



Loving Vincent

Genre: Mystery, Art House, Biopic

Length: 94 minutes

Technique: oil-painting animation

A Poland/UK co-production with the participation of Qatar

“We cannot speak other than by our paintings”

Written by Vincent van Gogh in a letter the week before his death

Website: LovingVincent.com

Trailer: [Youtube.com/watch?v=yQZvzHmAXhc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQZvzHmAXhc)

Facebook: [Facebook.com/lovingvincentmovie](https://www.facebook.com/lovingvincentmovie)

Twitter: [Twitter.com/LovingVincent](https://twitter.com/LovingVincent)

Instagram: [Instagram.com/lovingvincentmovie](https://www.instagram.com/lovingvincentmovie)

Tumblr: LovingVincentMovie.tumblr.com

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SHORT SUMMARY

LOVING VINCENT is the world's first fully painted feature film. Written & directed by Dorota Kobiela & Hugh Welchman, produced by Poland's BreakThru Films & UK's Trademark Films.

The film brings the paintings of Vincent van Gogh to life to tell his remarkable story. Every one of the 65,000 frames of the film is an oil-painting hand-painted by 125 professional oil-painters who travelled from all across the world to the Loving Vincent studios in Poland and Greece to be a part of the production. As remarkable as Vincent's brilliant paintings, is his passionate and ill-fated life, and mysterious death.

No other artist has attracted more legends than Vincent van Gogh. Various labels a martyr, a lustful satyr, a madman, a genius and a layabout, the real Vincent is at once revealed in his letters, and obscured by myth and time. Vincent himself said in his last letter: 'We cannot speak other than by our paintings'. We take him at his word and let the paintings tell the real story of Vincent van Gogh.

Loving Vincent was first shot as a live action film with actors, and then hand-painted over frame-by-frame in oils. The final effect is an interaction of the performance of the actors playing Vincent's famous portraits, and the performance of the painting animators, bringing these characters into the medium of paint. Loving Vincent stars famous faces to match the famous paintings they portray:

- **Douglas Booth** (Jupiter Ascending, Noah) stars as Armand Roulin;
- **Eleanor Tomlinson** (Poldark, Jack the Giant Slayer) is Adeline Ravoux;
- **Jerome Flynn** (Game of Thrones) plays Doctor Gachet (the painting of which held the record for the highest priced painting for fourteen years, the longest time ever);
- **Saoirse Ronan** (Oscar nominee for Brooklyn & Atonement) plays his daughter Marguerite Gachet;
- **Chris O'Dowd** (Bridesmaids, The IT Crowd) is Postman Joseph Roulin;
- **John Sessions** (Filth, Gangs of New York) is Vincent's paint supplier, Pere Tanguy;
- **Aidan Turner** (The Hobbit, Poldark) is the Boatman from Vincent's Bank of the Oise at Auvers painting;
- **Helen McCrory** (Harry Potter) plays Louise Chevalier, house-keeper to Doctor Gachet;
- and introducing theatre actor **Robert Gulaczyk** in his first film role as Vincent van Gogh.

CREDITS

MAIN CREW

Directed by:	Dorota Kobiela & Hugh Welchman
Written by:	Dorota Kobiela, Hugh Welchman & Jacek Dehnel
Producers:	Hugh Welchman, Sean Bobbitt & Ivan Mactaggart
Executive Producers:	David Parfitt & Laurie Ubben & Charlotte Ubben
Screenplay by:	Dorota Kobiela & Hugh Welchman
Cinematographers	Tristan Oliver & Lukasz Zal
Costumes:	Dorota Roqueplo
Editors	Justyna Wierszynska & Dorota Kobiela
Head of Painting	Piotr Dominiak
VFX Supervisor	Lukasz Mackiewicz
Composer	Clint Mansell
Head of Production	Tomek Wochniak

MAIN CAST

Armand Roulin	Douglas Booth
Vincent van Gogh	Robert Gulaczyk
Adeline Ravoux	Eleanor Tomlinson
Doctor Gachet	Jerome Flynn
Marguerite Gachet	Saoirse Ronan
Postman Roulin	Chris O'Dowd
Pere Tanguy	John Sessions
Boatman	Aidan Turner
Louise Chevalier	Helen McCrory

COMPANY CREDITS

BreakThru Films, Production Company

Trademark Films, Co-Production Company

SilverReel Entertainment, Gap Financier

Cinema Management Group, International Sales

Co-Producers:

City of Wrocław - European Capital of Culture 2016

Odra-Film / The Lower Silesian Film Fund [Dolnośląski Fundusz Filmowy]

CeTA [Centrum Technologii Audiowizualnej]

With the support of:

The Polish Film Institute [Polski Instytut Sztuki Filmowej]

Doha Film Institute

MEDIA

Unibail-Rodamco

SYNOPSIS

France, Summer 1891. Armand Roulin (Douglas Booth), a feckless and directionless young man, is given a letter by his father, Postman Joseph Roulin (Chris O'Dowd), to hand-deliver to Paris. He is to deliver it to the brother of his father's friend Vincent van Gogh, who, they have just heard, killed himself. Armand is none too pleased with the mission: he is embarrassed by his father's association with Vincent, a foreign painter who cut off his ear and was committed to the local asylum.

In Paris there is no trace of the brother Theo. His search leads him to the paint supplier, Pere Tanguy (John Sessions), who tells him that Theo died shortly after Vincent, apparently destroyed by the death of his older brother.

Pere recounts how Theo helped Vincent on this incredible transformation from a down-and-out at 28, who had failed at three careers and was living in a barn in the mining district of the Borinage in Belgium with a bunch of books and no idea what to do next, to the new artistic sensation of Paris at the time of his death 10 years later. After hearing this story Armand believes he may have misjudged his father's friend, and really wants to know why, after such struggle, Vincent chose the moment of impending success to take his life: Pere has no answer to this.

