



Montanhas na Provence (*Mountains in Provence*)
Óleo sobre tela, 1886-90. Paul Cézanne

Cézanne: the founder of modern art

"I want to know in order to feel better and feel better in order to know better."

Cézanne lived for his work. There were few exhibitions of his paintings and he worked in artistic isolation. However, today, he is considered to be one of the greatest masters of modern art as a result of his unique approach to space, color and weight to create forms.

Cézanne had many impressionist friends, such as Monet, Pissarro and Renoir, and as rare as such friendships were, he did not let any of them interfere with his work. He painted indefatigably using his own method and he was very conscious of what he was doing. Nonetheless, he was never satisfied and inevitably surpassed his friends' attention to individual brushstroke and the reflection of light on objects, creating "something more solid, more durable, like the art in the museums," he would say.

Paul Cézanne was born in Aix-en-Provence, in the south of France, on January 19, 1839. He went to school in his hometown, where he met Émile Zola, who became his friend. His father obliged him to study Law, which he did while attending drawing classes at the same time, between 1859 and 1861. Against his family's will, he decided to pursue a career in painting and in 1861, joined Zola in Paris.

Although his father didn't agree with his decision, he supported him financially. This enabled Cézanne to live without

having to deal with the demands imposed by merchants and buyers.

In Paris, he met Pissarro and other impressionists, but he wasn't approved in the Academy of Fine Arts because of his attitude. From 1874 to 1877, he participated in impressionist exhibitions, but what he really wanted was to be accepted in the famous Salon, where the specialized juries united the main artists. Cézanne, however, was constantly rejected. He was facing hostility from the public, the critics and even from some of his impressionist friends, and therefore he returned to Aix-en-Provence, rarely making visits back to Paris. In 1886, it was the end of the friendship between Cézanne and Zola because he thought he was being portrayed in Zola's book *The work* as a failed painter. In this same year, his father died and left him a great fortune. He, then, established himself in Aix-en-Provence and married Hortense Fiquet, who he had been going steady with for some years and with whom he had a son, Paul.

In 1890, he suffered from a diabetes crisis, which destabilized him. He left his wife and son, with whom he reunited many years later. During this time, he was already a well-known painter, many young artists visited him and his paintings were greatly disputed.

In October 1906, Cézanne was caught in a storm while painting in the field. He died a week later from a pulmonary edema. Differently from Van Gogh and Gauguin, when he died, his work was already famous and valued by the general public and art critics.