

The Passion of the Christ in Word and in Art

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The Last Supper

- Narrative of the Last Supper is found in:
 - All four canonical Gospels
 - The 1st Letter to the Corinthians
- The narratives differ somewhat due to the audience
 - Each Evangelist was speaking to a unique group of believers
 - Different actions are more or less important to each group
- Matthew, speaking to Jewish converts stresses Jewish customs, laws and scripture
- Luke, speaking to Gentile converts omits a lot of the details about Jewish customs

The Last Supper

Scripture	Beginning	Conclusion
Matthew	MT 26:17	MT 26:29
Mark	MK 14:12	MK 14:25
Luke	LK 22:7	LK 22:20
John	JN 13:1	JN 13:30 (17:26)
1 st Corinthians	11:23	11:25

The Last Supper

- So we may ask, exactly what happened at the Last Supper?
 - The witnesses to the event never wrote about it
 - Oral tradition and Church practice were later committed to the Gospels (15-20 years after 1 Cor)
- Luke's account (Lk 22:14-20) is the closest to Paul's in his 1st letter to the Corinthians
- Mark and Matthew
 - Jewish meal ritual is closely followed
 - Preparations are made

The Last Supper

- Every particle of leaven in the house is destroyed – reminder of the flight from Egypt – no time to bake with leaven
- The Passover lamb would be slaughtered at the temple
- Four other things would be on the table:
 1. Bowl of salt water – tears when in slavery in Egypt
 2. Bitter herbs – horseradish, chicory, endive, horehound, etc., - the bitterness of slavery
 3. Charosheth – a paste of apples, dates, pomegranates and nuts – reminder of making bricks in Egypt
 4. Four cups of wine – the four promises in Exodus (6:6-7) - Free you from slavery, redeem you with arm and mighty acts, take you as my people, and I will be your God

Passover and Last Supper

- A Jewish, festive meal
 - Wine is made ready and each drinks in turn (first cup)
 - This is accompanied by a prayer – God is blessed for having given to us “the fruit of the vine”
 - The meal in a full sense begins when the father of the family breaks the loaf of bread that will be distributed to the guests and as he does so, says a suitable prayer
 - When the meal is over, he takes another cup of wine (cup of blessing) and says a longer prayer over it and that cup is shared
- Matthew’s and Mark’s accounts differ from Luke’s – most likely due to Luke’s Gentile audience

Passover and Last Supper

- There is a structure to the Last Supper which has become the practice of the Church in the Eucharist
- The same structure marks all of the accounts:
 1. Jesus *took* bread, then a cup of wine
 2. He *gave thanks*, or pronounced a blessing
 3. He *broke* the bread
 4. He *gave* the bread and cup to his disciples
- All four are linked and important – they also appear in the same order in the multiplication of the loaves

The Last Supper

Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Preparations	Preparations	Preparations	Supper
Predict Betrayal	Predict Betrayal	Supper	Washing of Feet
Institution of Eucharist	Institution of Eucharist	Institution of Eucharist	Predict Betrayal
Peter's Denial Predicted	Peter's Denial Predicted	Predict Betrayal	Judas Leaves
Depart	Depart	Who is Greatest	Farewell Discourses
		Peter's Denial Predicted	Depart
		Depart	

The Last Supper

- Mark and Matthew
 - Jewish meal ritual is closely followed
 - Preparations are made
 - Stress on *"eating"* and *"eating with me"*
 - MT – While they were eating (26:21), As they were eating (26:26)
 - MK – While at table eating (14:18), As they were eating (14:22)
- Treachery foretold
 - MT – Someone who has dipped his hand into the dish with me will betray me (26:24)
 - MK – It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping into the same dish with me (14:21)

The Last Supper

- Luke
 - Clearly intended to refer to the Passover meal
 - There are two cups - First cup of the meal then cup of blessing
 - The narrative roots the Eucharist into the celebration of the Last Supper
 - The account (and in MT-MK) would have been influenced by the *emerging* liturgical practice
 - We don't exactly know what steps occurred between the Last Supper and the Lord's Supper (the Mass)

