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Senior Project: Van Eyck's Backgrounds in the Age of Digital Enhancement

The Fifteenth century artist Jan Van Eyck followed the tradition of Netherlandish artists to create hyper-realistic backgrounds, and even at the time of the creation of the works they were known for their massive amounts of details. In the age of technology, 2019, we as viewers of art are able to appreciate the works on a whole different level. With the use of technological enhancement, my purpose of writing this paper is to go into detail of what can truly be seen, in more detail than before, comparing the six works with each other and finding which of these six contain the most amount of detail.

The *Arnolfini Wedding* was made in 1434 and is an oil painting of 82.2 cm by 60 cm, currently located in the National Gallery of London. It is a portrait of two standing figures, one male and one female, both positioned to the side, the center focal point being their joined hands, the male figure's hand under the female's. The first thing the eye is drawn to is the extravagant clothing each figure is clad in. The male figure is Giovanni di Nicolao Arnolfini, and the woman is Jeanne Cenami. For simplicity they will be referred to as the male and female figures. The male figure is clad in a fur cloak, his under clothing is not that visible, most likely it is a black dress shirt that is loosely fitting. On top of his head is a large brimmed top hat. His wife is dressed more colorfully. She wears a green dress adorned with a black belt under her breast. The green dress has fur trimming on the arms and what appears to be ruffled cloth at the trails. Underneath her dress is a blue underdress, most likely tight fitting as compared to the loose fitting green dress. Her head is dressed with a white veil, helping to reinforce the theme of marriage between the two figures.

The setting is the interior of a room, set between the bed and the window. The two figures are standing, the male close to the window while the female is on the side of the bed. Above them is a chandelier, ornate with what appears to be gold or gold leaf. The two pieces of furniture that are meant to be used as seats or for rest are the bed in the back, and what appears to be a chair located behind them. Evidence that would further reinforce that it is a chair, would be the location of sandals at the base of it, probably from someone removing them as they sat down. The bed also is very luxurious. A large canopy with open curtains stands above the bed. Both the bed and the chair are all upholstered with red cloth, which possibly could be velvet; it would not be a long stretch seeing as the luxury of the room is high. There are a few more objects inside of the room other than the furniture. Things that are partially cut off from view are the following: less than 10 percent of an ornate carpet, what appears to be a small dresser, and a few oranges.

The items in the piece do represent certain things, as this is a portrait that could denote either an engagement or a wedding ceremony. The first item that from a regular point of view would just be seen is the couple's pet. That is to say the small dog in between of the two. This dog represents loyalty, which reinforces the concept of marriage between the two. Second we have a pair of sandals and the fact that the male figure is not wearing any shoes at the moment. We do not know if the female figure is wearing shoes or not since her feet are not represented due to her dress covering them. Since the male figure is not wearing shoes, the fact that they are next to him represents the concept of holy ground, going as far back as to the book of Exodus when Moses was asked by G-d to remove his sandals as he stood upon holy ground, This yet again reinforces the idea of a marriage, making it a holy scene between the two figures. Lastly we have something in the background, a convex mirror. This small object holds the most significance in this painting as it reflects what is beyond the panel. With the utilization of digital enhancement we can really get close and see what is represented in it, Inside of it we can see the backs of

the two figures, and two more people. One could be presumed to be the artist Jan Van Eyck himself, as well as an assistant.

“Instead of showing the couple in the front of the room, he painted their reflection in such a way as to place them several feet closer to the rear wall than they are in the primary image, and between the chest and the bed.” (Carelton, David L page 123)

Behind the female figure is of course something that would never be out of place in any bedroom, a bed of course. It is a burgundy bed set with a matching burgundy canopy with its drapes tied back, with matching burgundy pillows. Behind the bed to its side is a small chair, with a deeper burgundy upholstery. On the chair is an ornate wooden creature. This creature bears a striking resemblance to a Chinese pair of sculptures. The small creature has the stance of a lion, with the ears of a dog and a human face, which is reminiscent of the Chinese Shishi, a pair of lion dogs that are placed in front of shrines. The reason this small wooden sculpture could most probably be a Shishi is how its mouth is represented, by representing it with a rounded lip, in a near oval structure. A second part of its representation that could heavily point to it being a Shishi is the placement on the chair and its mouth again. It is on the right side of the viewer, the left side of the chair. Traditionally a Shishi is set in pairs, the Shishi on the right from the front, left from the back is always closed mouth. This is from the ancient belief of the alphabet, the opened mouthed Shishi would represent ‘Ah’ the start of the Sanskrit alphabet, while the closed mouth represented ‘Un’ the end of the alphabet putting the whole of the alphabet between them, a imagery of union that would not be out of place in that of a marriage picture. Not only that but the figure of a Lion dog, not only represented fidelity and loyalty; it also represented protection. The closed mouth of the lion-dog represented keeping the good energy of life within its mouth while the other lion-dog which is not represented in this painting would have its mouth open to scare off any evil. Underneath the lion-dog-like

