

Michelangelo Buonarroti

(my-kel-AN-jel-loe bwoh-nah-ROW-tee) **1475 – 1564**
Italian Painter

88



Fresco - painting on wet plaster walls and ceilings. When the plaster is damp, the paint is absorbed into the plaster and gives a longer lasting finished work.



Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni was born in Caprese, Italy (known today as Caprese Michelangelo). He grew up in Florence where his father was an official. His mother had a long illness and died when he was **six**. He showed no interest in schooling, preferring to copy church paintings and seek the company of painters. Florence was at that time the greatest center of the arts and learning in Italy.

In 1488 (**13**), Michelangelo was apprenticed to Domenico Ghirlandaio, a master of fresco painting, figure drawing and portraiture, in the largest workshop in Florence. Michelangelo was **fourteen** when his father persuaded Ghirlandaio to pay his apprentice as an artist, highly unusual at that time.

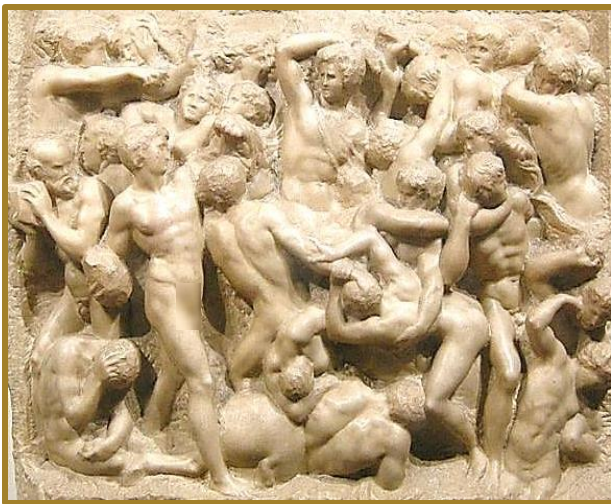
The Medici family was very influential in Italy's art and politics.



When in 1489 (**14**), Lorenzo de' Medici, de facto ruler of Florence, asked Ghirlandaio for his two best pupils, Michelangelo was one sent. From 1490 to 1492 (**15-17**), Michelangelo attended The Medici School, becoming a sculptor. There he met philosophers, artists, poets and writers. He sculpted the reliefs *Madonna of the Steps* and *Battle of the Centaurs*.

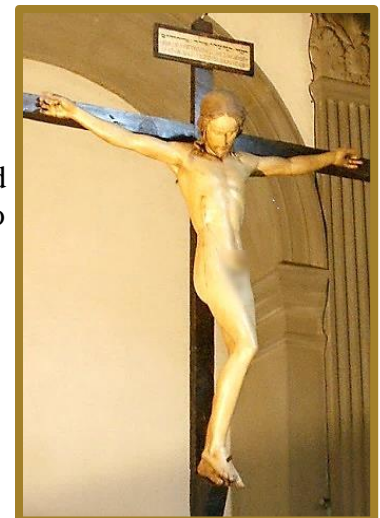


When he was **seventeen**, another pupil struck him on the nose, causing the conspicuous disfigurement in Michelangelo's portraits.



Lorenzo de' Medici's death in 1492 reversed Michelangelo's fortunes. He left the security of the Medici court and returned

to his father's house. He carved a polychrome wooden *Crucifix*, as a gift to the prior of the Florentine church of Santo Spirito, which had permitted him some studies of anatomy on the corpses of the church's hospital.



Portrait of Michelangelo by Jacopino del Conte (after 1535 ~ 60).
Self Portrait as the head of Holofernes, Sistine Chapel ceiling ~ 1510 (**35**).
Madonna of the Steps, 1490–92 (**15-17**), Michelangelo's earliest known work.
Battle of the Centaurs, 1491–1492 (**15-17**). *Crucifix*, 1493 (**18**).

