

The High Renaissance



Revenge of the turtles...

Having started in the wealthy banking city of Florence, the ideas of the Renaissance spread outward. Individualism began to put down roots. The belief in art and beauty as means of spiritual enlightenment became more and more a part of the ideas of both church and culture.

Art became the pop culture of the Renaissance. Artists gained reputations and worked for the rich and famous. They were still craftsmen, still just “guns for hire,” but they gained notoriety and reputations. They were remembered and people came on pilgrimages, not just to see relics, but to see art.

In a culture where we have ipods, internet, and television, it’s hard to understand what the change in life and social structure meant during the renaissance. For the first time, people who a hundred years before would have been tied to a social class were able to have a little bit of mobility and to see a little glimpse of art and beauty. Plato’s ideas of education as a means to become a “good” person were taken to heart and humanism blossomed. Aristotle’s ideas of accepting the “real,” physical world as having worth were taken to heart and art became more realistic, more accessible.

The renaissance had truly begun, and society had taken the first step to the modern world.

Renaissance

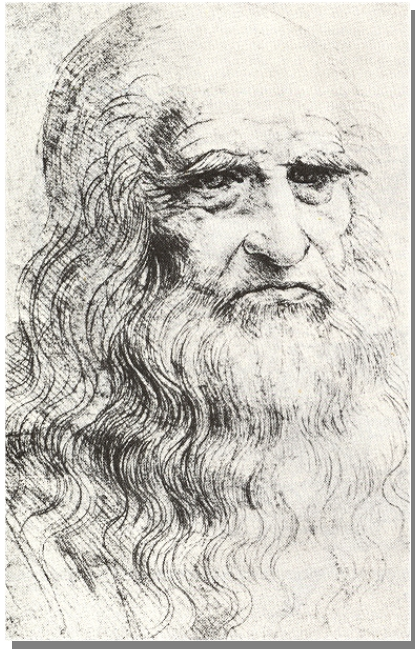
- Knowledge
 - Plato/ Aristotle
 - Greek sculpture
- Opportunity
- Money



Born in 1452 in the early years of the Renaissance, Leonardo DaVinci remains one of the era's greatest figures and artists.

We know that DaVinci was a man with a boundless imagination. His notebooks show an individual interested in everything, and we know that he did not get to try even half of the things he dreamed of attempting. DaVinci was frequently reclusive and private, although he was open in sharing his sketches and examples with younger painters whom he mentored (among other things – it is believed he had sexual liasons with a number of boys and young men in his household).

Leonardo was a scientist and inventor as well as an artist. He followed the ideas of Aristotle and believed passionately in observing the physical world in order to better portray it in art or emulate it in invention.



Leonardo Da Vinci

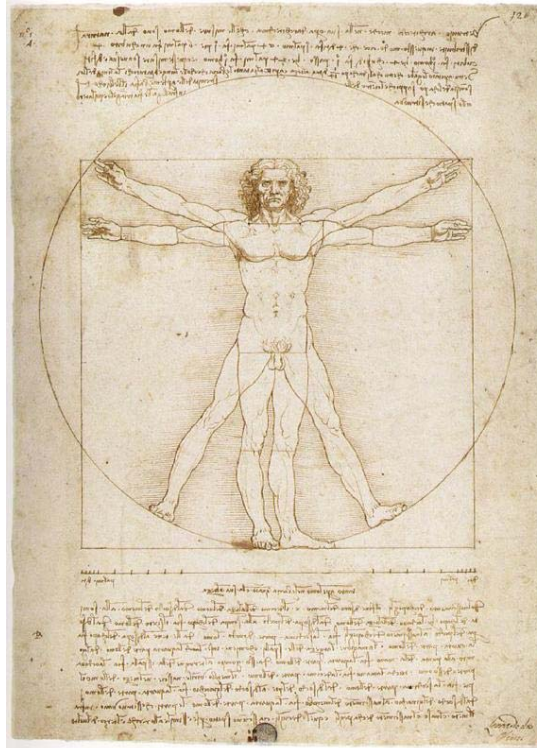
By the time of the High Renaissance, DaVinci was older than other artists. His experience makes him an 'odd' artist. He knows and uses some of the early renaissance conventions while doing other things that did not come into fashion until centuries later.

DaVinci was the illegitimate child of a noble and a peasant woman who was eventually raised in his father's household. Vasari, writer of a biography of the artists of the Renaissance, wrote that Leonardo was a strikingly handsome man with great strength and a fine singing voice whose "charming conversation won all hearts.." Unlike other Italians of his time, he was a vegetarian. He loved animals so much that he would buy caged animals at the market just to set them free. He was also fond of fine clothes and practical jokes.

DaVinci showed artistic promise early. He was trained under a master and then surpassed him, going on to work on his own shortly thereafter.

DaVinci was a procrastinator who frequently failed to complete commissions. He spent a great deal of his life messing with inventions and devices; in fact, he worked for the Borga family inspecting fortifications

Vitruvian Man



In ancient Rome, an architect and engineer named Vitruvius wrote a textbook on architecture and proportion. His work was used throughout the centuries as a textbook on architecture. Leonardo DaVinci studied the works of Vitruvius, and was particularly interested in Vitruvius' discussion of the proportions that make up the human body.

As a part of his extensive notebooks (filled with sketches and written in code), DaVinci sketched what Vitruvius described, a sketch of anatomy known as the Vitruvian man.

For DaVinci, the emphasis of the sketch is combining geometry with art so that small whole numbers build up to make a realistic proportion – navel is the middle, and according to Vitruvius, if a man lies down with arms and legs extended, and a circle is drawn with his navel as the center, the edge of the circle will match up with his palms and the soles of his feet.

Leo shifts what Vitruvius says, changing the arms from above the head to shoulder level, and drawing a square within the circle, which places the center of the body at the genitalia.

Leo shifts “center of magnitude” through position – notes no change in gravity

Madonna of the Rocks



The Madonna of the Rocks (or Virgin of the rocks) was DaVinci's earlier works, but it illustrates an amazing grip on optical principles. Took 25 years to completion.

Art has to portray 2 things – physical reality & emotion or intent. Leo does both.

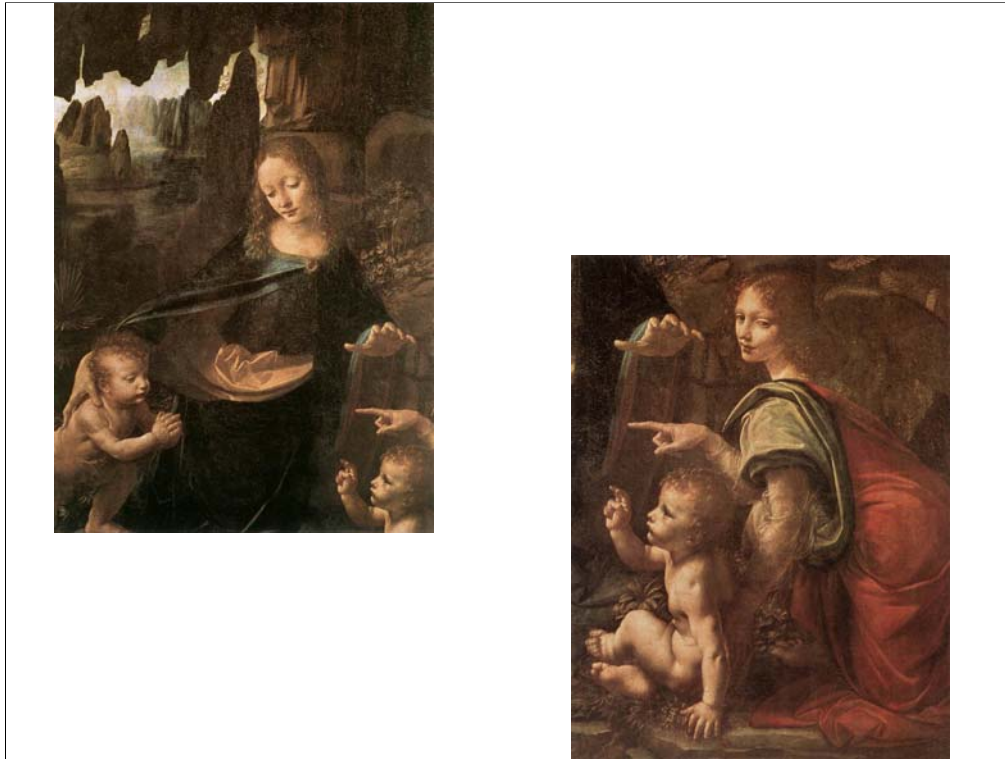
In the painting, he uses a 3-D method that creates a pyramid or rectangle joined together by lines, gestures and glances. The pool in the foreground prefigures Christ's baptism.

He also uses a method called sfumato which, instead of drawing dark lines and filling them in like Botticelli uses shadows and areas of light and color to create borders, a method that allows him to create a more realistic image.

DaVinci's backgrounds are painstakingly realistic and detailed. The rocks in the background draw on DaVinci's research in the Alps. The geology of the piece is completely accurate and can actually be analyzed by experts. The plants surrounding the figures also show personal observation.

The painting shows a deep understanding of light and atmosphere and their affect on color and reflection. The space of the painting appears to be filled with a fine mist.

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The painting was commissioned as part of an altarpiece and ended up in a nasty legal battle.

Close examination of the painting shows an incredible understanding of the way cloth appears in light and how light interacts with skin.

Additionally, the plants in the painting are not only drawn from life, they also are correctly placed – they grow where they would in real life.

