

Letter T29
Paris, 29 March 1890

My dear Vincent,

We were very pleased to receive your last letter, but we regret from the bottom of our hearts that you cannot give us better news. You will need an enormous amount of patience to surmount the trouble your condition must give you. At any rate there is a tendency toward improvement, which we ought to be glad to begin with. Cold weather has always had some influence upon you, and so it's possible that milder weather will put you on your feet again altogether, at least let's hope so, and don't tire yourself too much.

How happy I should have been if you could have gone to the Exhibition of the Independents. It was the Preview Showing¹, when Carnot² was there. I was there with Jo; your pictures are very well placed and make a good effect. A lot of people came to us and asked us to send you their compliments. Gauguin said that your pictures were the chief attraction of the exhibition – the “clou,” he said. He proposed an exchange of one of his canvases for one of the Alpine foothills [F 662, JH 1804]. I told him I supposed you would not object, but that on the contrary you would be very pleased to know that he likes your picture. I like it very much too – that picture, I mean – it makes an admirable impression in the exhibition.

Seurat is showing a very curious picture there in which he has made an effort to express things by means of the direction of the lines. He certainly gives the impression of motion, but it has a very queer appearance, and it is not very generous from the standpoint of ideas. Guillaumin has a good many things on view, including some very good pieces; de Lautrec has an excellent portrait of a woman at the piano, and a large picture which is very striking. Notwithstanding its scabrous theme it has great distinction. In general it is to be observed that the public is beginning to get more and more interested in the young impressionists; at least there are a certain number of art lovers who have started buying. The exhibition of Pissarro's work is over; a lot of people came to see it, and five pieces were sold. For the moment it was all that we could hope for.

Bernard and Aurier intend to come to see your latest pictures next Sunday. Enclosed you will find a letter from Aurier. He will be back before long to look at the Gauguins, and to write an article about him.

I received the money from your picture from Brussels, and Maus writes me, “As soon as an opportunity presents itself please tell your brother that I was extremely glad of his participation in the Salon of the ‘XX,’ where he has found many lively artistic sympathies in the confusion of the discussions.” Do you want me to send you the money? I shall hold it for you as long as you wish.

I hope, my dear brother, that you will be able to give us a more satisfactory report on your health very soon. If only you could see your little namesake you would feel happier. Try to find out from Dr. Peyron whether he sees any danger in your coming to Paris as soon as you have recovered from this crisis. Jo gives you her kindest regards, and joins me in expressing best wishes for your prompt recovery.

A cordial handshake.

Theo

1. In Paris this day is called “*jour de vernissage*” [varnishing day]; it is always a great occasion, and the entrance fee is enormous.
2. Marie François Sadi Carnot (1837-1894), president of the French Republic, who was murdered by an Italian anarchist.