

Girls Who Grew Up to Change the World



Gertrude Stein

(1874-1946)



In the early 1900s, writers and artists from all over the world were flocking to Paris.



They painted gloomy pictures of rain-slicked streets,
composed romantic poems by the river Seine, and wrote
novels recording their escapades.



At the centre of it all was Gertude.



She'd been born in America but grew up travelling between countries with her parents. When they finally settled in California, Getrude found school unchallenging and spent most of her time reading.



Eventually, she went on to study medicine at university. It didn't go well, Medicine at the time was dominated by men and Gertrude was always getting into arguments with men who thought they knew better than her.



Discouraged, she quiet without earning her degree, and moved to Paris to be with her brother.



The two of them collected art together. They filled the house they shared with oil paintings and sculptures.



By 1906, their art collection featured pieces that would go on to become some of the most famous in the world, including paintings by Cezanne, Matisse and Picasso. Those painters also became some of Getrude's closest friends.



Every Saturday night, her house would fill with poets, artists and writers, all keen to gather around Getrude to ask her advice, soak up her wisdom and hear her stories.



From Hemingway to Picasso, Fitzgerald to Matisse,
everyone wanted to spend Saturdays at 27 rue de Fleurs,
celebrating life, art and the thrill of being around creative
people



Gertrude also wrote, and she did it like no one else. Some people thought it was nonsense, but other people thought her work was the most beautiful thing they had ever read.



In Tender Buttons, she wrote:

'Asparagus in a lean in a lean to hot.

This makes it art and it is wet wet

Weather wet weather wet.'



By gathering struggling artist under her wing and pushing the limits of language, Gertrude single-handedly helped drag art into the twentieth century.





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