The Last Supper

■ John

- Notably, John completely omits the institution of the Eucharist
- The Washing of the Feet only appears in John's Gospel
- John does include a reference to dipping bread in the dish – It is the one whom I give the piece of bread that I dipped in the dish (13:26)
- The discourses are long and are given as instruction for the faithful after the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus
- John's Gospel is for a more mature, growing and persecuted group of believers

The Last Supper

- Matthew and Mark
 - Jewish ritual meal – following the customs of the day
 - The betrayer is clearly identified
 - The institution of the Eucharist takes place
 - Mark – Jesus is not clearly in charge – “they all drank”
 - Matthew – Jesus is in charge - “take and drink”
- Luke
 - References to a Jewish ritual meal – double cup, etc. (LK 22:14-20)
 - Command to celebrate the Eucharist in remembrance – this is the only Gospel with that command
 - Argument about who is the greatest – command to serve

The Last Supper

- John
 - *Before* the festival of Passover – others are at Passover
 - While at supper Jesus washes the feet of the Apostles
 - Focus is on Christian service and sacrifice
 - Commandment to “love one another” (13:34)
- I Corinthians
 - Straightforward recounting of the Last Supper as related in the Synoptic Gospels
 - Paul was criticizing the Corinthians – they were not sharing with one another – some were left out – there were divisions in the community

Last Supper

- Like the infancy narratives we tend to lump the accounts together
- The meaning of each account is important and taken together spiritually are important
 - Our faith is rooted in Jewish culture and tradition
 - The Eucharist was instituted by Jesus himself
 - The Priesthood was instituted by Jesus
 - Service, sacrifice and love of all are commands from Jesus
 - Raising ones' self to be equal to God is a betrayal



