

Who Painted the Mona Lisa?

For many people, the answer to this question is easy. Leonardo Da Vinci, lived from 1452 to 1519 and was a brilliant painter, inventor, engineer, draughtsman, scientist, sculptor, and architect. He created some incredible pieces of work, of which the Mona Lisa was one. However, if we take the creation and existence of a beautiful painting as an analogy for the creation and existence of the physical realm in which we live, then maybe the answer is not as straightforward. There is no doubt the painting exists. Its beauty is in and of itself evidence of creation by an intelligent designer. And there is no doubt we exist, but belief in how we came into being very much depends on your world view.

Consider the following world views:

Atheism – atheists would say the painting came into being all by itself from nothing. ‘Nothing’ exploded, and all the atoms in the paint appeared out of nowhere and arranged themselves into a picture by luck. It just took an exceedingly long time.

Agnosticism – agnostics would say they have no idea how the painting was created. It’s too complex to think about, but they will follow the evidence so long as it leads to somewhere they prefer, and which makes them feel cosy and comfortable.

New Age – they would say Mona Lisa painted herself, because the characters in any painting are equivalent to the painter. In fact, they don’t need to follow the painter’s design at all, they can just do what they want. If a New Ager believes the Mona Lisa is a Van Gogh self-portrait, then that’s just their ‘truth’ and therefore (they say) we should respect it.

Catholic – they are waiting for someone else to tell them who painted the picture.

Buddhist – Buddhists would say it doesn’t matter because a designed and created painting will be flawed and will, therefore, possibly be recreated as a statue.

Scientism – Based on the claim that science is the best way to truth and an explanation of reality, followers of this belief will be able to tell you the number of brushstrokes, the length, width, height, and weight, the colours used, and a bunch of guesses as to who did the painting. I.e., lots of description, with nothing conclusive. Tomorrow, the answer will be Monet, because answers depend on who provides the funding and what conclusion they want to hear.

Yet despite the obvious silliness of all of this, there is a serious point to be made. The answer is blindingly obvious. Keeping to the Mona Lisa analogy, the painting is evidence of a ‘being’ beyond the painting itself – the painter. Where did it come from? It must be from the imagination, creativity, and skill of the painter, using materials he brought together.

Likewise, if the physical realm consists of space, time, and matter, then it must have been created by a being outside of space, time, and matter. And this is where the Christian world view makes much more sense in explaining where everything comes from. Christian belief is not constrained by the physical realm like, for example, the atheist belief, because God is Spirit and therefore beyond the physical. It is okay for Christians to appreciate the Mona Lisa, but the true admiration should be reserved for the skill of Leonardo Da Vinci. In the same way, it is perfectly fine to appreciate the beauty of nature and God’s creation, but worship and adulation of His creation is idolatry and an abomination in His eyes.

The focus for Christians is to be at one with God, our Father and Creator, and not being overly concerned about the created and material things. It is about seeking a relationship with Him so that we can have everlasting life with Him. This physical experience we call ‘life’ is tiny and insignificant compared with eternity. But it IS important to use this time wisely, and to make a choice of where we spend that eternity. Everyone has a choice – life or death for our eternal spirit. The frightening thing is that none of us really knows how long we have left to make this choice. It is SO important not to keep putting this decision off.

So, how do we choose 'life' for our eternal spirit? All of us sin every day, and the Bible teaches us that sin is an abomination to God. He will not allow any sin in His presence. God provided us with the solution through His enduring kindness and love for us. It is a free gift if you choose to accept it.

Repent for your sins from your heart and put your trust in Jesus. Believe that Jesus paid the ultimate price by being cruelly crucified, then rising from the dead three days later to conquer death. Jesus led a perfect life but was sacrificed to pay for the sins of mankind. Belief in Jesus is the only way to God and to achieve eternal life in the presence of God.

"For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". John 3:16

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me". John 14:6

Do you want to find out more? Here are some useful resources to begin your journey:

davidpawson.co.uk

derekprince.com

bibleproject.com

khouse.org

(produced by kingdomtracts.co.uk)