



Arshile Gorky, birth name Vostanik Manough Adoian, was born sometime between 1902 and 1904 in a village near Lake Van in the Ottoman Empire. He was an Armenian-American painter who had a seminal influence on Abstract Expressionism.

Gorky had a tragic early life. At round 5 years old his father left him, his mother, and three sisters to avoid the draft by immigrating to America. At around 13, Gorky escaped his home village with his remaining family during the Armenian Genocide. His mother died a few years later of starvation due to the aftermath of the genocide. He was finally reunited with his father as an adult, but they never grew close.

Gorky is hailed as one of the most powerful American painters of the 20th century. Many have speculated his tragic life helped inform his painting style.



