Van Gogh is for Afternoons

Van Gogh is for afternoons:
mediaeval cobalt illuminations
and all those incontinent blues
flooding in a frenzy of corn and blossom.

Taste him after Rembrandt and Vermeer
—leaving the solemn Rijksmuseum (past shuffling school parties
laden with Cokes and crisps)
and cross to the glass and sloping concrete built especially for him.

Vincent will appear suddenly outspoken.
Ill behaved. Brashly wanton. Too
Mediterranean.
Yet his Dutchness is there: those gaunt potato eaters, faces
carved from the dark of despair
and beyond the southern sunshine, nostalgic canals.