



**Charismatic:** Vincent Fantauzzo with his painting of Heath Ledger.

## Portrait of the actor

THE paint was barely dry on his portrait when actor Heath Ledger was pronounced dead.

Melbourne artist Vincent Fantauzzo had been putting the finishing touches on his painting of the star at his Docklands studio on Tuesday.

A day later, his subject was found dead in his New York apartment.

Fantauzzo painted Ledger with the intention of entering the portrait in the Archibald Prize this

year. But the work got an early showing yesterday with the approval of the Ledger family.

Ledger sat for Fantauzzo on his last visit to Perth in December.

The painting depicts the famously private actor in three separate images.

Fantauzzo said he felt privileged to have worked with Ledger.

"Heath was a very private person, which is one of the reasons I was so honoured that he allowed

me to paint him," the artist said.

"He was so easy and professional to work with. He didn't need any direction, (he was) absolutely focused. Once done, he was back to his usual charismatic self."

Ledger's friend, hip hop artist N'fa, told *Channel Ten News* the actor couldn't wait to see the finished work. "This is the way he always was. He was always a thought ahead," N'fa said.