Main Source of document: Wikipedia. * N

Between 1493 - 1494 he carved a larger than life marble statue of Hercules. It was sent to France but disappeared around the 18th century. In 1494 (19), after heavy snowfalls, Lorenzo's heir, Piero de Medici, commissioned a snow statue, and Michelangelo re-entered the Medici court. He created *St. John the Baptist* and a sleeping *Cupid*, in 1496 (21). Michelangelo was asked to treat the Cupid with acidic earth to make it seem ancient. The cardinal who purchased it learned of the fraud and demanded his money back. However, because the cardinal was impressed with the quality of his work, Michelangelo was permitted to keep his share. He did not press charges against Michelangelo and even invited him to Rome. These two sculptures increased Michelangelo's fame.

Michelangelo arrived in Rome and created an over-life-size statue of *Bacchus*, the Roman wine god. The finished work was rejected by the cardinal who commissioned it, but was purchased for a banker's garden.

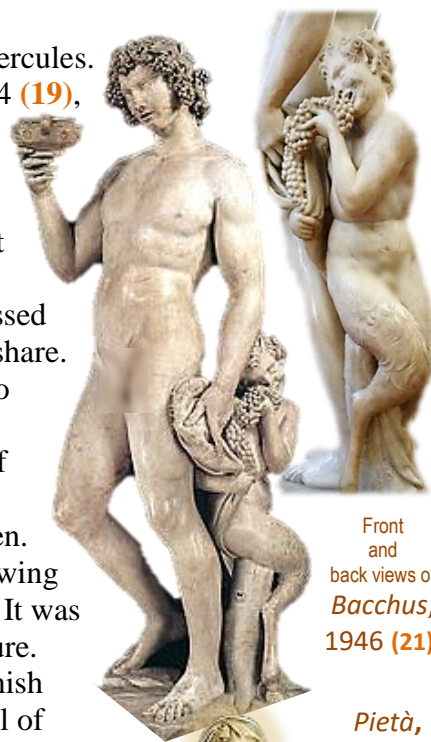
In 1499 (24), Michelangelo finished carving a *Pietà*, a sculpture showing the Virgin Mary grieving over the body of Jesus, for another cardinal. It was soon to be regarded as one of the world's great masterpieces of sculpture.

Michelangelo returned to Florence in 1499 (24) and was asked to finish a project begun 40 years earlier: a colossal statue of David as a symbol of Florentine freedom. He completed the Statue of David, in 1504 (29). The

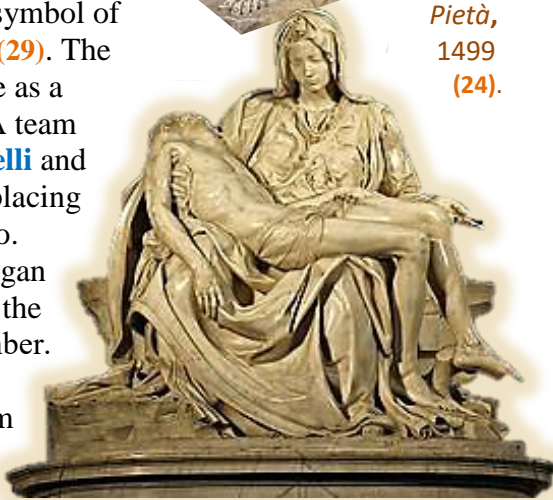
work established his prominence as a sculptor of extraordinary skill. A team of consultants, including **Botticelli** and Leonardo **da Vinci** decided on placing it in front of the Palazzo Vecchio.

In 1504 Leonardo **da Vinci** began painting the *Battle of Angiari* in the Palazzo Vecchio's council chamber. Michelangelo was hired to paint the *Battle of Cascina* across from it. Leonardo's painting depicted soldiers fighting on horseback.

Michelangelo's showed soldiers being ambushed while bathing in the river. Neither was completed and both were lost when the chamber was refurbished. They were much admired and copies remain of them: Leonardo's copied by **Rubens**, Michelangelo's by **Da Sangallo**.



