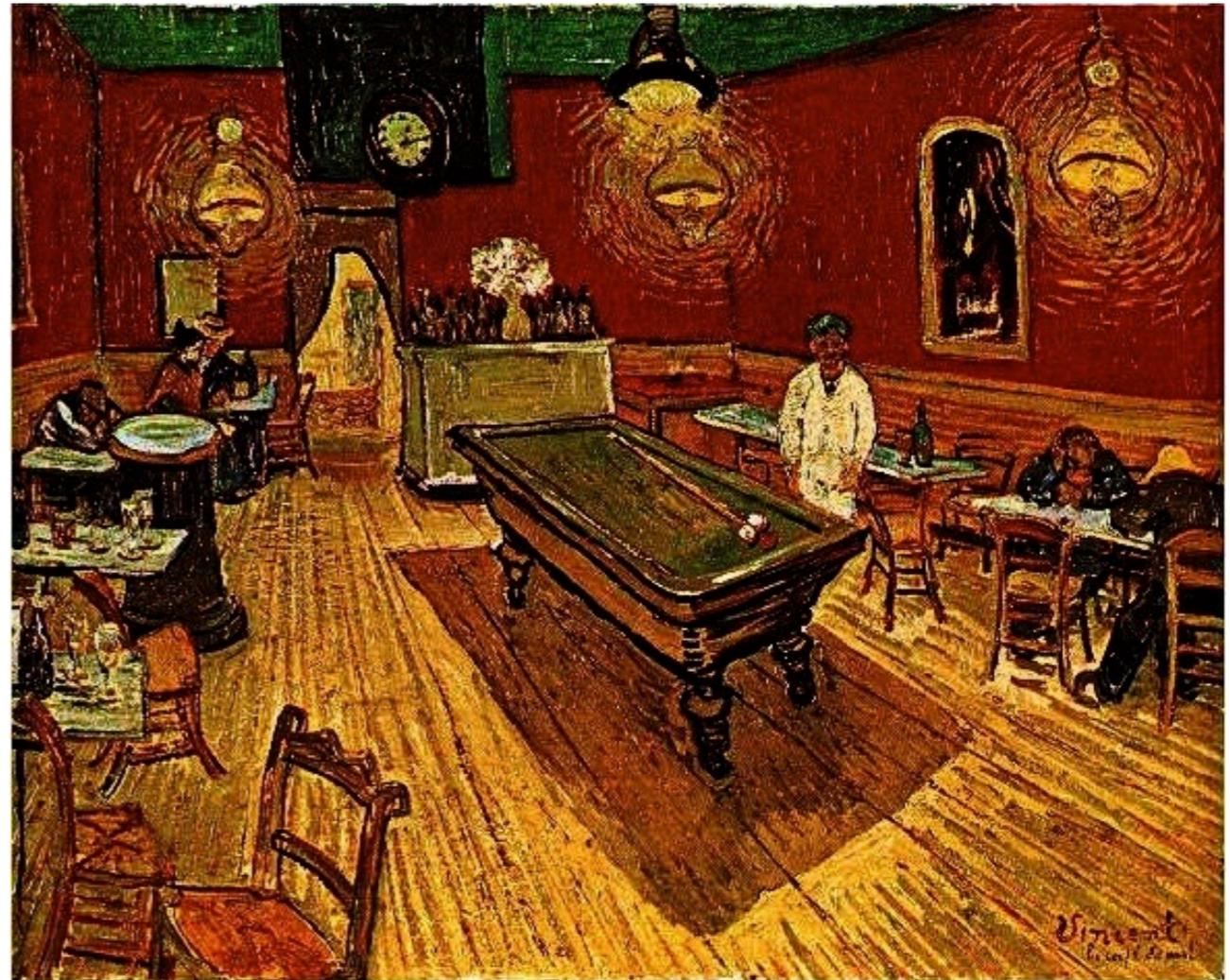
Scene...b Night Café..

LOC: *the scene is a continuation of the above scene and takes place in the Night Café.*

Action: *The lovely melody, now over a different chord is suddenly dissonant as we continue with a V.O of Vincent describing his personal inner battle as “the storm within.” We see Vincent in the “Night Cafe” taking his place in front of his easel painting ‘The Night Cafe’. The dissonance has given way to the instrumental intro of ‘Pathetique’.*

Instrumental Intro

V.O. Vincent: *...So far Theo, I have not made the slightest headway in people's affection. Whole days go by without my speaking a single word to anyone, except for to order a meal or a cup of coffee, and so it has been from the start.. I seem to have a sun in my head and*



a storm in my heart Theo, and when the storm within grows too violent, perhaps I take... a glass too many to seek... diversion.....

Song Cafe' Nuit'

Pathetique'

Sung by Mme. Ginoux'

In the precincts of the night café
The lost take refuge from the cold dark streets
Their shadows there are cast on bold display

In somber shades of Jaundiced Pathetique'

**Absinthe, tobac and cheap red wine
Serve the lost to ease their hunger pains
On old stale crusts and little more they dine
Victims of a bourgeois cold disdain**

**Morning serves to bring their cause to light
They suffer yet another days defeat
They have no recourse but to then return
Unto the precincts that some call Café Nuit**

**Their nights they pass with planning bold intrigues
Their streets are paved with the shards of broken dreams
For what noble cause their valiant form in league
They are brought to naught for lack of simple means
Again the lost must face the morning light
Still suffering so from lack of food and sleep
Again the lost return up-on all fours
Unto the precincts that some call Café Nuit'**

**Another day another broken dream
Another night another failed intrigue
Another cast of shadows on display..
In the same old shades of
jaundiced Pathetique'**

Lights Dim and scene morphs to 'Cicadas'

Cicadas



Scene 4

Cicadas

Loc: *Out in the fields*

Action: *Vincent and Paul are trying to paint. Gauguin is frustrated with the heat, the wind and the flies. He complains to Vincent. In the background over the music we hear the very convincing sound of cicadas on a very hot afternoon.*

*Music: the Reverie commences....
The sound of wind*

Gauguin: (there are at least twenty flies on this canvas. . How can you work like this?

Vincent: (*after pause*) So take them off then.

Gauguin: take them off! ..Take them off you say
How can you work this way?

Vincent: Take heed man ...you're repeating yourself now.

Gauguin: we leave the house it's freezing ...then stifling heat....and this damned wind....this is like a bad dream sometimes. I wonder why I ever came here....and in the larder this morning...the money is almost gone again.

Vincent: I had to pick up tubes we were short...(being cut off)

Gauguin: And so what shall we do for food Vincent?...Fry up the leather of those old shoes for steaks? I can't live on stale bread and twenty cups of cold black coffee a day like some of us can.

Vincent: (*after a pause*) the Post is due....

Vincent:
Listen...
Hear ,
and lend thine ear
Now here.....now there...
that celestial sound..
It's all around
They're everywhere

Gauguin; sarcastically
They're a pestilence my friend...
And you they astound ?

Listen ..
There it is again
Behold!

The first cicadas
Sing..
The air they fill..
..a symphony of beating
wings

Gauguin:
They're insects my good friend...
Destruction is their goal and
Final end...
And these flies....

Vincent:
And these ..do thee offend..?
So Pick them off then..

Vincent;
Now there..
A magpie sings
Again..
..the beating wings
and the fresh dunged earth
within my soul
my muse gives birth...
Pause
the flies ,
the heat
the wings that beat
can't you see
that all works
as a symphony
beneath the sun....
that all is as one..?
from these our works emerge..

Gauguin
(peeved, getting up, restless)

Desist now from this dirge
*The mistral comes up ..Wind blows
over Gauguin's canvas..*

This heat ..
The wind..
This.....