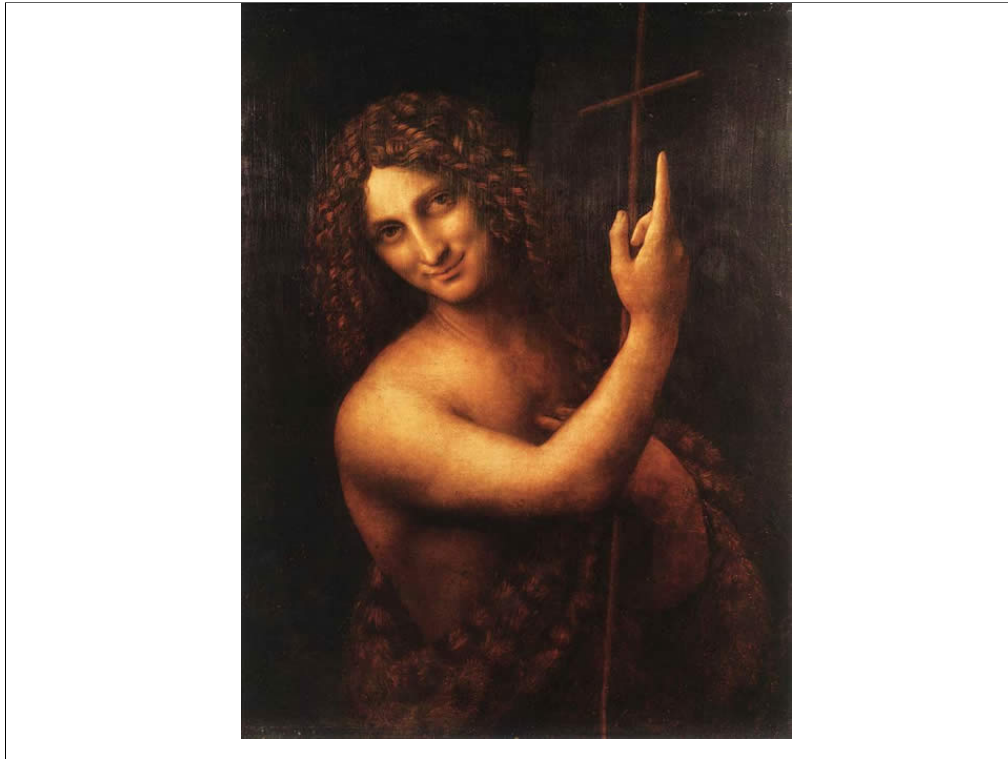


1483-1486



1495-1508







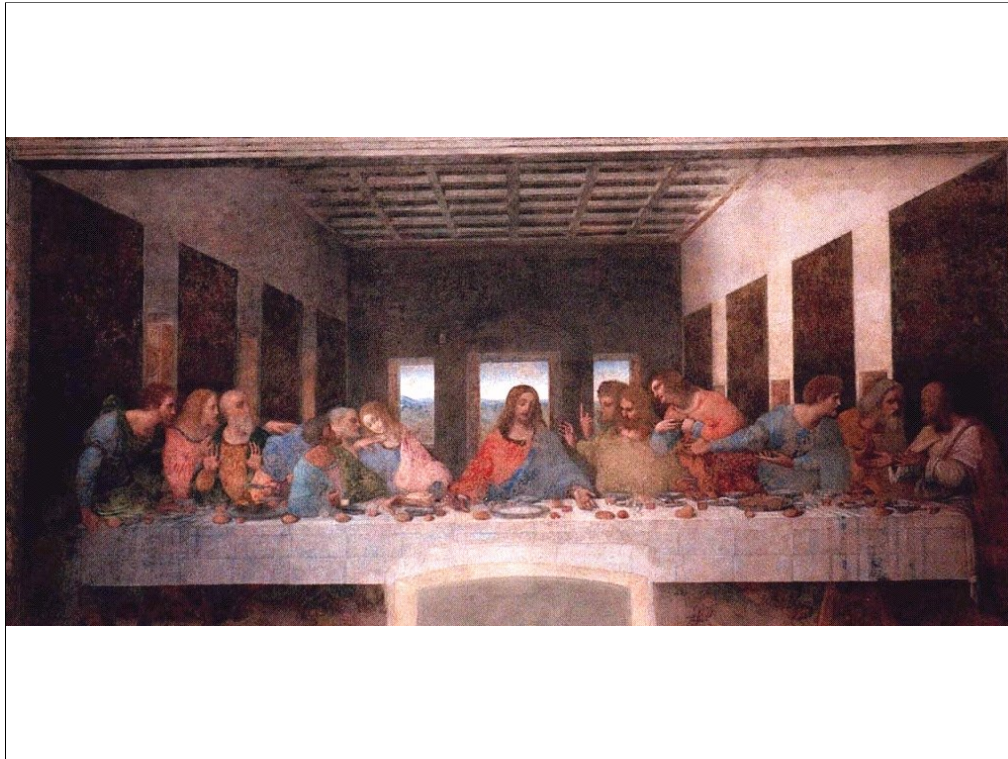
The fresco measures 15 x 29 feet and took almost 3 years to complete, partially due to DaVinci's bouts with depression.

The painting is unusual – typically the last supper was shown around a round table. Judas was isolated and usually across the table from Jesus. DaVinci made the table square and played visual tricks – it's too small for the group of 13, and the figures are oversized as well.

DaVinci was a scientist and inventor; he kept experimenting with new methods. Instead of going with Buon Fresco and its unforgiving requirements, he decided to paint on dry plaster w/ egg tempera – began to flake almost immediately.

The painting is in terrible condition – it was “restored” numerous times, notably by Michelangelo. It was restored in 1977-1997, but much of it is still lost. For example, Jesus has no feet b/c some moron decided that this was the best place for a door.

In 1943, abbey was bombed – the wall survived b/c of bracing and sandbags, but refectory was not restored, so it had to survive the elements for over a year. **P.296**



The painting is a synthesis of math and emotion. The mathematical space is perfect with a clear, single focal point. Jesus sits in the middle of the space, peaceful in the middle of major emotional chaos.

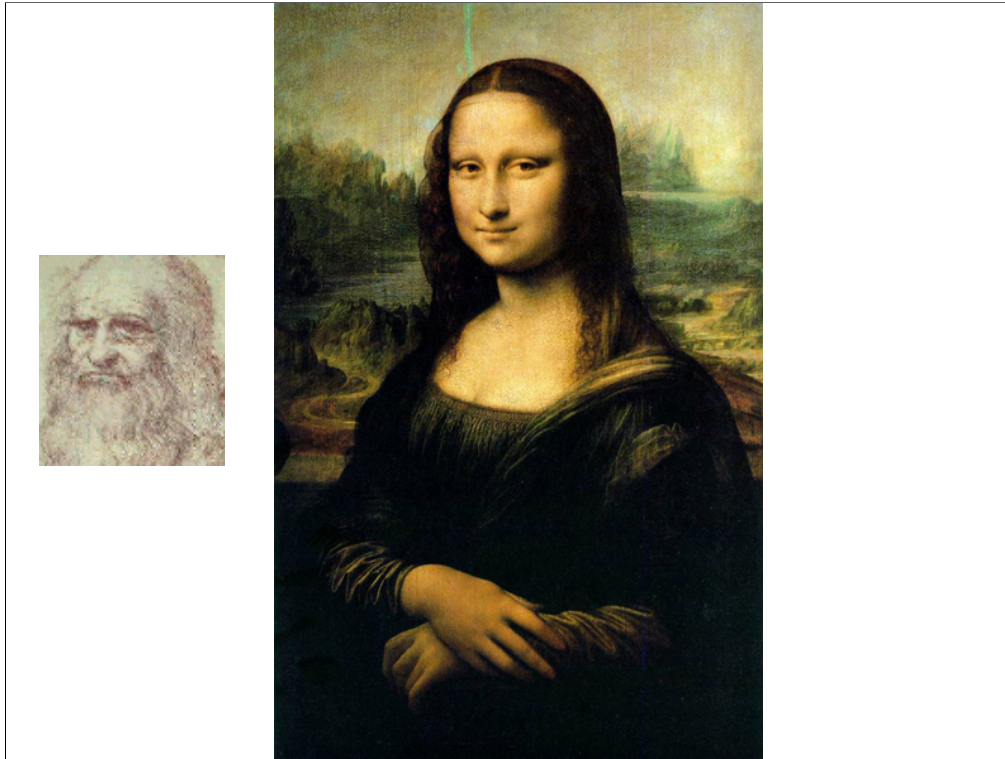
From left to right

- **Bartholomew, James** and **Andrew** form a group of three. All are upset, Andrew appears so upset that he is raising his hands in a “stop” gesture.
- **Judas, Peter** and **John** form the next grouping. Judas, you will note, has his face in shadow and is holding onto a money bag. Peter juts his jaw forward angrily, and a feminine-looking John seems about to pass out.
- **Thomas, James** and **Philip** are next. Thomas appears angry, James curls his hands toward himself in shock, and Philip holds a hand up with a finger raised as if asking for a pause or more information.
- **Matthew, Thaddeus,** and **Simon** comprise the last group of three figures. Matthew and Thaddeus appear to be turning to Simon for explanation or advice.



A closer look at the painting before and after restoration shows the changes made by other artists.

Closer looks also reveal a little bit about Leonardo's methods. A hole into which a nail had been driven has been found, located in the temple of Jesus. The location is the key spatial focus of Leonardo's painting of the *Last Supper*. He drove a nail into the wall and radiated string in various directions to help him see the perspective of the room he was painting.



The Mona Lisa is possibly the most famous painting of all time.