Front and back views of *Bacchus*, 1496 (21).



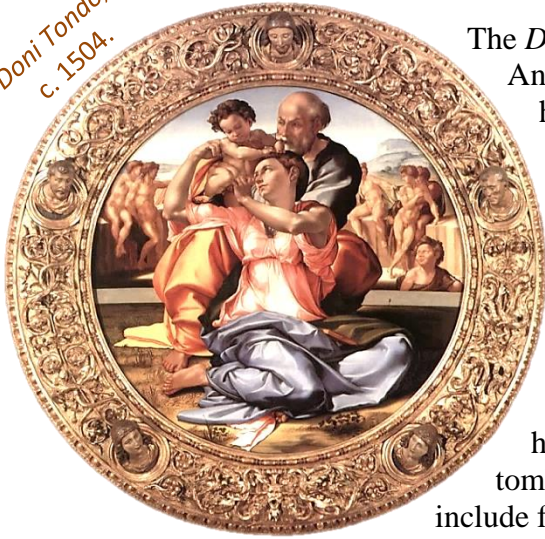
Pietà, 1499 (24).



1504 (29) –
Statue of David (3).
Battle of Cascina, c. 1504.



Doni Tondo,
c. 1504.



The *Doni Tondo* was created when Michelangelo was hired by Angelo Doni to paint a "Holy Family" as a present for his wife. It hangs in its original magnificent frame which Michelangelo may have designed.

In 1505 (30), Michelangelo was invited back to Rome by the newly elected Pope Julius II and hired to build his tomb, which was to

include forty statues and be done in five years.

Under the Pope's patronage, there were constant interruptions to his work on the tomb to accomplish other tasks. Although Michelangelo worked on it for 40 years, the tomb was never finished to his satisfaction. Most famous is the central figure of Moses. Of the other statues intended for the tomb, *The Heroic Captive* and *The Dying Captive*, are now in the Louvre.

During this time, Michelangelo painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, in four years. Commissioned to cover the central part of the ceiling with ornament, Michelangelo proposed a more complex scheme to Pope Julius: to represent the Creation, Fall of Man, Promise of Salvation through the prophets, and the genealogy of Christ.



Moses, 1516 (41).
Dying Captive,
c. 1513 (38).

