

Michelangelo: sistine chapel



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Michelangelo: The Sistine Chapel The Sistine Chapel is a chapel in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican City. It is one of the most famous and memorable pieces of art in the history of art. This beautiful piece of art history took a little over four years to complete. He started this project in July of 1508 and finished in October of 1512. Pope Julius II had requested Michelangelo paint the ceiling in the chapel. The Pope was strong-minded that Rome should be renovated to show its prior exaltation.

He was on a mission to show this by painting the ceiling of the chapel and he wanted the very best painter complete it, which he believed to be Michelangelo. Julius II assumed that if he had the ceiling painted that it would glorify his name and he would become more popular with the people under him. Pope Julius II wanted to make sure that every job he did for the Vatican City was more impressive than Pope Alexander VI, which was Julius's rival. The ceiling to this day is 131 feet long by 43 feet wide which means that Michelangelo painted roughly 5, 000 square feet of the ceiling.

There were questions such as why was Michelangelo painting when he was a sculptor and the answer was that the Pope believed he would be the best for the job, even though that Michelangelo had only painted one other painting in his career because he worked mostly with sculptures. The start to this painting was slow simply because Angelo had never painted frescoes before. Angelo had to learn many new techniques for this painting but once he understood what he was doing his pace of painting sped up quite a bit. (Esaak. Many questions were asked about the painting and about Michelangelo while the painting was going on and many, many years afterwards. There are still questions going on to this day. One questions

asked was why it took four years to paint the ceiling and there were many various reasons as to why this was. There were many setbacks such as mold, which made the painter and some of the others in the building during this time sick, and glum, wet weather often because of the frequent rain that prevented the plaster and molding to dry and stick together.

During the time period of the painting Pope Julius II went off to war, and became close to death at one time. (Katz.) This prevented Michelangelo from getting paid and furthering the painting because, although the entire project and design was his, Angelo did not want to make any decisions without the conformation from Julius. Angelo created this whole design himself, but he did need assistants when it came to completing the project. His assistants did things such as mix paints, rush up and down the ladders, and prepare the plaster he needed for his project.

Angelo trusted very few to let him ever paint the ceiling. There were rare incidents that allowed him to trust someone enough to work on the sky or landscape parts, but they never did more than that. Most people always wondered if he completed the ceiling all by himself and questioned if that was a reason the painting took so long to accomplish. One question that also struck the audience was if Michelangelo painted the Sistine Chapel lying on his back, as most rumors would tell. The answer to this question was no, he did not.

There was a movie made which reenacted the painting of the chapel, and the actor in that movie did lie on his back to create a more dramatic effect of how challenging the painting was. Angelo actually assembled a scaffolding

system, which is a temporary structure for holding workers and materials during the production or decoration of a building mostly used by painters. The one he created himself was sturdy enough to hold himself, workers, and materials needed to complete his project but was higher up because there was always a chance it couldn't hold the weight up. Katz) There were many rumors going around that Angelo had a few misfortunes when it came to his health during the duration of the painting. He had to bend over backwards to paint the ceiling and paint over his head, which was quite a weird, uncomfortable position to be in for the long period of time he was there. This type of position could cause neck and back aches permanently, and cause a burning in one's arms that would not help the pain. Angelo also claimed that this permanently ruined his vision, which led to rumors of him being blind.

Andrew Graham-Dixon, who was the chief art critic for London's Sunday Telegraph said, " He (Angelo) was working on the largest multi-figure compositions of the entire ceiling when the actual fresco plaster itself became infected by a kind of lime mold, which is like a great bloom of fungus, so he had to chip the whole thing back to zero and start again. Eventually he sped up. He got better. " The audience's today question how someone could start off so badly on a project like this, and complete something as magnificent and beautiful as this when they had never painted before, and it end up the way it did and become so popular and famous?

Some people say that most artists are born with talent and started whatever they're good at well; Angelo was good at sculpting, not painting. He had only completed one other painting and the rest of his artwork was sculptures.

Graham-Dixon asked a very inquisitive question that went into great detail of

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the painting. Andrew asks, “ Yet I found myself wondering, why did Michelangelo have God create Adam with a finger? ” (Katz.) This is a type of question that digs further than the questions the general audience would ask simply because he understands art and tries to reveal true meanings behind his findings.

Graham-Dixon wrote a book, which this previous question was asked in, and he also states: “ In other representations, for example, if you look at Ghiberti’s doors in Florence, God raises up Adam with a gesture of his hand. And as I turned over various ideas and theories, I began to see it as the creation of the education of Adam, because that’s the symbolism of the finger. God writes on us with his finger, in certain traditions of theology. In the Jewish tradition, that’s how he writes the tablets of the Ten Commandments for Moses—he sort of lasers them with his finger.