So Armand journeys on to Vincent's final destination, the quiet village of Auvers-sur-Oise, an hour outside Paris, to meet Doctor Paul Gachet (Jerome Flynn), Vincent's doctor in his final weeks, to find the answer. The doctor is away for couple of days. Armand resolves to wait, during which time the villagers tell him different theories of why Vincent took his life and who is to blame.

While in Auvers-sur-Oise Armand stays at the Ravoux Inn, where Vincent stayed for the last 10 weeks of his life, and where on 29th July 1890 he died of a bullet wound to his abdomen. Here Armand meets the Inn-keeper's daughter, Adeline Ravoux (Eleanor Tomlinson). While he awaits Doctor Gachet's return, Armand also interviews Doctor Gachet's housekeeper, Louise Chevalier (Helen McCrory), the Doctor's daughter, Marguerite Gachet (Saoirse Ronan), and by the river where Vincent often spent his days he meets the Boatman (Aidan Turner).

Armand gets the sense that the truth is being hidden from him, and feels like a pawn in overlapping village feuds. Armand is determined to root out the truth, for his father, for Vincent's memory, and for himself. A run in with the local police, an unexpected encounter with a second Doctor, and finally his much anticipated meeting with the mercurial Doctor Gachet, lead to unexpected and heart-rending revelations, but also to Armand understanding and appreciating the passionate and surprising life of Vincent van Gogh.

Loving Vincent Oil – Painting Animation technique

All the characters in *Loving Vincent* are played by actors. These actors worked either on sets specially constructed to look like Van Gogh paintings, or against green-screens, with the Van Gogh paintings being composited in, along with Computer Generated animation, after the shoot. The live action shoot took place at Three Mills Studios in London and CETA studio in Wroclaw. The experienced film crew included cinematographers Lukasz Zal (Oscar nominated for *Ida*) and Tristan Oliver (*Fantastic Mr. Fox*, *Chicken Run*). The footage from the live action shoot then becomes the reference footage for the painting-animators.

The art form of film is different from painting. Painting is one particular moment in time, frozen. Film is fluid, seeming to move through space and time. So, prior to and during the live action shoot the Painting Design team spent one-year re-imagining Vincent's painting into the medium of film. There are 94 Vincent paintings that feature in a form very close to the original, and there are a further 31 paintings that are either featured substantially or partially.

Vincent's paintings come in different shapes and sizes, so the design painters had to work out how to best show these paintings within the frame set by the cinema screen. This required breaking outside the frames of Vincent's paintings, while still retaining the feel and inspiration of Vincent's originals. They also had to work out how to deal with 'invasions', where a character painted in one style, comes into another Vincent painting with a different style. They also have to, for the purpose of the story, sometimes change daytime paintings into night time paintings, or paintings which were done in Autumn or Winter, had to be re-imagined for summer when the journey of the film takes place.

The Character Design Painters specialized in re-imagining our actors as their famous portraits, so that they would retain their own features and at the same time recognizably take on the look and feeling of their character in painting form. There were 377 paintings painted during the Design Painting process.

The painting animators then use the reference footage, and paint over this with reference to the style (brushstrokes, colours, impasto) set by the Design Paintings to paint the first frame of their shot on canvas, sized 67cm by 49cm. They then animate the shot by re-painting, matching the brushstrokes, colour and impasto of their previous frame, for all parts of the shot that are moving. At the end they are left with a painting of the last frame of the shot. Each frame is recorded with a Canon D20 digital stills camera at 6k resolution.

The Painting Animators work in the Painting Animation Work Stations (PAWS) designed by BreakThru Films over the course of 2 years during the development of the project. PAWS allow the painter to focus as much attention as possible on painting and animating without being concerned about lighting and technology, and allow for consistency across the photographs being taken in 97 PAWS in 3 studios in 2 countries. 24 of these high-resolution photographs of 12 frames of painting make up each second of the film. After the photographing of the frames of painting there is simply some flicker correction, as the light-bulbs change temperature during the animation, and some colour correction to balance between shots, and that's it. So what the audience will be seeing is 65,000 high resolution photographs of actual oil-paintings.

Loving Vincent

A select few original oil paintings from the film are now on sale at <http://lovingvincent.com/>

BIOGRAPHIES

Dorota Kobiela – Writer and Director

A graduate from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Dorota Kobiela was awarded the “Minister of Culture scholarship” for special achievements in painting and graphics for four consecutive years. Through friends Dorota discovered animation and film, and immediately threw herself into learning these new artistic disciplines, attending The Warsaw Film School, Direction Faculty. She has directed one live action short film, *The Hart in Hand* (2006) and five animated shorts – ‘The Letter’ (2004), ‘Love me’ (2004), ‘Mr. Bear’ (2005), *Chopin’s Drawings* (2011) and *Little Postman* (2011). *Little Postman* was the world’s first, and to her knowledge still only, Stereoscopic Painting Animation film, and won Stereoscopic Best Short Film at the LA 3D Film Festival, 3D Stereo Media (Liege), 3D Film & Music Fest (Barcelona).

For her sixth animated short, *Loving Vincent*, Dorota aimed to combine her passion for painting and film, and intended to paint the entire film herself. However once she expanded the project into a feature film the task of writing and directing was such that she had to content herself with directing the 125 painters. *Loving Vincent* is her feature film debut.

Hugh Welchman – co-Writer, co-Director and Producer, BreakThru Films

Hugh graduated from Oxford University with a degree in PPE and a vague notion of wanting to make films. He supported himself through teaching history, selling carpets, and even selling fish, while he joined various grass roots film cooperatives in London. After a few disastrous experiences, where the drama was all behind the camera instead of in front of it, Hugh sought out training at The National Film & Television School.

