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## Van Gogh's Ghost Paintings: Cha

[Cliff Edwards, Virginia Commonwealth University](#)

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Van Gogh's Ghost Paintings: Art and Spirit in Gethsemane

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Includes:

- ▣ Foreword by David Cain
- ▣ Acknowledgments
- ▣ Chapter 1: Locating the Ghost Paintings

- Chapter 2: A Zen Master's Question
- Chapter 3: Quest for the Artist

## **Date of Submission**

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## **Abstract**

One of the most significant and revealing paintings by the work of van Gogh was never seen by anyone but the artist himself. The painting, *The Garden of Gethsemane*, was painted by van Gogh in 1888. It is one of the two paintings that he painted it twice. He was so conflicted about the painting that he destroyed it twice. Cliff Edwards argues these two unique paintings that were destroyed are at least as important to understanding the artist as the two thousand or more paintings and drawings that do exist. In *Van Gogh's Ghost Paintings*, Edwards invites his readers on a journey that begins in Japan and ends at a favorite site of the artist, a ruined monastery south of France. Recovering the intent of van Gogh and the meaning of his "ghost paintings" becomes a "zen koan" waiting to be solved. The story of the deepest levels of the artist's life as painter and spiritual pilgrim and the artist's choice of the biblical theme of the Garden of Gethsemane in the lost paintings illuminates the relationship of joy and creation, religion and the arts in van Gogh's life and work. Edwards solves a long-ignored mystery that provides a critical understanding of van Gogh's religion and art.

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