Looking at Religious Art based on the Gospels

Paintings of The Last Supper
by
Leonardo da Vinci
and
Jacopo Tintoretto

Leonardo da Vinci



Jacopo Tintoretto



The Four Step Art Critique Process

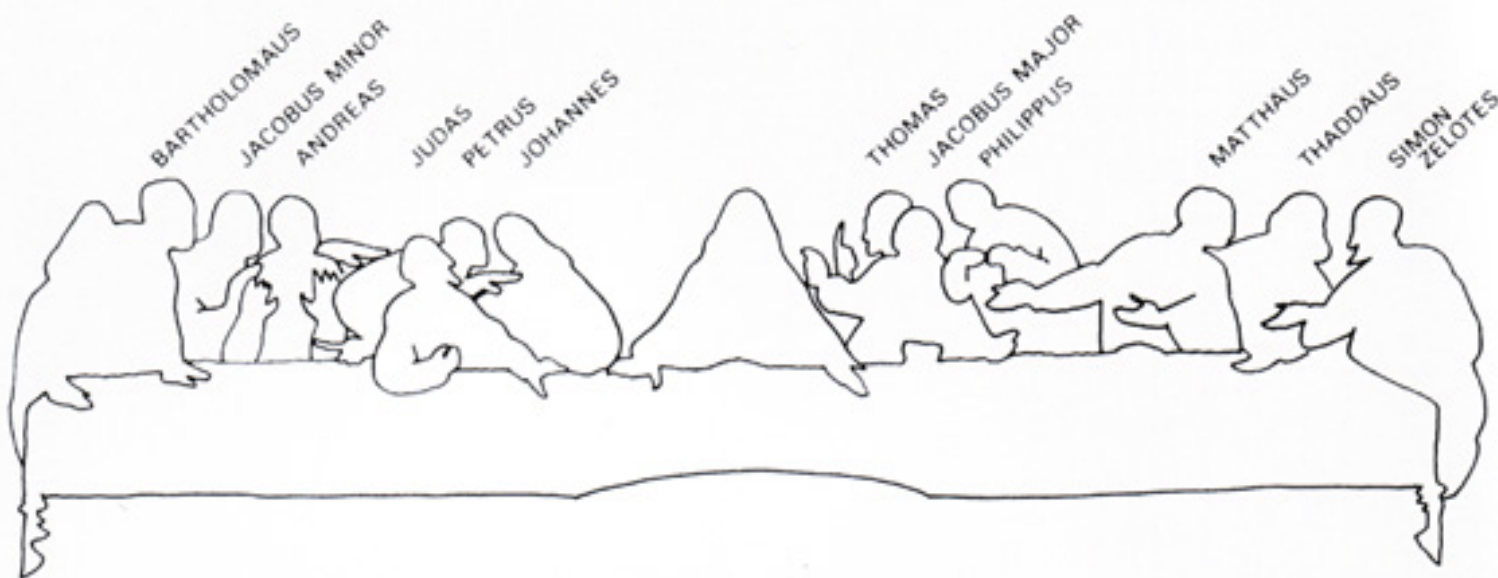
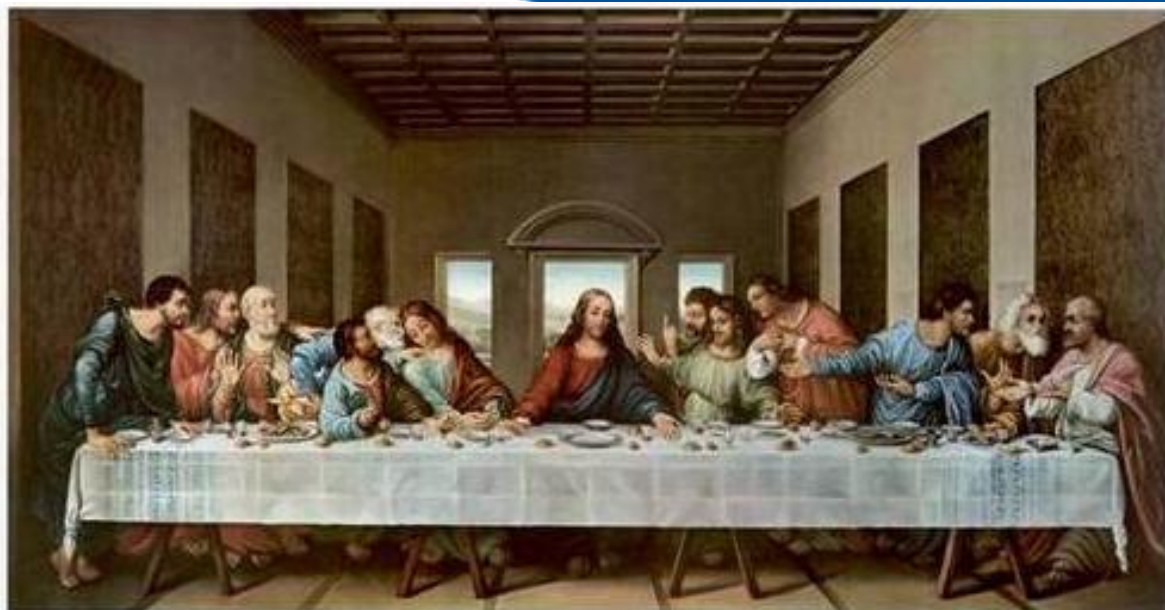
- 1. Description** - What do you see in front of you? Literal qualities (subject) and the elements of art used
 - We know the basic subject of these pieces but a discriminating eye can see obvious visual differences
 - The elements are line, shape, value, form, color, space, texture and pattern
- 2. Analysis** – (Composition) – How is the artwork organized? Is the space flat or deep? What is the relationship of the viewer to the painting? How has the artist used the principles of design?
 - Balance, harmony, variety, rhythm, repetition, dominance and contrast are the principles that the artists employ in different ways

The Four Step Art Critique Process

3. Interpretation (Content) – What is the artist saying?
What does the painting mean?
 - We will be focusing on this over the next weeks and we will see what meaning these images have for us personally
4. Evaluation or Judgment - Is the artwork successful?
Why or why not? Do we like it? Do we enjoy looking at it? Does it make us feel or think something?