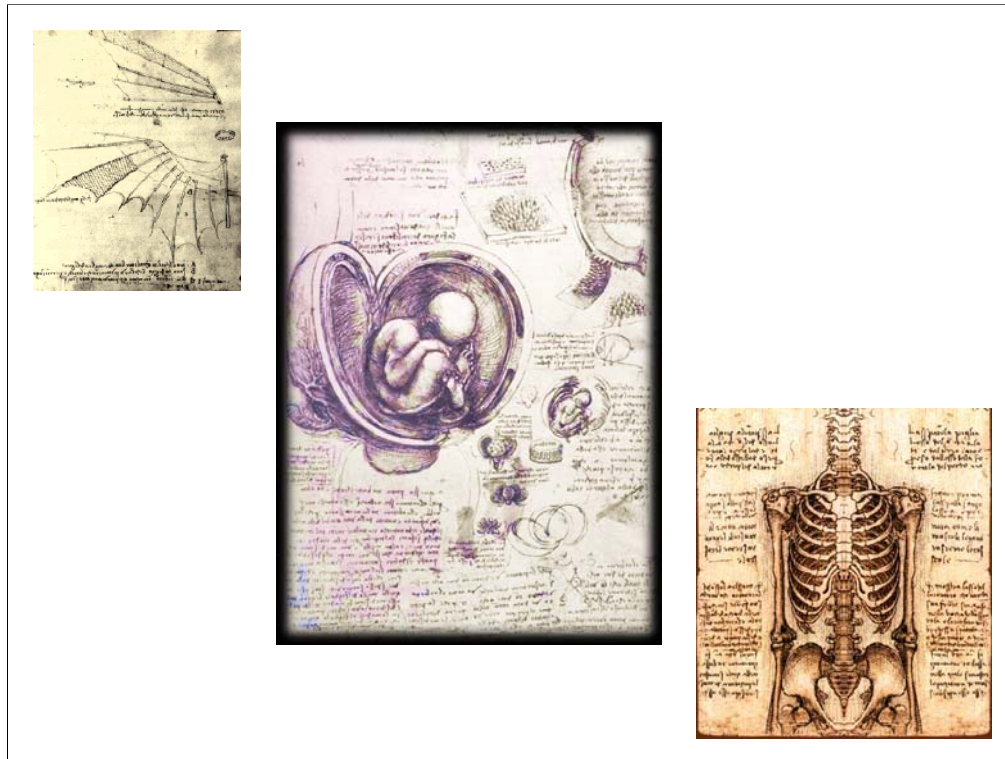
Monna Lisa was her original title. Monna is a contraction for Madonna, Mia Donna (Madam or My Lady). It became Mona Lisa, in English, due to a spelling error. She is La Joconde in French, La Gioconda in Italian, "the merry one," referring to the smile but also possibly a play on her name, Lisa Gherardini del Giocondo.

DaVinci loved this painting, carrying it with him for 4 years and keeping it until his death. It is a mystery in many ways – The wealthy lady supposedly portrayed has no rich clothing, jewelry, or indication of her rank. But if she is supposed to be portrayed as a saint, why is there no religious symbolism? The background is geographically accurate but vague. The smile appears and disappears – trick of the eye. And the drapery and hands are expertly done.

The edges of the painting were cut off at some point, and the paintings true colors remain a mystery under the grime. X-rays reveal 3 different paintings below this one.

Her eyebrows may have been inadvertently removed during an early cleaning and restoration. There is also the possibility that she may have shaved or plucked them as was the fashion in her day.

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DaVinci's interests centered around art, but he was a die-hard Aristotelian who believed that learning about the natural world could only enhance art.

He worked out a wide variety of inventions including plans for a flying machine, a helicopter, a submarine, and a self-winding clock.

Additionally, Leonardo DaVinci was the father of anatomical drawings. Eager to discover how the body worked (he thought that the order of the body reflected the order of the universe), DaVinci exhumed bodies for study (irritating the church in the process).

Performing autopsies, DaVinci sketched out accurate, 3-dimensional representations of the human body which gave scientific input on the function of the body, allowed him to better draw the human form, and reveal exactly how curious the man was about everything.

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DaVinci, like Botticelli before him, relied upon the patronage of rich merchants and local churches. However, there was a powerful player in Italy who became a major sponsor of art and artists. The papacy had gradually slipped from a position of great spiritual reverence to a purchased position of great temporal power. Many of the Renaissance popes had bribed their way into the position and, although well educated, were more interested in the political power and beautiful accommodations of the papacy than the religious aspects. You can think of the papacy like the Emperor of Rome. It started out as a great and serious position, but by this point, it was a coveted position of power for the wrong reasons.

The Renaissance papacy owned lands across the center of Italy called the Papal states and collected taxes on them. The pope commanded an army as well as demanding loyalty.

Most of the Renaissance popes were well educated men, **humanists** who believed the way to perfection was through beauty, education, and enlightenment. They wanted to create beautiful works of art and to return Rome to its former glory.

Vatican



The pope and his entourage lived in the city of Rome in an area known as the Vatican. Speaking of the Vatican implies the pope and his advisors as a whole. If “the Vatican” makes a decision, the decision is assumed to come from the Pope.

The Vatican became one of the biggest **patrons** or sponsors of art during the High Renaissance.



Julius II

One of the best known popes of the Renaissance is Julius II, also known as the warrior pope and Il Papa Terribile. Julius took the Papal throne by a good bit of maneuvering, manipulation, and bribery.

Julius had a strong vision of what the papacy should be. He intended to bring back the papal states that had broken away from the rule of the papacy and were doing their own things. He intended to bring the city of Rome, currently a muddy, stinky cess pit back to being a beautiful, imperial city worthy of the seat of Christianity (and a lot of tourism), and he intended to keep an eye on the religious part of the papacy too. Although Julius was by no means a bad pope, his lack of enthusiasm for things spiritual is evidenced by the fact that he was known for falling asleep in mass during sermons.

Almost immediately after becoming pope, Julius hired an up-and-coming artist to carve a massive tomb for him, a tomb which would have over 50 marble figures on it, and would cost hundreds of gold ducats.

Julius was distracted from his tomb planning, however, and ended up beginning a total rebuild of St. Peter's Basilica, one of the most sacred places in Christendom, instead. The artist for his tomb was angry, and unpaid. Michelangelo Buonarroti's feud with Julius had begun.

Michelangelo Buonarrotti

Michelangelo is considered one of the greatest artists of all time. Decidedly weird and cranky in temperament, Michelangelo was a genius when it came to art.

Specializing in massive figures carved with precision, delicacy, and passion, Michelangelo left his stamp on art history. His David is far more familiar a sight than the versions by either Donatello or Bernini. And his Sistine Chapel ceiling frescoes draw thousands of spectators each year.



Michelangelo Buonarrotti

Michelangelo was born the son of a minor official in the city of Florence. He was one of 5 sons, and his mother died in childbirth. Raised in the firm conviction that his family was of royal heritage and had simply fallen upon bad times, Michelangelo spent his life trying to restore his family's glory – and fend off the stupid decisions made by his father and brothers.

Known as a brilliant artist from a very young age, Michelangelo frequently did not seem to care for anything other than his work. He had a reputation for neglecting to eat, sleep, and bathe, and he usually slept in his clothes and boots. He rarely went out for social gatherings and frequently left abruptly when he did go out. He respected no one but God.

Yet Michelangelo's work shows an incredible knowledge of the human condition – its emotions and its impressiveness. Michelangelo's work is known for 2 characteristics above all else – its massive power (frequently called *terribilita*) and its twisted poses.



At only 22 years of age in 1497, Michelangelo, having trained at the Medici art school, wandered his way down to Rome, writes a contract with a French cardinal, for the realization, within a year, of a "**Pietà**" (literally meaning "pity" – a statue or painting portraying the dead body of Christ in his mother Mary's arms) in marble destined to be placed in the Basilica of St. Peter's on the cardinal's tomb.

The statue is a masterwork. It is hard to believe that the drapery of Mary's clothing is marble. It stands 69 inches high (almost 6 feet) and it is one of the most clever tricks of illusion sculpted. The Madonna, delicate as she appears, is huge in comparison with the body of Christ. Standing, she would be over 15 feet tall.

The statue was repeatedly attributed to another sculptor, supposedly at least once within Michelangelo's hearing. According to tradition, he sneaked back to the cathedral that night and carved a message on the cross tie of Mary's robe reading "Michelangelo Buonarroti, Florentine, made this." The inscription makes the Pieta the only signed Michelangelo sculpture.

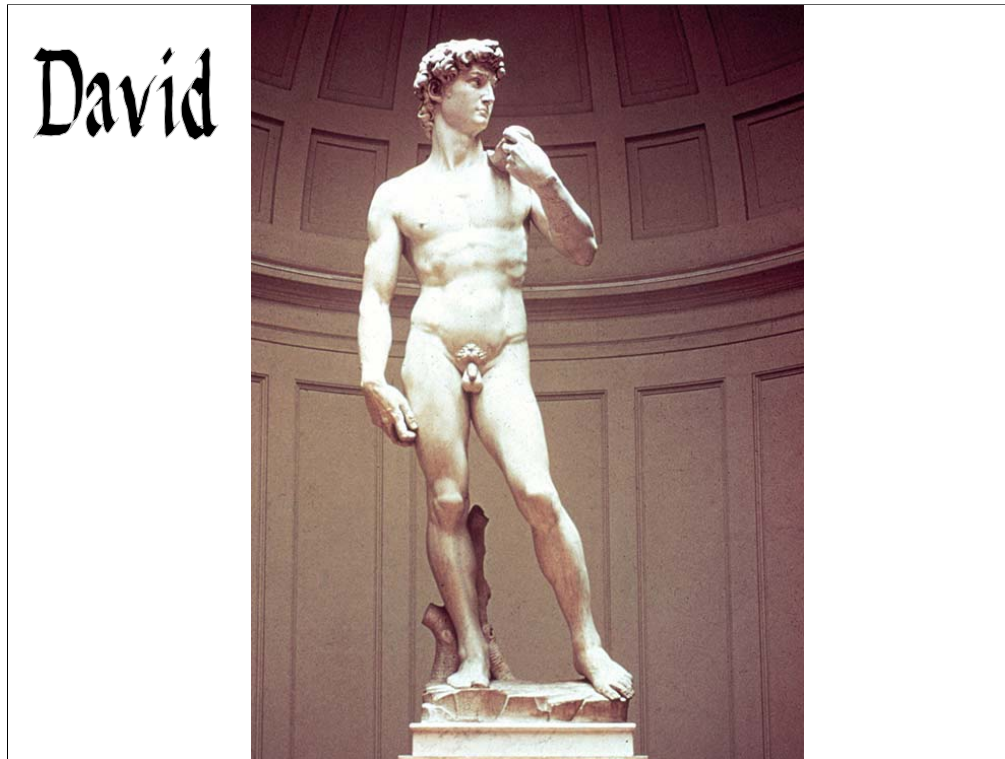
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Michelangelo's texturing and delicate detail make the statue lifelike, making it look like something more than marble.