wooden sculpture is a large cat sculpture, which is probably a Lion as well. As stated before that would go completely with the concept of the piece.

The Madonna of *Chancellor Rolin* is a painting finished in 1435, of 66cm by 60 cm, located in the famous Musee du Louvre in Paris. The Madonna of *Chancellor Rolin* is a divided piece. The scene takes place inside a building, but outside of the room is a vast cityscape. Starting off with the figures again, we have the Chancellor himself, seated to the left side of the pictorial space. Directly in front of Rolin are the figures of his devotion, Mary and the infant Christ upon her lap. Rolin is dressed in an ornate robe, a dark blue with orange designs sewn into it with gold thread, and the trims of the robe are covered in furs. Moving over to the Madonna, her dress is covered up by her red cloak; we can only get small glimpses of her blue dress through the gaps of the cloak. The edges of the cloak are trimmed with ornate designs. Christ of course is still a infant, and he is not dressed at all. Above the Madonna is a small angel, who holds in his hands her crown as she in this depiction is represented as the queen of heaven. The facial expressions of the figures are where personality is represented, as their postures are mostly rigid. *Chancellor Rolin* gazes level-headedly at the Madonna, not lowering his head an inch. His eyes are open and fixed upon her as his hands are clasped together in prayer. The Madonna has her eyes closed slightly as she looks downward, not towards her infant son, but more so towards the ground. However, the most expressive face is that of the infant Christ. His eyes show a humility about him as he raises his small hands in his iconic benediction, with a orb in his other hand.

It would be a waste to not go into detail about the highly decorative room they are placed inside of, it is a empty space that is taken up by the figures. The only pieces of furniture are the stool used by the Chancellor to rest his scriptures as well as his elbows. The second piece of is the chair that the Madonna is seated upon, we can see details of it slightly behind her so that we know she is not just floating in the

space. The tiles of the room are split up into seven different designs, with distinct orders used, among which the only one to be used twice is the plain white tile, hence only seven types were used. Outside of the tile are pillars, which open up the room, these (ionic) pillars are ornate as well, drawn with various relief sculptures. Above the pillars are glimpses of stained glass, Since we cannot see the whole stained glass we do not really know what is on them. Outside of this room is a vast world, we can see the whole cityscape from outside of it.

The world outside of the small room the figures are secluded in is a gorgeous representation of the outside world, carrying on, doing their own business in the background. Starting off with the first layer outside of the window we are presented with two figures standing with their back turned from the viewer facing what we can assume is the edge of the road, overlooking the water. The representation of these figures is foreshortened to a degree, leading us the viewer to believe they are truly a ways away from the main room. The Garden that separates the interior of the room and the outside is not just a simple bunch of flowers, Even though most of it is covered up by that of the figures in the interior, we do get a clear cut glimpse of it in between the figures. The flowers are a myriad of colors, but sadly not enough is shown visibly of them as to take an educated guess of their species, though do get to see that they are in full bloom. The view they overlook is that of a city in the distance divided by a large body of water. Due to the distance in which this city is represented we must first realize that this body of water is far bigger than just a normal river, because it is much farther away than the two foreshortened men. On the river are a few things, the first of which is a large bridge connecting the two sides. The bridge is shown curving, which is a product of the representation of distance. Farther down the river we see something, a large mass in the water. It could be a small island, or more likely it is a sailing ship. It is most likely a ship due to the shape, the bottom half of it is curved, while the top half is a sideways white square, most probably representing sails. On the right of the water is the more ornate, wealthy side of town, one could assume. Buildings clad in gold are shown; one of the most striking ones is that in the

farthest corner to the right, that is slightly cut off by the window. This building is represented with Gothic detailing to it, such as a spire. Other buildings are shown with the same palette, further enhancing the idea of wealth on this side of the city. The other side, the side of the Chancellor, is a more tame cityscape. We see small buildings, only one really that is shown to have a tower to it. Most likely it is a church for the less wealthy. One of the main details we can see is that of a large hilly area. Small globs of green represent trees. Behind the two sections of land, the river twists and turns off into the foggy distance. We as the viewer can only imagine the extent of the world as the rest is covered in a thick haze.

