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Press Materials: [http://pbs.org/pressroom](http://www.pbs.org/pressroom) or [http://thirteen.org/pressroom](http://www.thirteen.org/pressroom)

***Secrets of the Dead*** episodes online at [pbs.org/secrets](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/secrets/)

Facebook: [SecretsofTheDead](https://www.facebook.com/SecretsofTheDead)

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/SecretsPBS>

**THIRTEEN’s *Secrets of the Dead* Reveals**

**the Truth About *Van Gogh’s Ear***

**Wednesday, December 14, 10 p.m.on PBS**

Even those with a scant knowledge of art know about the moment when artist Vincent van Gogh looked into a mirror, held up a blade and cut into his ear. The deed was dramatized by Irving Stone in his best-selling novel “Lust for Life,” and portrayed vividly by Kirk Douglas in the 1956 film.

But did Stone get it right? What did van Gogh really do on the fateful night of December 23rd, 1888 in the town of Arles in southern France? Afterwards, there was a successful effort by his family to play down the event. His friend, artist Paul Gauguin, who was present, gave conflicting accounts. Still others tried to profit from his local infamy. Generations have theorized about what really happened, but no one has unearthed the true details…until now.

***Van Gogh’s Ear****,* broadcast as part of ***Secrets of the Dead***, one of PBS's longest running, limited primetime series, delves into the artist’s state of mind on the night he committed his notorious act of self-harm and offers fascinating evidence discovered by researcher Bernadette Murphy. The program premieres nationally Wednesday, December 14 at 10 p.m. on PBS. (Check local listings.)

Murphy, an independent researcher living in Provence, had long been intrigued by van Gogh’s story and spent seven years piecing together a meticulous picture of his life in Arles (1888-9); person by person, house by house, exploring closely his friends and his enemies.

Her detective work uncovered definitive long-lost evidence, which graphically reveals exactly what happened that night, who was involved and how it ultimately shaped van Gogh’s remarkable art. Murphy finally provides answers to the mystery that has divided art historians for decades.

***Van Gogh’s Ear*** focuses on van Gogh’s time in Arles including the visit from artist Paul Gauguin which proved to be life-changing, weaving together a detailed timeline of the momentous events. Following Murphy’s meticulous research and a reexamination of van Gogh’s work, the film reveals the artist’s rollercoaster of emotions and his mental health, placing his actions in proper context for the first time.

On July 12, Farrar, Straus and Giroux published a book about her findings, *Van Gogh's Ear*, featuring sixteen pages of full-color illustrations.

***Secrets of the Dead: Van Gogh’s Ear*** is produced by Lion Television/an All3Media company and THIRTEEN Productions LLC for WNET in association with the BBC and ARTE France. Producer/Director is Jack MacInnes. Executive Producer for Lion TV is  Bill Locke.

Executive-in-Charge for WNET is Stephen Segaller. Executive Producer for WNET is Steve Burns. Supervising Producer for WNET is Stephanie Carter.

This program is among the full-length episodes that will be available for viewing after broadcast on ***Secrets of the Dead* Online** ([pbs.org/secrets](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=001RTHGE9iiv_3DWb5yBWYzXxBkFIQw7OIt1VMOEYibZ9aLpggHidRkylkAlaKHmvASnDCyAnGs1oxdmCeMrBppEJ7zXmxTncnGiQeMppA5Qnw=)). As one of PBS's ongoing limited primetime series, ***Secrets of the Dead***is a perennial favorite among viewers, routinely ranking among the 10 most-watched series on public television. Currently in its 16th season, ***Secrets of the Dead***continues its unique brand of archaeological sleuthing and employing advances in investigative techniques, forensic science and historical scholarship to offer new evidence about forgotten mysteries. ***Secrets of the Dead*** has received 10 CINE Golden Eagle Awards and six Emmy nominations, among numerous other awards.

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**About WNET**  
WNET is America’s flagship PBS station and parent company of [THIRTEEN](http://thirteen.org/) and [WLIW21](http://wliw.org/). WNET also operates [NJTV](http://www.njtvonline.org/), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its broadcast channels, three cable services (KidsThirteen, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature), [Great Performances](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf), [American Masters](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/), [Charlie Rose](http://www.charlierose.com) and a range of documentaries, children’s programs, and local news and cultural offerings. WNET’s groundbreaking series for children and young adults include [Get the Math](http://www.thirteen.org/get-the-math), [Oh Noah!](http://www.pbskids.org/noah) and [Cyberchase](http://www.pbskids.org/cyberchase) as well as [Mission US](http://www.mission-us.org/), the award-winning interactive history game. WNET highlights the tri-state’s unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](http://www.nyc-arts.org/), [Reel 13](http://www.thirteen.org/sites/reel13), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](http://www.njtvonline.org/news/) and [MetroFocus](http://www.thirteen.org/metrofocus), the daily multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. In addition, WNET produces online-only programming including the award-winning series about gender identity, [First Person](https://www.youtube.com/firstpersonpbs), and an intergenerational look at tech and pop culture, [The Chatterbox with Kevin and Grandma Lill](https://www.youtube.com/chatterboxpbs). In 2015, THIRTEEN launched Passport, an online streaming service which allows members to see new and archival THIRTEEN and PBS programming anytime, anywhere: [www.thirteen.org/passport](http://www.thirteen.org/passport).

11.08.16