From the time it was unveiled, viewers complained about the youth of the Madonna. Michelangelo said it was indicative of her special, divine purity. His personal opinions also had a lot to do with her portrayal -

Do you not know that chaste women stay fresh much more than those who are not chaste? How much more in the case of the Virgin, who had never experienced the least lascivious desire that might change her body? –Michelangelo



After completing the Pieta, at the age of 29, Michelangelo returned to his native Florence, where he was commissioned to work on a great block of marble called the “giant.” Originally started by 2 other sculptors over 40 years earlier, the David was an inherited project that drew on Michelangelo’s creativity – he had to work with a block of stone abandoned by 2 other artists as too inferior to work.

The David was a political statement as well as an artistic one. Florence was a little state surrounded by large, powerful states and as the power of the Medici family waned, it seemed like David surrounded by Goliaths.

It didn’t always get much respect, however. When it was originally put on public display in 1504, people threw stones at it. In 1512 lightning struck the pedestal. In 1527 someone threw a bench out a window in a riot and broke his arm off; it wasn’t restored for 16 years.

The statue measures 14 feet high (17 with its base), and is amazing because so much of it is completely free standing.

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Unlike Donatello's David, Mikey's is shown before the battle, tensed and ready for the fight. The incredibly accurate musculature indicates that Michelangelo, like DaVinci was involved in a bit of grave robbing. Like Donatello's figure, the David is nude, rising from a lack of clarity in the Bible story that Mikey used to support his desire to sculpt a nude male. Oddly enough, for a young Jewish boy, David is uncircumcised, probably because Renaissance culture thought circumcision dishonoring/ mutilating.

The David represents the characteristic which carries through in all of Michelangelo's work – a sense of tension, of coiled expectation. Rather than portraying his people in a moment of action (that comes with later artists), Mikey portrays people all bottled up. He shows their inner tensions through the massive, tensed bodies and taut faces, but they never get to act.

David's right hand is an excellent example of this; it serves 2 purposes. First of all, it provides a large contact point which allows the weight of the arm to be directed back toward the statue. Secondly, its carefully defined tensions and bulging veins show David's tension and power – the hand holds the handle of the slingshot and it, as much as the slingshot, is the weapon that kills Goliath.

**Tricks of mikey - walleyed

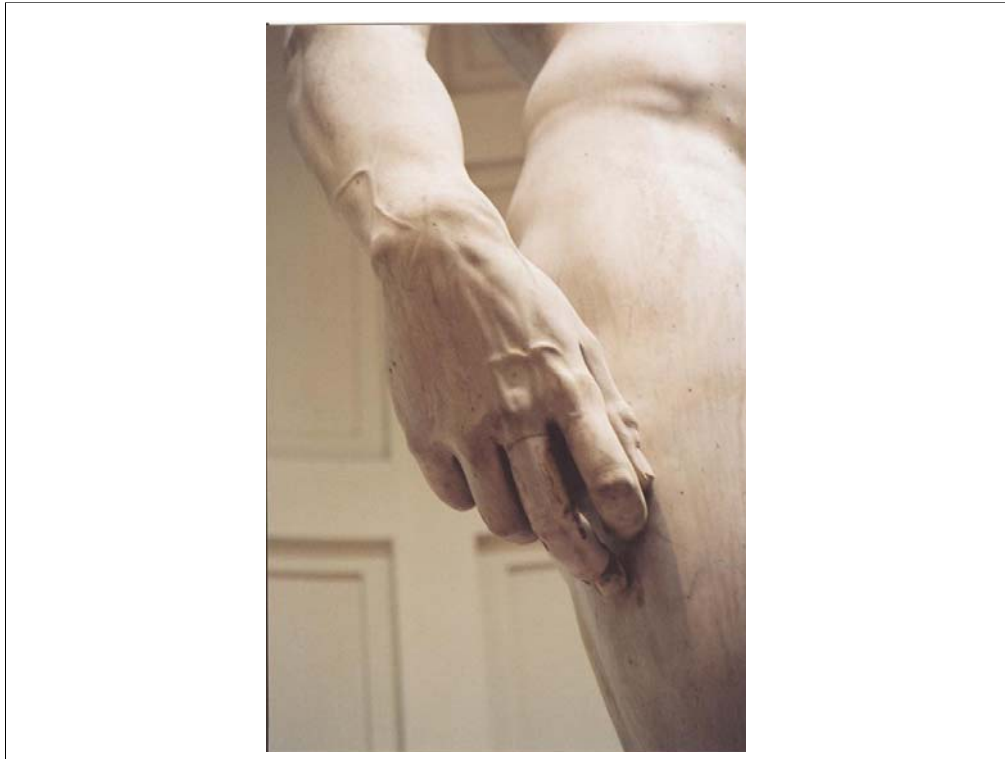


Chosen by another artist in 1463, the 18 foot block of marble from which David was carved was chosen by another artist for the purpose of carving an enormous statue for a public work in Florence. The original sculptor gave up on the commission. A second artist was brought in and declared the stone too flawed to be worked. The marble was abandoned out doors in a churchyard, exposed to the elements for over 30 years before Michelangelo managed to do something with it.

The marble is “thin” – David is much slenderer than any of Michelangelo’s other sculptures.

The figure was finished by Michelangelo in 1504.

Since then it has been dipped in acid to “clean” it – a process which actually removed the protective finish put on by Michelangelo. A crazy painter who couldn’t sell anything smashed his big toe with a hammer. He was left out in the elements and acid rain for almost 100 years. Finally in 2004, he received a cautious, high-tech cleaning.