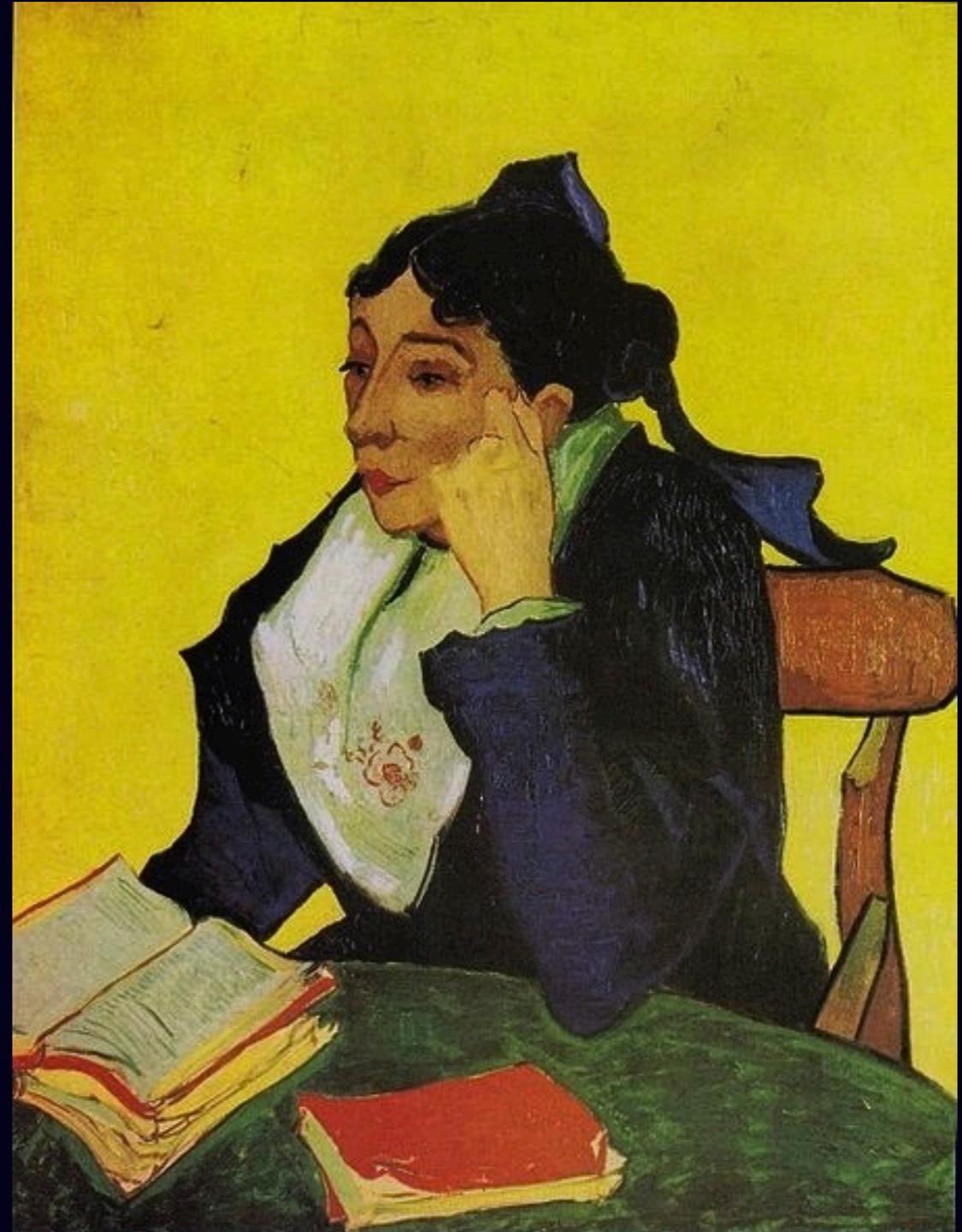
*Picking up the canvass ..get's paint on his sleeve ..
..Looks on in disgust..*

..it's ruined

scene fades to...

The Valiant

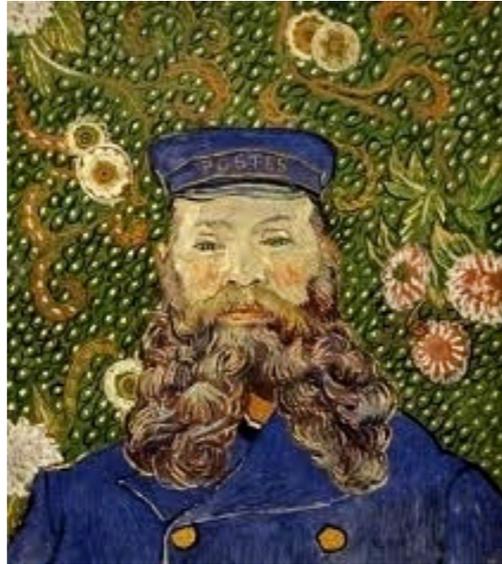
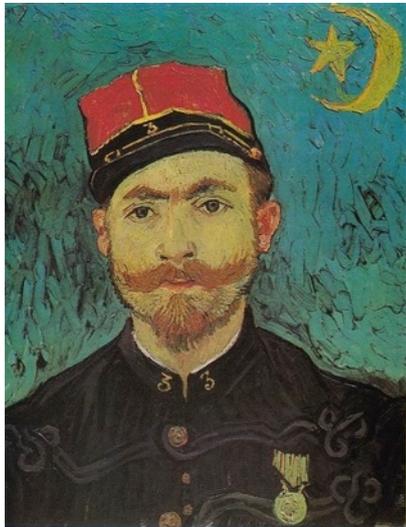
Scene 5



The Valiant

Loc: The Café run by Madame Ginoux'

Action: As Vincent and Paul are at the Café to paint her, Madame Ginoux' commences with 'The Valiant'. At points during the tune Gauguin' and Van Gogh are seen arguing barely audibly and in an animated fashion. In the first chorus we can hear them more than just audibly in heated exchange. In the second chorus we can actually hear Van Gogh letting Gauguin have a piece of his mind below the chorus. The waiter who has been serving them has to pull them apart with the help of another one of the patrons there. Madame Ginoux' is up and about the front of the stage singing for most of the tune. The song culminates with Ginoux', Roulin and The Zouave all singing the final chorus in harmony. At the very last verse of the song, Mme. Ginoux' takes her seat, lifts a book from the table and gestures as she sings the words... "See here...where the page is worn"!



V.O. (Over the Intro to the Valiant)

...Gauguin and I discuss Delacroix, Rembrandt and others a great deal. The debates are always exceedingly electric, and sometimes when we finish our minds are as drained as an electric battery after a discharge...

Song The Valiant

So pale the sun
So bright the moon
Now in the cool of the night
Does a caged bird take flight then
'nd unto the swelling ranks
he wings, he soars..
'nd he pledges to return no more
But then, that conceived in light...
Succumbs to night

The cold
The bitter wind
It leaves him, somehow
Defenseless then...
His only friend...'
he finds...
at some bottles end

And where do they go?
Where do they sleep?
Now in his quandary confused
He has no idea how he'll eat
But the bird he wings his way again
Across the cityscape he flies
And he holds unto his pledge
and to survive
And then at break of day...
The bourgeois go their way

The bird he spirals down
He lands out on a ledge
He contemplates
The razors edge
And then again recalls his pledge
And from whence did Zola bear?
Hugo his Fontine' ...his Val Jean declare
In oh, ..such sweet proses fair

Chorus
Lift me now, now lift me high
O'er where were those valiant slain
Where are sweet blossoms formed
Where are sweet verse ordained
Ask me not ,
Not importune me..
As to where have the flowers gone...?
See there amidst the thorns...!

Now 'gain bright the moon
And so strange the scent
But now in the gutter, he's spent
And... where's the rose gone and went?
But the nightingale shall sing tonight he will
And he shall woo the rose in ascending trills..

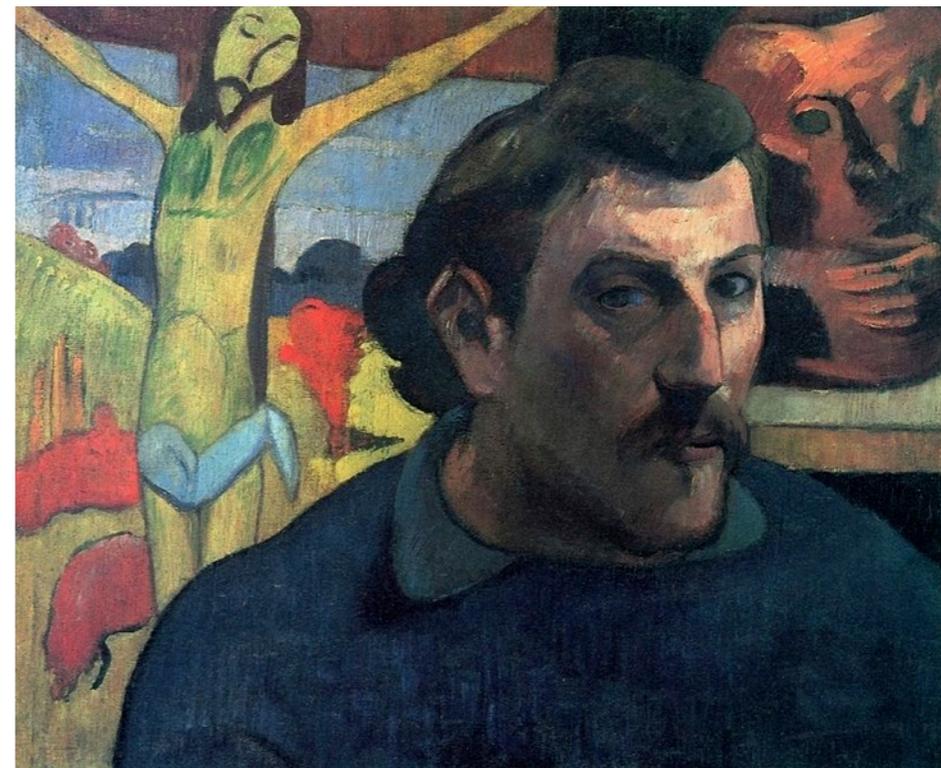
But then again...
There's his bottle friend

His friend he calls him down
They make the city rounds
he chews him up
he spits him out..
then drops him in some lost and found...