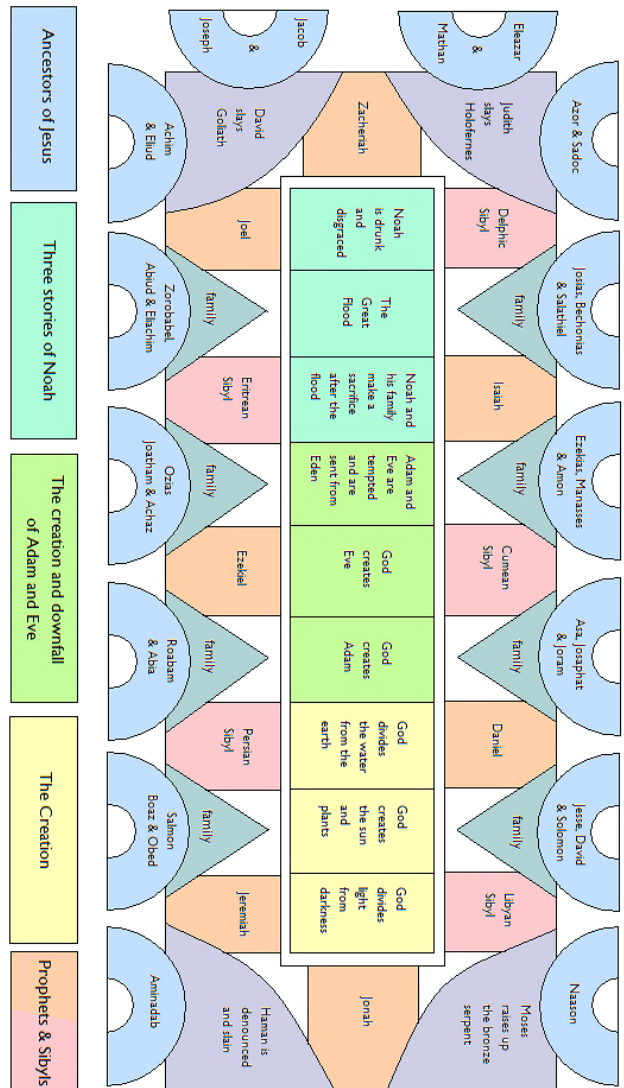


Michelangelo's composition contains over 300 figures.

The Sistine Chapel ceiling, 1508–1512 (33-37): *Creation of Adam* (2), *Temptation and Fall*, L to R - *Daniel*, and *The Prophets Jeremiah, Joel and Isaiah*.



Sistine Ceiling and map. The Deluge. God creates the Sun and Moon.



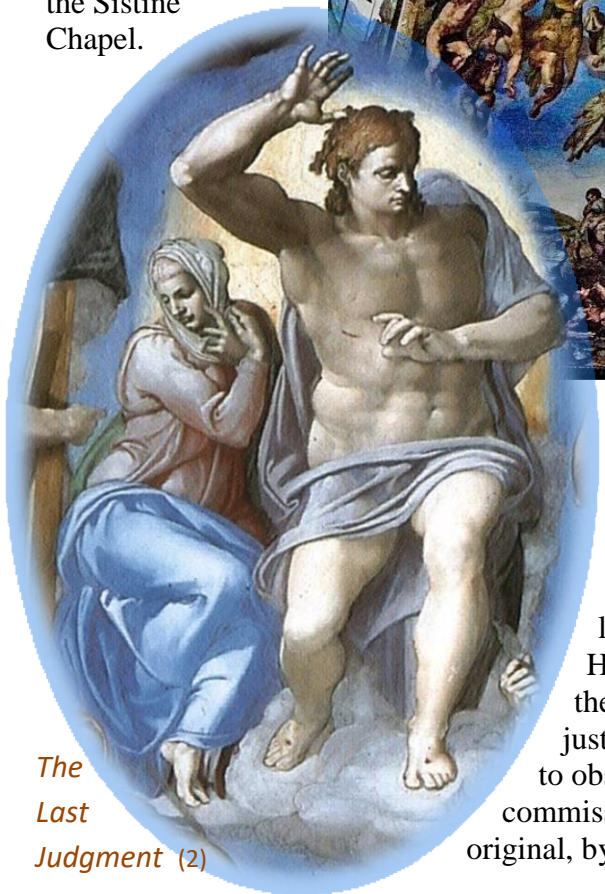
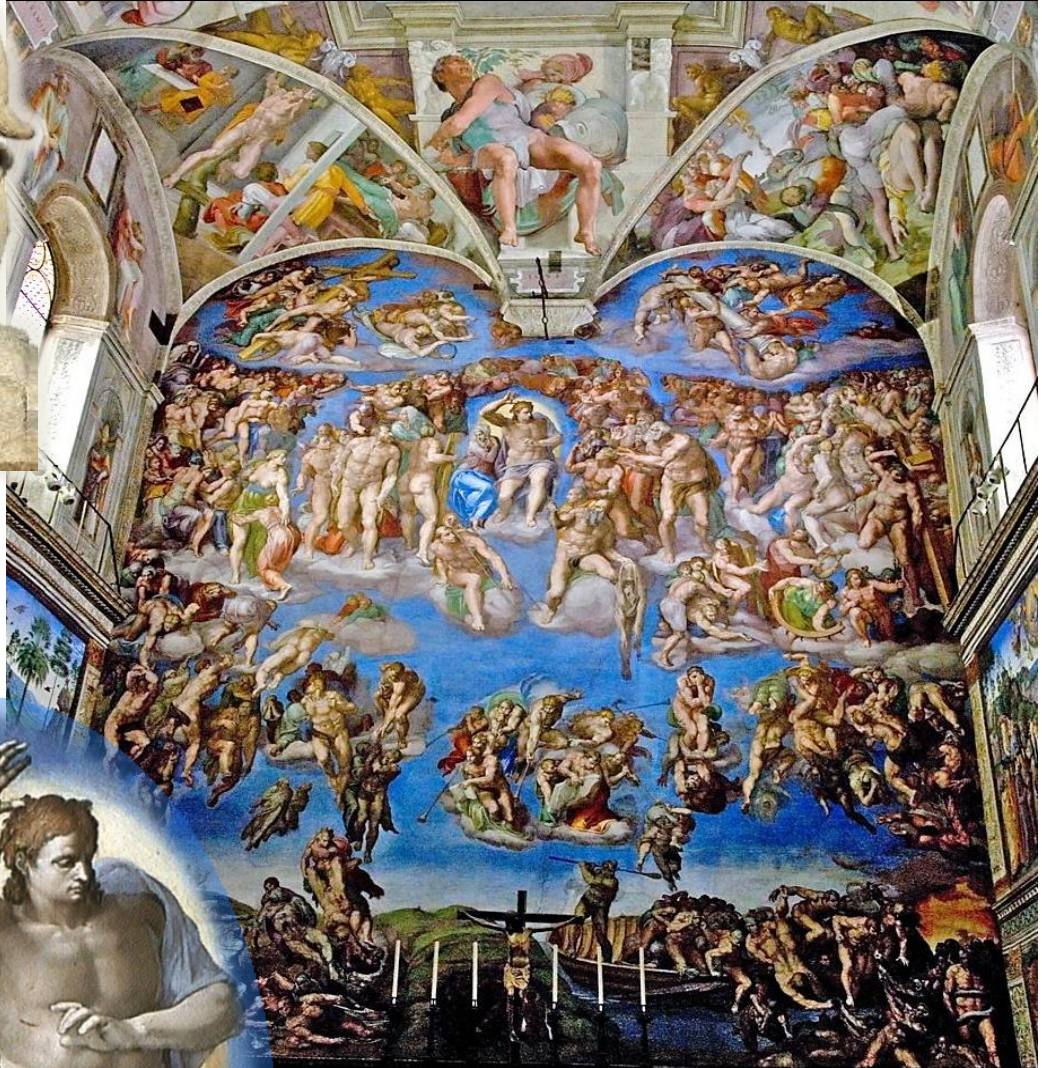
Medici Madonna (2) and chapel.



