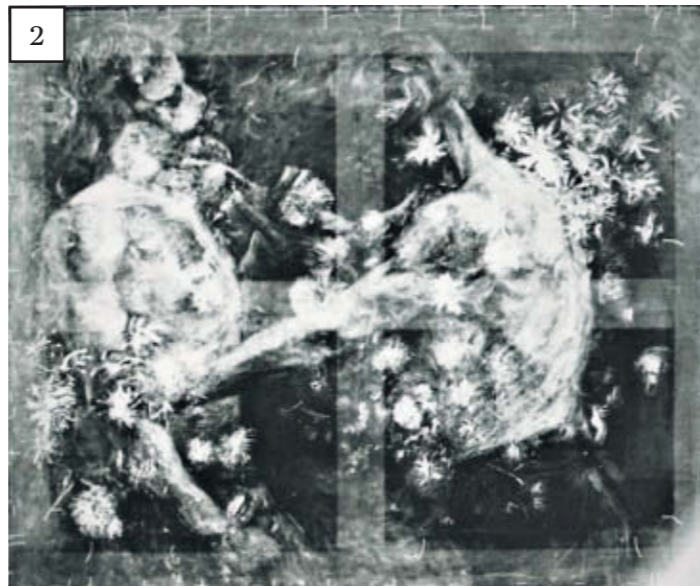




1) Van Gogh's Still Life With Meadow Flowers and Roses (1886-87), turned 90 degrees clockwise
2) An X-ray shows two half-naked male wrestlers
3) An edge detection of the wrestlers from the X-ray
4) The final recreation of the work by two British scientists



Something to behold as Van Gogh wrestlers spring forth from flowers

British scientists use X-rays, AI and 3D printing to recreate pair of figures under Master's still life

By Dalya Alberge

VINCENT Van Gogh's "hidden" portrait of two wrestlers has been brought to life by British scientists 135 years after it was painted over by the artist.

An X-ray of one of Van Gogh's floral paintings in a Dutch museum confirmed the existence of the artwork which the Dutch master had made reference to as a student to his brother Theo on Jan 22 1886, telling him: "This week I painted a large thing with two nude torsos - two wrestlers."

However, he reused the canvas so the completed painting never took shape - until now, 135 years later, as two British scientists have recreated the earlier composition in full colour with 3D textured brushstrokes in a project lasting

five months. Neuroscientist Anthony Bourached and physicist George Cann, both PhD candidates at University College London, used X-rays, artificial intelligence and 3D printing.

The wrestlers are beneath Van Gogh's *Still Life With Meadow Flowers and Roses*, painted in 1886-87, an oil on canvas measuring 100cm by 80cm, in the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo.

Mr Bourached is a specialist in high-dimensional neuroscience, trying to model human behaviour through AI.

He told *The Daily Telegraph* that they trained an algorithm to simulate how the original painting might have looked, analysing Van Gogh's brushstrokes in hundreds of paintings.

"How much it is like the original painting is impossible to tell at this point because the information doesn't exist. I think it's very convincing - by far the best guess we can get with current technology," he said.

He is the first to admit that it is not perfect and that, while the X-ray shows broad outlines, this is "a statistical

method of interpretation". Artists have reused canvases, either because they could not afford new supplies or they were unhappy with a composition. Precisely why Van Gogh painted over his wrestlers is unknown.

He had arrived in Antwerp in 1885, enrolling at the art academy the following year.

Part of the course involved painting wrestlers. Van Gogh told his brother: "I really like doing that."

The recreated wrestlers will be exhibited this week at the Focus Art Fair in the Carrousel du Louvre, Paris, where it is expected to fetch offers in the region of tens of thousands of euros.

Thought to be the first attempt to recreate a "hidden" Van Gogh, it is the latest experiment in the scientists' "NeoMasters" project, conducted through a company called Oxia Palus.