But now his back against the wall
The bird his pledge again recalls...
The bird lifts his wings ...lifts his voice
And soars...

Lift me now, now lift me high..
High o'er where do those valiant sleep
There shall I take my rest this night
And there due vigil keep
And ask me not
Not importune me ..
As to where have the hours gone..
See here...

Where the page is worn....



The scene immediately fades into the music of the Reverie... 'Je Suis'.

***Note:** The VO of the following scene begins 'here' over the Coda of "The Valiant". I note this because I may extend the length of the VO in consideration to the 'timing' of the transition.' from this scene to the next one. If an additional 30 seconds is necessary, the image of Gauguin's "Painter of Sunflowers" will be appropriately projected so as to insure that the transition is smooth.*

This and a few of the other more difficult transitions not mentioned, utilizing this 'simple device' will appear in Director's copy.

(See following scene for the short version of the VO)

Je Suis

Scene 6

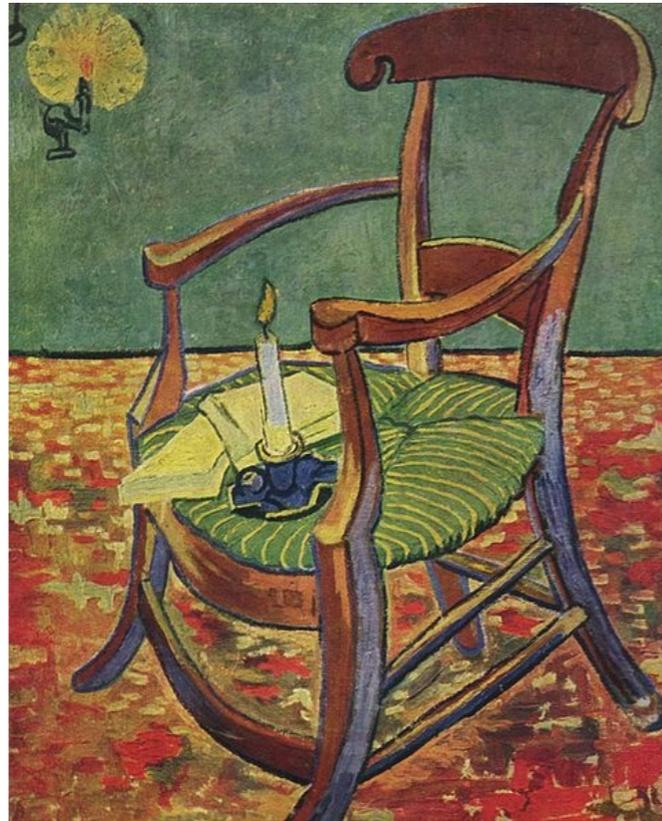


Scene Je Suis Espiritu

LOC: we see Vincent and Gauguin in the kitchen of the yellow house. They are both painting. Vincent is painting sunflowers and Paul is just finishing up his portrait of Vincent called "The Painter of Sunflowers."

Action: There is the sound of howling wind. Gauguin gets up and starts to mull around the kitchen. He is complaining that he has been stuck inside the house for weeks with 'this damned Mistral' that never ceases. At one point Vincent storms out and returns again. The scene culminates in their duet when Vincent writes on the wall with chalk "Je suis el esprit". There is a V.O. over the Intro of 'Je Suis' of Vincent reading a letter to Theo describing the deteriorating situation in the Yellow house.

NOTE: The piano with trailing voices is barely audible at times as it is moving like a subtly rolling sea beneath the dialogue and the Mistral wind. The actors here act as conductor with the pianist interjecting in the softest of tones. Even the banging of the shutters in the Mistral play a part in this. Finally as Vincent has stormed out one last time leaving Gauguin in the kitchen it becomes obvious that Gauguin has



made a decision. He will give it one more night, and then he will be out of there. The piece is recited in meter...not sung!

V.O.... *It is weeks now brother, that we are holed up here in the house prisoners of the Mistral, and as the situation is deteriorating quickly, It seems that Gauguin and I are 'continually' at each other's throats. If he chooses to leave, so be it...we do not need him!....*

Song

Je Suis

'Recited' rhythmically in cadence with the music

Gauguin:

It's the same song here all the time Vincent
Again we're almost out of money
We live and work for weeks like monks and then
We're supposed to reward our selves with absinth and a trip to the
brothels?
We're lucky if we can afford the dregs..

Vincent:

You have mentioned that already ...

Paul Gauguin: *Pacing and walking up to Vincent's paintings*

Empty chair...

Those old shoes there..

Pausing in front of 'Sunflowers'

Silence

Vincent get's up and storms out

Gauguin goes to the door and opens it again into the Mistral and calls after Vincent

Gauguin;
You're mad you know...
...you're mad...!
Vincent comes back into the room...
He continues to paint ignoring Gauguin...
Gauguin continues pacing
G
...Same song
Another day
A different key....
You weary me my friend...
Those tubes you squeeze with such gusto,
such waste...

V.
Where is the waste
If once boiled
The broth might
have some taste?

G.
You press me my friend...
Your words sometimes
offend...
Don't... push me off the end

V.
You're free to leave
To come and go...

*Action: Vincent steps out again and returns with something...(about 30 – 40 seconds should elapse here) while a grumbling Gauguin who is pacing stops to stare at the sunflowers again. Vincent re-enters the room and resumes painting at his easel when the exchange gets heated to a boil...(all is in French from here till *) The exchange culminates with Vincent rising to his feet and the two of them eye to eye as Vincent goes into a controlled rage of anger. He walks over to the wall painting the words 'Je suis espritu'...in yellow paint on the wall... speaking louder and louder until it is plainly spelled out on the wall in large yellow letters...then he states it first in French and then in English...The musical note playing at this point is held steady...until Vincent leaves the room.*

*“Je suis....
Je suis...
I am...
Je suis espritu
I am...
the
Holy Spirit!”*

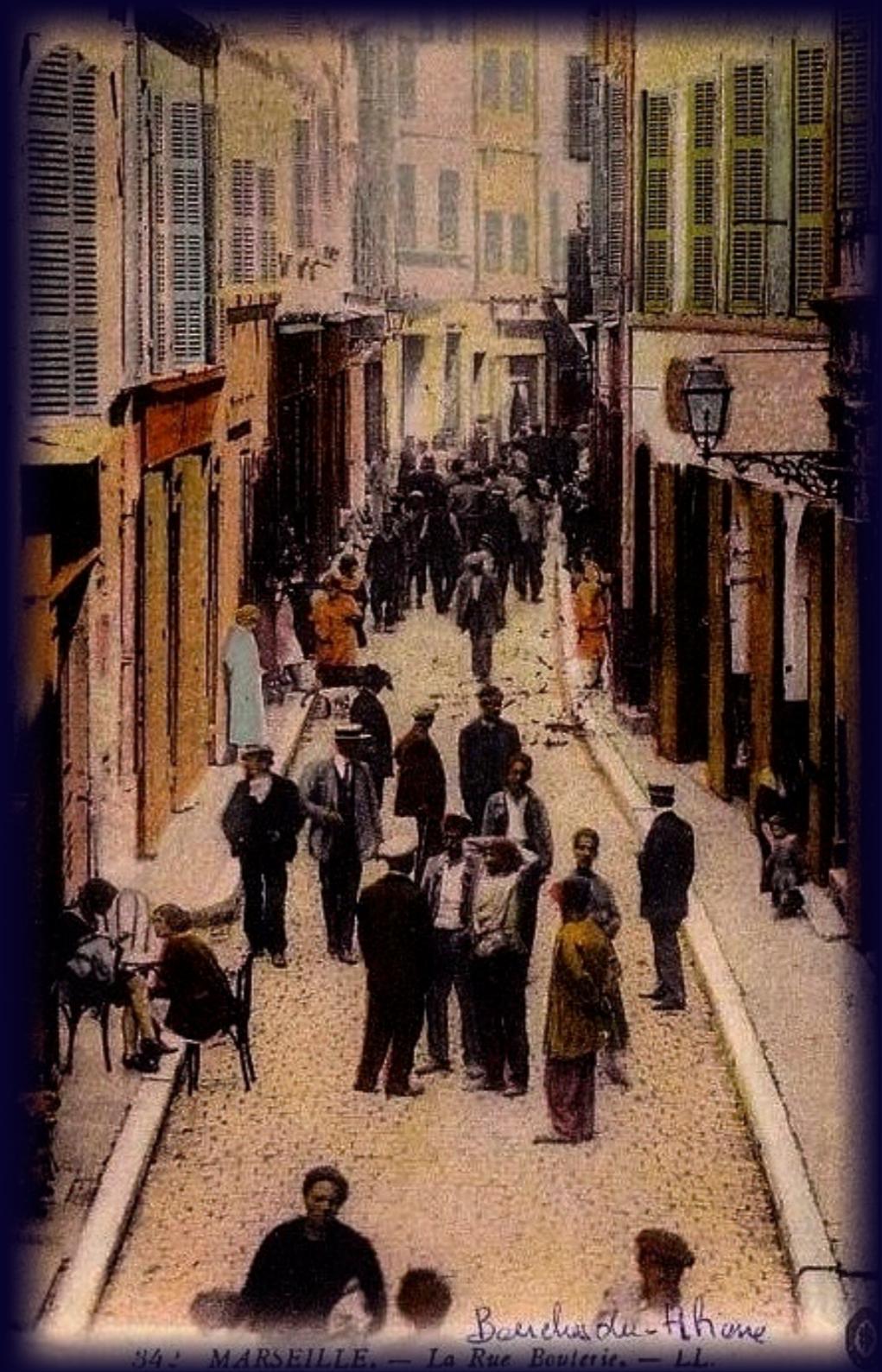
*With this, Vincent is up and out of the room again
Gauguin once more stares at the sunflowers for a few seconds and
then storms out with....*

