

Vincent's Canvases

Aldo Rafael Forte

- I. Dance Hall in Arles***
- II. Irises***
- III. Self Portrait with Bandaged Ear***

Vincent's Canvases is a major work for band in the form of three contrasting tone pictures inspired by three paintings of Vincent Van Gogh. The composition was commissioned by and is dedicated to the South Effingham High School Band, Mr. Sean McBride, Director. Sean has performed two of my major works with his band. I am very impressed with his artistry and musicianship and was thus thrilled when he asked me to compose this work. The composition was written specifically to be premiered at the 2008 Jan. Fest at the University of Georgia on January 18, 2008.

Vincent's Canvases is approximately 11 minutes in duration and is scored for standard American concert band instrumentation. The work opens with ***I. Dance Hall in Arles*** depicting a rare painting of Van Gogh's of a crowd of people dancing. The music, like the painting, features lots of motion and contrasts swing elements with Latin overtones while keeping a constant tempo. The second movement, ***II. Irises***, is the slow and pretty movement of the set and features some lush polytonalities and expressive melodies which symbolize the beauty of the irises series of paintings by the Dutch master. The final movement, ***III. Self Portrait with Bandaged Ear***, begins with a slow dramatic introduction which builds to a tense chord after which we are thrown into a frantic tempo for the remainder of the movement. The music is restless, continuously juxtaposing different motifs and harmonic systems, symbolizing Van Gogh's mental state when he cut off part of his ear.

Special thanks to Sean McBride and the South Effingham High School Band for making this work come to life in such a fantastic way. What a great group!!!!

Aldo Rafael Forte
Composer
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