

Old Dominion University

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Poetry Slam 2021

Undergraduate Student Events


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4-2021

### Van Gogh

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“Van Gogh”

One of the worst lies  
I have ever been told  
Is that Van Gogh ate yellow paint  
To bring happiness to his soul  
If the story is true- the reason isn't so quaint  
The truth of the matter is he wanted to die.

At some point the depressed  
Were sick of being trivialized.  
So they made their suffering look pretty  
And now it is glamorized.  
Now their art is open for the world to see  
But the inspiration behind it still gets dismissed.

Sylvia Plath was seriously hurting  
Critics didn't notice until publishing *Ariel*  
Too little, too late  
Two years after her burial  
An unnecessary loss of a talent so great  
Why didn't we realize before she took her life at thirty?

They love works about death  
Somehow managing to focus only on the beauty  
And ignore all of the pain  
It couldn't have been clearer when Emily  
Said she felt a funeral in her brain  
But nobody knew up to her very last breath.

It's easy to romanticize darkness  
If you've only known light  
You won't understand  
Can't relate to their plight  
It's like drowning in quicksand  
To ignore it is heartless.

They've turned depression into another aesthetic  
Metaphors help keep it vague  
Keep the suffering disguised  
It's been everything from grey skies to the plague  
But remember the darkness is not all we have to advertise  
Joy can be just- if not more- poetic.