Gauguin:
One more night...
I'm out of here

Gauguin storms off

Rachael

Scene 7a, and b



Scene

Rachael

*Loc: House of Tolerance
No.10. Brothel with tavern.*

Action: Vincent and Gauguin enter the tavern brothel and Gauguin is immediately seduced into going up stairs to a Bedroom with one of the ladies of the evening. Vincent sees Rachael and goes to sit with her. The Madame comes over and asks if he would like to 'buy' anything or order a drink. He says something to the Madame after the drink arrives, and she gestures as if offering Rachael's services. She points with her hand that there are other men there that would like her company. The place is filled with Zouves in uniform.



Painting by Emile Bernard

We get the distinct impression that the madam wants him to leave, but Rachel puts her off with a wave of the hand. Any speaking here has been done over the intro to the song 'These Days', which commences with Vincent singing the first verse as the Madame walks off in a huff. The audience doesn't yet realize that she will be returning toward the end of the song. As she goes off we hear Vincent relating his feelings about Rachael in verse. She feels sorry for him but informs him in song that 'true love' is not what she is there for. Vincent tries to convince her that this is not what he is asking for, but she knows the truth and that he is in love with her, but she has mouths

to feed. She pleads with him to 'lend an ear' and to hear what she is saying. He begs her

"Three words I pray",

The background singers are repeating over and over the songs theme and variants, assisting in making both Rachael's and their own dilemma clear to Vincent, and that is: They don't even so much as 'dare' to care to fall in love these days.

As the song goes out it rises in intensity to a feverish pitch as Vincent and Rachel sing in a tight harmony of 'thirds' until finally, the piece culminates in a gut wrenching crescendo and their voices soar like two wounded yet glorious swans. Immediately with two more turnarounds of the final verse left, the Madame enters and seeing Vincent still there with Rachael, angrily reaches for a small bell and rings it to summon the proprietor who immediately arrives with muscle in tow. Gauguin, who has simultaneously come down from up the stairs apparently having had less than perfect meeting with his hostess, goes to pull Vincent away from the fray so as to leave. With the Madame having now moved between Vincent and Rachael, and holding her back in the frenzy, Gauguin, realizing Vincent is somehow NOT at all getting the message, says to him in a loud voice:

"Vincent, she's just a whore"

At that moment an enraged Vincent and Gauguin are pushed out to the street at each other's throat.

The stage then morphs and reveals the street outside.

Song

*I Don't Care that much
for Love no more*

These Days

Pt.1

RSo nice friend...

R....To see you...

V....It's been a while... (Fill)
V....How've you been (Melody)

And Life it just goes on here all the same
and I keep dreaming and keep hoping
it's not in vain
perhaps it's hard for you to understand friend..
But I don't dare to ever
fall in love again

R...Don't say this...

R...Don't play me

V... I only want to..

R...Go home now...

Please understand these days I'm just not free...
what will it take, to make you just believe..

don't ask again
I beg you go away
I don't dare to fall in love
no more these days

Chorus 1

I pray thee...

This is no make believe, there is no maybe...
Please know it's much too late, too late to save me...
Please don't insist, please hear me now
If I could I would...
I'd find a way somehow

Chorus 1b

These days Friend...
It's hard enough to just survive..
'nd make ends meet and..
And though you are the one
I've dreamed I might believe in...
(I'm a slave to the bills)I got bills to pay
(with) 'nd four mouths to feed
the life that I choose
is a matter of need...

Note: there are two
chorus 1's to the left.
Director may choose
whichever they prefer

Chorus 2, is fixed!

Pt.3

Listen to me friend, now lend an ear
You'll find no sympathy, no love in here
I beg you please my friend don't ask for more
Please understand
that's not what I'm here for

You know that's really not what I'm here for
I don't really care for love that much no more
It's really much to late to change my ways
I don't dare to care to fall in love these days

Chorus 2

And heyyyyy

I'm begging you now pleeease...

Just go awaaayyy
before I fall in love again
'nd have beg you to staayyyy

* **Note:** use of
slang and double
negatives in this
song is in character
with the scene and
is deliberate.

Listen to me friend just go away
I'm really much to much far gone
to change my ways

Now listen to me friend now try to hear
You'll never find true love, no not in here

If I could for you , you know I'd make the change
But I'm much to much to lost to find the range
Somehow I've lost the keys, I've lost my way
I don't dare to care to fall in love these days

Rachael and sometimes chorus al fin

I don't care for love
no more *
That much
These days

Vincent

Three words I pray

R

Pleeeeeease leave here now
Please close the door

V

Beg me to stay

R

I beg you please
Don't ask for more...

V

It's, not that way

R

Don't ask me now
What's it all for

*

R

I don't care for love
That much
No more
These days

R

I've lost the keys
I've lost my way
Don't beg me

This is not what
I came here for

C

These days

This is not what
I asked you for

C

These Days

Gauguin is coming down the stairs

This is not what
I'm asking for

C

These Days

Gauguin, realizing that the situation is futile, and that Vincent is overcome with emotion, calls Rachael a whore

Gauguin: Vincent, let's go.... We're not wanted here....
Vincent...c'mon..

Vincent....She's a Whore!

The two painters are Violently seized by the muscle, and thrown out the door into the street where they continue in a rage.

C

These days

Note: The repetitive phrase "These Days" is the Coda sung by the chorus, over Vincent's frantic pleas for Rachael's consideration...

The mood this creates is one of 'finality'.

Simply put, Vincent is in 'denial,' while Rachel's future as a prostitute, is written in stone. Gauguin sees this clearly.

Transition to...

Scene 7b Transition Theme

LOC: outside the door in the street

Action: Blades Flash! As this very complex scene continues, we see Vincent pull a straight razor out of his side jacket pocket....

*.... Gauguin just stares at him and puts his hand in his own pocket and then; pulls out a blade. Vincent lunges at him and is quickly overcome by Gauguin who has taken a swipe at Vincent's head and accidentally cut a part of his ear off. Gauguin panics and Vincent shoos him away. Gauguin wants to help but we feel that he believes that the situation is not that serious. Gauguin takes off and we see Vincent reeling on stage holding his hand against his head and then discovering a piece of his ear on the ground he starts to reel about as though he were losing his mind *.*

OR

*As Gauguin attempts to stare him down, a razor wielding Vincent lunges at Paul Gauguin who moves to disarm him, and as a result, Vincent suffers a deep cut which severs his earlobe. We sense here that the fault is Vincent's for lunging at Gauguin in the first place. Vincent clutches the side of his head and discovers that part of his ear is dangling by a thread and he then shoos off a concerned Gauguin **

** The intro of Song; Calling the Gendarme' commences*

Immediately

Entering the stage here are the various characters in the scene

'Calling the Gendarme'

Calling ^{the} Gendarme

*Scene 8a
and b*



Transition to...

Loc: The streets of Arles. Same local

Action: (continuing from the last sequence) A distraught Vincent is seen holding his head and reeling about as the townspeople start to dance around him in a surrealistic fashion. As the second verse develops, we see that the townspeople also include his dead Father, Teersteeg, Mauve, and others from his past that seem to have come back to haunt him.

Song Calling the Gendarme

Vincent oh
Vincent
Are you not as yet convinced yet
Convinced yet
All this absinthe and wine
Sipping turpentine
You're running low on time
(Voice: he's living like a swine)
you know you could go blind
Vincent
Some say you've lost your mind

Vincent
They're calling
'nd
All this poison's set your skin
to crawling
to crawling..
All this loneliness and shame
You're causing others pain
You've just yourself to blame

Is it all in vain ...Vincent?
Some say you've gone insane..