In 1520 (45) Michelangelo created a funeral chapel for the Medici, with its most famous statue being the *Medici Madonna*. A concealed corridor was discovered in 1976 with drawings on the walls relating to the chapel.

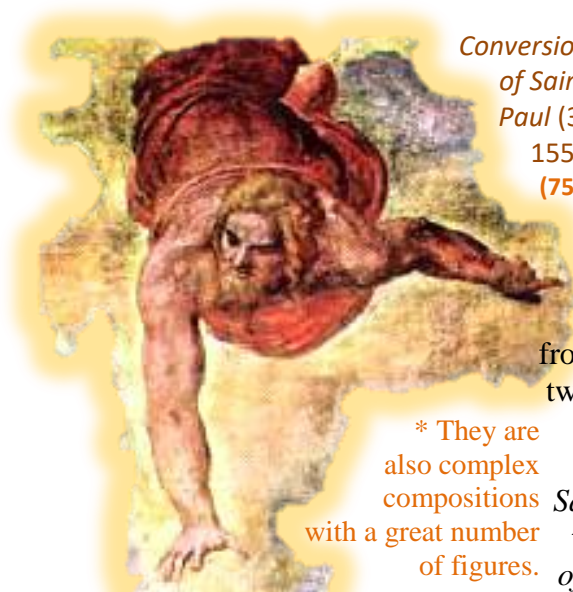


From 1534 – 1541 (59-66) Michelangelo painted a fresco of *The Last Judgment* on the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel.



