



Willem Dafoe as Jesus, Barbara Hershey as Mary Magdalene and Harvey Keitel as Judas in Martin Scorsese's scandalous 1988 film "The Last Temptation of Christ" based on the novel by Nikos Kazantzakis.

The great finale of the epic: Faust's ascension in the mountain gorges

"Here they are done; Eternal woman hithers us on."

The Gospels and the Apocrypha, which were removed from the biblical canon about four hundred years later by the Catholic Church under Pope Jerome, reported that numerous women followed Jesus and made pilgrimages to his crucifixion.

Three of them were personified in almost all biblical texts, for example in the Gospel of John, where it says: "Standing by Jesus' cross were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala", Mary Magdalene. Goethe takes up this story

and has the three biblical prostitutes Magna Peccatrix (the great sinner Mary Magdalene), Mulier Samaritana and Maria Aegyptiaca appear as penitents in the finale of his great parable of humanity.

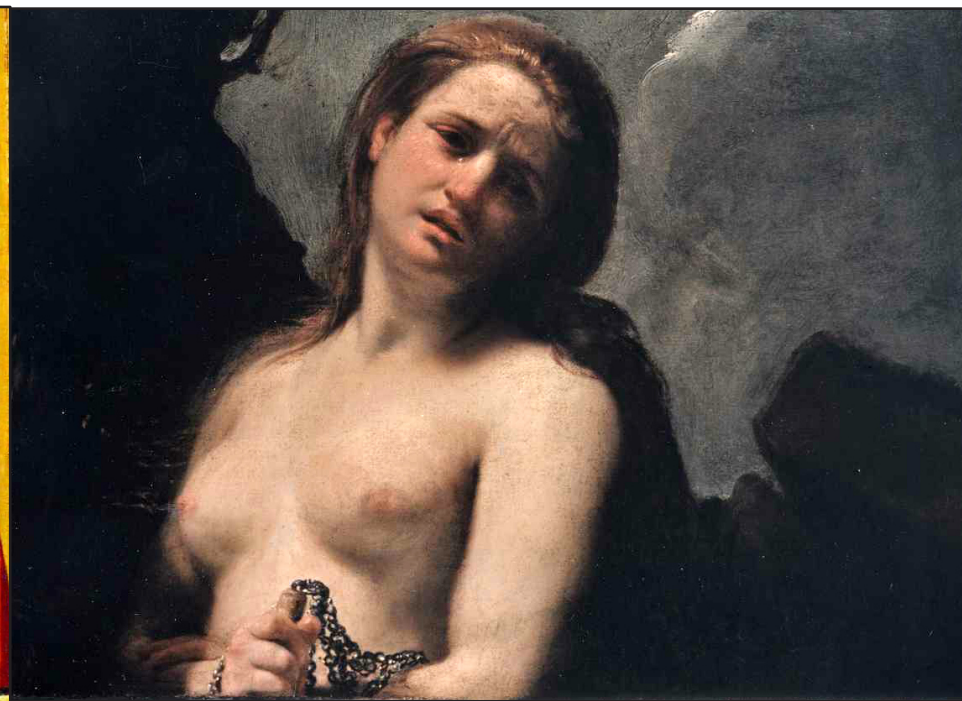
This is the "love feast of the final scene, where it goes up with the saved soul", according to Goethe to Eckermann in 1831.

The Penitent Mary Magdalene. The painting by Ippolito Scarsella called Scarsellino (1551-1620) served as a model for the new tin figures.





Above: Byzantine icon of St. Mary Magdalene with her attribute, the myrrh jar. In the early days of the Christian movement and even later in the Eastern Church, she was venerated as a saint. Ecclesiastical and Gnostic writings even placed Mary Magdalene on a par with Peter.



The Penitent Magdalene by Guido Cagnacci, private collection. The Gospel of Luke reports that Jesus was invited by a Pharisee named Simon, in whose town also lived a "woman of ill repute". She washed Jesus' feet with her tears, dried them with her mop of hair, kissed them tenderly and rubbed them with anointing oil. "Therefore her many sins shall be forgiven, she loved much," Jesus said.

Top left: The Ascension, oil painting by Benjamin West (1801), Denver art Museum. The idea of the ascension to heaven runs through all epochs. Beginning with the ancient myth of the Ascension of Heracles, through Romulus, who was caught up to heaven, from the legends of ancient Egypt and the journeys of the souls of the shamans, the Ascension of Jesus Christ, to the Islamic traditions of Mohammed's ascent into the firmament.

Right side: The group of pewter figures with the three penitents and the angels who float with Faust's immortal into higher spheres. Colour composition by the miniature painter Reinhold Pfandzelter.

Far right: The Assumption of Mary Magdalene. Painting by Guido Cagnacci. c. 1640, Florence, Palazzo Pitti.



How the church transformed the Maria Magdalena

The Catholic Church has changed the image of the woman from Magdala over the course of time, explains theologian Susanne Ruschmann, who studied the history of Mary Magdalene in her doctoral thesis. The important role she still played in the early Church was probably pushed back in the Western Church for political reasons, Ruschmann suspects.

