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## VINCENT: A TROUBLED LIFE, AN ARTISTIC INFLUENCE

The life of Vincent Van Gogh is as fascinating and capturing as his paintings are textured and influential. Living with a troubled mind, his paintings are said to be the only real insight to the tormented, yet creative thoughts that led to the such revolutionary pieces. It is this irony and this psychological suffering that has now been recreated and presented through movement and dance. This interpretation is a performance bought to the stage by **Lissajane Dance**, and is a dark representation of an artist that has been referred to as both a genius and a mad man. 'Vincent' is an exploration that can be enjoyed by both art and dance lovers alike.

Showing at the Odeon Theatre Norwood, as part of the Adelaide Fringe, 'Vincent' follows the many symbolic relationships within the artist's life and mind. The tug-of-war between his sanity and his declining psychological health is represented through the relationship and letters between Gogh and his more respectable brother, Theo. Through movement and use of intense expression, these complicated strings are undeniably and clearly portrayed, with upmost credit to the talented dancing cast.

Choreographer, **Melissa Lanham**, says she has been a fan of Gogh since seeing his 'Sunflower' exhibition in London, sparking an ongoing fascination with his mind and life that led to the inspiration for this show.

'This work is my interpretation of how I see the inner workings of his mind,' says Lanham. 'All of the dialogue in this performance is taken directly from the letters written between the brothers themselves over their lives.'

While the contemporary choreography and the quality of the cast is a delight for anyone interested in this area of performance, applause really needs to be given to the lighting designer, **Phil Lethlean**, who can be credited for visually enhancing this performance. Through crafty use of lighting and props, the stage transforms into a freakish insight to the dark and twisted mind of its subject. Lighting is also important when it comes to the intricate use of costumes and makeup, with all of these components coming together to portray the style and textures famous to Gogh's work. These elements not only enhance the performance, but also give it an exciting and expressive visual appeal that can be enjoyed by anyone, even those not necessarily attracted by contemporary dance.

Conveying not only the life and mind of Gogh, but also his famous brush strokes, textures and style, 'Vincent' can be seen as an artistic piece brought to life through dance and contemporary movement. Mad man or genius? Troubled? Or just ahead of his time? 'Vincent' does not answer any of these questions. Instead, it leaves the artist's story ambiguous, and the audience with newfound questions and speculations about the influential life and works of Vincent Van Gogh.

'Vincent' is showing at the Odeon Theatre, Norwood from 9th March - 14th March 2016.