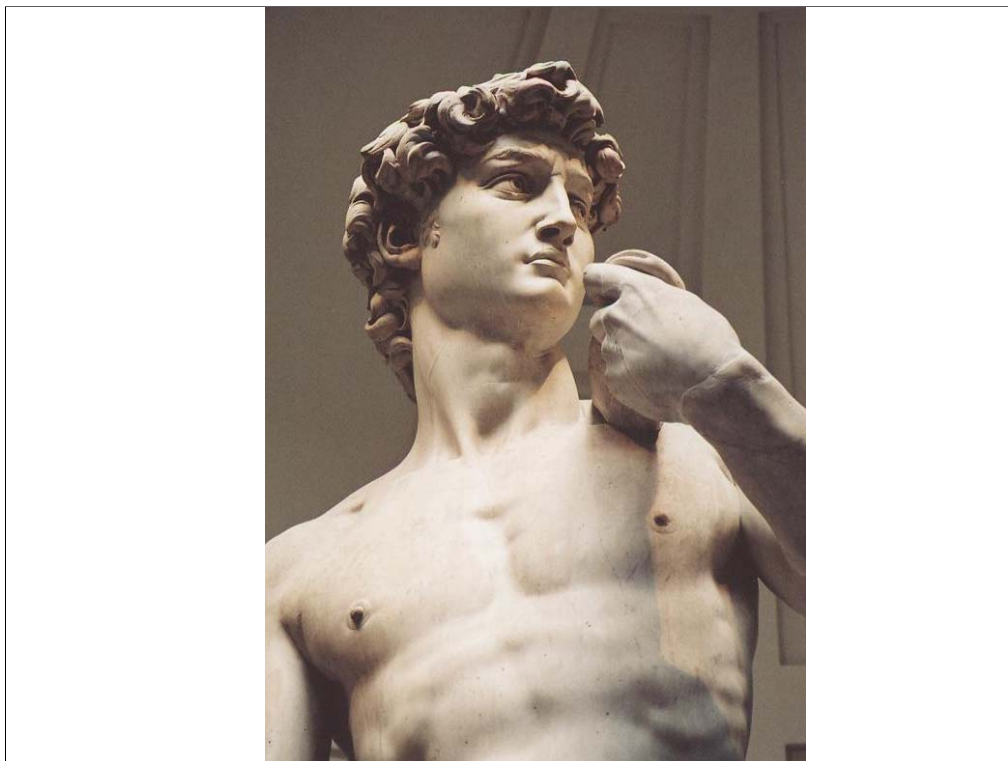
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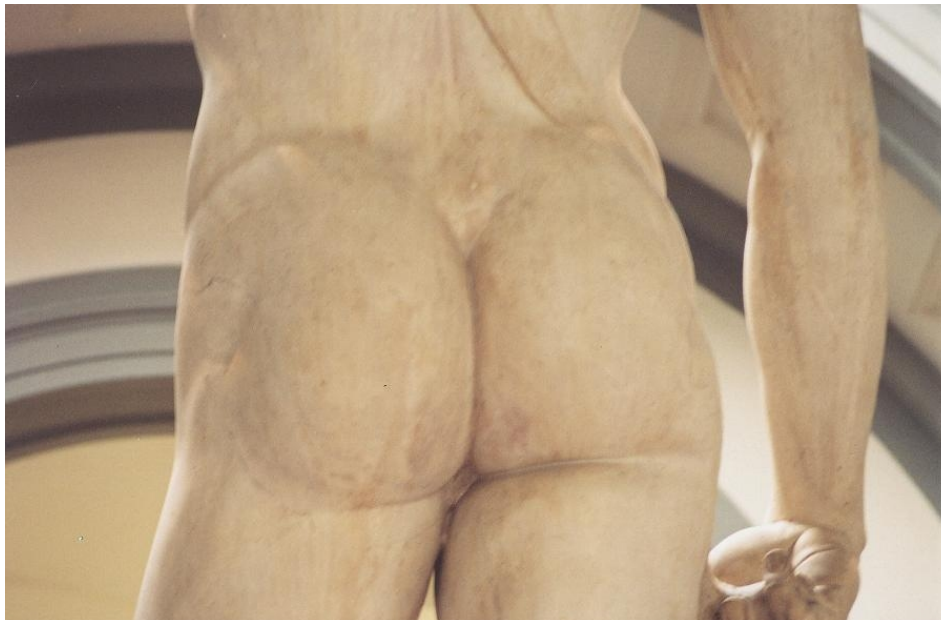
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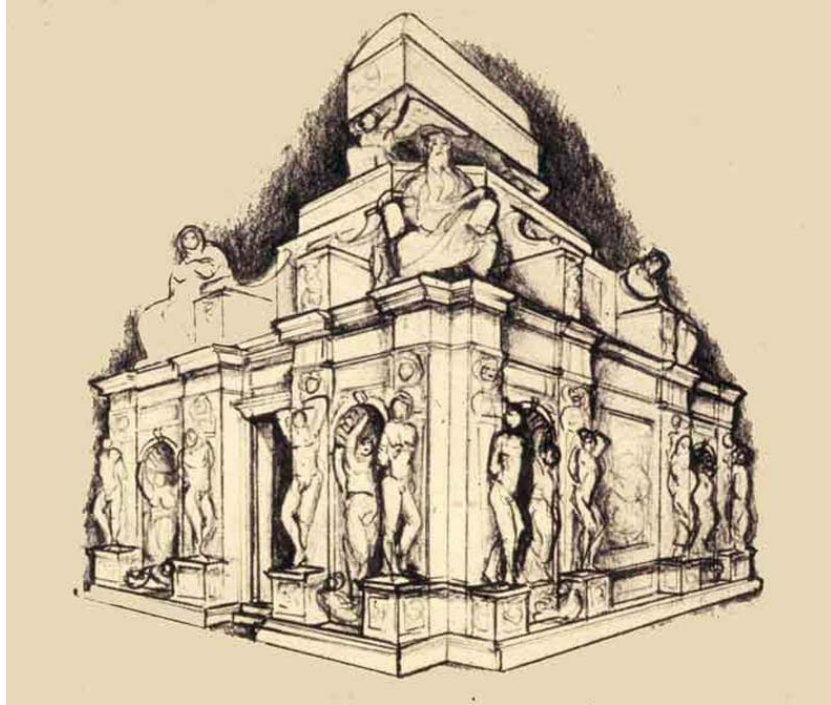
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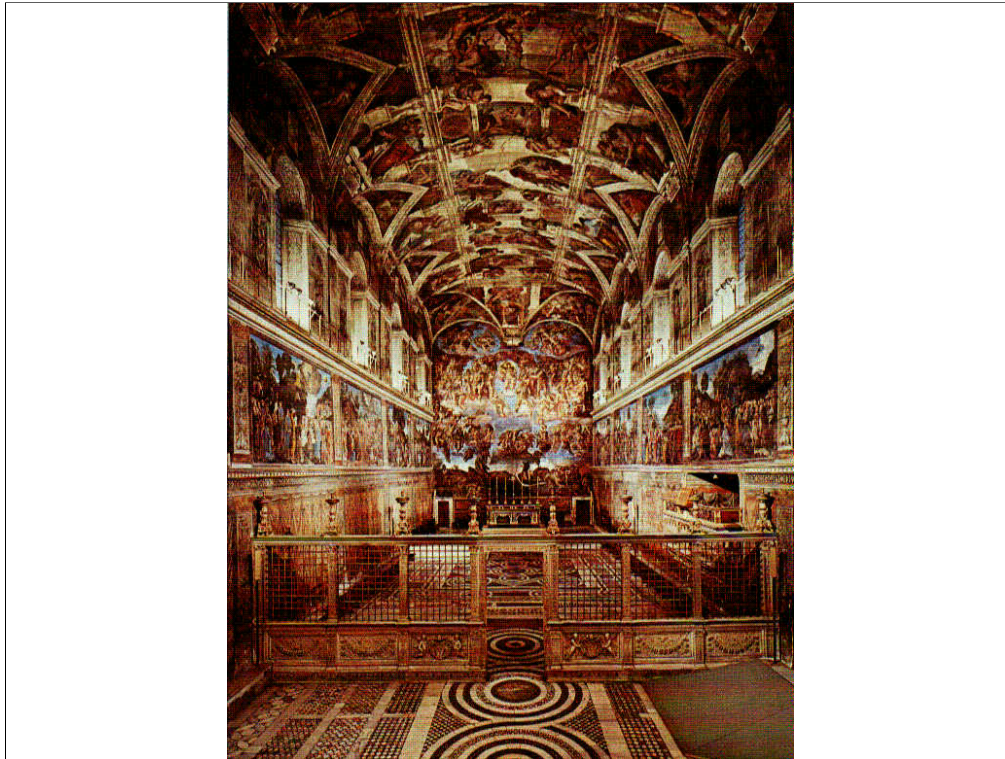


Sistine Chapel

Hearing about Michelangelo's reputation, Julius II hired him to come to Rome and work on his tomb. Julius, however, got distracted by the construction of St. Peter's. Michelangelo got angry and ran back to Florence.

The Sistine chapel, built by Pope Sixtus IV had great importance in Catholicism. The chapel was the place where the council of Cardinals met to select a new pope. It was also the place where the Pope usually went to church. The chapel was originally built almost as a fortress, complete with soldier's quarters and cells above the chapel and arrow slits for defense. The chapel was well built but, like a lot of Rome, it was built on swampy ground without underlying bedrock. The chapel had been beautifully decorated by a team of talented artists, including the painting of a starry sky across the vault. However, the shifting foundations created a massive crack across the ceiling. The pope's architect fixed the foundations, but something had to be done about the crack in the ceiling.

Julius decided to hire Michelangelo to paint the ceiling. Never mind that Michelangelo had never worked in fresco, let alone worked 70 feet from the floor on a curved surface 134.28 feet long and 44 feet wide



The result was a battle that lasted almost 4 years and produced one of the greatest works of art in history.

In painting the ceiling, Michelangelo was stubborn, grumpy, and generally mean – normal for him. He was paid less than half of what he had been promised for the tomb, and his payments were frequently slow in coming. He had to learn to work in fresco, and it was not until over $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way through the fresco that he understood how large the figures had to be in order to be clear from the floor. He also did not even try foreshortening until later in the fresco. But by the end of the job, many of the massive figures are freehanded without even the transfer of a cartoon to the surface.

When he hired him, the pope had a plan for the ceiling, mostly involving geometric designs. Michelangelo ditched that idea, proposing the current scheme, which involves over 300 figures.

When he began, Michelangelo hired 5 assistants, and, judging from his notes, he intended for them to do almost all of the painting. They got fired.

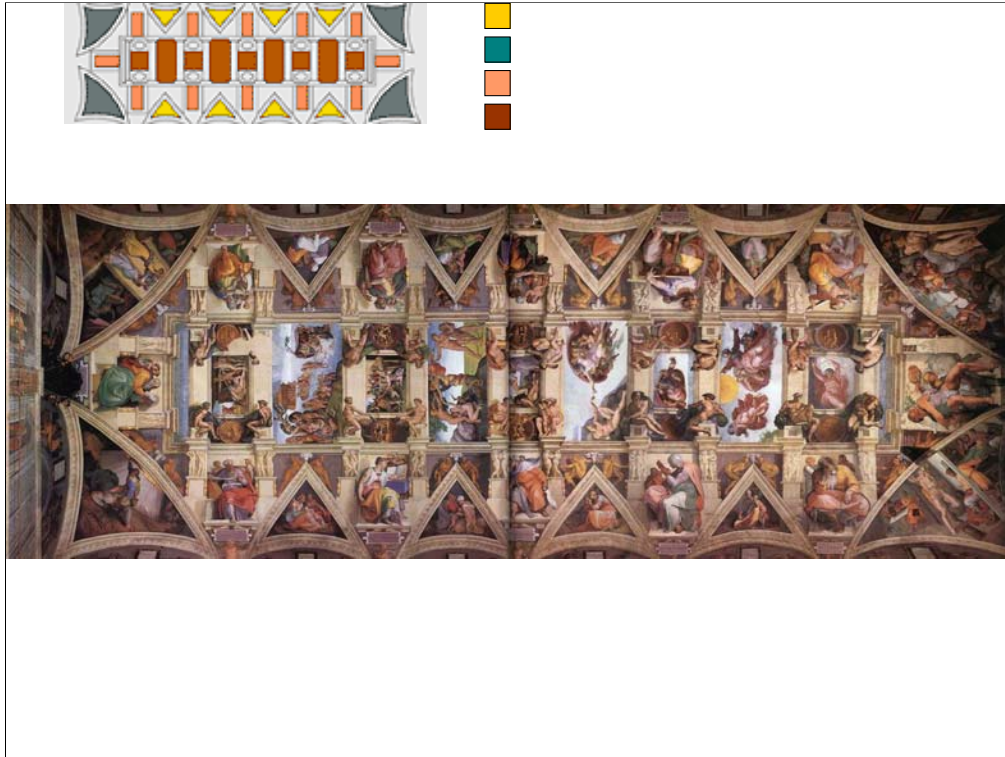
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First, Michelangelo had to figure how to get UP to the ceiling to work. The roof was 67.91 feet from the ground and Julius didn't want the scaffolding to interfere with the floor of the chapel in any way.

Michelangelo designed his own scaffold. It covered about $\frac{1}{2}$ the chapel. It was held in place by pegs sunk over a foot deep into the side walls above the windows. The rig itself was a series of stepped platforms that conformed to the curve of the vault, then flattened out about 5 feet from the roof, giving the workers a stable place to work. Beneath the rig was a large sheet of canvas – it kept paint from dropping onto the floor and hid Michelangelo's work from curious eyes – an important thing to Mikey.