His graduation film, *Crowstone*, won the Cinefondation Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, and he was awarded the Sam Mendes Shakespeare Prize. He got his first professional experience producing short films for Monty Python, and then set up BreakThru Films. In 2008 Hugh was awarded an Oscar for BreakThru’s first major production, *Peter and the Wolf*. The film also picked up several other top prizes including the Annecy Cristal and the Rose D’or. *Peter and the Wolf* premiered at a sold out Royal Albert Hall accompanied live by The Philharmonic Orchestra, then at the Hollywood Bowl, and has since been performed at over 70 concert halls worldwide. His next film, *Magic Piano & the Chopin Shorts* premiered in Beijing’s Forbidden City with pianist Lang Lang, then at London’s South Bank Centre and New York’s Lincoln Centre, and has since been performed in 30 major venues around the world with live solo piano accompaniment.

After falling in love with Polish painter and director, Dorota Kobiela, Hugh also fell in love with her film project, *Loving Vincent*, and has been working with her on it ever since.

Sean Bobbitt, Producer, BreakThru Films

Sean graduated from the University of Virginia with a BA in International Relations, and three weeks later ended up in Poland with the Peace Corps. Sean enjoyed his time in Poland so much that he kept pushing back his return to the US, and looking for excuses to extend his stay. During his time in Poland, Sean has started work on a doctorate,

worked as a journalist and a translator, and finally started up with friends one of the leading multiplex cinema chains in Poland – Silver Screen - where he held the roles of CFO and then CEO. After merging with Multikino in 2010, Sean thoroughly intended never to work as hard again as he had at Silver Screen, but was persuaded by Hugh that joining BreakThru and becoming a producer would be an ideal part time occupation for him. While Sean no longer takes everything that Hugh says at face value, he has acquired the film making bug, and will certainly be producing more films.

Ivan Mactaggart, Producer, Trademark Films

Ivan joined Trademark as a Producer/Executive Producer in October 2010. Formerly Director - Film and Media Funds for senior debt financier BMS Finance, he has 20 years' experience in film financing having worked in a variety of finance and business affairs roles for companies including BBC Films, BBC Worldwide, Baker Street Media Finance and Stewart Till's Signpost Films. He has been involved in the financing of a number of successful British films including Made in Dagenham, Moon, Bend It Like Beckham, Billy Elliot and Shallow Grave.

David Parfitt, Executive Producer, Trademark Films

David has worked as an independent film and theatre producer for over 20 years. His film credits include Henry V, Peter's Friends, Much Ado About Nothing, The Madness of King George, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, Twelfth Night, The Wings of the Dove (both nominated for four Academy Awards), Shakespeare in Love (winner of Seven Academy Awards including Best Picture and four British Academy Awards including Best Film), Gangs of New York, (Production Consultant), I Capture the Castle, Chasing Liberty, A Bunch of Amateurs and My Week with Marilyn. In April 2007 he co-produced, with Finola Dwyer, the critically acclaimed theatre production of Elling at The Bush Theatre and in the West End.

David is Chairman of Film London and a former Chairman of BAFTA. Before moving into film & theatre production, David worked as an actor.

Edward Noeltner, Executive Producer, Cinema Management Group

Edward is the founder and CEO of Cinema Management Group. Since its inception, CMG has been known for offering original, commercial properties including the hit animated titles Hookwinked and Adventures In Zambezia, as well as award winning dramas like Still Mine, and the Academy Award nominated documentary Gasland. Over the past 25 years, Noeltner has had the privilege of licensing some 16 Academy Award nominated features (many of them Academy Award winners), including Scott Hick's SHINE, Julie Taymor's FRIDA, Stephen Daldry's The Hours, Quentin Tarantino's Kill Bill: vol. 1 & 2, and Rob Marshall's Chicago.

Clint Mansell, Composer

Heralded as "a soundtrack genius" by NME, Clint is responsible for some of the most iconic film scores of the past 20 years: 'Requiem for a Dream', 'Black Swan', 'Noah', 'The Fountain' and 'Moon'.

Piotr Dominiak, Head of Painting

Piotr graduated from the Lodz Academy of Fine Art, and did whatever jobs offered to him if they involved painting, including painting shop signs, large scale friezes, and theatre sets. When there weren't painting jobs Piotr worked at casual jobs to leave himself free should any painting jobs come up, including being a grill chef. One of his painting jobs involved painting the forest backdrop and moonlit night backdrop for BreakThru Films' Peter and the Wolf. Following this he was appointed head of painting on Dorota Kobiela's short film, The Little Postman, and then became one of the 'gang of four' painters involved in the R&D and painting the concept trailer for Loving Vincent. Along with Dorota Kobiela and Tomek Wochniak, Piotr designed the Painting Animation Work Station.

Tomek Wochniak, Production Manager

Tomek started working with BreakThru Films as head of IT on Peter and the Wolf, and had the same role on Magic Piano and the Chopin Shorts, after which he became Head of the Studio at BreakThru's facility in Gdansk, and Production Manager on Loving Vincent. Tomek along with Dorota Kobiela and Piotr Dominiak designed the Painting Animation Work Stations.

Tristan Oliver, Cinematographer

A cinematographer for 26 years, Tristan has worked across the disciplines. His long collaboration with director Nick Park includes Academy award winners, 'Wrong Trousers', 'A Close Shave' and 'Curse of the Were-Rabbit'. His work with other directors has produced BAFTA short winners, 'Stage Fright' and 'The Big Story' as well as the popular feature films 'Chicken Run' and the Academy award nominated, 'The Fantastic Mr. Fox' and 'ParaNorman'

Lukasz Zal, Cinematographer

Lukasz Zal – Oscar and BAFTA nominated DOP of Academy Awarded IDA directed by Pawel Pawlikowski. For IDA, his feature debut, Lukasz has won multiple cinematography awards including Golden Frog/Camerimage 2013, 28th Gdynia Film Festival, 29th Warsaw Film Festival, 20th Minsk International Film Festival Listapad, 20th Warsaw Jewish Film Festival, ASC Spotlight Award, Medias Central European Film Festival Award, The San Francisco Film Critics Circle Awards, PSC Award, EFA Award. In 2008 Lukasz has been graduated from the Polish National Film School in Lodz.