The Last Judgment (2)

The fresco depicts the Second Coming of Christ and his Judgment of the souls. Michelangelo ignored the usual artistic conventions in portraying Jesus, and showed him a massive, muscular figure, youthful, beardless and naked. He is surrounded by saints, among which Bartholomew holds a drooping flayed skin, bearing Michelangelo's likeness. The dead rise from graves, to be consigned to Heaven or Hell. Once completed, the depiction of Christ and the Virgin Mary naked was considered sacrilegious, and just before Michelangelo's death in 1564, it was decided to obscure the genitals. One of Michelangelo's apprentices was commissioned to alter the painting. An uncensored copy of the original, by M. Venusti, is in the Capodimonte Museum of Naples.



Conversion of Saint Paul (3) 1550 (75).

* They are also complex compositions with a great number of figures.

While still Working on the Last Judgment,

Michelangelo received another commission from the Vatican: two large frescos depicting the Conversion of Saint Paul * and the Crucifixion of Saint Peter *.



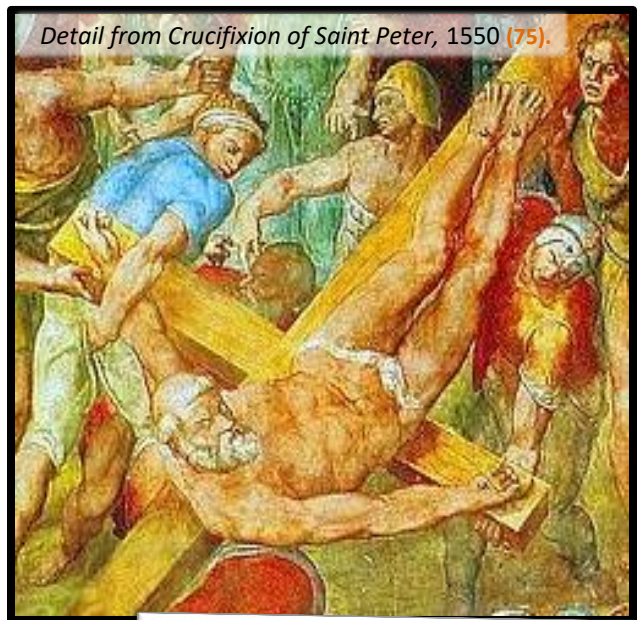
In 1550 (75), Giorgio Vasari published his *Vita*, including a biography of Michelangelo, who was the first Western artist whose biography (there were two) was published while he was still alive. Vasari, who also wrote about **Da Vinci** – but after his death, wrote one. While Michelangelo was alive he was often called “*Il Divino*” (“the divine one”) and sometimes,



“inventor delle porcherie” (“inventor of obscenities”) because of his many nudes. His

output during his long life was prodigious. When the volume of correspondence, reminiscences and sketches that survive is also taken into account, he is the best-documented artist of the 16th century.

He was considered an influential “High Renaissance” man.



Detail from Crucifixion of Saint Peter, 1550 (75).



Michelangelo's Dome Design (2) c.1547 (72).

St. Peter's Basilica

In 1546 (71), Michelangelo was appointed architect of St. Peter's Basilica, Rome. The process of replacing the 4th century basilica had been underway for fifty years. He strengthened the structure both physically and visually. He designed the dome but it wasn't completed (1590) until after his death. St. Peter's is the most



renowned work of Renaissance architecture and remains the largest church in the world. Tradition and strong historical evidence hold that Saint Peter's tomb is directly below the altar of the basilica.

Michelangelo died in Rome at 88. His body rests in Florence, fulfilling his desire to be buried there.