

# Breaking News English.com

## Activists jailed for soup attack on Van Gogh painting – 30th September 2024

### Level 4

The U.K. has jailed two activists for throwing soup at Vincent van Gogh's Sunflowers painting. The protestors wanted to highlight the damage to the climate caused by fossil fuels. One activist received a two-year prison sentence. The other got 20 months. In October 2022, the protestors threw tomato soup over Van Gogh's priceless painting. They also glued their hands to the wall. The soup did not harm the painting, but caused damage to the frame.

The court judge said the painting was a "cultural treasure" that could have been "seriously damaged". He said the activists, "couldn't have cared less if the painting was damaged or not". He said they had no right to do what they did. The protestors said that before throwing the soup, they checked to see if the painting was protected by glass. Museum staff worried about soup dripping through the glass.

### Level 5

The U.K. has jailed two climate activists for throwing soup at Vincent van Gogh's Sunflowers painting. The protestors are from the environmental group Just Stop Oil. This highlights the issue of climate change caused by fossil fuels. One activist received a two-year prison sentence. The other will serve 20 months. In October 2022, the protestors threw tomato soup over Van Gogh's priceless painting. They then knelt beneath the iconic work of art and glued their hands to the wall. The soup did not harm the painting. However, it caused over \$13,000 of damage to the frame.

The court judge called the Van Gogh painting a "cultural treasure". He said it could have been "seriously damaged or even destroyed". The judge told the activists: "You couldn't have cared less if the painting was damaged or not. You had no right to do what you did....You clearly think your beliefs give you the right to commit crimes when you feel like it." In their defence, the protestors said that before throwing the soup, they checked to see if the painting was protected by glass. Museum staff worried the soup could have dripped through the glass.

### Level 6

Two climate activists have been jailed in the U.K. for dousing Vincent van Gogh's Sunflowers painting with soup. The pair of protestors are from Just Stop Oil (JSO), an environmental group focused on highlighting the issue of climate change caused by fossil fuels. One of the activists received a sentence of two years in prison. The other will serve 20 months. In October 2022, the protestors threw two cans of tomato soup over Van Gogh's priceless 1888 painting at London's National Gallery. They then knelt beneath the iconic work of art and glued their hands to the wall. The soup did not harm the painting, but it did over \$13,000 of damage to the picture frame.

Presiding judge Christopher Hehir called the Van Gogh painting a "cultural treasure" that could have been "seriously damaged or even destroyed" in the attack. The judge told the activists: "You couldn't have cared less if the painting was damaged or not. You had no right to do what you did to Sunflowers. You clearly think your beliefs give you the right to commit crimes when you feel like it. You do not." He added: "Soup might have seeped through the glass." In their defence, the protestors said that prior to throwing the soup, they checked to see if the painting was protected by the glass. Museum staff worried the soup could have dripped through the protective glass.