Paul Cézanne Biography

“When I judge art, I take my painting and put it next to a God-made object like a tree or flower. If it clashes, it is not art.”

– Paul Cezanne

Paul Cezanne Short Biography

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) was born on 19 January 1839 in Aix-en-Provence, in Provence in south of France. His father was a successful banker and his father wished him to pursue a ‘respectable’ career. To please his father, between 1859 and 1861 Paul Cezanne attended the law school of the University of Aix. However, in 1861, he became disillusioned with this career path and dropped out to pursue his life’s passion – art.

With the encouragement of his great friend Emil Zola, Paul left for Paris and sought to further his artistic career. Initially his father was upset at his son’s choice of career. But, on evidence of his talent, his father later became reconciled to his choice and on the death of his father, Paul inherited a substantial sum which enabled him to pursue art without any financial worries.

In Paris, he met the Impressionist artist, Camille Pissaro. Pissaro acted as Master to the young Paul. However, over time, the student became as respected as the Master.

In 1870, the Franco-Prussian war broke out and Paul Cezanne fled with his mistress to Marseille. He was caught as a draft dodger, but, soon after, the war fortunately ended. In this period in the south of France, Paul drew an increasing number of landscapes and abandoned the dark colours
which had dominated his rather somber paintings. In this period Paul Cezanne became one of the leading impressionists though his difficult personality made it hard for him to mix with many of the leading artists of the time.

**Jaz de Bouffan – 1876**

His final years of his life from 1878-1905 were spent in Provence. It was here that he increasingly developed the style of his paintings and moved beyond a classic impressionist style. He used planes and blocks of colour to give a more abstracted observation of nature. It was this abstract innovation that was said to be a key element in the link between the 19th Century impressionist art and the modern art of Matisse and Picasso of the Twentieth Century.
Paul Cezanne