The finger is the conduit through which God’s intelligence, his ideas and his morality seep into Man. And if you look at that painting very closely, you see that God isn’t actually looking at Adam, he’s looking at his own finger, as if to channel his own instructions and thoughts through that finger. ”

Statements and questions like this in the book take up many debates and myths about the Sistine Chapel, like the rumor about Angelo lying on his back to complete the painting when really it was just portrayed that was because of a movie.

Another stimulating testimony made in Andrew Graham-Dixon’s book, Michelangelo and the Sistine Chapel, was a short excerpt from a poem Angelo wrote to his friend trying to be amusing saying, “ My beard toward Heaven, I

feel the back of my brain upon my neck. My loins have penetrated to my paunch...I'm not in a good place, and I'm no painter. " The obvious idea of the ceiling is the principle of humanity's need for Salvation as offered by God through Jesus. This is a visual representation of the need for a strong relationship with God.

When studied by professional researchers and scientists, the picture unravels more interesting details than most would imagine. The entire sections of the painting tell the story from nine scenes that came out of the Book of Genesis. (Sistine) The visual effects of this project portray the idea the God created a perfect world then placed the humankind as part of this perfect world but humanity couldn't handle it and they completed actions that deserved punishments as bad as death and separation from God.

The painting goes on to show the deeper troubles that humanity dug themselves into, and the punishments they endured to show they were becoming a disgrace. It goes on to show God sent their savior, Jesus, to better the world and rid them on their sins. Although most of the painting is linked back to the early church beliefs, the ceiling also has components that express the exact Renaissance thinking that required reconciling Christian theology with the belief of Humanism of the Renaissance. (Sistine.) Angelo was an odd individual in his younger years.

At the age of 17 he began dissecting corpses from the church graveyard. There were reasons to believe that Angelo had secret messages in the painting he completed for Pope Julius II. This was followed by the evidences that Angelo was also a anatomist and not just an artist. Angelo tried to hide

this detail about him by destroying almost all of his anatomical drawings and notes. After many years of study with the evidence Angelo did not get a change to destroy, scientists discovered that his drawings and notes were hidden in the painting of the Sistine Chapel.

In the panel of God Creating Adam was a clearly and easily seen visual of the human brain in the cross section. (Fields.) Scientists guess that Michelangelo surrounded God with a veil representing the human brain to suggest that God was giving Adam not only life, but also supreme human intelligence. (Fields.) In the panel The Separation of Light from Darkness there is more evidence of Angelo having anatomical visuals in his painting. Leading up to God's chest and developing through his throat, there is a clear depiction of a human spinal cord and brain stem that researchers and scientists have discovered.

Some people have come to the understanding or belief that these hidden discoveries are just homage to God. (Fields.) The lighting in the neck of God in one panel showing the clear visual of the brain is questioned because scientists do not understand how one can commit the clumsy act of highlighting the secrets he was trying to keep hidden. There is more that researchers have not discovered yet, but there will be more studying of the painting until what scientists believe to be everything hidden by Angelo is uncovered.

Once the Sistine Chapel was completed Pope Julius II celebrated, and shortly after a few years later he passed away. After his passing, Michelangelo was asked to paint the wall behind the altar; he accepted this request and title

this piece of art The Last Judgment. (Last Judgment.) He started the project in 1536 and finally finished it in 1541. The picture comes out from the center of Christ, and Michelangelo had decided to show the many different saints included in the work holding the instruments of their martyrdom instead of the actual scenes of torture.

Once Michelangelo completed this painting, the new Pope, Pope Paul III, had officially decided that since these paintings were in House of God that the naked people had to be covered with some type of veils, loincloths, or any type of cloth as long as they were not being exposed to the public in this House of God. (Last Judgment.) Angelo had been given an artistic license too not only portray images from the Bible in his paintings, but also in mythology. The genitalia in the fresco was covered in 1564 when Michelangelo passed about by the mannerist artist Daniele da Volterra, when the Council of Trent condemned nudity in religious art.

Some artists have become famous just by using techniques used by Michelangelo and inspire such artists to try to achieve a greatness he has accomplished, and is undertaking today still even though he isn't around anymore. Works Cited Esaak, Shelley. " Michelangelo – The Sistine Chapel Ceiling. " About. com Art History. N. p. , n. d. Web. 20 Sept. 2012. Fields, Douglas R. " Michelangelo Secret Message in the Sistine Chapel: A Juxtaposition of God and the Human Brain | Guest Blog, Scientific American Blog Network. Michelangelo Secret Message in the Sistine Chapel: A Juxtaposition of God and the Human Brain. N. p. , 27 May 2010. Web. 23 Sept. 2012. Katz, Jamie. " Smithsonian. com. " Smithsonian Magazine. N. p. , 10 Apr. 2009. Web. 22 Sept. 2012. " The Last Judgement. Images of a <https://assignbuster.com/michelangelo-sistine-chapel/>

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