You're walking around armed
You're causing yourself harm
Feeling a bit warm?
Vincent...

They're calling the Gendarme'

Action: As the music winds down Vincent enters into the yellow house in the distance and we hear a woman scream.

We see the Gendarme rushing toward and entering the house. Then we see the people of Arles immediately gathered in front of the yellow house serving a petition on the mayor who enters from stage right. The woman is stage left of him.

As the petition is read, the mayor of Arles appears to be pompously full of himself taking little bows and removing his top hat etc. at the hearing of the words pertinent to his title of nobility. His face goes straight with a 'whatever' as the woman tries unsuccessfully to pronounce the name Van Gogh.

Scene 8 b

Woman in the crowd: Reading pompously

M. Mayor, We the undersigned residents of the fine city of Arles, Place Lamartine, have the honourrr... of informing you that the Dutch subject named Vood (one Vincent vanHoot..uh Hoof...Gufff..) Mayor: Whatever

Woman: landscape painter residing on the aforementioned square, has for some time and on several occasions furnished proof that he is not in full possession of his mental faculties and that he indulges in excessive drinking, after which he finds himself in such a state of excitement that he no longer knows what he does or what he says, and, that his instability causes fear for all the residents of the neighborhood, particularly for the women and the children.

The crowd frenzies here

In consequence the undersigned have the *honourrrrr* of asking in the name of public security that the said Vood (Vincent) be returned to his family as soon as possible, or that his family take the steps necessary to have him admitted to a *mental asylum*,
*Crowd excited with anticipation here * Rev Salle steps out...*

in order to prevent whatever misfortune will most *certainly* occur one day or another if vigorous measures are not taken *immediately* .

We dare hope M. Mayor, that taking into consideration the serious concern that we are putting forward, that you will be so kind as to take action in pursuance with our request .

I also want to say M. Mayor that we have the honor of being with the most *profound* respect, your *devoted* constituents.

*As the Mayor is handed the petition, a Clergyman steps out of the crowd and speaks to the audience in an aside from line 17 * of “the petition”. His voice though just above a whisper, is clearly audible over the People of Arles reading the petition.*

Rev. Salles: Shaking his head and speaking in soft but clear tones.

Tsk.. This was indeed, a tragedysuch a social injustice. I'm the Reverend Salles of the Reformed Protestant Church here in Arles. I was recruited to accompany Vincent to the Maison de Sante'...that's the asylum of Saint-Paul-de-Mausole in Saint-Remy.

The truth is not what you might be led to believe by all of this... fuss. First of all, after Vincent was admitted to the hospital here in Arles, the Superintendent of Police interviewed those People (pointing) who signed the petition. The statements form a file, and I have actually read some of them and am of the opinion that exaggeration plays an *awfully* large part in all of this. It is very clear to me ...from what I have read that these people are afraid of Vincent. It as though his very 'life force' threatens to negate the validity of the petty world that is their own empty shallow existence, and so it is that as if with a vengeance and cruelty..., that they have egged and goaded each other on.

And anyway, What if the things that they accuse him of were true? They do not justify declaring a man insane and demanding that he be locked up!!

One says that the children collect round him and that he pursues them and that he might cause them harm...they are saying that he drinks a lot. The innkeeper, who is his *neighbor*, confirms just the

opposite. And finally the women claim that he has caught some of them around the waist...and *fondles* them! I don't believe this.

Vincent spoke to me calmly and with perfect lucidity on these matters. This bothers him a great deal. He told me that if the police had protected his liberty by preventing the children and even the grownups from collecting around his lodgings and climbing up to his windows as they have done, as if he were some bizarre caged animal, he would have remained calm. He understands perfectly well that he is being treated as someone who is out of his mind... and this not only troubles him, but revolts him as well.

Vincent was 'entirely' conscious of his condition when he spoke to me of what he has been through. He speaks with a candor and simplicity, which is 'touching'. "I am unable" he said "to look after and control myself; I feel quite different than I used to be.

Well anyway, as it was, everyone in the hospital was very well disposed towards him. It ought to be the doctors and not the Superintendent of police that are appointed the to judge in matters such as this.

2 min .1 sec

Johanna Dear



Scene 9

LOC: Scene Theo's apartment in Paris is stage right and Johanna's parents house in Amsterdam stage left. Then a church. The Van Gogh and Bonger families are present and also a preacher.

Action: Theo and Johanna sing their duet from both sides of the stage respectively. Their countenance obviously that of longing one for the other. At the end of the piece, we see them joined together and hear wedding bells, and through a hail of confetti and rice we now see them arrayed in their wedding clothes at a church with the ceremony just finished, and having been pronounced man and wife.

Vincent's congratulations are read in V.O. over the wedding beginning at the throwing of the rice. Finally as the scene and music fades on them we hear the distinct sound of a baby over Vincent's voice in V.O.

Song

Johanna

I need to need you
To dance with and lead you
Johanna my dear

I want to want you
To have and to flaunt you
But you're not here

The stars above you
Know that I love you
That I'm sincere

would you be free
To give your heart to me
*

I want to know you
To have and to hold you
Theo my dear

I want to guide you
Be there beside you
All through the years

Dry all your tears

Will you be mine
Until the end of time
*

I want to hold you
But haven't I told you

*Wedding bells ringing
Rice and confetti are thrown*

As they are pronounced man and wife, Theo and Johanna embrace and kiss

V.O. Vincent;

My dear Theo, I have just received the good news that you are a father at last, that Jo is over the most critical period and that the little chap is doing well. This has brought me more pleasure than I can put into words. And oh how pleased Mother will be. Hearing from Jo and knowing how brave and calm she was at her moment of peril has helped a lot in these days when I was myself ill at times not even knowing where I was and with my mind wandering...

Starry Night

Scene 10



Scene

LOC: At the gate of the Asylum

Action: Vincent is present with Eugenie Boch and the young novice and a few others. Vincent gives them instruction as to how to handle the painting Starry Night and how to send it to him when dry. They are bidding him farewell for it shall be the last time that they shall all see each other. They speak reassurances to each other and then as Vincent's carriage has arrived, the porter takes him out. As the young novice looks on, she begins to sing....

Novice: Oh, I am so happy for you..and they have named him after you...

Eugenie Boch: And so you will go to live with them now Vincent? You will be very happy I am sure..

Vincent: Well, I will visit with them and,,, we will see! What is best for the family.

Novice: And Vincent...the painting is still wet, I am afraid I will ruin this beautiful painting...and...

Vincent: Here dear...everything is written out... the drying , the packing...it's all there. Now don't fret yourself... I trust all will go well...

Eugenie: (*highly emotional*) Vincent...we are ... we... Vincent... it will not be the same here without your...

Eugenie hugs Vincent and the young novice lowers her countenance. Vincent embraces her cumbersome 'self' and she responds....

Enters Porter...

Your carriage is here Msr. Vincent...

Vincent turns to them and bids them one final adieu! As we hear the sound of the carriage departing... the young novice sings as Eugenie looks on....

Song

Starry Night

See the moon like an angel in flight

Lift her wings

Toward the heavens

Toward the bright starry night

Like a dream

Verdant fire

Cypress silently weeping

Clouds dance the night music

While the whole world is sleeping

See the church in the village below

Like a world

Lost adrift neath the bright starry show

Toward the hills

Hear the sound of a nightingale singing

A sonnet so sweet

Yet there's no one there listening

Lift me now toward the heavens tonight

Lift my heart

Lift my eyes toward the heavenly light

Lift my soul

Let me now

**Wander silently, seemingly
Lost in the vastness
So wondrous
So mean-ing-fully**

*Scene fades to... Scene 'Our Family'... We hear the song
commencing even before the fade out and transition is complete...*

Our Family

Scene 11



Loc: The apartment of Theo, Johanna and child

ACTION: We see Theo and Johanna in their new apartment with their newborn named after Vincent. The child is being attended to by ALL those who are gathered round the cradle. Theo and Johanna are singing the song 'Our Family'. There is a nanny present who is helping Johanna. At one point she picks up the baby and is rocking it in her arms when the bell rings and she hands the child to Johanna. It is Vincent at the door. The whole scene seems to overwhelm him. The song 'Our Family's' conclusion, is the beginning of the next song which Vincent will sing.. 'No Day Without a Line'

Song

Our Family

Love is
Like the rain that falls upon
the heath so gently
Love is
Like the golden

Sun that brings us warmth and heat

Love is
Like the earth
That nurtures all
And shares her bounty

Love is
Like a sea we sail upon
An ocean deep

*

Love is
Like a rose
That fills our happy home
With fragrance

Love is
Like a star
that fills our family heart with light

Love is
Like the hearth we gather round
The winter seasons

Love is
like a thread
That weaves and binds
Our Family Life

Loc: The home of Theo and Johanna and then, A pastoral setting

Action: This musical introduction begins as an overjoyed Vincent takes his namesake into his arms for the first and last time of his life. As the Intro moves into the song and Vincent starts to sing, we see a confused look on the faces of Theo, Johanna and the nanny. They go into darkness as a now pastoral scene takes it' place. The Coda leaves us hanging on a note mid-key in preparation for the subsequent scene: The Testimony of Adeline' Ravoux.'

