

Loving Vincent

2017 UK / Poland 95 m

Directors / Writers Dorota Kobiela, Hugh Welchman

What some critics said:

‘ If you ever wanted a masterpiece hanging in the gallery to come to life your wish has been granted many times over’ Robert Egbert

‘ A film that is almost too beautiful for its own good ‘ Seattle Times

NOTES

The film delves into Vincent van Gogh’s life and death in 1890 (which according to some recent studies eg ‘Van Gogh - The Life ‘ may have been murder rather than suicide) .This is the first full-length animated film to be made entirely of oil paintings on canvas – an astounding 65,000 of them all derived either from the artists original works like ‘Starry Night ‘and ‘Cafe Terrace at Night ‘or heavily inspired by his distinctive thick brush strokes. 125 painters were involved - 65 arrived every day at an enormous sweltering hangar at Gdansk Science and Technology Park in northern Poland to reimagine, amid thick fumes of oil paint, van Gogh canvases.

The Polish painter Jerzy Lisak in two years alone painted 400 frames or cells. He agreed that the huge amount of effort involved may make this a first and last time for such an undertaking. ‘It is clear this is the realisation of a dream’ he said.

Ms Kobiela supplied the vision. After reading the artist letters to his brother Theo she created an 8 minute animation. Mr Welchman (Director of award winning Peter and the Wolf) fell in love with Ms Kobiela and her project and persuaded her to make a full length feature. ‘I knew it would be difficult bordering on crazy ‘ he said, ‘but Vincent deserves more than 8 minutes’. Live-action was also involved. A stellar cast of actors were filmed and that footage became a point of reference for artists who painted over it with oil pigment frame by frame. Each of 1000 establishing shots requires a new oil painting. To make the animation look fluid every second of the film needs to consist of 12 hand-painted frames. Creating one frame takes from an hour to 2 days which means a painter may spend nearly a month on a single second of

the frame . Production slowed when the pool of classically trained painters in Poland dried up and the producers had to advertise abroad for artists to complete the project. Four thousand artists came willingly from all over the world to audition to complete the project which took 6 years to realise.

A week before he died Vincent wrote ‘ We cannot speak other than by our art’. The film is a labour of love : the Directors vision was to as far as possible immerse us in the art and at the same time pay homage to an absolutely unique artist .

Music

Don McLean - Vincent

British Composer - Clint Mansell

Our next film on 11th January is the Bunuel classic ‘The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie’ introduced by Dr Isabelle Vanderschelden