The Passion of Eve

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Recommended Citation
Lo Russo, Anna (2022) "The Passion of Eve," AWE (A Woman's Experience): Vol. 9, Article 6. Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/awe/vol9/iss1/6

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2022
The Passion of Eve

First Place Winner

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Over the centuries, women belonging to the Judeo-Christian world have been subjected to live on the margins of society because of the traditional, male-centric perspective of the Adam and Eve story. Cultural traditions have limited women through claims that they are inherently disobedient, gullible, evil, and carnal, or that subordination to a husband and child labor are women’s punishments for Eve’s disobedience. Over time, these labels and accusations have limited the voice and overall freedom of women. Eve’s story, originally recorded by a male (and yet holy) prophet, has contributed to the objectification of women’s bodies, educational limitations, societal roles, and political injustices that have and continue to cause women grief and pain.

Another association of the word passion, past its general definition of strong emotions, is with Christ’s suffering and death or that of His mother Mary. While incomparable to the Passion of Christ, I wanted to call this work, “The Passion of Eve” and by right, the passion of all women who have followed her. Women are beautiful, powerful, and full of creative potential as contributors to every conversation.

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe that the holy scriptures have been written and kept by worthy prophets called of God. The years following the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ were full of apostasy where light and truth was taken from the earth, and there was no prophet authorized to lead God’s church. Over these unguided years, the holy texts like the Bible experienced unauthorized changes. Through the Latter-day prophet Joseph Smith, light and truth regarding the Creation story have been restored. From the Pearl of Great Price, Moses 5:11 reads, “And Eve, his wife, heard all
these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient.” This scripture alone proves the wisdom and bravery in Eve’s decision to partake of the fruit and further God’s will to bring eternal life and immortality to all mankind (Moses 1:39). The story I wanted to tell was a visual record of what Eve might have seen or felt to help her understand how essential the Fall was to God’s Plan of Salvation. It is not in an attempt at actual speculation, rather a curated visual to represent my personal understanding of Eve’s side of the story.

I wanted to use a male-authored work to juxtapose the stop-motion visual with the claim of Eve’s naivety. The inclusion of the song “If I Had My Way,” by James Kendis and Lou Klein, works as a contrasting soundscape for the visual story that would keep the male-centric perspective present to hopefully allow viewers to see why that single-story is flawed. Lyrics like “You would reign all alone like a Queen on a throne” vocalizes the assumption that if Eve had never partaken of the fruit, they would have not had children and remained in the garden alone forever.

I decided to create a short narrative of Eve transitioning from being 2-dimensional to 3-dimensional (both literally and rhetorically) as a way to show that there was and is depth to Eve as a person and the decision she made. Everything seen in the visual I felted by hand, which to me was beautifully symbolic of how God’s hand was in Eve’s story and legacy just as He is in mine. I included a painting I love by Chagall that portrays Adam and Eve in the
garden next to each other with only three legs and two arms visible, signifying to me that it was ultimately a decision made together—as one. The inclusion of the phone and social media question about Eve was something I actually posted to my Instagram story with the accompanying responses. To me, Eve’s story demonstrates the beautiful potential that women have to be bold, creative, faithful examples to influence the world for good.

To learn more about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, check out the link below!

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