Previous examples include a Picasso painting of a crouching nude woman, recreated almost 120 years after the artist painted an entirely different composition over it, *The Blind Man's Meal*, in

the Metropolitan Museum in New York. On their website, the scientists say: "With potentially thousands of works of art hidden beneath existing paintings, resurrecting the world's lost art has only just begun."

'With thousands of works of art hidden beneath existing paintings, resurrecting lost art has only just begun'

The X-ray that revealed the wrestlers was among discoveries made in 2012 by researchers from the University of Antwerp, headed by Prof Koen Janssens. Yesterday, on being shown images of the recreated painting, he said: "It reminds me very much of one of the Van Gogh self-portraits."

"The scientists say that information from so many paintings was used, but it seems to be biased towards one."

The recreation prompted a mixed response from Prof Emily L Spratt, an art

historian and data scientist at Sotheby's Institute of Art, New York. She described it as "a bold project", using technology to bring "a more nuanced understanding" of what can be learned from traditional conservation methods.

But she is uncomfortable about these scientists calling such recreations "NeoMasters".

She said: "I don't know if NeoMaster refers to their work as computer scientists or if they're saying the algorithm is a NeoMaster in some sort of a resurrection of Van Gogh. That raises a host of ethical problems."

She added: "Van Gogh did not want the world to see that underdrawing completed and that was for a reason. This also has to be considered."

Responding to that criticism, Mr Bourached said: "When we study history, we don't consider what political figures wanted us to know about them. It's much more important to us that we know the absolute truth as much as possible... Why do we think about it differently [with] artists?"

Clunes: my lack of accent is no longer what the doctor ordered

By Berny Torre

MARTIN CLUNES has claimed his voiceover work dried up because advertisers favour regional accents.

The 60-year-old best known for playing Martin Ellingham in the ITV series *Doc Martin* and Gary Strang in *Men Behaving Badly* said he was once sought for his narrative skills but was now "out of fashion".

Clunes, who was born in Wimbledon, south-west London, but now lives in Dorset, told *Radio Times*: "I have a studio here. I'd been doing voiceovers remotely for ages, but recently I've completely gone out of fashion. I've no idea why, it's an advertising thing."

Asked if he was "too pale, stale and male", he added: "Entirely, absolutely. No accent, no regionality in my voice whatsoever. That used to be what they wanted, what they called a brown voice."

Clunes voiced Kipper in the animated children's series *Kipper the Dog* and Harry in Safeway's "When Harry Met Molly" advertising campaign from 1993 to 1999. He has also narrated documentaries for ITV, including *Islands of Britain* in 2009, and acted in *Baldi*, a BBC Radio 4 series.

The traditional tone set by the BBC's first radio broadcast in 1922 has long given way to regional accents. The success of *Peaky Blinders* and *Normal People* have shown an international appetite exists for shows with diverse casts and Welsh actors such as Rob Brydon get regular offers of voice work.

Toby Hancock, a former agent at deVine Voices International Voice Agency, said: "There definitely is a trend towards more regional accents."

John Altman, who played Nick Cotton in *EastEnders*, is listed as a voice actor with Soho Voices agency. Its website features a playable recording of his cockney twang, with his voice described as "confident, warm, sincere, deep, smooth".

Dominic Littlewood, the Essex-born TV presenter, is also on the site, alongside "English, northern" actor Nigel Pivaro who was in *Coronation Street*.

Radio 2 bosses 'too focused' on young listeners

By Berny Torre

BBC Radio 2's exodus of talent will worsen as executives are too focused on attracting younger listeners, a former chief of the corporation has said.

Trevor Dann, an ex-head of BBC music entertainment, said the station's managers were prioritising attracting working-class women aged in their late 30s and early 40s over loyal audiences.

Mr Dann told *Radio Times*: "If you're seething about the high-handed way the bosses are treating you, don't bother writing to complain, because they don't care what you think."

"What's driving their obsession with change is the data that says that Radio 2's audience is getting older, the average age is now 54."

