

Freud's Trip to Orvieto

Nicholas Fox Weber

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In the first few years of the sixteenth century, in Orvieto's splendid medieval cathedral, Luca Signorelli painted *The Last Judgment*, a sprawling, shocking fresco of muscled nude men, bared buttocks, horrific violence, antichrists, angels, and evil mayhem. Sigmund Freud simply called it the greatest artwork he'd ever seen. Months later, for very Freudian reasons, he suddenly couldn't recall the painter's name and then, when reminded it was Signorelli, his memory wiped itself clean of what the painting depicted. So, what was the old boy repressing? With a barely suppressed grin, Nicholas Fox Weber believes the homoerotic imagery was to blame and this witty, art-savvy project meanders in all manner of delightful directions to build the case.

MATT SUTHERLAND (May/June 2017)

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