

Db from the middle ages through the renaissance



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The first artwork that the group chose was created by Botticelli. It is a painting entitled "The Last Communion of Saint Jerome" which was created in early 1490's and based on some customs and traditions, it was said that the saint depicted in the painting passed away in the monastery which is near Bethlehem. In the painting, several objects can be observed. A bed with plant and crucifix with Jesus Christ can be observed in the middle of the painting, implying that the communion was done inside Saint Jerome's room. Two windows and the roof can be observed, giving more emphasis that the communion was indeed done inside a room.

The communion, done inside Saint Jerome's room may imply that Saint Jerome is unable to go to church for a regular communion. Two men, wearing brown robes further supports this implication as they hold Saint Jerome, who is unable to support himself. Two altar boys hold candle holders with lighted candles. They create a church atmosphere and a feeling of solemnity inside Saint Jerome's room. St. Jerome is wearing a white robe and is held on a white cloth, such objects may signify St. Jerome's purity and holiness. It may be a symbol of St. Jerome's modest life, of St. Jerome's good deeds.

A small plate and communal bread is being held by St. Eusebius' left and right hand, respectively. He gives St. Jerome's last communion and the moment is captured well by Botticelli in this painting. One wall of the room, more specifically the hut, is removed by Botticelli and it seems that the event is performed inside a bare room. Wickerwork can also be observed to be covering the hut. The observer seems as if he is part of such momentous event. Above the painting, there is an image of angels around God who is holding Jesus Christ, offering Christ help or support on carrying the cross.

This particular image may signify that even if St. Jerome is in pain or in a condition which seems really difficult, God will always be there to support him, just like what God did to Jesus Christ. The angels seem to be rejoicing for God and Christ are again together, which may also be the case after St. Jerome passes away and goes to heaven. The lines used in the painting are not that distinct and the brush stroke is not that heavy. Texture of the painting is course to slightly fine where most details are portrayed using shapes. Shapes are important part of the painting.

Also, the shapes are more distinct than the lines. The exterior shape of the painting, measuring 13 ? x 10 inches, is similar to a long rectangle which curves at the top. There is a subtle interaction of shapes and colors used in the artwork. The intensity of the colors used is not too strong as to overwhelm the symbolism depicted by the artwork. The painting is done though the use of oil as medium. As such, some resulting strokes, lines, colors or texture in some parts of the painting are slightly smooth. There is no particular or distinct pattern used by Botticelli in the painting.

There is balance in the colors used, as the intensity of the light is in equilibrium with the dark. There is also balance in the colors used; the white and brown robe of the altar boys on the left is paralleled by the white and brown robe of St. Jerome and the two men on the right, respectively. There is an almost perfect symmetry observed in the hut, crucifix and the plants. There is also balanced observed through the characters in the painting; two altar boys on the left, two men on the right, two saints in the middle.

The altar boys, candles and candleholders, crucifix and appropriate robe of St. Eusebius give emphasis to a church atmosphere. Two men supporting St. Jerome and God supporting Jesus Christ gives emphasis on pain and being able to rely on someone's help. There is solemnity observed in the painting and also, there is harmony between lines, colors, and shapes From the painting, Botticelli seems to be showing us the holiness and solemnity of a communion. The artist also shows that there is a haven waiting for us after we pass away; and this is on God's hands. For me, this artwork created by Botticelli is a masterpiece, having the capability to move observers, able to give the observers hope and strengthen one's faith.

The painting may mean that we don't have to falter in our chosen path, in our beliefs and religion. There is hope, and righteousness pays off. It is a good and important artwork for me, and it would be best to display it in a museum rather in my home. It is not created to move one pebble; it was made to mountains. I was moved upon looking the painting, and it would be best if such experience I got from the painting is also received by others. The second artwork that the group chose was created by Leonardo da Vinci.

It is a painting entitled " Ginevra de' Benci" which was created between 1474 and 1480, though it is generally given that the painting was created in 1474. Such date was proposed for it was in 1474 that the sitter at the age of 16 was married to Luigi Niccolini. The date, 1474-1480 was proposed because during the creation of the artwork, Bernardo Bembo, who was identified to be a possible patron, was the Venetian Ambassador to Florence also in 1474 up to 1476. He became the Venetian Ambassador again in

1478-1480. Bernardo Bembo and Ginevra was said to have a relationship, even if they were both married to other individuals.

Though, during that time, this relationship was accepted. A horizon between that which seems to be a mountain side or an elevated plane and the sky can be observed in the right background, along with some trees and a river or a small body of water. Trees are generally, Ginevra's background in the painting. More specifically, a juniper tree can be observed behind Ginevra, which is translated in Italian word as " ginepro. " Ginepro may have been a symbolized pun on Ginevra's name. Furthermore, in Renaissance, the juniper tree was used as a symbol for chastity; thus may have implied Ginevra's status as a sensitive virgin woman.