Starting off with the buildings on the left (those of the average people), we can see a few things. Not many buildings are visible as they are not that close together. We see a main building in the center of the section with a large spire on it. The large spire on it suggests it being a place of worship, most likely a church. The other buildings are far less impressive, small ones that are most probably just homes for the lay people of the city. Behind the section of average buildings is a large hill, on this large hill is one various strip of greenery, which would be indicative and would align with it being farmland. On the other side of the river we see that large and expensive area, that of golden and ornate architecture. What would most probably be the grand cathedral for the upper class is represented clad in gold. Around it we see other large and impressive buildings, all with spires of their own. Since all the buildings on this side have spires it would be safe to assume it is not a mass of churches.

Made between 1438 and 1440, the *Madonna in Church* is 31 cm by 14 cm currently located in Berlin. The *Madonna in Church* is a fantastic piece, creating a heavenly church for the Madonna to be presented within. At first glance one would only notice the figure of the Madonna as well as the very

young infant Christ in her arms, but , upon closer inspection you would see the group of figures in the small room of the church, which can be presumed to be angels due to the slight presence of wings behind them. Starting off with the Madonna, she is dressed extravagantly. As with the *Chancellor Rolin*, she is represented in both blue and red, but this time the colors are inverted. Her cloak is blue while her dress is red. As this is a heavenly setting, the dress of the Madonna is more extravagant than what it usually would be, This time she is represented with a extremely ornate crown. Countless jewels are placed on her crown, following the same color scheme as her outfit, red and blue. In her hands is of course the infant Christ half swaddled in a cloth.

The church itself is grand; Of course it should be as this is a heavenly piece. For this analysis we shall start from the ground up. We begin looking at the floor of this grand cathedral in the heavens. We see a stone-like tile which is most definitely marble. This can be inferred by the faint discolorations between whites from each and every tile. From the floor we can see small spots of light, presumed from the windows, meaning the sun would be in or around noon. As we go up from the floor we see first and foremost a pillar situated behind the Madonna. This pillar is grand to say the least. We see ornament on it, At about the eye level it is given a circular rim, that separates the lower section from the arch above it. On this pillar is a tablet, and with digital enhancement we can get close enough to see that nothing in particular is written on it, as it was probably not meant to be read by the viewer, leaving us to speculate. What it most probably represents is prayers, as this is a church with the Madonna herself present. Before going up above the arch we must take a look behind the pillar. In small detail is a golden sculpture affixed to the wall. Not enough is given about this small sculpture to infer as to who or what it is representing, but it is represented nonetheless. Above the column we are greeted with a smaller set of columns, creating mini arches above the arch. Above the mini arches are the windows, which are not just regular windows, they are stained glass. Figures in red and blue can be see in these windows, the left figure appears to be

either wearing a hood, or has long hair. If it is wearing a hood, it is safe to assume it's probably represent a monk. Due to the fact that behind the presumed monk is a blue background, we can assume it is a Dominican monk. Moving on to the back of the church, we can zoom in to see the small room of worship that the angels are in. Different sculptures line the facade of the room, one of which that can be seen clearly is the figure of a man with his right hand on his heart, holding what would seem to be a cloth. Above the stone sculptures is the grand cross of the church. A representation, most probably, of Christ on the cross. It is an ornate cross of gold, and even Christ's simple loincloth is represented as gold.

The Diptych of the *Last Judgement* and the Crucifixion will be treated as two separate pieces. I begin with the first, the crucifixion. Countless numbers of figures are presented at the scene of Christ's Crucifixion, with the center point being Christ himself. The moment selected here is when pity is taken upon Christ, as Longinus stabs him in the side in order to hasten his death. Christ is in the center, upon a T shaped cross, not a full crucifix since the upper portion of it is just a plaque. Christ is in the partial nude with minimal coverings. Various figures are around Christ. At his direct left and right are the two criminals that were killed alongside him. Underneath them we see a vast crowd of different figures, and up in the front we see Mary clad in a blue cloak, as she is tended to due to the immense emotion of seeing her son die.