Lukasz Mackiewicz, Head of VFX

Lukasz graduated with a masters in Animation from Krakow Academy of Art, after which he started work in CeTA in Wroclaw working across Computer Graphics, Animation and Motion Control. When CeTA became a co-producer on Loving Vincent Lukasz started working on the production as a Motion Control operator, but because of the combination of his in-depth technical knowledge, keen artistic eye, feel for animation and his infinite patience he was quickly promoted by Dorota and Hugh to Head of Visual Effects.

Justyna Wierszyska, Editor

Justyna graduated from The Lodz Film School. Her graduation film, MC Man of Vinyl, won the Grand Prix at the Taiwan International Film Festival, among others. Upon graduating she joined BreakThru Films, working as an Assistant Editor on The Magic Piano, and Consulting Editor on the Chopin Shorts, and since she has been editing on Loving Vincent,

Loving Vincent

and also working on the Visual Effects and doing the occasional bit of acting, when required.

COMPANY PROFILES

BreakThru Films, Production Company

BreakThru Films is a film company based in Poland and the UK. Their major productions have been the Oscar winning film Peter and the Wolf and The Magic Piano. Additionally, they have produced 12 animation shorts in different styles for the 'Chopin Shorts' Collections, 5 live action shorts, and worked as VFX producers on the Edith Piaf biopic, 'La Vie en Rose'. As well as the Oscar, their films have 35 international top prizes for Best Film, and also in categories of Cinematography, Stereoscopy and Technical Achievement.

Since 2011 BreakThru have been pioneering a new film production method, combining live action, computer animation, visual effects and hand-painting, to create a Hand-Painted Film. First was Dorota Kobiela's short film 'Little Postman' and now BreakThru are in production on their feature debut, 'Loving Vincent'. BreakThru's team hope that people will be enthusiastic enough about their Hand-Painted Film approach that they will be allowed to make more films, long or short, in this technique!

Trademark Films, Co-Production Company

Trademark Films was established in 2000 by Academy and Bafta Award winning producer David Parfitt, with other members of his regular production team. Trademark's debut production was the acclaimed 2001 adaptation of Dodie Smith's much loved novel I Capture the Castle. This was followed by Chasing Liberty in 2003, A Bunch of Amateurs in 2009 and, in 2011, My Week with Marilyn, starring Michelle Williams as Marilyn Monroe with Kenneth Branagh, Eddie Redmayne and Judi Dench.

Trademark's first television production was Parade's End which, in 2012, it co-produced with Mammoth Screen. Parade's End was a 5x1hr series for BBC and HBO, written by Tom Stoppard, directed by Susanna White and starring Rebecca Hall and Benedict Cumberbatch.

Trademark's most recent production is the feature film The Wipers Times, which completed in July 2013. Written by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman, directed by Andy de Emmony, and stars Ben Chaplin, Julian Rhind-Tutt, Emilia Fox and Michael Palin, it tells the story of how one man turned the horrors of World War One into black comedy.

Cinema Management Group, International Sales

CMG is a full service international sales company, headed by veteran sales and distribution executive, Edward Noeltner. CMG was launched in 2003 with the exclusive int'l sales on "HOODWINKED – The True Story of Little Red Riding Hood", the hit animated feature which went on to gross over US\$ 110 million in its world-wide theatrical release. Since 2003, CMG has added over 100 titles to its line-up which includes quality feature films of all genres, 3-D animated features and series as well as award winning feature length documentaries and series.

Doha Film Institute is an independent, not-for-profit cultural organization established in 2010 by Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani. It's dedicated to film appreciation, education, and building a dynamic film industry in Qatar that focuses on nurturing regional storytellers while being entirely global in its scope. With culture, community, education and entertainment at its foundation, Doha Film Institute serves as

an all-encompassing film hub in Doha, as well as a resource for the region and the rest of the world.

City of Wrocław - European Capital of Culture 2016

In 2016 Wrocław had the title of the European Capital of Culture and for one year it became the cultural centre of the continent. The title was also an opportunity to develop a long-term cultural development strategy. The idea of the European Capital of Culture is constantly growing since 1985 and is now one of the most recognizable European Commission initiatives. Wrocław was awarded the title as a result of a competition, joined by 11 Polish cities.

Odra-Film / The Lower Silesian Film Fund [Dolnośląski Fundusz Filmowy] was established in 2008. It operates under the name Lower Silesian Film Competition (Lower Silesian Competition for supporting film production). Its benefactors are the self-governments of Lower Silesia Province and the city of Wrocław. On the basis of an agreement between the two self-governments, the fund is run by Odra-Film, Institution of Culture of Lower Silesia Province Government, which is responsible for film redistribution and promotion of film culture. Odra-Film is also the co-producer of the films which received financing in the Competition.

Audiovisual Technology Centre [Centrum Technologii Audiowizualnej (CeTA)] is a state-owned cultural institution supervised by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. It was created in November 2011 as a result of the transformation of the Wrocław Feature Film Studio (WFF Wrocław) and is currently the successor and keeper of the years-long, rich tradition of the WFF.

Audiovisual Technology Centre is active in the field of promoting and development of modern multimedia technologies, as well as education (workshops, courses, seminars and lectures) and spreading culture (festivals, meetings, showcases). Film studios and professional technical support allow production and co-production of movies. An array of advanced technology, which is at the institution's disposal, and a qualified staff of specialists allow, among others, creation of visual special effects for use in cinema and media, including television.