A calm Jesus Christ is front and center.
Christ has spoken,
“Verily I say unto you: One of you will betray me. ”







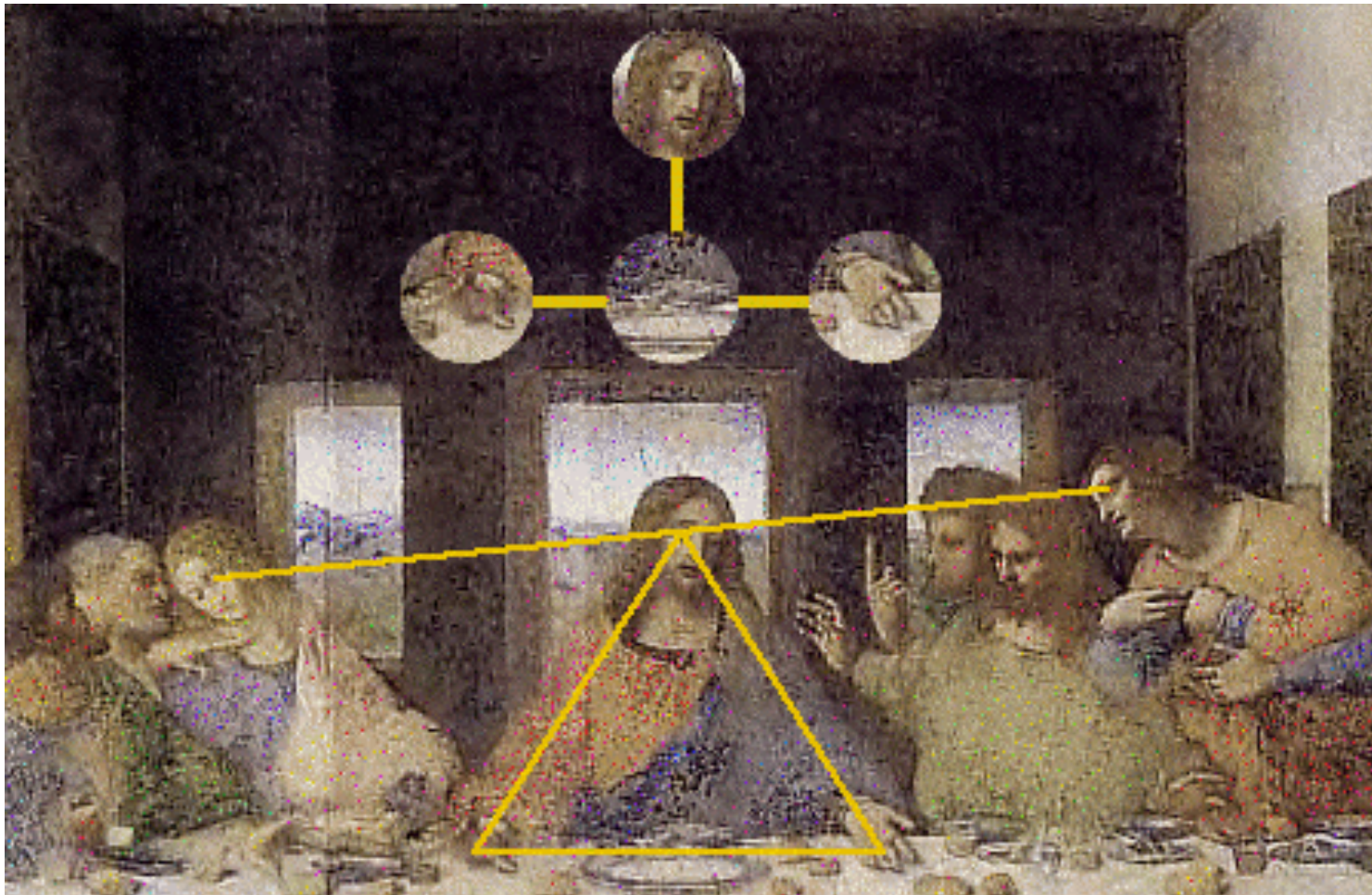
Judas



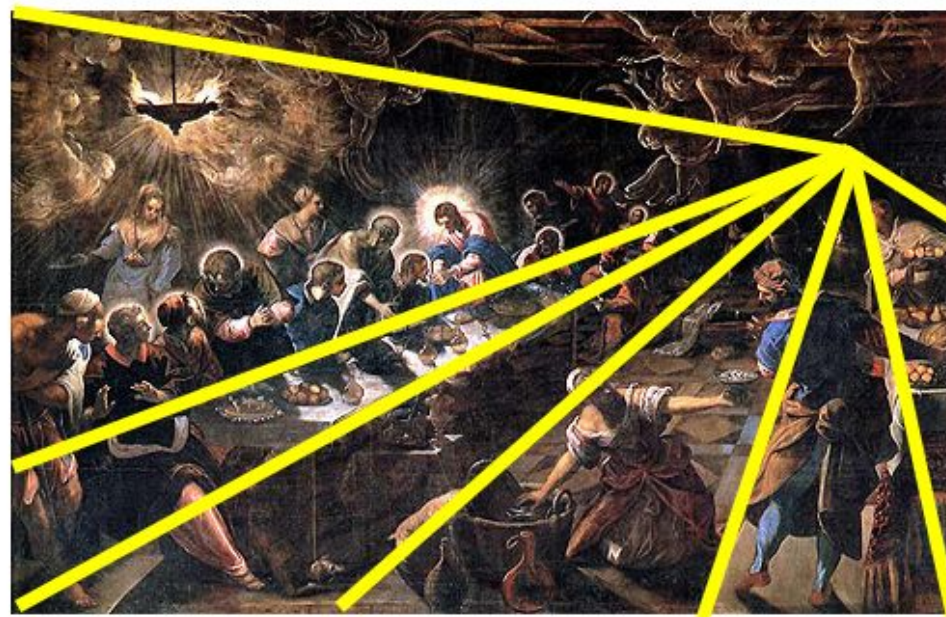
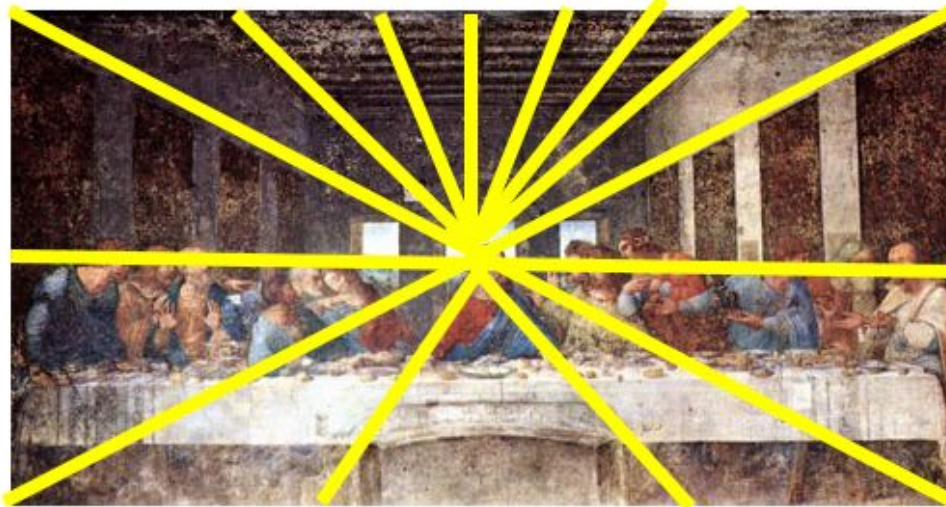
Thomas



Triangle Symbolizing the Holy Trinity















The Last Supper by Tintoretto, 1592–94

- Exemplifies crowded, dramatic compositions that displayed Mannerist traits like a plunging diagonal perspective, off balance design & lighting for emotional effect rather than accuracy.
- More about imaginations than reality (angels).
- Includes servants, dishwasher, animal drinking water – disconnect.
- Lantern = Holy Spirit.
- Judas – only one on opposite side of table, no halo

