

Letter 495  
Arles, 26 May 1888

My dear Theo,

If the roll is not too big to be accepted by the post office, you will receive another big pen drawing, which I would very much like the Pissarros to see if they come on Sunday. I have just received part of the paints order, and thank you very much for it.

Early tomorrow I start for Saintes-Maries on the Mediterranean. I shall stay there till Saturday evening.

I am taking two canvases, but I'm rather afraid it will probably be too windy to paint.

You go by diligence, it is 50 kilometers from here. You cross the Camargue, grass plains where there are herds of fighting bulls and also herds of little white horses, half wild and very beautiful.

I am taking especially whatever I need for drawing. I must draw a great deal, for the very reason you spoke of in your last letter. Things here have so much line. And I want to get my drawings more spontaneous, more exaggerated. I am still worried by your travel plans, or rather the proposals which have been made to you about travelling.

Travelling beats you up, and above all it disturbs the brain more than can be good for you.

Anyway, I feel that I am to blame for it, and tell myself that it is my need for money that is driving you to it. No – it's not right.

Then I say to myself that we can begin to hope that in a little while I shall sell one or two pictures a month, for they are improving. Keep putting them off and talk to Gruby about it; I venture to think that he would rather you kept quiet for a year. If I am wrong, and if Gruby thinks that a change would be good – but this cannot be so. I have written to Gauguin, and said only that I was sorry we were working so far from one another, and that it was a pity that several painters did not combine for one campaign.

We must count on this by dragging on for years perhaps before the impressionists have a steady value, and so we must consider that helping him will be a lengthy business. But he has such great talent that being associated with him would be a step forward for us.

I was quite serious when I first told you that, if you like, I will go to America with you, provided that it would be a good long stay and would be worth the trouble.

We must try not to become ill, for if we do, we are more isolated than, for instance, the poor concierge who has just died. These people have their own set, and see the comings and goings of the household, and live in foolishness. And here are we alone with our thoughts and there are times we could wish we were fools too.

Given the physique we have, we need to live with our own crowd.

Enclosed is a line of farewell to Koning. I must get some stuff done that might persuade somebody like Thomas, for instance, to join you in sending people who would go to work down here. In that case I think that Gauguin would be sure to come.

With a handshake – many thanks for the paints.

Ever yours, Vincent

It would be a great risk to take Gauguin, but we must aim at this, and I hope that you will find Tersteeg a help, or Thomas, or somebody, I don't know who, but I hope so.