Thus Magdalene acquired the reputation of a sinner. "In the course of time, there was a mixture with other images of women mentioned in the New Testament," says the theologian. Thus, Mary of Magdala is associated, among other things, with the sinner - presumably a prostitute - who anointed Jesus' feet with oil - an enormous relegation of Peter's former rival. FOCUS online, Lisa Kleine



If one follows the Faust expert and important philologist Professor Albrecht Schöne, love is the main and fundamental word that dominates the final scene of this last chapter of Faust 14 times, "the almighty one of whom Father Profundus sings here that it forms everything".

Goethe contrasts love as the graciously helpful, saving eternal feminine with the errant striving Faust, the active and violent, who is presented as the eternal mascu-

line. The Chorus mysticus concludes the drama:

"All that is transient is but a parable; The inadequate, here it becomes event; The ineffable, here it is done; The eternal-feminine draws us up".

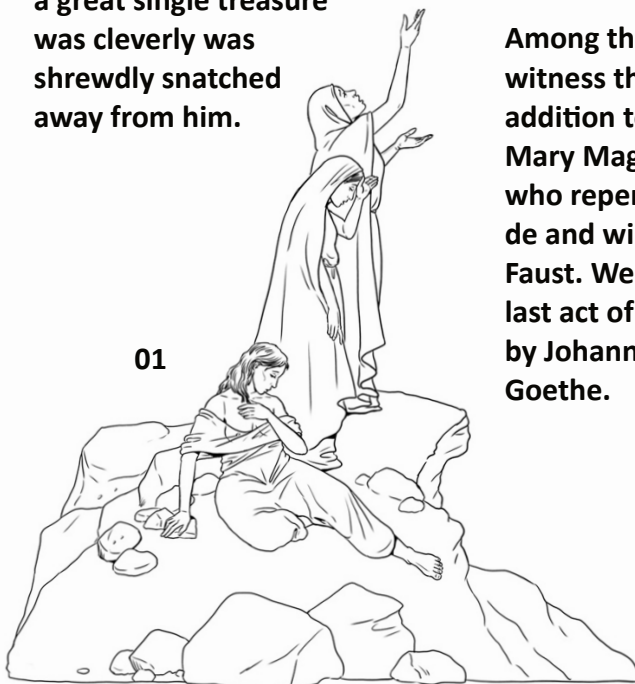
The eternal-feminine can be seen as the principle of love, which is opposed to the eternal-masculine, the Faustian titanism.

The angels hovering in a higher atmosphere, carrying Faust's immortal proclaim it:

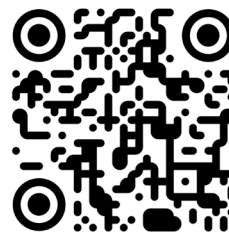
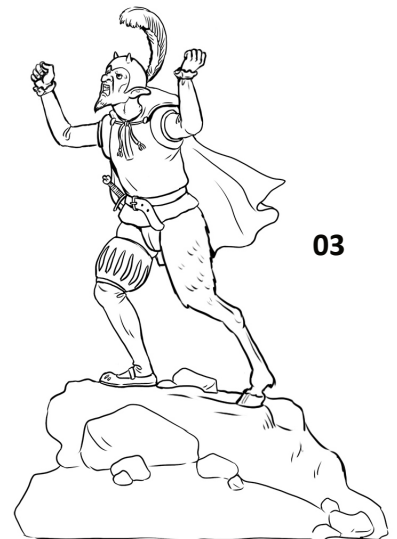
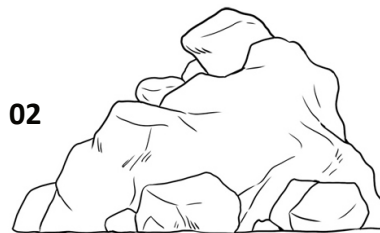
Saved is the noble limb
Of the spirit world from evil,
He who ever strives
We can redeem him.
And has love in him
From above has taken part,
The blessed multitude meets him
With a hearty welcome.

In the mountain gorges Faust's Ascension

In the previously published series "Faust's Entombment", the heavenly hosts triumphed over Mephisto's devilish accomplices and saved Faust's soul from the Hellmouth. Now the angels have raptured his immortal into a mythical landscape and carry it up to heaven. Mephisto rages because he has been given a great single treasure was cleverly was shrewdly snatched away from him.



Among the penitents who witness the scene is, in addition to the great sinner Mary Magdalene, Gretchen, who repents of her infanticide and will follow her lover Faust. We see here the very last act of the Faust epic by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.



www.bellazinnfigur.de

01 Mary Magdalene and two other penitents, 02 rock, 03 Mephistopheles furious, 04 Group of angels with Faust's soul floating towards heaven.

The set, packed in a high-quality cardboard box, includes four unpainted tin figures in a size of 30 mm size, a beautiful postcard as a painting template and an informative 8-page booklet with many illustrations. Illustrations by Sascha Lunyakov, engravings by Regina Sonntag. To order by e-mail at dieter@beller.info or in the shop at www.bellazinnfigur.de