When restorers began cleaning the ceiling, they almost exactly recreated the rig – there wasn't really a better way.



The ceiling is an impressive creation. It tells a series of stories from Genesis in its central panels, ending with the drunkenness of Noah.

The four corners or pendentives, tell stories from the later books of the Old Testament and the apocrypha. The webs, or arched pieces over the windows portray the ancestors of Christ. The spaces between the windows show a series of prophets (Biblical foretellers of Christ) and Sibyls (pagan prophetesses that the Renaissance Catholic church taught also foretold Christ and even later events).

Between the figures is a painted architectural scheme with puttis (fat, puffy babies), male nudes, and large medallions that were supposed to show scenes glorifying the reign of Julius. Amusingly, no one can clearly see what is on the medallions from the chapel floor.



The ceiling is an amazing accomplishment – doubly so because of Michelangelo's utter lack of knowledge of fresco when he started the project.

The figures still display the massive, tense qualities characteristic of Michelangelo. The also show a learning curve that teaches us a lot about Mikey's styles and thought processes.

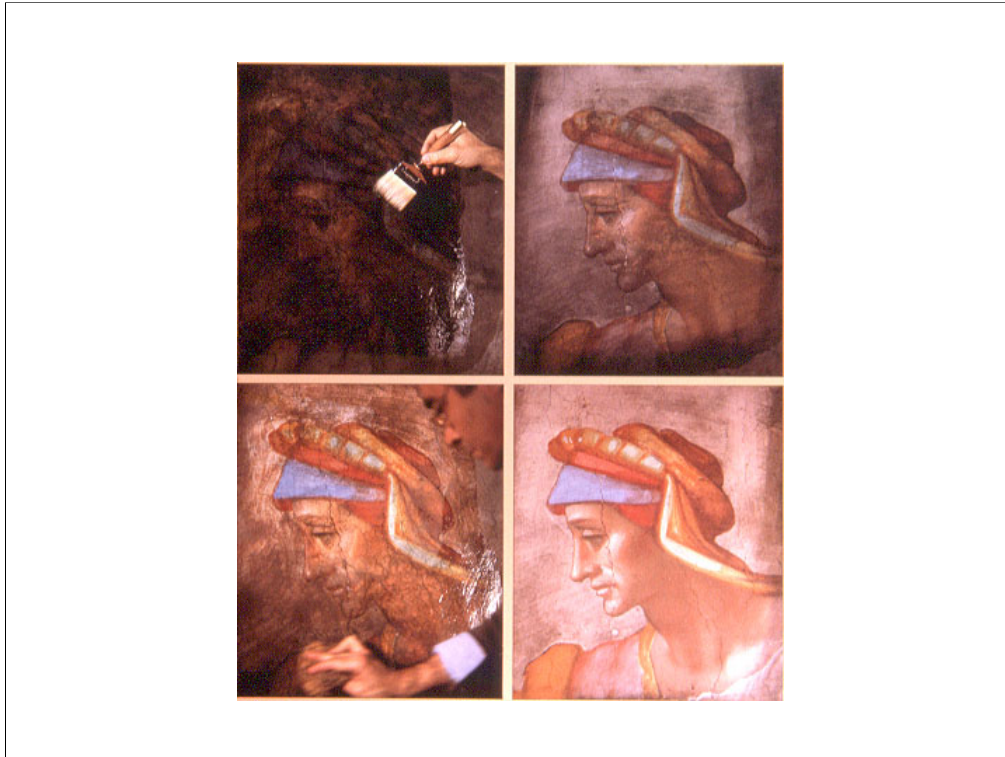
Michelangelo was extremely possessive of his fresco. He allowed no one to see it before the first half was completed, perhaps because of negative reaction to the David. Legend says that when the pope had the chapel opened late at night to sneak a peek, Michelangelo had heard of his plan and waited for him. Seeing the pope enter, he pitched a board at his head and ran off.



The paintings were a success, and remained a marvel and tourist attraction.

However, the chapel also remained in use, and the ceiling was the final landing place for 400 years of candle smoke, incense, and carbon dioxide. Over the years, people tried to restore the ceiling by adding coatings and resins to brighten the colors.

Between 1979 and 1999 a group of restorers using all technology available to them dabbed the entire ceiling with a mixture of purified water and baking soda, carefully removing several centuries of grime from the ceiling. The results were amazing.



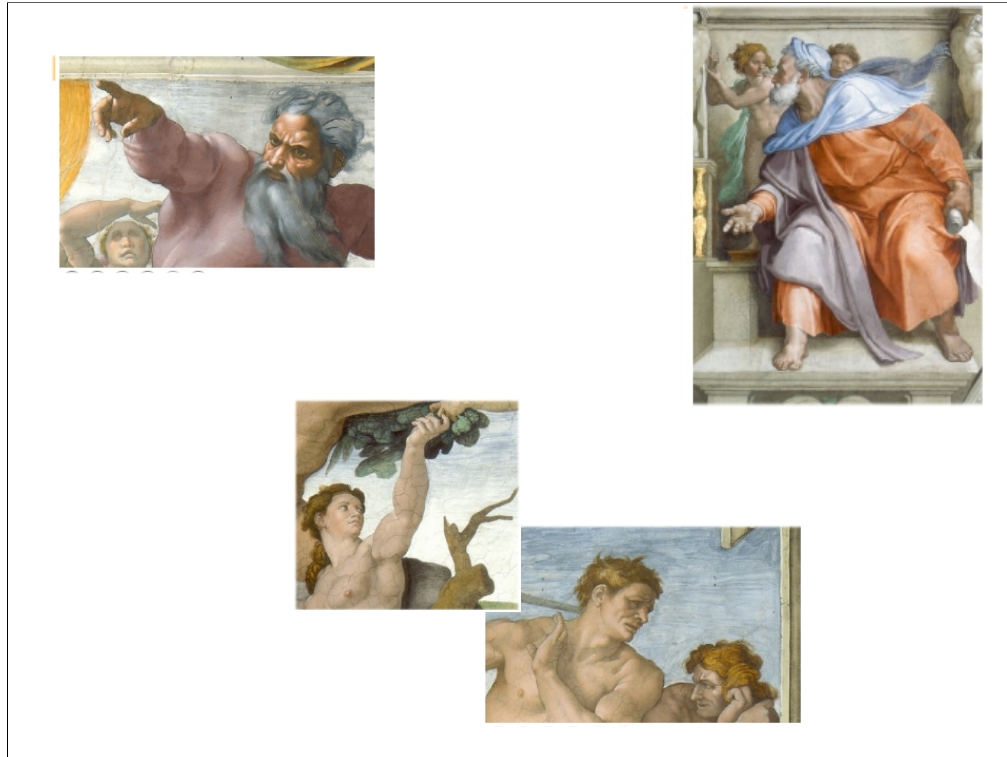
Numerous critics actually accused the restorers of damaging the original paintings because the colors revealed were so bright and clear.

The chapel is now carefully climate controlled in an attempt to preserve the frescoes, and lit candles are not allowed.



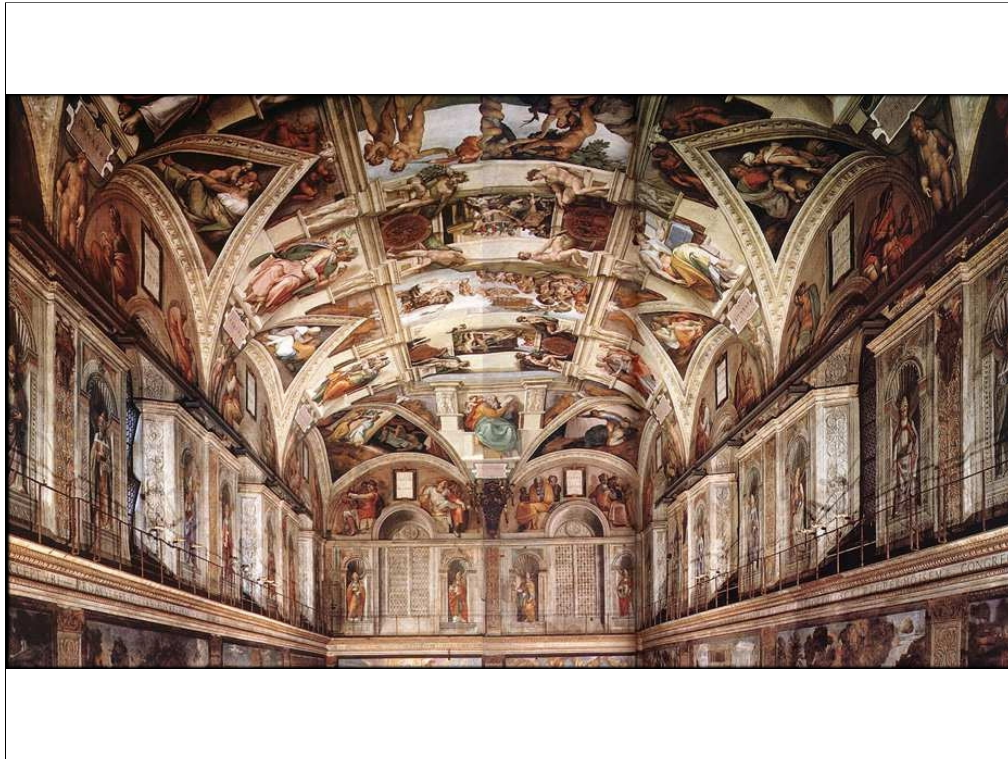
The figures on the ceiling show that Michelangelo's sense of the human body as a way of expressing emotion spills over into painting as well as sculpture.

They also reveal that Michelangelo still loved sculpture. He put the figures into a painted architectural setting much like he might have used for Julius' tomb.



Looking at the figures up close reveals the detail of the facial expressions and the detail of the light effects and cloth effects that Michelangelo uses.