One of the institution's tasks is also implementing work proficiency in the area of visual and audiovisual art., special effects and electronic post-processing. The institution also conducts research with the aim of improving the technologies used in moviemaking.

The Polish Film Institute [Polski Instytut Sztuki Filmowej (PISF)] is the newest film institute in Europe, established in 2005 in accordance with a new cinematography law passed by the Polish Parliament. It is set up similar to the mechanisms of support for the film industries in many other countries of Europe.

The Institute's principal task is to provide the Polish film industry with a modern mechanism of support – from the development of film projects, through production, to promotion, distribution and circulation of Polish and European films. It supports films from concept to screening, with particular emphasis on international co-productions.

Unibail-Rodamco is the leading listed real estate company in Europe and the third-largest in the world. Listed on the Paris stock exchange since 1972, today the Group owns an exceptional portfolio of prime commercial properties located in the largest most prosperous cities across Continental Europe. Its operations are deliberately focused on large shopping centres in major European cities, the most prestigious office buildings in the heart and West of Paris and major convention and exhibition venues in and around Paris.

MAIN CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Armand Roulin ***Douglas Booth***

Douglas first came to public attention following his performance as Boy George in the BBC Two film *Worried About the Boy* (2010). He also starred in the BBC adaptations of *Great Expectations* and *Christopher and His Kind* (both 2011). In 2013, Booth starred in Carlo Carlei's film adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*. In 2014, he appeared in Darren Aronofsky's *Noah* and Lone Scherfig's *The Riot Club*, and in 2015, co-starred in The Wachowskis' *Jupiter Ascending*.

Vincent van Gogh ***Robert Gulaczyk***

Robert is a Polish theatre actor with Modjeska Theatre in Legnica, one of Poland's greatest theatres, renowned for its depth of acting talent. His experience includes almost 40 roles in professional theatre productions.

Two years ago he received a phone call saying that as he looked like Vincent van Gogh, the first time anyone had ever mentioned this fact, he had to go and audition that same day for a lead role on an international feature film. Having spoken barely any English since leaving school Robert was bemused when he was immediately whisked into costume and make up, and had to read out Vincent's letters in English. That was the start of a great journey of discovery into the life and works of Vincent van Gogh. Robert considers himself a lucky guy because he loves his job, and now he is loving Vincent too.

Adeline Ravoux ***Eleanor Tomlinson***

Eleanor is known for her roles as Princess Isabelle in *Jack the Giant Slayer* (2013), Isabel Neville in *The White Queen*, and Demelza Poldark in the hit BBC drama, *Poldark*.

Doctor Gachet ***Jerome Flynn***

Jerome came to prominence in the UK for his roles as Kenny "Rambo" Baines in the 1986 television film *London's Burning*, as Paddy Garvey of the King's Fusiliers in the ITV series *Soldier Soldier*, and came to international prominence as Bronn in the hit HBO series *Game of Thrones*, an adaptation of the *A Song of Ice and Fire* novels by George R.R. Martin. He has also been a No.1 selling pop-singer in the UK.

Marguerite Gachet ***Saoirse Ronan***

Saoirse is a two-time Academy Award nominee; receiving a Best Supporting Actress nomination for *Atonement* (2007), and a Best Actress nomination for *Brooklyn* (2015). She has also received three BAFTA Award nominations, two Golden Globe nominations, two Screen Actors Guild nominations and a Satellite Award.

Postman Roulin ***Chris O'Dowd***

Chris is known for his role of Roy in the Channel 4 comedy *The IT Crowd*. O'Dowd created and starred in the Sky 1 television series *Moone Boy*, which aired between 2012 and 2015, and for which he received a Golden Globe. His film roles include *Bridesmaids* (2011), *This Is 40* (2012), *The Sapphires* (2012), *Thor: The Dark World* (2013), *Calvary* (2014) and *St. Vincent* (2014). He made his Broadway debut in the play adaptation of *Of Mice and Men* in 2014, for which he was nominated for a Tony Award.

Pere Tanguy ***John Sessions***

John has had ensemble roles as a character actor in many films such as Gangs of New York, The Bounty, and Kenneth Branagh's Henry V. He starred prominently in Channel 4's Porterhouse Blues and BBC's lavish adaptation of Mervyn Peake's novels, Gormenghast. He is a regular panellist on Whose Line is it Anyway and QI.

Boatman ***Aidan Turner***

Aidan is one of the best known actors in the UK as a result of his leading role in the BBC hit TV series, Poldark, and as the Vampire John Mitchell in Being There. He is also known throughout the world for his portrayal of the dwarf Kili in the Hobbit trilogy. He was voted world's sexiest man 2016 by Glamour magazine.

Louise Chevalier ***Helen McCrory***

Helen portrayed Cherie Blair in both The Queen (2006) and The Special Relationship (2010). She also portrayed Narcissa Malfoy in the final three Harry Potter films; Mama Jeanne in Martin Scorsese's family mystery film Hugo (2011) and Clair Dowar in Sam Mendes' Skyfall (2012)

VINCENT VAN GOGH – A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

“We cannot speak other than by our paintings”

Vincent was born in The Netherlands, the eldest surviving son of a Parson. His parents came from well-connected families. Vincent was named after his father’s childless elder brother, Vincent ‘Cent’ van Gogh, who had made a fortune as Holland’s pre-eminent art dealer. Vincent’s parents were angling for their son to take over this lucrative business when choosing his name. Indeed, Vincent joined the art-dealing firm when he was 16. Despite having shown no particular interest in or aptitude for art as a child, Vincent threw himself into learning everything he could about art. This encyclopaedic knowledge didn’t stop him from being side-lined within the firm, as he was seen as unable to deal with clients, and eventually sacked. His sacking was a humiliation for his parents, and Vincent tried to redeem himself, after false starts as a teacher in England and a Bookseller’s assistant in The Hague, by studying to become a parson like his father. However, this led to further humiliation when it became clear he wasn’t academically gifted enough to pass the Pastor’s exams despite a year of private coaching provided by his parents. Still his father managed to secure him a position, although on the lowest rung of the ecclesiastical career ladder, as an evangelical preacher’s assistant in the desperately poor mining district of the Borinage. Vincent was sacked from this lowly position for being ‘excessively religious’. He gave away the church’s possessions, his own food and even his own clothes, to the miners.