The scene is that of a barren desert, outside of Jerusalem since we can see the holy city in the background, above that we see a wide sky, covered in various clouds. The detail of the city in the distance may be tiny, but the amount of detail applied to it is immense. With digital enhancement we can see clearly that details such as a windmill have been faithfully represented, even the mountains off in the distance have been represented. Each figure even has a detailed face represented.

Even before we see the first layer of buildings we are presented with a large section of the desert near Jerusalem. We see many dead trees behind Christ on the cross. The hills raise up high, and we can even view figures looking at the large mass of the crowd, and even one man on horseback. Behind this we get to the main part of the background, that is to say the buildings of the old holy city. The first thing that is to be seen is a large, large ornate building with different spires and unglazed windows. However adjacent to this large building is a large spire, which has been represented in gold. This is most probably a construction of the Roman empire as the Jews of ancient Israel did not build with gold in that kind of manner. Moving to the right of the grand building we are shown different smaller castle-like buildings, none of which are bigger than two floors. We can see other large castle buildings making the town grow in our view, giving us the clear idea that the crucifixion took place on the outskirts of town. Behind this large city we can see a few interesting things. We can see five windmills, which yet again were not invented in that form until the 1300's.

The second piece is the Last Judgement, that depicts an apocalyptic scene, of when Christ comes back and is judging humanity. In the center we see Christ himself on a glowing throne, halo and all. To his sides are his mother and John the Baptist as well as a full court of countless saints. Christ this time is represented in clothing, only a red cloak is draped around him, as his stigmata glows. Below Christ and the saints is an angel, presumably the chief angel Michael. His wings are represented in varied color and in his hands is a flaming sword, and a shield.

Behind the angel are the living, being judged. On one side we can see bodies rising from the ground, coming out of their graves. Alongside of them we can see bodies surfacing from the ocean. Underneath

however we can see the damned, guarded by a skeleton. We can see many things happening to these damned souls, humans being attacked, tortured by various monstrous things.

Behind the living humans on the ground, we can see a hellish scene. As a setting for the humans that were not raptured or taken by hell, we can see that the earth itself is covered in flames, remnants of structures burning are seen behind them. To the right we see the humans escaping the fire to the sea, and even farther in the back we can see smoke and that the fire is as close as it can get to the ocean.

Lastly we have a detail from the *Ghent Altarpiece* finished in 1434 located in St Bavo's Cathedral, that of the *Adoration of the Lamb*. It is set in a grassy field, with the altar as the main focal point. Upon the altar is the representation of Christ, a single Lamb, staring directly at the viewer. Around the lamb on the altar are angels in prayer, and around them are various groups of beings. The crowd in worship represents the Eight Beatitudes: the apostles, angels, the prophets, the patriarchs, the female saints, the confessors, and the martyrs. (Elizabeth Dhanens, 104)

The main focus of the piece is of course the lamb representing Christ. The altar he stands upon is decorated with various gold objects placed upon it, and the angels are swinging the incense around it. Directly across from the altar is a fountain, that separates the groups of people who are praying to the lamb. All of the figures are indeed praying to the lamb, unlike the angels flanking the lamb on all sides, most of the figures are standing in their prayer. However, in both the groups on the lower left and right, we have equally two rows of kneeling figures. On the left are figures holding scriptures, while on the right the humbly dressed figures are all empty handed. The dress of all these figures is extravagant. Without going into massive detail for each figure, each group has a general theme. The bottom left seems to be more average of clothing, that of what the normal lay person would wear, while on the right we see groups of people in red cloaks, that of people of the church. In the upper left we have groups of popes, most presented with the papal tiara, and similar attire with blue drapes along their chests. One the upper

right we have more average attire, different colored cloaks, no general theme at all. The angels are all dressed in togas, the ancient Roman attire.