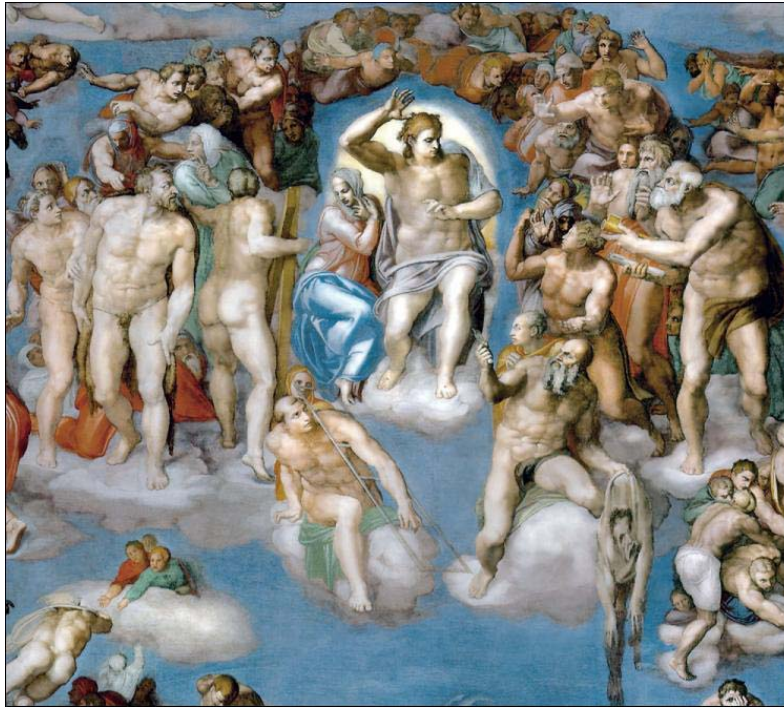
It's also interesting to see Michelangelo's use of the figures to show the change in attitude. For example, in the panel depicting the fall/original sin, Eve's face and manner are totally changed between the depiction of her before and after the fall.



Part of the wonder of the Sistine chapel lies in its shape. Painting 5-6 feet from the surface of the ceiling created problems in perspective for the artist. Painting on a curved surface doubled the problems.

The fact that Michelangelo not only handled the problems but produced an amazing work of art is tribute to his genius.

Like the art or not, it is an amazing piece of work.



A few years after completing the Sistine Chapel ceiling...Michelangelo was called back by another Pope. He painted an altarpiece at the front of the chapel. The Last Judgment was a big change from the ceiling – it's a rather emotionally dark piece, with an enormously massive Christ in the center of the panel dispensing rewards with a massive hand.

Just below the central figure, Michelangelo painted a rather gnarly self-portrait. He painted himself as the flayed skin of St. Bartholomew. **martyred by patron demands – but retaining the promise of salvation,

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A note on Michelangelo.

His figures are all massive...including the women.

Michelangelo's women are all essentially men with female sexual features. The bodies/models used are clearly masculine. Why would such a great artist with a remarkable grasp of male anatomy do this?

There are several theories.

1. Writings from the renaissance have been found referencing a Greek sculptor whose beautiful works superseded gender, and could be viewed as either male or female, making them mysterious and beautiful.
2. Michelangelo wasn't a sexy guy, and he had no recorded lovers. Some believe that his own religious convictions and devotion to art made him a little bit scared of women. Therefore, he was unwilling to use female models.

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Raphael

One of Michelangelo's contemporaries and competitors was a young man named Raphael Sanzio.

Raphael stands out among his contemporaries in the Renaissance not only as a genius artist, but as a normal guy. Raphael was charming, funny, and easy going. He enjoyed social gatherings, knew how to 'make nice' with patrons, delivered work on time, and bathed regularly.

Leonardo DaVinci mentored him (perhaps because he was cute and talented), and Michelangelo hated him.

Raphael is, however, proof that the good die young. Michelangelo lived to be almost 90, Raphael died at 38.

Raphael is notable because he was a sponge. He was able to absorb influences from vastly different artists and combine them in his own ways into beautiful, organized images that attract viewers even today.



One of Michelangelo's contemporaries and competitors, Raphael was hired by Julius about the same time. Julius had decided to move into a new set of rooms in the Vatican and he wanted the space redecorated. One of the rooms was his library. Julius wanted the space above each "section" or category of books decorated with an appropriate picture.

Raphael painted 4 of these lunettes, each on a different section, but the best known of the 4 is the one that sits above the philosophy section of the library, known as the "School of Athens."

- Architecture resembles the proposed interior of St. Peter's
- Elliptical construction
- Background statues
- Central figures
- Focal point
- Individual character of figures
- Michelangelo – commentary

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At the center of Raphael's painting are the two central figures of Philosophy – Plato and Aristotle. Walking forward toward the viewer, the two appear involved in active debate. Plato points upward to his realm of ideals and forms while Aristotle gestures, palm down, to the physical world. The whole painting is divided around these two figures, with artists and thinkers on the left (Plato's side) and mathematicians, astronomers, and scientists on the right. Interestingly enough, Raphael paints his self portrait in the far right corner of the painting, clearly expressing where he thinks he belongs.

**Some scholars think Plato is a portrait of Leonardo DaVinci



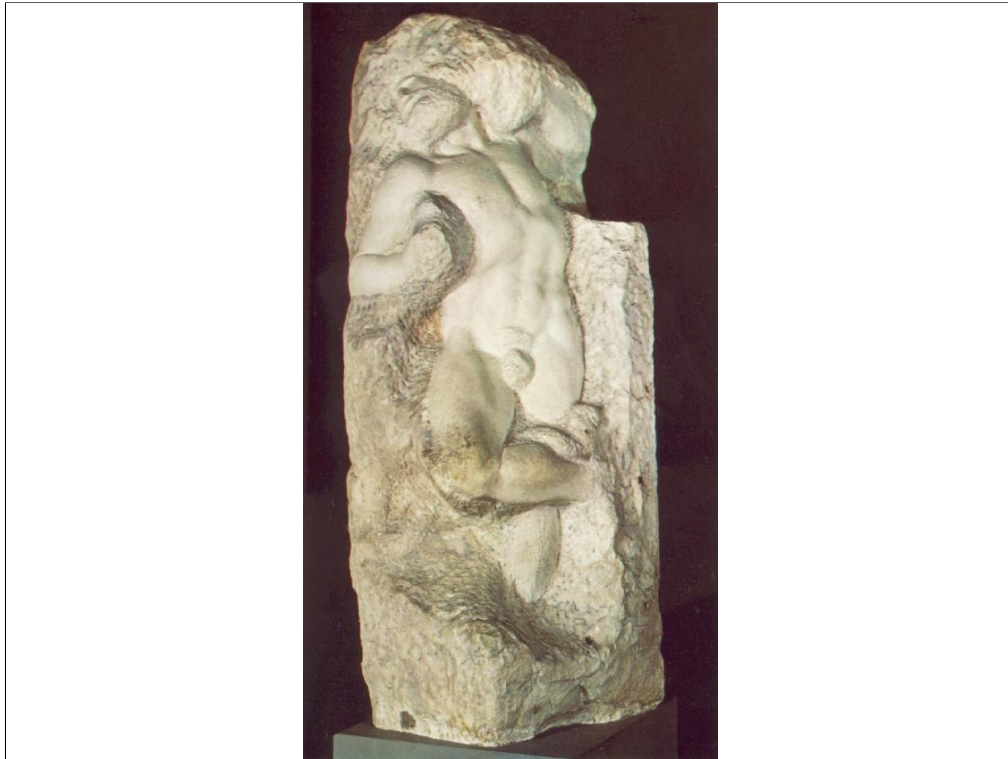
Raphael's most frequent subject was the Madonna and child. His Madonnas are considered by most critics to be his strongest work. They represent the pinnacle of Renaissance style. The paintings are beautiful and ideal, so perfect that some modern viewers don't like them. Yet they have a sense of dimension, proportion and character that makes them seem quite realistic.

Most of Raphael's Madonnas follow DaVinci's organization and create a pyramidal construction that ends at Mary's head. Most of Raphael's female figures bear a strong resemblance to one another, and most art historians agree that he consistently used his girlfriends/lovers as models – and he had consistent taste.

Raphael was also a consummate portrait painter. Some of the greatest portraits of the Renaissance come from his brush. Raphael had a great gift for capturing the impression or temperament of a sitter as well as his physical appearance. For this reason, it is easy to determine the temperament and mood of the individual in the painting.

- Julius – painted after losing a battle – tension and discouragement
- Castiglione – dignity, thoughtfulness, and elegance

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After the sistine chapel ceiling, and the subsequent last judgment altar piece painted there, Michelangelo went back to sculpture.

Michelangelo believed that every piece of rock had a statue inside it. It was the job of the sculptor to free that statue. This is called **subtractive sculpting**. Michelangelo's unfinished statues (believed to have been intended for that dang tomb of Julius') reveal that methodology. Called "slaves" or "Captives" they appear to be captive in the rock, straining to break free. They look less half carved than half carved out, as if the rest of the statue is already formed in the rock, just waiting to break free.

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And Julius finally got his tomb...posthumously...and not where he wanted it.

Instead of 40-50 carved figures, he got 7, but it was carved by Michelangelo!

