

Makala Jean  
ARH 101  
Professor Romaine  
09/17/2021

## Henry Ossawa Tanner: Christ and His Mother Studying the Scriptures

The artist of this painting Henry Ossawa Tanner uses two photos he took of his wife and son. He uses them to create a painting similar to his family. This painting shows a mother and son reading something long like a scripture. His painting allows for the viewer to use their spiritual imagination to create a story of the painting. This effect is a catalyst for the painting to establish a deeper connection between a sacred subject and the viewer. The photo shows the mother and son at the same level looking at something. It is interesting because the face of the boy is slightly in front of the mother's face. This can indicate Christ teaching his mother. This may also represent the mother as the teacher. As a result, it ultimately shows intimacy and a bond between the two. Tanner is successful in this work because it causes the viewer to spark their spiritual visions.

I personally found it interesting that Tanner uses his own family to recreate a biblical story. It shows his ability to be vulnerable with the viewers. It's all so successful because it is establishing a deeper connection between a sacred subject and myself. As the older sister, I have been an educator to my younger siblings. More importantly, my sibling has been a teacher to me. In this new age that we are living in, I am learning a lot from people who are significantly younger than me. It's interesting to see how history really does repeat itself. In the sense that the mother is able to learn and aptness to her child. On the other hand, the child's face shows ease around his mother to learn from her as well. My first impression was that the scroll is so long that they may have been working on this for a while. I also noticed the closeness between them to the mom wraps his arm around her son. The Son is leaning into the work while leaning on his mother's shoulder. It looks like whatever that is that they are reading is intriguing. The way the son is pointing to the scroll shows his efficiency. To add to that, the son pointing is indicating the importance of the material they are studying. Overall, I am still appreciating the painter's ability to make a painting spark an open-ended spiritual visualization.