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SPREADING THE WORD

UNRAVELLED where art, music and science intersect. Global Brain Health Institute / UC San Francisco / Trinity College Dublin, Ireland present the virtual premiere of this new drama by Jake Broder.

Based on true events and incorporating research and interviews conducted by Broder as a Hellman Visiting Artist at UCSF's Memory and Aging Center, *UnRavelled* explores the fascinating connection between the work of Canadian painter Anne Adams (1940–2007) and French composer Maurice Ravel (1875–1937), both of whom suffered from the same rare brain disease.

According to Memory and Aging Center director and GBHI co-director Dr. Bruce Miller, “Ravel and Dr. Adams were in the early stages of primary progressive aphasia, a form of frontotemporal dementia, when they were working. The disease apparently altered circuits in their brains, changing the connections between the front and back parts and resulting in a torrent of creativity.”

Directed by Nike Doukas, Lucy Davenport stars as Adams, a renowned scientist, who, in her fifties and at the height of her career, lost interest in science and began painting. Starting out with simple works — houses, strawberries — Adams became suddenly, inexplicably obsessed by Ravel's famous symphonic masterpiece, *Boléro*, and began to paint in a wildly different style. The result was Adams' most famous work, “Unravelling Boléro,” a virtuosic painting of brilliant design and color, in which she transcribed Ravel's music bar by bar.

Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle award-winning actor Rob Nagle stars as Anne's husband, Robert, who, in his attempt to understand and navigate Anne's radically changing sense of self, eventually brought her to see Dr. Miller, portrayed in the play by Obie award-winning actor Leo Marks.

LA Weekly award winner Conor Duffy plays Ravel, whose one-movement orchestral piece, composed as a ballet for Russian dancer Ida Rubinstein (played by Melissa Greenspan became his most famous work — in spite of the fact that it, too, was a radical departure in style for the composer.

Also in the cast, providing narration, is Michael Lanahan.

“The science is fascinating — the idea that this rare form of dementia allowed Anne to experience music so vividly that she felt compelled to begin painting pictures of her auditory experience — but the real themes of the play revolve around identity and love,” says Doukas. “The beauty of the writing, the humanism paired with science, and the wonderful cast are what make this project so compelling.”

The creative team for *UnRavelled* includes production designer Corwin Evans, sound designer Jeff Gardner and production coordinator Bree Pavey.

Two live seminars featuring experts in the field — including Dr. Miller — will take place on Thursday, February. 25, immediately following the initial 4 p.m. PT / 7 p.m. ET stream; and Wednesday, March 3 immediately following the stream beginning at 9 a.m. PT / 12 p.m. ET / 5 p.m. GMT.

***UnRavelled* will remain available to view, free and on demand, through March 31.**

The Global Brain Health Institute is a leader in the global community dedicated to protecting the world’s aging populations from threats to brain health. GBHI works to reduce the scale and impact of dementia in three ways: by training and connecting the next generation of leaders in brain health through the Atlantic Fellows for Equity in Brain Health program; by collaborating in expanding preventions and interventions; and by sharing knowledge and engaging in advocacy. GBHI strives to improve brain health for populations across the world, reaching into local communities and across our global network. GBHI brings together a powerful mix of disciplines, professions, backgrounds, skills, perspectives, and approaches to develop new science-based solutions. GBHI focuses on working compassionately with all people including those in vulnerable and under-served populations to improve outcomes and promote dignity for all people.