The lines in the painting are distinct, showing every detail of Ginevra's face and the shapes of the trees behind her. Even the horizon and shadows of trees on the body of water can be observed in the painting due to the use of slightly heavy brush strokes. The rising and falling curls of Ginevra's hair also show that Leonardo da Vinci used distinct lines. The texture of the background is slightly rough to smooth, whereas the texture of the painting observed through Ginevra is smooth. The texture of the painting as observed through her dress is also smooth. The exterior shape of the painting is that of a rectangle.

Ginevra's eyes are diamond-shaped whereas her face is almost round with edges on her chin. Dark colors are dominant in comparison with the light color. Ginevra's flesh is pale, in contrast with the dark background. Also, her hair color is almost similar to the leaves of the juniper tree. The painting was

created using oil on wood which measures 38.5 x 36.7 inches. The painting seems to be crowded more in the left side as compared to the right side, though no other particular pattern aside from the distinct lines, and the model's smile used or portrayed by the artist can be identified in the painting.

Imbalance is observed in the painting, as the left part of the painting seems to be more crowded as compared to the left part or side of the painting. Furthermore, Ginevra seems to be leaning more on the left, as if her whole weight is on the left side of the painting. There is good contrast in the picture, as color intensities vary nicely. This is observed from the tree on the right side of the painting and its reflection on the waters. The sky also shows good contrast, somewhat showing a time period of when the painting was created.

Ginevra's youth and beauty is emphasized in the smoothness of her skin, as portrayed by the artist through the painting's smooth texture. The juniper tree might have been used by the author to add emphasis on Ginevra's character. This artwork created by Leonardo da Vinci shows a woman who is not smiling, somewhat may be associated with his painting entitled "Mona Lisa". From the artwork, it's as if the model is uneasy; or is too bashful to express her self. The artist might have wanted to show the reserved or shy-typed Ginevra to the public.

This is emphasized by the use of juniper tree as background for the model, which is a symbol for chastity. I do not like this artwork much, for the model seemed aloof. The painting doesn't seem to be "friendly" enough to the

observer's eyes. Though, with the distinct, clear, smooth and the image of Ginevra well captured by Leonardo da Vinci, I can say that this painting is really good. I'd rather put this painting on the museum than in my home for it deserves a better appreciation; more understanding from different points of views. I think that the model's attitude or feelings is hidden in those lips, eyes and eyebrows of her.

It's somewhat intriguing to know why she felt aloof, or somewhat similar to being cold. The third artwork that the group chose was created again by Leonardo da Vinci. This painting is said to be Leonardo's best painting, entitled "Lady with an Ermine" which was created in 1485. It was said that in 1484, Leonardo da Vinci met Cecilia Gallerani in Milan. In that time, Gallerani was only 17 years old and was Duke Lodovico Sforza's mistress. Cecilia Gallerani can be observed to be holding a white ermine. The ermine in this painting plays a significant role in the interpretation of the painting.

Through the ermine, several interpretations can also be found. During those times, ermines were said to be symbols of aristocracy or nobility which was connected with Cecilia. Her black jewelry and extravagant hairdo emphasizes a noble status and certain decency. On the other hand, the white ermine may have been a symbol for purity and virginity, which debunks the story that she is the duke's mistress. Strictly speaking, the animal Cecilia Gallerani is holding is not an ermine but a white ferret. The lines in the painting are distinct, and the texture of the painting is smooth.

The exterior shape of the painting is that of a rectangle, and interior shapes are distinct in the painting. There is a good interplay of colors and shapes in

the painting, as seen in the dress of Cecilia Gallerani. The painting is done using oil on a wood panel, its form is a 54 x 39 cm rectangle. Like that of the other paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, such as the Mona Lisa and Ginevra de' Benci's portrait, the distinct lines and the " smile" or expression on the face of the model's are Leonardo's pattern on painting female models. The balance is almost good, though the black background somewhat overwhelms the model.

There is low contrast, especially in the colors used in the painting. There is a feeling of innocence, and calmness slightly tainted with worries observed in the painting. There is good harmony between the colors on the model; her flesh, the ermine and her clothes. The painting gives a feeling as if the ermine is moving towards the audience or observers. The proportion in the painting is slightly good. It seems that Leonardo da Vinci, again, just like his other paintings of female models, wanted to show the character and the values of the models.

Again, their " smiles" seems intriguing, giving the observers a feeling to look more on the painting, and to look beyond the painting. The ermine, more particularly, gives observers a feeling to look for other symbolisms. I do like this painting and I think it's really important for it gave or became the standard for Leonardo da Vinci's other paintings. I'd love to place this artwork at home, rather in the museum. It shows a lot of intriguing points of views and I feel like I'd want to give more time in looking at it. Placing or displaying it at home would give me the time that I would need to look beyond what's usual.