The background of this is the most impressive out of all the pieces, even if this piece is more than half the size of the others. It is set on a grassy field, with the altar the lamb is upon in the center. The altar is ornate, as it is the sacrifice ground for the lamb. It is red with golden ornament around it. The other main object is the fountain separating the groups on the left and the right in the foreground. This is a elaborate structure, releasing water from multiple nozzles. The grassy field is not perfect, as we can see small specks of white scattered across it, which could be assumed to be flowers. In the top back left and the top back right we see bushes, each of these bushes is of a different species as they are all represented in different shapes and sizes, some even with fruits upon them. Going to the next layer behind these bushes we are greeted with even more empty grassland, leading into paths in separate directions. Two of these paths are occupied by the figures, as their groups are massive spanning farther than the composition can show us. The middle clearing leads into the far distance where we can see civilization, A singular tower stands alone away from the massive grouping of distant buildings. Even further past the tower we see a far distant landscape, the miniscule aspect of the painting representing a further nature made up of hills, foggy mountains and what could be assumed to be forests.

We do see many different trees. Some trees carry some fruits on them. The trees behind the popes on the left are all different fruit-bearing trees as we can tell by the splatters of color all over the trees. On the other side we are shown flowering trees; this can be inferred because none of these trees have any bright colors, only light colors, mainly whites.

Looking deep into the distance past the fog in the top right corner we can see civilization.. We see a few buildings, not of the ancient civilization but buildings of the architecture of Van Eyck's day. The one that is the most impressive is a large cathedral, most probably based on an existing one in the

Netherlands. It has two smaller spires with one large spire in between them, and on its right we see a large domed structure.

In the age where technology has advanced by far, we have been able to understand things differently than in the past. In the past when one was to view the work of a Netherlandish artist, specifically Jan Van Eyck, one could only rely on the naked eye to see the piece. Distance was the only method one could change how they view the piece. For us in 2019 that is no longer the case at all. In the age of Technology we can digitally enhance or view of the paintings. Detail that would not have been able to have been seen with the naked eye without getting extremely close is now available to anyone anywhere. With the simple act of moving our fingers on our phones we can zoom in into massive amounts of detail, even going as far as to make the small detail larger for us to view.

I begin by comparing one interior setting with a dual piece, *the Arnolfini wedding* and the *Madonna with Chancellor Rolin*. The most obvious Comparative point would be the amount of figures. While in the *Arnolfini* it can be argued that there are more than two figures as evident by the presence of figures inside of the mirror, I'll only be counting the two main figures for comparison. In the *Chancellor Rolin* piece there are three figures in the foreground, and two in the Middle ground.

Moving past the foreground, and getting into the real detail of this paper, we shall compare the two backgrounds. The *Arnolfini* is in a closed off section of a bedroom, as compared to the vast wide open space of the *Rolin*. *Arnolfini* has wooden flooring, while *Chancellor Rolin* has ornate tile, showing a

higher class of interior. *Arnolfini*'s enclosed background focuses mainly on the items in the room, the bedding, chair, chandelier, and mirror, while in *Chancellor Rolin*, the main detail of the background is in the far off distance, the only main item in its immediate background being that of a small garden, as well as part of the design of the room, being the pillars. Something that could be interesting to compare, is the presence of art inside of the artworks. In the *Arnolfini wedding*, we see small sculptures around the room, as well as the decorations around the mirror, Being the only forms of art present while in contrast in the *Chancellor Rolin*, one could argue that the floor could be considered as art on top of the fact that are nature sculptures in the capitals of the column. In the *Arnolfini* we are shown only a small tiny glimpse of the fact that an outside world does indeed exist, that being the window's small showing of the outside world, while in contrast we have *Chancellor Rolin*'s whole room being opened to the distance, showing that this is not a secluded place, but rather a place high up overlooking the Outside world. Another interesting similarity between the two pieces would be the level of light, Nowhere in either piece are the skies any the least bit dark or red, setting both of them at the same time, around noon in the day.

Something that you may think is obvious when comparing these two paintings may not be so obvious when going deep, that is to say that amount of detail they both have in the backgrounds. one would say *Chancellor Rolin* has a far superior amount of detail in it because its background goes off into many layers. That is true in its own way, but when taking into account all of the small symbolic details inside of the *Arnolfini wedding* we have a large question. In terms of detail what is more important, quality or quantity. The piece with more quantity, would be the *Chancellor Rolin*. In the *Chancellor Rolin* piece we are greeted with a massive amount of detail in its background, that being two separate towns divided by a large body of water, and even closer to us a garden with two figures in it. *Arnolfini wedding* may not have multiple layers of different structures and figures, it may just be stuck in a room, but nevertheless the quality of its background is immense. The most striking thing, that has long been discussed as, the convex mirror in this piece.

