

LOVING VINCENT

Poland, UK (2017) 94 minutes

Directors / Writers: Dorota Kobiela, Hugh Welchman

Cast (voices): Douglas Booth (Armand Roulin), Jérôme Flynn (Doctor Gachet), John Sessions (Père Tanguy)



Screening 5 September 2018 at Swindon Arts Centre

Synopsis

On 27th July 1890 a gaunt figure stumbled down a drowsy high street at twilight in the small French country town of Auvers. The man was carrying nothing; his hands clasped to a fresh bullet wound leaking blood from his belly. This was Vincent van Gogh, then a little known artist; now the most famous artist in the world.

Reviews



The fact that every frame of *Loving Vincent* was oil-painted, in a process that took six years, would be remarkable enough in itself. But painted to look exactly like the work of Vincent van Gogh? That's something else. Corn fields shimmer and rustle with slight flickers of the impasto. The night sky sparkles and swirls. And faces – even the recognisable ones of a noted British cast – pose for a set of portraits that are rarely short of captivating. Footage was shot of the cast playing out scenes on rudimentary sets, then this was projected on to canvases, frame by frame, and painted over. The visual effect is overwhelming, a luxurious immersion in the palette and environment of a celebrated artist.

... It's all about surrendering yourself to the textures of scenes – the tinkling of cups in a tea-room, the sounds of bickering in a bar. Clint Mansell's elegantly mournful score does an important job in knitting it all together into a flowing piece of embroidery you want to stay with.

Tim Robey, The Telegraph

Every now and then, a ground-breaking movie comes along which does something so new, so startling, that it shows us cinema in a completely fresh way.

Loving Vincent is stunning in a whole new way, although the amount of work and length of time taken to produce it may render it a one-hit wonder. Fictionalising the story of Vincent van Gogh's final, tragic days (and disputed suicide), the Polish production was filmed using human actors but then hand-painted, painstakingly, by a team of over 100 artists who have created an exquisite new contribution to the genre of animated movies with this first, fully painted feature. Adopting van Gogh's signature style, and frequently using his actual paintings as establishing shots for scenes, the moving oil paintings on screen deliver the viewer an incredible effect of immersion and starry-eyed delight.

... The result is not just a sumptuous visual feast, although it helps that van Gogh was known for his rich royal blues and golden yellows. In the texture of the oil paint and the constant flickering of brush strokes, it is very vibrant. But the quest narrative also rides along well, helped by the juxtaposition of flashbacks rendered in black and white which keep your eyes interested.

Stuff.co.nz

Film Facts

- The directors are British animator Hugh Welchman and his wife Dorota Kobiela, a Polish-born artist. They worked with 125 volunteer artists to paint the film's 65,000 individual frames, inspired in each sequence by specific van Gogh paintings.
- Lauded at many film festivals, the film won the European Film Best Animation Award in 2017, and was nominated for a BATFA and an Academy Award in the same category