"Its published remit may be to attract all age groups over 35, but privately the management team stresses its focus on what it calls 35-44 C2DE women."

Radio 2 fans have accused the corporation of ageism after Paul O'Grady, 67, announced he was quitting the station earlier this month. He departed after a shake-up that led to him splitting his Sunday show with comic Rob Beckett.

Steve Wright, 67, Tony Blackburn, 79, and Craig Charles, 58, have recently lost their Radio 2 slots. Presenters Simon Mayo, Vanessa Feltz and Graham Norton have also quit their jobs at the station in the past few years.

Mr Dann said: "In the world of audience research, listeners are nowhere near as important as potential listeners. I've even heard older loyalists described as 'the wrong kind of listeners'."

A BBC spokesman said: "Whilst we always want new listeners to discover Radio 2, we are focused on providing the 14.5 million people who tune in each week with a brilliant range of programmes."

"Radio 2's multi-generational appeal serves a 35-plus audience, a target which hasn't changed in decades."

Williams seeks licence to thrill on Bond soundtrack

By Daily Telegraph Reporter

JOHN WILLIAMS has said he would "love" to write the music for a James Bond film.

The five-time Academy-Award winning composer, who celebrated his 90th birthday this year, created scores for the Star Wars, Harry Potter and Jurassic Park films.

Mr Williams, who also wrote the soundtrack to the Indiana Jones films, said he has finished about a third of the soundtrack for the forthcoming fifth instalment starring Harrison Ford.

"I pretty much have the thematic scheme done. But we probably will be working on this into September," the American told *Classic FM*.

"Writing for film music is very difficult... it's probably not a profession for all composers because it can be very constricting and possibly very frustrat-

ing. I don't listen to my own music. Once I've done, finished with it, I close the book and go onto the next empty page, which has become a way of life."

"I'm on a very fortunate life path where I'm very happy to get up each day to work. I would feel very deprived if I couldn't do it."

Mr Williams also said that earlier in his life he had "tension and anxiety" about having to produce music under time pressure. "Whereas now, if I get behind for a minute or two it doesn't trouble me anymore."

"Maybe that's just an old veteran's experience."

Williams added that he would like to write the score for the next James Bond film, saying: "I'd love it."

Last year, he was named the most popular living composer, with many of his hits featuring in the *Classic FM* Hall of Fame.



'Purbeck Schindler' A statue of Trevor Chadwick, who helped rescue 669 Jewish children from Czechoslovakia in 1939, is unveiled in his home town of Swanage, Dorset.

BBC disrespectful to ignore critics, says axed radio host

By Berny Torre

A VETERAN BBC presenter has accused the corporation of showing disrespect to licence fee payers by failing to address criticisms in public.

Roger Bolton, who hosted *Feedback* for 23 years before his final show on Friday, told listeners he got "very angry" at managers who refused to be interviewed after legitimate complaints.

The former *Panorama* editor said: "The BBC have decided someone else needs to take it over," adding: "Obviously, I'd have liked to have continued."

In his last words for the programme, which airs complaints, praise and other views sent in by listeners about BBC radio programmes, Bolton said: "The BBC belongs to all who pay for it, not those who are paid by it."

Asked about managers refusing to give an interview when a legitimate

request was made in his last broadcast, the 78-year-old said: "On the whole they refuse far more times than they accept and I get very angry, actually, on behalf of you all."

Simon O'Hagan, a *Radio Times* journalist, said Bolton's last programme was a "really classy sign-off".

Jeremy Vine, the Radio 2 presenter, added it was "sad [that the episode] was Roger Bolton's last" and David Shukman, former BBC News science editor, said: "An incredible voice, ruthless questions, utterly charming manner and now a major loss."

A Radio 4 spokesman said: "We want to thank Roger for being a brilliant presenter of *Feedback* for 23 years."

The Daily Telegraph understands *Feedback* will be moving to an independent supplier with a new presenter to be announced soon, after a recent tendering process.