Following this line of thought, the next comparison to be made is that between the *Chancellor Rolin*, *Arnolfini wedding* and the *Madonna in a Church*. As with the *Arnolfini* the *Madonna* is a pure interior piece, but unlike the *Arnolfini* piece the *Madonna in Church* has absolutely no outside presence in it. The church may have windows, yes, but we do not see a single thing of the outside world from them, enhancing its heavenly theme. Starting off, the architecture of the *Madonna's* church is closer to that of the room in the *Chancellor Rolin* than that of the room the *Arnolfini wedding* is in, This is because of the stature of the rooms. In each of the three paintings each room is that of a different social class, the lowest being that of the *Arnolfini* wedding, followed by the *Chancellor Rolin* piece, lastly with no expense spared is the *Madonna in Church*. Various luxurious sculptures, stained glass windows, and countless priceless gems all over the piece really paint the presence of extreme luxury, We have moved, from the small wedding of two people, to the Chancellor praying, and lastly to the Virgin Mary enthroned in a church. Moving on to comparing figures, it would be wrong to not compare the two representations of Mary and the infant Christ. In each of the two pieces, both Mary's are depicted gazing downward, They have the same shades of hair, as well as similar coloring of their clothing. Differences are that of location: in *Church* she is the main subject, while in the *Chancellor Rolin* piece she is off to the side, Lastly their main difference is that of the expression on their faces. With the *Madonna in Church* she seems more somber, her eyes slightly more open than the *Chancellor Rolin* representation of her. Next for comparisons, which will not be that intense, is the infant Christ, As he is an infant there is not that much that could be different with him, the only main difference is that in the *Chancellor Rolin* piece he is holding the orb while giving the benediction, and in the *Madonna in Church* he is more so depicted as a average infant. Sculpture, be it a small carving of a lion in the *Arnolfini wedding*, or relief sculptures on the walls of the *Chancellor Rolin* piece, and lastly that of massive widespread relief sculpture, sculpture in the round, these follow the same hierarchy as the rooms were categorized in the previous argument. Going from least extravagant to most extravagant the order follows the same, with *Arnolfini wedding* at

the bottom, next being *Chancellor Rolin* and last the most impressive of all the *Madonna in Church*. The *Madonna in Church* has various different representations of sculpture distributed throughout it, be it Christ on the cross clad in solid gold, to the figures around him and even highly detailed relief sculpture in the prayer room.

Paintings with an exterior setting include both panels of the Diptych as well as the detail of the *Adoration of the Lamb* from the Ghent altarpiece. I will begin with the *Adoration of the Lamb* and the *Chancellor Rolin* piece again. The background of the *Adoration of the Lamb*, a wide open field covered in greenery is in stark contrast to that of the divided background in the *Chancellor Rolin* piece, In *Rolin* the background is divided by a large body of water, while in the *Adoration of the Lamb* there is a lack of any water in it. However they have a major similarity, the clear separation of parts. In the *Adoration of the Lamb* the background could be divided into sections. Following straight behind the lamb is a path leading into the far distance, while on its sides are a few hills sectioning off the buildings in the distance into two separate pieces, much like how the body of water functions in *Chancellor Rolin*. Unlike the *Chancellor Rolin* piece, the two sections of buildings are not different, each side has buildings of the same nature, large buildings with towers and spires alike. Moving past the buildings and going further into the distance is the hazy smoke letting the background fade into the sky, which is present in both pieces, despite the different viewpoints. In the *Chancellor Rolin* the pictorial space is presented from ground level, as if the viewer were standing in the room with Rolin and the Madonna. However, in the *Adoration of the Lamb* the viewer is elevated, be it on an imaginary hill, or floating. The viewer sees the pictorial space from a high position making the angle that we see the distance of the background different to that of the *Chancellor Rolin* piece. Because of this the amount of sky we see is different in the paintings. Despite being partially covered by the interior of the room, a large part of the sky is still visible, taking up almost thirty percent of the space. However, in the *Adoration of the Lamb*, upon looking carefully the sky only takes up a small ten to twenty percent of the pictorial space due to the angle of the pictorial space. The

