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Giovanni Segantini. La Vita – La Natura – La Morte

Landmarks of Swiss Art

Juerg Albrecht

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- Giovanni Segantini's monumental Alpine triptych *La Vita—La Natura—La Morte* is a key work of symbolist art
- The book offers insights into the moving genesis of Giovanni Segantini's landmark painting
- Based on extensive research and the evaluation of previously untapped sources

Giovanni Segantini's (1858–99) three paintings *La Vita—La Natura—La Morte* (Becoming—Being—Passing) of 1898/99 do not reveal at first glance anything about their equally complex and interesting background. Originally planned for the 1900 Paris Exposition of 1900 as a gigantic, multimedia "Alpine symphony" panorama 722 ft long and 66 ft high, Segantini was forced to reduce his work to three purely pictorial main paintings, owing to a lack of financial means. When he died in 1899, whilst still working on it, he left behind an incomplete triptych that was intended to embody "the spirit of nature, of life, and of death."

In this book, Swiss art historian and Segantini-expert Juerg Albrecht traces this monumental landmark piece in the artist's oeuvre as one of the last programmatic works of *fin de siècle* art. Apart from its genesis, the book explains, as well the cycle of life and death that the three paintings visualise, whose origins Segantini sought both privately and creatively in the mountains of the upper Engadine valley during his lifetime.

Text in English and German.

Juerg Albrecht, born 1952, is a scholar of art history. He served as head of art history at the Swiss Institute for Art Research SIK-ISEA 1991–2015.





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