Vincent then reached a low point, refusing help from his family, and living in a hay barn in the Borinage. His beloved younger brother, Theo van Gogh, who unlike his brother was working successfully for the art dealership, visited him to try and revive him out of his depression. Theo suggested that Vincent should capitalise on his love of art, and work to become an artist. Vincent, aged 27, grabbed at this lifeline and started teaching himself to draw from manuals provided by Theo. Although drawing didn’t come naturally to him, Vincent’s prodigious work ethic, often practicing all through the day and all through the nights as well, led him to steadily improve.

He was taken under the wing of his Uncle by marriage, Anton Mauve, Holland’s most famous living painter. However, Vincent fell out with Mauve, partly because Vincent had taken in a prostitute and her children into his studio. This scandalized his whole family, and under financial pressure from Theo, who was supporting him completely, he moved back to his parent’s parsonage. As fast as Vincent’s work was improving, it was here that Vincent completed his first masterpiece, ‘the potato eaters’, his relations with his family were deteriorating. Vincent had declared himself completely against the church, and fought bitterly with his father. When his father died prematurely of a heart attack his sisters and mother blamed Vincent, saying the stress he heaped on his father had put him in an early grave.

After short and unsuccessful spells in Antwerp and on the moorland of Drethe Vincent turned up on Theo’s doorstep in Paris. Theo’s connections got Vincent into the Cormon Atelier, alongside bright young painters such as Toulouse-Lautrec and Emile Bernard.

Vincent was rather shunned by the younger and, by everyone’s reckoning at the time, more talented painters, until Theo was appointed by his gallery to buy impressionist art. This made Theo the most sought after friend for painters working in the new styles, and

this made Vincent sought after company as well. There followed three months where Vincent together with Theo were at the centre of a group of the most interesting new painters. However, their party life style was severely damaging Theo's health and also Vincent felt his work was stagnating. So Vincent struck out on his own for the South in search of sunshine and blossoms, like in the Japanese prints he was obsessed with.

Very unusually when he arrived in Arles in Provence it was snowing, however it wasn't long before the snow melted and the blossoms burst forth. Also bursting out, from Vincent, was a new style of painting, the style we recognize today as Vincent's style, which synthesized his Dutch period, the new styles he had learnt in Paris and his study of Japanese prints. Alongside a prodigious output of new paintings Vincent concocted a plan to set up an artists' studio, which other artists from his Paris group could come and join him in, and so he rented the Yellow House. Only Gauguin, enticed by free board and rent, made the trip. A brief honeymoon period was soon eclipsed as competition and resentment grew between them, and heated arguments raged in the Yellow House, until one night after an argument, Vincent sliced off his ear and made a present of it to his favourite whore. Gauguin left Arles the next morning, and Vincent was committed to the local mental asylum. After two weeks Vincent seemed completely recovered from his fit, but after a month his health deteriorated again, and under pressure from his neighbours, who signed a petition asking the mayor to remove him, Vincent voluntarily committed himself to the private mental asylum at St Remy in the Alpilles. For one year he alternated between feeling completely normal and having periods of terrifying fits, until he considered himself well enough to leave.

He travelled back up North, to be near Theo, but didn't want the bustle and distractions of Paris, so he moved to the sleepy resort village of Auvers-Sur-Oise, an hour outside of Paris. The village had long been a magnet for painters, following in the footsteps of Charles Daubigny, and many of the bigger houses were second homes for rich Parisians. As well as its reputation for tolerating painters, additionally Vincent was there because of Doctor Paul Gachet, a doctor who specialized in treating melancholia in artists, and who was a passionate supporter of the new painters in Paris, and Doctor to other painters such as friend to the Van Gogh's, Pissarro. Gachet was something of a painter himself, and aspired to be more than what he was, a gentleman painter.

Vincent at first seemed to fare well in Auvers-sur-Oise, and threw himself into his work and also a friendship with Doctor Gachet. However, Vincent was still worried about many aspects of his life: money, his state of health, his brother and his brother's new baby, his isolation from people. There also seems to have been a deterioration in his initially warm relations with Doctor Gachet, and only 10 weeks after arriving in Auvers-sur-Oise, having painted 70 paintings, Vincent arrived back at the Ravoux Inn on a Sunday night with a mortal wound to his chest. He stated that he had shot himself. He came back without the painting gear that he had left with, and without a gun on him. Neither his painting gear nor the gun was ever found. Vincent died two days later, his beloved brother Theo at his side.

SELECTED INTERVIEWS

Dorota Kobiela – Writer and Director

How did the idea for Loving Vincent originate?

I decided I wanted to combine my two passions - painting and film - and make a painted film. I was 30 when I came up with the idea to do *Loving Vincent*, the same age that Vincent was when he started painting. More than his paintings, which I do love, it was the example of how Vincent lived that inspired me. I have battled with depression all my life, and I was inspired with how strong Vincent was in picking himself up from similarly terrible life setbacks as a young man in his twenties, and finding, through art, a way to bring beauty to the world. His letters helped me at a low point in my life, and inspired me to make this film.

Why did you decide to make a feature instead of the originally planned short?