quality of the nature aspect of the *Adoration of the Lamb* is far superior to that of the *Chancellor Rolin* piece. This is not only due to the fact that the *Chancellor Rolin* piece is mostly obscured by its interior, but because of the fantastical setting of the *Adoration of the Lamb*, with the setting being that of a heavenly field, where figures from all different times are set at once on the great green field. Lastly, the very land that is depicted has some similarities. In the left corner of the *Chancellor Rolin* we see a large green hill, while on the right side we see a flat plain with a incline of mountains . The left side of the *Chancellor Rolin* is most similar to that of the *Adoration of the Lamb*, while the right side of the space is similar to that of our next comparison, the Diptych.

Before bringing the diptych into the comparison we must compare it with itself, that being the Crucifixion of Christ and the *Last Judgement* its two sides. One is a fully earthly setting and the other while mostly set on earth, is that of a mythical apocalyptic setting, being the end of all . With these two paintings side by side the horizon line is evidently different on both of them. In the *Last Judgement* the horizon is set more of at a middle point of the pictorial space while in the Crucifixion the horizon line is elevated to give a farther view into the distance, which the *Last Judgement* lacks completely. Both pieces are covered heavily in human figures. In the *Last Judgement* a large majority of them are floating in the sky, while in the Crucifixion they are grounded. This can only be done due to their massive difference in vantage points.

Each side is more similar to a different piece. Due to the vantage point of the Crucifixion, being higher than that of the main focal point, its design is similar to that of the *Adoration of the Lamb*. Both paintings have the ground raise up in the foreground and slowly meet the horizon line, separating the architectural objects in the background from the main focal area. The *Adoration of the Lamb* divides the buildings in the background with hills, but in the Crucifixion the buildings are not separated at all. They are fully together existing in the back with no clear line to the sky in the background. The *Last Judgement*

has a level setting for the viewer making it fall in line with that of the *Chancellor Rolin*, only by nature of the pictorial space. The *Last Judgement* is lacking in terms of background, not even having a tenth of the background detail that any of the other pieces have, with its only details being that of some burning buildings. However the *Chancellor Rolin* and the *Last Judgement* are the only two paintings with the presence of water, though two very different types of water. As mentioned earlier the *Chancellor Rolin*'s background body of water is that of a river flanked by two land masses, while the *Last Judgement* has the ocean breaking onto the land. Swapping the comparatives, the *Crucifixion* shares some similarities as well with the *Chancellor Rolin*. Even if the angle of the pictorial space is similar to the *Adoration of the Lamb*, the amount of sky present far surpasses the *Adoration of the Lamb*, presenting far more sky than the *Chancellor Rolin* as well. Compared to the other three pieces, *Chancellor Rolin*, *Adoration of the Lamb*, and the *Last Judgement*, the sky in the *Crucifixion* is the most detailed of. The sky is a varying of different shades, whereas the other three skies are all a singular color. The *Crucifixion* sky goes further than varying its color, depicting a varying of clouds some fluffy, some just straight lines. The *Last Judgement*, it may be similar to the *Chancellor Rolin* because of its perspective, but not only do its composition and subject resemble the *Adoration of the Lamb* but its contents fall heavily in line with it. This is due to the presence of many figures in both of the works. In the *Last Judgement* the figures are all positioned in the sky whilst the *Adoration of the Lamb* has them on different sides. They both however are groupings of different prophets and holy figures.

In terms of sheer quantity the *Crucifixion* has the most architecture, Because in the *Crucifixion* the background is not separated in any way, generating far more space for buildings to take up. In terms of natural presence it is the *Adoration of the Lamb*. Because of its split ground for buildings to occupy it has far more greenery to take up space as compared to the others.



The Arnolfini Wedding



Detail of the Mirror from the Arnolfini Wedding



Madonna of Chancellor Rolin



View of the city in *Madonna of Chancellor Rolin*



Madonna in the Church



Close up of the upper right corner of *Madonna in the Church*



Ghent Altarpiece, Adoration of the Mystic Lamb



Dptych *Crucifixion*



Diptych *Last Judgement*

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