

Gun that Van Gogh killed himself with goes up for sale

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The revolver Vincent Van Gogh is believed to have shot himself with was found in a field by farmer in 1965, 75 years after the painter's death

The revolver with which Vincent Van Gogh is believed to have shot himself is to go under the hammer, a Paris auction house said Tuesday.

Discovered by a farmer in 1965 in the same field where the troubled Dutch painter is thought to have fatally wounded himself 75 years before, the gun has already been exhibited at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam.

Billed by Auction Art as "the most famous weapon in the history of art", the 7 mm Lefauchaux revolver is expected to go for up to 60,000 euros (\$67,000) when it is sold on June 19.

Van Gogh experts believe that he shot himself with the revolver near the village of Auvers-sur-Oise north of Paris, where he spent the last few months of his life in 1890.

The Dutch artist had borrowed the gun from the owner of the inn where he was staying.

He died 36 hours later after staggering wounded back to the inn in the dark.

It was not his first dramatic act of self-harm. Two years earlier in 1888, he cut off his ear before offering it to a woman in a brothel in Arles in the south of France.

While most art historians agree that Van Gogh killed himself, that assumption has been questioned in recent years, with some researchers claiming that the fatal shot may have been fired accidentally by two local boys playing with the weapon in the field.

That theory got fresh support from a new biopic of the artist starring Willem Dafoe, "At Eternity's Gate".

Its director, the renowned American painter Julian Schnabel, told AFP that Van Gogh had painted 75 canvasses in his 80 days at Auvers-sur-

Oise and was unlikely to be suicidal.

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