

# POETRY

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JACQUELINE KARP

## 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.