Scene 11b

Song

No Day Without a Line

Intro

When two hearts
are joined
'nd rejoice in
their season
the wise
must retreat
and accept
without reason

First verse

in youth I hearkened to my muses call
I gave my heart
My soul
My self my all
But now...
not more...

With each seasons turn my heart would sing
I'd celebrate
each turn

with joy
each rite of spring...
But now...what for

Chorus

No day I pass without a line
My soul I press out like fine wine
But now I would this soul be free..

Coda

Now leaves fall
as blossoms
sweet petals
To nights call
surrender...

ACTION: To the final instrumental cascading notes of this song, Vincent walks off toward the rear of the stage as the lights fade to darkness.

Testimony of Adeline Ravoux' *Scene 12*



*Loc:*The front porch of Ravoux's Inn. It is evening and the scene is illuminated by the street lamp and the lights within the inn.

Action: Seated leisurely out front are Monsieur Ravoux, his wife and several guests. They are playing a game of chess. Suddenly Vincent arrives from stage right and is holding his chest. After bidding him a good evening, Vincent nods to them and proceeds to enter the front door. All there present realize that something is very wrong and so Monsieur Ravoux goes inside with his wife following to investigate. Suddenly we hear her scream. There is a great deal of agitated chatter

in French as everyone runs inside to see what has happened. Then, as a middle-aged woman enters from stage right (in the front of the stage and not a part of the action), a boy runs out the front door of the Inn and pauses for a moment confused. He then runs off to stage left. Immediately then, a little girl comes running out. The little girl appears breathless and confused as she stops. Adeline R. remarks that she does not know which way to turn. The boy then having turned back hurriedly from stage left stops to speak with the girl, (all conversation in French, just above audible), and then both run off to the left. (stage right)

Adeline Ravoux' begins to address the audience in English at just the point where the girl has exited the inn and stopped in confusion.

Mme. Ravoux: Something terrible has happened here. The little girl is very upset. She is not sure if Tommy Hirshig has gone in the right direction to find the house of Dr. Gachet.

Boy immediately returns and speaks with little girl...they both run off to stage right

As Adeline Ravoux' observes the action with the audience

Boy: Ou est la maison de Dr. Gachet

The girl points and they run off to the stage right in a panic.

Mme. Ravoux: What you have just witnessed here is what transpired in the evening upon Vincent's return to my father's Inn.

It seems... that Monsieur Vincent has shot himself just below his heart with a revolver. On this day Vincent had gone toward the wheat field..

Stage is transformed to the scene's description with the spotlight still on Mme. Ravoux' and on the trees. We see Vincent's easel leaning on a tree on the path.

Continues: ...where he had painted before, situated just behind the Chateau of Auvers, which then belonged to a Monsieur Goselin who lived in Paris. It was just after lunch. He had to climb a rather steep slope shaded by large trees.

The stage dims on the chateau and she continues to speak

What I understood according to my father's account is that according to Vincent, after he discharged the pistol, he fainted and then was awakened by the cool of the evening.

We dispatched a cable to his brother Theo who came immediately from Paris to be at his brother's side. According to my father's account Monsieur Vincent spoke very frankly and stated his desire to die. My father was present in the room when Dr. Gachet told Vincent that he still hoped to save him, but Vincent just looked at him and said,

“ Well then, ... it will just have to be done over again”.

In the months after Monsieur Vincent's death, suddenly everyone was searching all the junk shops of Paris looking for those paintings of his that were formally in their opinion, not worth more than a few sous at most. Suddenly now though, they were seen as great masterpieces that would make them all fabulously rich. And you can believe that there were certainly more than just a few scenes like this one ...!

In astonished tones:

Loc. and Action: Farmer with a chicken coop in the background is illuminated on stage. His wife is standing with her arms folded, listening and shrugging at the appropriate point. There is the sound of the aviary just audible in the background.

In an aside to the audience

Farmer: in a very strong French accent and very broken English

Today.... I read dans le Mercuri de Paris of the death of the arteest.. Vincent Van Gogh! ...I look...I read about heeem ..I say to my wife... “I know zis man...I have.. one of his paintings... and zey are saying , he is a Genius” ... My wife say to me.. “Oh!! Merci... My God...maybe we will be rich!!!!...Where is eet...where is zee painting?” ...I could have died...! I had to tell her zat I use eet' to patch ze chicken coop...! “Mierde” I thought! “Zat was no peeze of junk...!”

Adeline Ravoux: And then, there were all the newspaper articles the Mercurie'.. the ... the... and now, suddenly, Vincent was this ‘great’ visionary. They were saying: “How is it possible that this ‘Genius’ could have lived in our midst, and we could not see?”

Sanctus Requiem commences here 1 minute 4 seconds

I think though that of all the events that transpired, the most vivid in my recall, was of the funeral itself. We had it arranged so that Vincent's casket was set in the parlor of the Inn in what is now called ‘The Artist's Room’. Monsieur Vincent's paintings were set up all around him, and with the yellow flowers that he loved so much... It was like they formed a ‘halo of light’ around him.

We see here the funeral of Vincent as was depicted by Bernard's drawing and Adeline Ravoux's description.

The saddest moment though, was when his brother broke down weeping uncontrollably and threw himself on his brother's casket...! He wept *so* bitterly. None of us would *ever* forget that moment...

Theo's Lament and then Sanctus

*Requiem Theme up to 'full volume' here for third verse..
Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus*

Here begins the reading of Psalm 51...in V.O. Vincent's voice. It is spoken in the background of Adeline Ravoux's testimony in an agitated though 'just audible' voice that increases in volume up until the words;

"They have pierced my hands and my feet, they have numbered all my bones," which coincides with the ending of Adeline's testimony and the beginning verses of the "Mistral" which is Vincent's final lament.

Mme. Ravoux: *(continuing)* ...Ah, but are we not ahead of ourselves now? And, this is no way to end a musical. As Monsieur Vincent would say, "It is not in the details". It matters not so much in a work such as this whether the event is related accurately in regard to nuance. Then it would be like looking at nothing more than an ordinary photograph, would it not? And too, the composer of this work would have you believe the same, and that it is rather in the whole impression that the work leaves you with. And anyway these matters of detail are better left to the scholars who will investigate

with conscience, ...that is to say con-sciencia and 'with science', and not rely on the irresponsible scandalous hearsay that the reputation of this good man, this good soul has so long been subjected to suffer through.

And so let us go back and return now... to those last few tragic moments at the Chateau at Auvers, for the conclusion of our story. I want to thank you for coming and wish you a good evening. Bon soir.

Vincent's trembling voice now raising to fever pitch
My God my God, why has thou forsaken me...
..they have pierced my hands and my feet,
they have numbered all my bones...

The Mistral

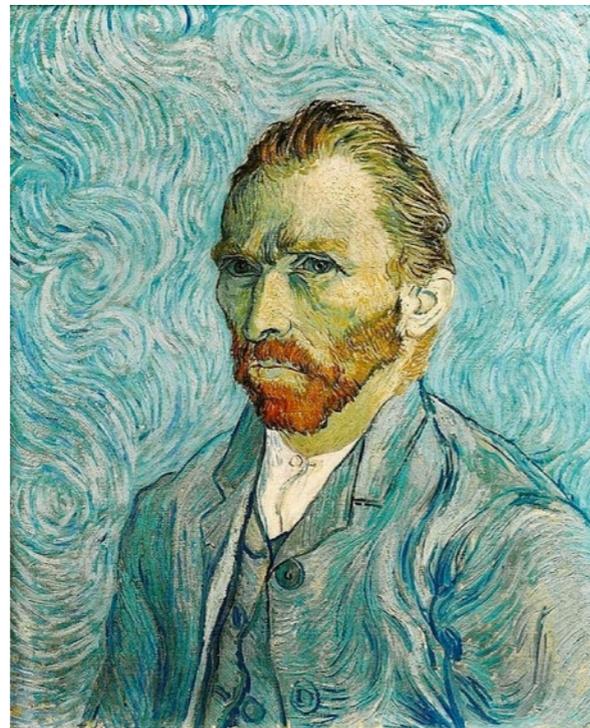


Scene 13a

The Mistral

Loc: The vineyard of Monsieur Goselin.