When Hugh had to queue for over 3 hours to get into a Van Gogh exhibition he persuaded me that we should at least look into seeing if the film would work as a feature. I decided it could be possible if it was done as a series of interviews with Vincent's paintings, alongside some painting animation transitions based on his landscape paintings. So I developed the script in this direction, and put together a concept trailer to work out the production method I had in mind. The reaction we got to the concept trailer gave me the confidence that this would work with audiences: total strangers; film professionals; artists; animators and members of the public all loved our visual approach.

What challenges did you come across while making the film?

By far the hardest challenge was re-writing the script as a feature film. I saw myself as a director, not a writer. I felt that my project had most in common with feature documentaries so I was watching as many of these as I could get my hands on. I wrote the first draft in Polish, so then we had to get it translated, which was expensive and time consuming, so seeing as we were going to shoot the film in English I decided I would write future drafts in English. So at this point I drafted in the help of Hugh and co-opted him as my co-writer.

How did you choose which part of Vincent's life to focus on?

I wrote many stories: stories taken from his life; stories that started from particular paintings; stories exclusively from his Dutch period; stories when he was deep in the bohemia of Mountmartre in Paris. But the first concrete script that emerged was set during his last days. This resonated, and also I loved the paintings involved, and the fact they included paintings of people who he had regular contact with at the end: the mecurial Dr Gachet; his mysterious daughter, Marguerite Gachet, painted three times, yet her face always concealed; and the spirited daughter of the owner of the Inn where Vincent died, Adeline Ravoux.

Why did you choose to include the flashback scenes in Black and White style?

There were two main reasons. Firstly we thought that it would be too much for audiences to have Vincent's intensive colour for ninety minutes. The fact that we structured the film with a lot of flashbacks, meant we had the opportunity to introduce a different style for these sections. Secondly, we didn't want to make up Vincent paintings that didn't exist. Most of the flashbacks involve Vincent's in life situations that he didn't paint, so if we did them in Vincent style we would be imagining from scratch how Vincent might have painted those scenes, which we felt was straying too far from his work. The reason we chose black and white was because a lot of our research involved sourcing black and white

photographs from the era, and these inspired our approach to the painted style of the flashbacks.

Why the title 'Loving Vincent'?

Several reasons. This project has been a labour of love. I've worked on it a total of 7 years full time, my love of Vincent's work, his letters and my respect for his struggle sustained me through those 7 years. And it wasn't just me that had to love Vincent. Our team of painters were painstakingly painting 65,000 frames of oil painting, spending up to 10 days painting a second of film, moving each brush-stroke frame by frame. That takes a lot of commitment, a lot of respect for his work. Thirdly it is a reference to how he often signs off his letters to his brother 'Your loving Vincent'. And perhaps most importantly we only decided to take the risk of making the world's first fully painted feature film because of how much people around the world are already loving Vincent. I hope this film will inspire people to find out more about Vincent, read his letters, see his paintings in the flesh. I hope I will have, in some small way, helped introduce Vincent to more people. I think he deserved that. I want everyone to be Loving Vincent!

Hugh Welchman – co-Writer, co-Director and Producer, BreakThru Films

Why did you want to make a film about Van Gogh?

Vincent's popularity has been growing ever since his death, and his influence is bigger now than at any other time. His paintings seem to speak directly to people, even people who have little or no interest in painting. He was a down-and-out who had failed at several professions by age 28, and out of this position of despair he started working as an artist, he picked up a paintbrush for the first time at 28 and 10 years later was a genius of art. In 10 years he willed himself through incredible hard work to give a body of work to the world which has been emotionally uplifting and consoling people ever since. We felt that the story of Vincent can only really be properly emotionally told if it is intimately connected to his paintings, and in our case we use the medium of paint, and his paintings to form the very fabric of the world of our film.

How did you choose which Van Gogh paintings to feature?

We wanted to use his mature style, so we set the film in Arles and Auvers, and briefly in Paris too. We chose portraits of people who were close to him at crucial points during this time: Postman Roulin; Lt Millet; Dr Gachet; Margaret Gachet; Pere Tanguy; Adeline Ravoux, alongside interiors and landscapes from these places. We tried to include as many of his best known paintings as possible; in all we feature over 130 of his paintings.

How did you prepare for making a film about Van Gogh?

We had read around 40 different publications about Vincent: biographies, academic, essays and fictional works. Over 4 years we visited 19 museums in 6 countries to view around 400 Van Gogh paintings. We also watched the major feature film and documentary productions about his life and interviewed experts at the Van Gogh Museum.

Why did you decide to shoot with real actors?

One reason was creative, and a second was practical. The creative reason was that Vincent worked from real people when he did his portraits, and wanted to convey the emotion of the real person in front of them. Likewise we wanted to have real people in front of us, and feel their emotion. Conveying real human on human faces has always been a challenge

for animation, that is why the majority of the great animation films are about non-human characters or very simplified and cartoony human characters. The practical reason is that by shooting live action with actors we could create material in days that would take months in animation. However we weren't convinced if the technique would work until we did our concept trailer. When we saw the results of our first rough low budget test I knew we were onto something.

What were the biggest challenges on the project?

Getting people to believe it was possible- it wasn't easy to find the right partners, most film funding specialists were too cautious to risk being part of something so new. Thankfully we found some special and courageous individuals who believed in us, and believed that we could hand-paint 65,000 individual frames on canvas at the size of 103cm by 60cm. We were, without a doubt, coming up with the slowest method of making a feature film ever devised, so I can understand why some people had their doubts, as to whether we could do it.

Douglas Booth

Why did you want to make Loving Vincent?

Hugh and Dorota showed me a short video they had made already of some painting animation and it completely took my breath away. It was the most unique thing that had been put in front of me in a long time, so I was on board straight away.

What did you think about the character you had to play, Armand Roulin?

