

Student 6: High Not Achieved

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**The Birth of Venus 1485**

**By Alessandro di Mariano di Vanni Filipepi better known as Sandro Botticelli**

The Medici believed that sharing knowledge with the people around them would bring them much fame and good fortune. They knew that society would only grow if education was available for all. Florence was the art capital of the world during the Renaissance and high Renaissance period. The birth of Venus was commissioned by the Medici and was painted in 1485. Being the patron of a painting meant that your family had status and most importantly money. This painting had value to the Medici because it helped them to grow their status. It was not approved for public viewing by the church and so it was commissioned for a private Medici home. Of course after the Medici dynasty died out the painting was viewable to the public and its beauty spread through the minds of those who looked past the naked figures and saw the true artistic meaning. ①

The techniques used in this painting were new and controversial at the time it was painted. The composition, characters, lighting, setting, general flow and more was new and unexplored territory. Botticelli took this opportunity with two hands. He valued the opportunity to paint something beautiful and artistic without religious boundaries. Botticelli used new lines for the body, only 50 years before his time people were painted still and lifeless. The twisting of the body and soft positioning of each figure's hands meant that there was a realism to the image. Art was moving away from the simple picture. Art was becoming a real life scene frozen within a medium. This valuable trait meant that anyone who saw this image could see movement and were able to relate to it in a real-life situation. It was the Renaissance version of a movie. The movement within the picture was not the only new technique. No two faces were ever the same again. Each had its own expression and look which is why the Birth of Venus feels like a personal piece. All this is valuable to the

human race because it not only documents the artists understanding of the Gods but also allows for many interpretations which will revolve around the same general idea.

Philosophy literally means “love of wisdom” Philo meaning love and sophy (Sophie or Sophia) means wisdom. So when philosophers were able to view classical history through the Birth of Venus their minds were blown. The Birth of venus is also very subjective. Botticelli painted what he imagined was a beautiful, full and feminine woman emerging from a clam shell. Leonardo da Vinci was a philosopher because he was curious about the world but in a slightly different way to Botticelli. **This painting has philosophical value because after viewing no person would go home empty minded. It shared wisdom with everyone, not just those who could afford an education.** The people of the Renaissance were very uneducated but this did not mean that they were unwise. Through viewing the Birth of Venus and many others of the High Renaissance paintings old men and children would have something to talk about even though they were completely different. Philosophy is today the most important and neglected subject. In his day Botticelli understood he needed to share his wisdom with the world and he did this through his painting which the Medici commissioned. The Medici family gained riches and shared wisdom; this is the most valuable part of Europe’s history.

1

**The Birth of Venus is one of the most valuable paintings in the entire world it was bought by the Italian government for 500 million dollars and hang at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Money is such a hard thing to understand. It places a number on something that has no value.** The Birth of Venus has a number value but is priceless. This is because it has been handed down through the generation and kept in amazing condition. It is also the painter who adds value. His legacy will stay in the world forever. Botticelli would have loved to know how much enjoyment the world has received from his paintings. Of course he is dead now but the value of his work continues to grow and it will continue to grow as his paintings become more and more rare.

2

Classical stories are an important part of world’s history. The Birth of Venus is Botticelli’s interpretation of the goddesses birth. It is physically impossible to stand on a giant clam shell but this is how he imagined Venus being born. She stands naked as are all people when they are born. When she steps out onto the land Flora wil cover her in a robe of flowers and from that point on she will remain clothed. This new interpretation by Botticelli tells an ageless story through modern eyes ( during his time). New interpretations of history are valuable for the future. Old stories survive in different forms so that anyone can understand what the story is about. The original story of the birth of Venus has been lost in translation bt she would not have emerged from a clam shell. But it is not the exact details that are valuable. When on understands the point of the story, the story has served its purpose. The point is that she emerged as a beautiful naked woman and was clothed as soon as she set foot on the place that she would live.