Action: We see Vincent had been struggling with his canvass and paints, which are blown over. The wind is blowing hard, knocking over the canvass and making a mess. Vincent appears hot and somewhat miserable. When Vincent is almost through the whole song, on cue, he pulls out something from his jacket pocket. We see it is a revolver. At this moment, two boys appear as if in hiding. They are snickering. One of the boys fires a shot at Vincent at the peak of the song. The boys come out as Vincent falls down to his knees. Seeing that the boys are in shock at realizing what they have done, Vincent shoos the boys off. As they run



away and Vincent collapses, and the scene darkens a bit, Vincent is then seemingly revived by the cool night air. He gets up and stumbles around for a few seconds as he realizes he needs to find his pipe, which is still on the ground somewhere. He retrieves it and he walks away pipe clenched in teeth and clutching his chest,
NOTE: The intro to the theme “Brother” reprises, just as he revives ,stands up and searches for his pipe.

Song

The Mistral

Woe, I am undone
There is naught more to be
No cause could beckon me

My debt as yet unpaid
Mine heart this night requests
This troubled soul find rest

Chorus 1A
Gone are the fair bloom of May
Their fragrance gone
Their petals spent..
All things they say
must pass a-way

(Inst.)

There is naught more to say
This burden once mine share
's now more than one can bear

In sooth I am undone
With grief mine soul impaled
Mine heart within me fails

In sooth my fate is sealed
With grief mine heart is pierced
I am naught left but bones

Chorus 2A

Each day my share
My Lord
I've asked not for the morrow
The truth is clear
these paths I tread
cross theirs with sorrow

*We see two boys here enter with stealth from Stage Right . They have a
gun and they are snickering.
extra verses*

The wolves they compass me
They know not what they do
There is but one to blame

My bowels within me fail
My heart doth melt like wax
The moth hath reached the flame

Final

Oh woe.woe..

My God

Forgive me

I am poured out

Undone..I am..

I must..I'm just a man.

What's the use..

...A gunshot rings out...

*The boys come running out confused as Vincent clutches his chest in
horror...he shoos them away, and they take off to stage right as
Vincent falls to the ground...*

Transitional Scene 13b

Reiterating...

*Action: Vincent stumbling back to his room at Ravoux's. This time
however the music is "charming". It is the theme from "Brother", the
second song of the play. Again, off to the side of the stage we see Theo
receive the cablegram from the Ravoux's. He looks at it and
immediately starts to pack his valise, but then suddenly, he just leaves
it and exits the door. He is immediately seen entering the room where
Vincent lay dying. As he takes the seat next to Vincent's right, Vincent
asks for his Pipe and then as Theo places his hand on his brother's
shoulder, he commences to sing his last song.*

Brother II

Bro-ther

And here we are again ol chap

And q'uy faire Dieu le sait

What's done is done and

Quoi qu'il en soit

Gachet' says that you'll be fine

Back on your feet up 'nd
up

'nd around again..

In no time

And well, so... you can come and live with Jo and I

And of course...

Your little namesake

The lad is... such a joy

And he looks so like you..

We'll find a new place

a cottage warm and quaint

With a lovely garden where ..

you can paint

and so then...

if that's not enough what is enough...

Serrer de pres

Tant mieux,

Que lacher'

not say...

what's the use and.....

Action and Location change

in Morph: The scene immediately morphs to the funeral of Vincent Van Gogh. With Vincent remaining on the bed, his brother turns to him in realization that he has died. Simultaneously the mourners, who are entering the scene from right and left, lift the hinged sides of the bed up around him and form a coffin, which is then turned to a side view. The area is immediately illumined, revealing the profusion of yellow flowers that all the mourners have in their arms. We see his paintings in evidence illuminated around the room. It is a candle light atmosphere that permeates. When the final 'note' of 'Brother' plays, it resolves into the

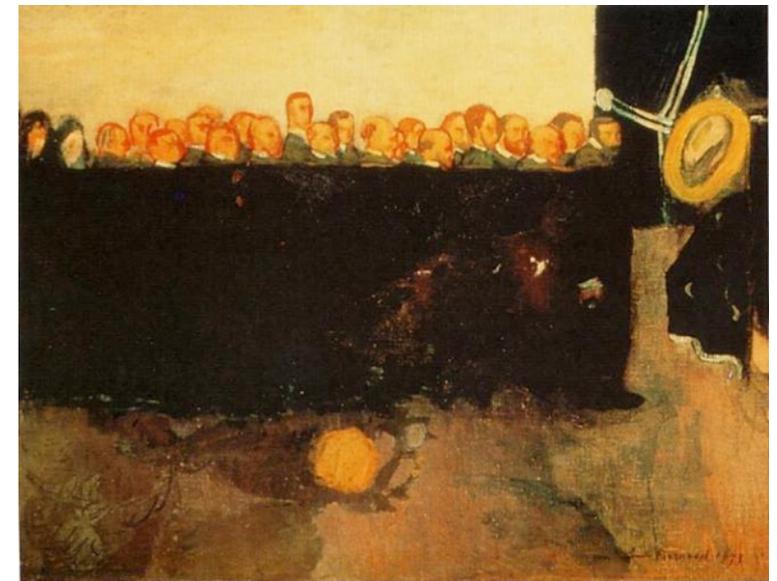


relative minor and reiterates one of the themes in the Margot Beggaman sequence....

Scene c

Funeral of Vincent Van Gogh

Continued from the last scene. We see the assembled group with Vincent's paintings all around and yellow flowers everywhere. The actual raising of the casket by the Pallbearers should be conducted ceremoniously in a fashion suggestive of military honors and should look like the illustration. (Bernard's "The funeral of Vincent Van Gogh"). Pere' Tanguy, who is facing the Pallbearers, makes the call in French to 'rise' then to 'lift'. He then turns to lead them all out. A weeping Theo's heart broken countenance should lend a sense of absolute finality to the scene.



Fades to last scene

Ici Repose



Scene 14



Scene

LOC: A graveyard at night in a misty rain

Action: As the previous scene morphs into this last scene, and the music of the last piece is dying down, we hear the sound of rain, as we see revealed the tombstone of Vincent Van Gogh. As we have heard Theo coughing in the last scene at the funeral, we now hear a final cough in V.O. as a second tombstone is illuminated with Theo's name in evidence with a date six months later than the date of Vincent's demise. Now, over the intro to the final song, we hear in the distance the sound of horses neighing as a carriage comes to a stop in the dark dreary night. A caped figure approaches leaving the others in the distance. It is Paul Gauguin who is approaching the two brothers tombstones. As he nears the tombs he begins to sing.



Song

Ici Repose'

A crust of bread your measure
Tobac and pipe your pleasure
The sun and moon and stars, they
were your treasure
A simple autumn leaf could set your
heart to skipping beats
The sight of children playing (in the
street) so always pleased you
At each days end we'd find a way to
beat the stifling heat
With an absinthe 'nd a glass of wine
In the tavern we would pass the time
You used to walk through heath and
field for hours
Always painting those old shoes, and
those Sunflowers
Painting towers in the air
Ici repose'
mon bon ami



Instrumental

During the musical reiteration of the first verse, the others in Gauguin's entourage' approach. We see people approaching carrying something in their arms. As they approach closer we see that they are carrying Sunflowers. It appears that Johanna Bonger, Bernard, Pissarro and Old Man Tanguy are there also. They lay the flowers at the foot of the two stones. As Paul Gauguin begins to sing the second chorus

I was so certain in those days
That in due time I could reach you
That you'd come to see the folly of your ways...
To think that I once thought

that it was I that would teach you
But whoever would have thought back then,
That we might never meet again
I think back on (all) those times we fought together
And how you told me once that never meant forever
I see now just how clever
that you were...
Ici Repose'
mon bon ami

Well, one thing I'll agree to
It's always good to see you
But who'd ever think alas, that only death would free you
You told me once that the heart was where real treasures were
I told you that every mortal had his price
How could I have ever thought that I could measure you
And that in my heart
I'd one day sigh..
The one man money couldn't buy
But in the setting of the sun upon life's hours
I shall recall again the storms and the rain showers
That brought sunflowers tall and fair

Ici Repose'
Mon bon ami
Ici Repose'
Mon bon ami



Curtain

The sky has been clearing for about a minute now and the theme has changed to the closing “Memories. Slowly the stars are revealed with a rising Crescent Moon. As the party all hug each other and start to walk back to the carriage, they turn and look up to see a beautiful shooting star and Gauguin remarks....

Gauguin: Looks like it's going to be another... Starry Night....!