One of the reasons I was drawn to the role is because my mother is a painter, so I was often surrounded by paintings. This almost mirrors Armand's story in the film, because his father loved Van Gogh and loved painting and that was why he was sent on this journey in the film, and this is also why I got sent on this journey, because I love my mother's paintings and both of us (me and Armand) fell in love with Van Gogh's work and his character.

Was it the story of Van Gogh or his paintings which captivated you?

To start with I didn't know much about Van Gogh. But through the film I learnt more about the man behind the paintings, and suddenly the paintings came alive for me. He was one of the first painters that really started painting with emotion, and that was really fascinating for me to discover.

How was the filming experience?

I shot for two weeks, and the painters worked for 2 years. My process was not rushed, we spent our time but it was very quick and the painters very long. We shot 60 minutes of film in two weeks and my character is in every single scene, interacting with every character so I had to lock myself in a room to learn my lines each night. It was an amazing whirlwind of filmmaking experience working with a cast of such incredible actors.

How did you feel seeing the painters at work?

Normally you shoot a film and that's the final product. Here they are adding a layer of magic on top of everything I did which is incredible and special to see - I'm sharing my performance with another artist, a painter, we are both performing at the same time,

almost working in tandem. I really enjoyed watching this film come to life. Normally you shoot the film and it drops down behind an iron curtain while the executives argue about it, but with this film it is purely just about the art and making it as beautiful and true to Vincent as possible. A lot of people have put in a lot of years of their life and are fully invested in the film purely because they like art and they love Vincent. It's amazing to see such a passion project come to life.

Saoirse Ronan

What did you know about Van Gogh before you've signed up to do this project?

I knew a little bit, obviously I knew that he was very influential when his paintings were eventually discovered. I've learnt a lot from the script, I have to say, to see an intimate side to an artist, a painter, is always really interesting, especially when it's someone who is long gone. It's lovely to learn more about him as a character, because beside "The Starry Night" I didn't know tons of stuff about him. I've got all of this in my head now [pointing at Van Gogh biography], I feel like a little encyclopaedia.

And what did you know about "Loving Vincent" before you've signed up?

I knew that the concept was new and that it was something that hadn't been done before! That's why I wanted to become a part of it, I was really interested to see what the process was going to look like. I knew we we're all going to be painted in these Van Gogh paintings. I'm really excited about this!

Any favourite paintings of Van Gogh?

Apart from this one of Marguerite Gachet, something like "The Starry Night" is so mysterious, there's a simplicity to them, which I really love. With that painting and knowing a little bit more about him now, his character and those dark places that he could find himself in, I think that painting resonates with me more now.

How was it to take a first step to become one of the Vincent van Gogh's paintings?

It was great! I always like when this technical side of the film meets the artistic side and this time the team managed to balance it perfectly.

Eleanor Tomlinson

Before joining the Loving Vincent team, what did you think the production will look like?

I had absolutely no idea what to expect on joining "Loving Vincent"! I was amazed and excited to be a part of the project that's the very first attempt to do something – for every one of us it's the first fully painted film. I was amazingly impressed when I came here – I had no idea that it's going to be on this scale, we're working on this huge green screen which you normally see in the American multimillion dollar film. It was a pleasure to work with Hugh and Dorota – they have such control over the set, such a vision of everything!

And what did you know about Van Gogh himself?

I knew very little about him, only things I have learnt in school as a kid... I knew about his ear – probably the most famous thing? But I had absolutely no idea about him surprisingly killing himself, or that there was ever any question around how he died. It's been fascinating to explore all of these in the script and also to read different accounts from the different characters!

So Eleanor, now that you've been working on "Loving Vincent", do you have your favourite painting?

I think it's "Wheatfield with Crows". There's something incredibly dark in this one, which I really like.

Chris O'Dowd

So, what did you know about Vincent van Gogh before this film?

Not much, but I feel like I know even less now! I knew some of his paintings, I knew that he was a troubled soul, a little bit about his time in Brixton – after seeing a play about this at London's National Theatre...

And what did you know about this film before you've signed up for it?

Nothing! But I saw a little bit of the footage from what's been made here and I thought "I have never seen something like this before", so I found it incredibly interesting! If only I knew about this beard I have to wear... [laugh]

What's your favourite Vincent's painting?

I love "The Starry Night", I feel like I had it in some wall in my childhood, but now I have my new favourite one and it's "Postman Roulin". He almost looks like one of those old-time croquet players.

What did it feel like to bring Vincent's painting to life?

That's interesting, because if you're in the middle of it, you don't necessary feel like you're doing it. That's probably something I'll feel proud of later, because right now, we're working in this giant bank of green! And for me it's almost something the least artistic you might do actually – standing in front of the green box. All of the magic is to paint it now, to make it art.

Statement from Axel Rüger, Director Van Gogh Museum Amsterdam

The Van Gogh Museum's mission is to make the life and work of Vincent van Gogh and the art of his time accessible to as many people as possible in order to enrich and inspire them. We applaud innovative approaches to reaching Vincent's fans all over the world, and are therefore very happy with Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman's cinematic masterpiece *Loving Vincent*, the first ever fully painted feature film.

Loving Vincent is the culmination of years of dedication and hard work, and the Van Gogh Museum has supported the project since 2014. We have drawn on our extensive expertise to provide assistance throughout the research and development phases. The first 20 minutes of the film were screened as a sneak preview in our museum, after which visitors had the opportunity to put their questions to the film-makers. We are now focusing on cross-promotion of *Loving Vincent* in the Netherlands, as well as offering support to allow the film to flourish on the world stage.

The Van Gogh Museum firmly believes that *Loving Vincent* will contribute to further raising public awareness of Vincent van Gogh's work, his letters, and his turbulent life. As part of our educational programme, we will also be exploring new forms of collaboration with film-makers.