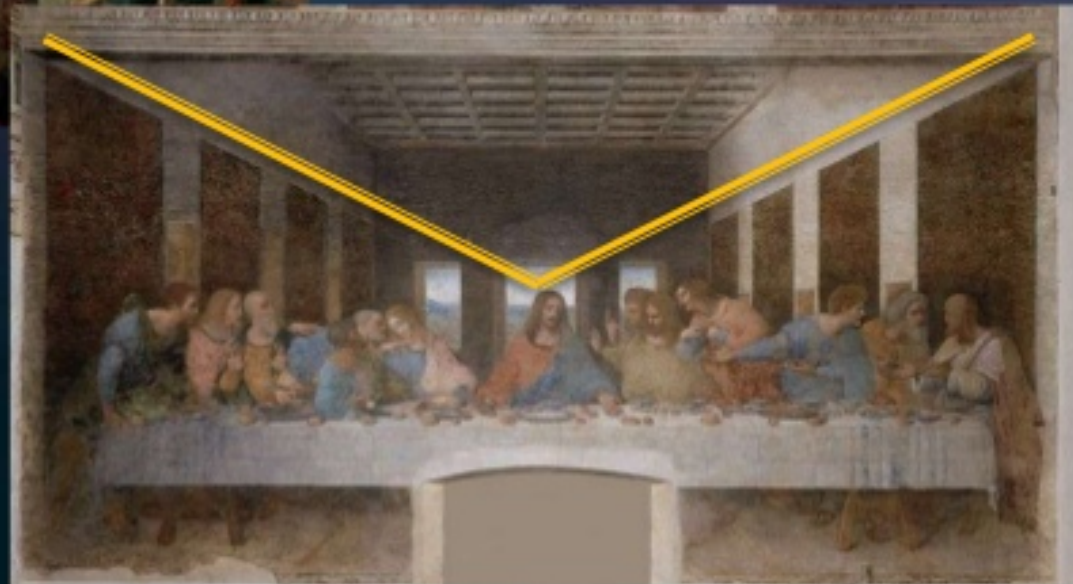
The Last Supper

Tintoretto; 1592-1594



- smoky lighting
- light originating from halo/lamp
- mix of angels and humans
- servants take up one side
- two vantage points

da Vinci; 1498

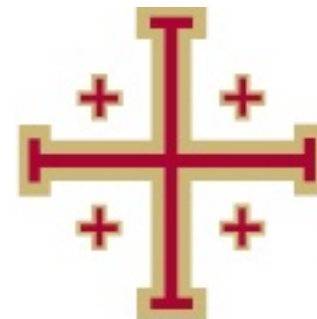
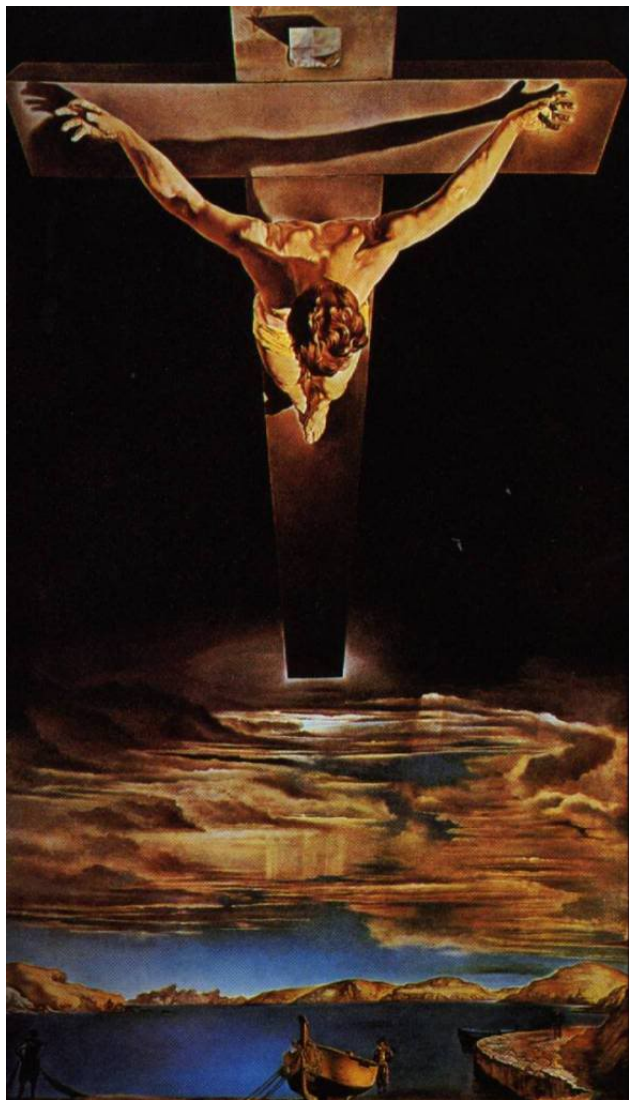


- outdoor lighting
- Christ centered
- centered vantage point
- all activity toward Christ

Salvador Dali

Another View to Discover





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