**Thank you... Fred Pohlman
917-796-9655**

**If you would like more information on
the Progress of the Starry Nights
Musical, or would like to become an
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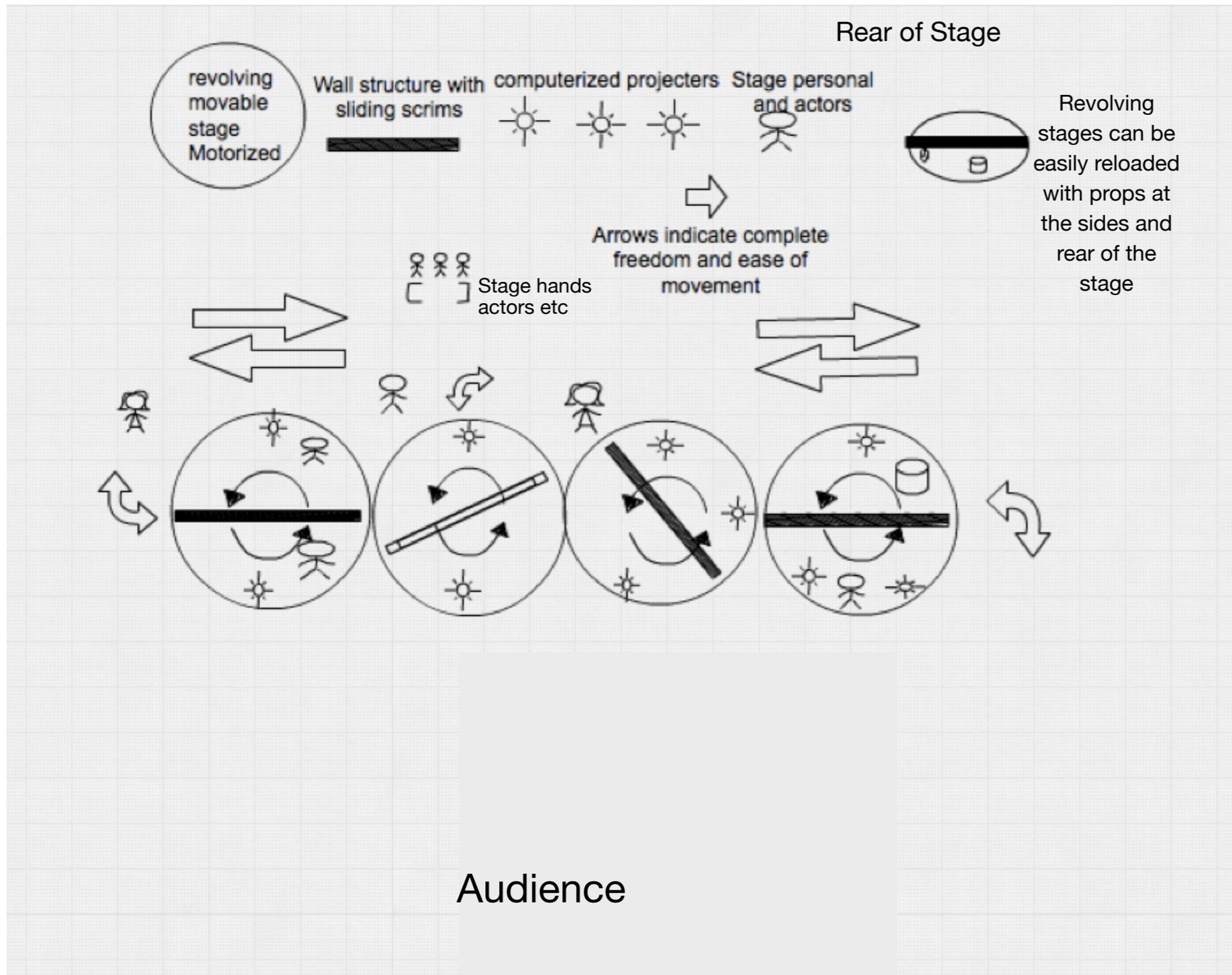
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**my personal email is
odysseus96@yahoo.com**

Section 1 Stage Diagram

Bird's Eye View



To the left here is a simple diagram showing 4 small revolving stages on wheels with brakes offering complete mobility.

They can be motorized or not, and can be moved off to the back of the stage for quick loading with props and fresh sliding scrims.. Each platform has several simple computerized projectors that are controlled by the Directors Assistant.

Note: The term 'scrim' here used can refer to either to an actual scrim or a 'projection' screen.

The State of the Art of computer projection offers a *far* superior and cost effective solution to putting on a Musical of this complexity. Years ago this would have cost a small fortune, but now... tiny fraction of the cost

Note:

In The Musical *Starry Nights*, virtually ALL of the projection material is in the Public Domain, and can be used free of charge

Of course it goes without saying that the Projectors are also above the stages and that the projectors project from the back so as to avoid individual props and actors interfering with the beams. In fact the projectors may not even be necessary if the screens themselves are 'active'. Also whereas the situation as it was years ago required space for onstage 'storage' of sets, this has been all but done away with.

And so in conclusion, any backer should realize, that though the production of Starry Nights the Musical might at first reading 'seem' to be an extravagant and costly proposition in terms of stage design, the reality is that even with technology that was available fifteen years ago, a Musical such as this is doable for only a fractional % of what it would have cost 20 or 25 years ago, and so could therefore be very professionally and elaborately orchestrated even on an Off Off Broadway level.

Also note that : As a Road show the 'cartage' of sets around the country, would constitute an astronomical savings.

Morph

In this Musical the term implies the use of sophisticated projection and stage lighting to change scenes with a smooth and seamless rapidity.

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Novice

This term refers to the young nun who remains nameless throughout the Musical. She is obviously not fully ordained and stands in stark contrast in comportment to her 'Superiors' whom Vincent in one of his letters condemned as being unusually rigid and overly pious.

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

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Find Term

Sein

Readers who are familiar with certain translations of Van Gogh's letters may be accustomed to seeing 'Sein' being referred to by the name Xien. I am using the name Sien for the reason that the vast majority of readers here will have never read the letters of Vincent Van Gogh, and it's use otherwise would only serve to confuse them.

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

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Find Term

Stage Right and Stage Left

Stage right and left indicate the opposite of what the audience is viewing. For the purpose of this publication, This will not pertain to the to front and rear of the stage.

Precisely what I mean is...any stage instruction to the left is actually to the right. Any stage action to the 'right'...is to the left...

Any mention of the the front of the stage ...IS the front of the stage and any mention of the rear of the stage... IS the rear of the stage...

This is in partial deference to all those 'dillitantes' who would like to rain on my parade with their Pedantry... (see below)

Pedantry | 'pedntrē|

noun

excessive concern with minor details and rules: to object to this is not mere pedantry.

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Transitional Scene

This term refers to a scene that is set up in such a way so as to connect both the previous and the following scene in such manner that the transition is smooth and seamless. For example Act I Scene 'Unrequited' connects Scene 'Sorrow' through the transitional scene 'Sein Hoornik' . In that particular scene, the use of projection and images 'in silhouette' give us time to connect two very difficult scenes utilizing means that are more apt to enhance the performance artistically, rather than detract from it with the distraction of having to move scrims and props.

In the above example, even the actors who are acting out in silhouette, need not be the actual principals, for their faces are never seen except in shadow.... This buys valuable time in the transition process, while adding a 'surprise factor', in that the actors appear to have somehow been in two place at once with their seeming sudden appearance out of nowhere at the commencement of the following scene....

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Transitional Song

This term refers to a melody used as a ‘theme’ for the purpose of ‘weaving’ different aspects of the musical together. For example, the theme from Act I Scene 1b, ‘Brother’ is used to connect Scene 1a with 1c, and is repeated in melody at the end of 1c and also reiterated in the next to final scene of the Musical in order to bring us back to Square One in terms of the Emotional Tone-Set put forth at the beginning of the Musical. And so in truth, these transitional songs are not ‘songs’ per se’ in the classical sense.

Another example in the play: in Act II, “The Way Things Were Back Then’, is used again in Act III Scene 2 in order to establish the ‘mood’ of the camaraderie between Vincent and Paul Gauguin. If the play were ever re-written so as to emphasize for example: Vincent’s period in Arles, or in Paris, that piece would be elaborated and given a different status. As it is of course that this is a Biography - allbeit a fictional one - , this is not possible here without running the play for many more hours than the general public could ever possibly tolerate, and so we have these nice melodies, delegated to the status of being ‘Transitional’ in nature. Please note though, that I may choose to record them as ‘stand alone’ entities, that will not appear as such in the Musical itself.

Related Glossary Terms

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VO or V.O.

In *Starry Nights*, the term VO or V.O. stands for Voice Over, and in every case, is the Voice of Vincent Van Gogh either quoting or paraphrasing from a letter to his Brother or One of his Friends.

Related Glossary Terms

Xien

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Xien

Readers who are familiar with certain translations of Van Gogh's letters may be accustomed to seeing 'Sein' being referred to by the name Xien. I am using the name Sien for the reason that the vast majority of readers here will have never read the letters of Vincent Van Gogh, and it's use otherwise would only serve to confuse them.

Related Glossary Terms

VO or V.O.

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