

Bassano's last judgment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Last Judgment, by Leandro Bassano 16th century Venetian Artist, religious painting of Christ Finished in 1596, currently residing in the National Museum of Western Art; Tokyo, Japan (Ueno). Visited on 11/2/09 from 10: 15-11: 30 Bassano's The Last Judgment Painted by Leandro Bassano, a 16th century Venetian artist, The Last Judgment is a stunning work of sacred art that takes one's breath away upon first sight. Finished in 1596, the oil painting stands 73 x 51 cm tall and currently resides in the National Museum of Western Art in Tokyo, Japan.

Visiting this piece on a Monday, I had the pleasure of seeing it mostly to myself. Most people walking by stopped to take a brief look at the well lit painting and I couldn't help but wonder if they were Christian or not and whether or not the piece would have had a bigger impact if they were. At first glance it was pretty easy for me to see this piece's relationship to Christianity and the event that it depicts. The painting, to me, appears in 3 sections: the central and most eye drawing section on top, the middle section, and the bottom section.

The top section depicts Jesus of Nazareth basked in a glowing light holding a white flag of salvation while a man, most likely his father God, floats above him. He is surrounded by angels and pure followers of Christ at, what the title suggests, is the last judgment. This section is the brightest and most eye catching part of the painting due to the well played contrasting colors surrounding it. All other parts following this are duller and darker in color and really help to create a glowing light in the darkness effect for this top portion.

The middle section, duller in tone to its predecessor, appears in two parts. The left side portrays people of the church while the right side shows commoners. I felt this section depicted those who were neither tainted nor completely pure; those who were almost in reach of salvation but who could yet still fall. I thought this section, although smallest in portrayal, represented the largest portion of the Christian community as we are often on the path to salvation but can still easily sway.

This middle section was what I believed to be the middle way. As it appears, the top portion of the painting conveys salvation and Christ, while the middle section depicts the church and the people, so all that remains are those in redemption and those who are already damned. This is the bottom and darkest part of the piece. On the left side sits those who can still be saved; the image of angels helping men stand up convey great feelings of regret and redemption.

The right side of the section, the darkest and grimmest part of the painting, depicts devils and demons carrying and torturing the tainted and damned. When I first saw The Last Judgment I was curious as to why the brightest piece was on top and not dead center as it was what drew my eye first and foremost; however a quick look at the other sections of the painting quickly draws one to the conclusion of an order with heaven on top, earth in the middle, and hell down below.

The colors and style of the painting resemble that of other renaissance pieces surrounding it and really does well in drawing one back in time; giving the viewer a wonderful feel of the Christian religion. Overall this was an

amazing piece depicting a holy and scared event in the Christian religion.

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