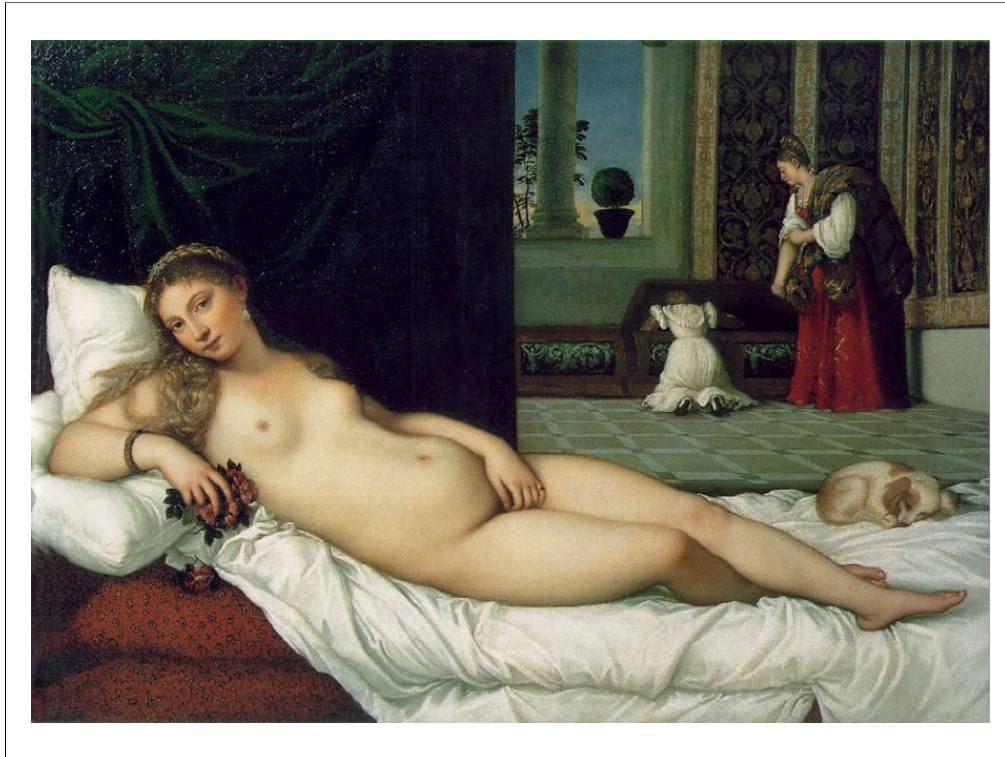
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Michelangelo was also an architect as well as a painter and sculptor. Eventually, he made significant contributions to both the construction of St. Peter's and the Vatican. One of his best known and most interesting works of architecture is the Biblioteca staircase – the stairs in the vestibule of the Laurentian library in Florence. The staircase is a study in proportion and visual trickery. The stairs were originally drawn up by Michelangelo, but built by another artist.

The stairs are actually quite short, and not very high. However, the curved shape of the stairs, combined with the landing in the middle and the shallow height of the individual stairs gives the effective illusion of a high staircase fading into the distance.

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Having the notoriety of being the first completely secular painting in art since the medieval period (not even art historians and critics can draw religious implications into this one), Titian's Venus of Urbino represents a new shift in art.

Probably originally intended to simply be an image of a beautiful courtesan, the similarity of the pose to an earlier painting of Venus and the roses in the subject's right hand earned her the title of Venus. Urbino, of course, is the city from which the guy footing the bill hailed.

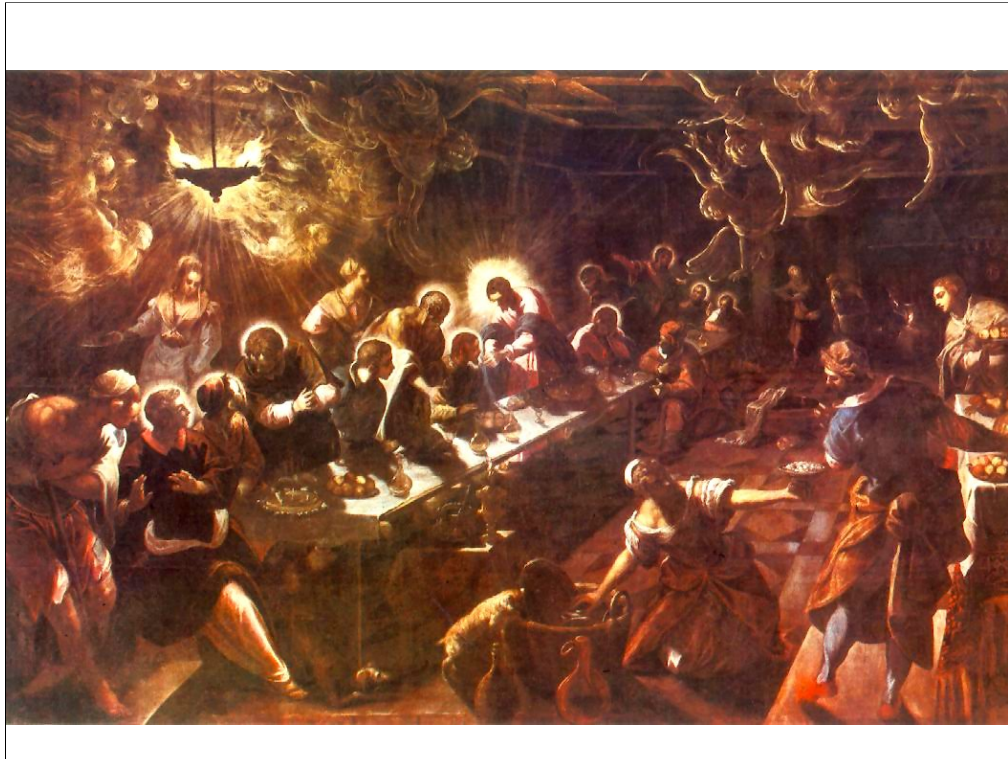
The painting exhibits a new style reflective of Titian's home town – Venice. Venetian painters were more interested in landscape, pastoral idealism, and color. Titian's painting shows an amazing grasp of both organization and color.

- Matching reds
- Counterbalanced image
- Forced layers of perspective
- Colors create texture rather than lines.
- Oil on canvas allows luminous play of light & color

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Mannerism

- Exaggeration/ movement for dramatic effect
- Bizarre coloration
- Lack of proportion
- Abandonment of balance

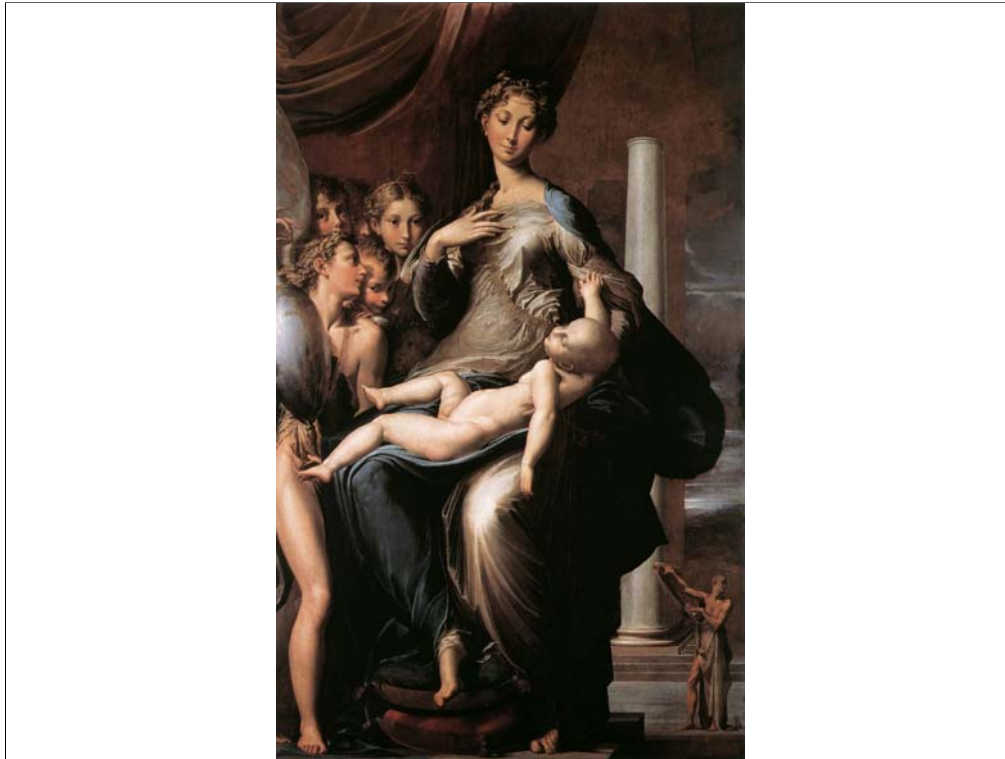


Tintoretto, also hailing from Venice, pushed art in a completely different direction. He was enamored of the colors used by Titian, but he wanted movement and twisting figures like Michelangelo.

Tintoretto uses tricks of light and perspective to make his painting weird and confusing in an attempt to impress upon the viewer the “otherness” and spiritual quality of the scene. His lines of depth are extreme, pushing the viewer into an almost impossible room length at the rear of the scene. The last supper itself is pushed to the side, with the bright halo around Jesus’s head being the primary identifying/attention getting element.

- Symbolism/ mingling – cardinal, bishop, death entering
- Attendants – non Biblical
- Intrusion of the spiritual world into the natural – transparent angels

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As the high renaissance drew to a close, chased into a new era by political and religious developments to the north, a new style of painting broke out, known as **Mannerism**. Mannerism took the realism and emotion of classical renaissance painting with its delicate figures and beautiful portrayals of skin and texture and exaggerated them for a sense of otherworldliness, movement, and shape rather than realism.

One of the best known mannerist paintings is Parmigianino's *Madonna with the Long Neck*, so named because...she has a really long neck.

Parmigianino's image shows an excellent grasp on painting drapery and detail and texture. However, he purposely distorts his figures and uses the baby Jesus as a double for the dead body of Christ making the picture both a Madonna and child and a Pieta. He also plays mind games with proportion, returning to the idea of the Madonnazilla, and placing a strange column and tiny figure with a scroll at the right of the painting without giving any sense of proportion or space to place them in context. He also ignores earlier concepts of balance, heavily weighting the left side of the frame.

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Castiglione



Among the literature coming out of the Renaissance the work of Baldissare Castiglione. Living in the court of the Duke of Urbino, in one of the most elegant and “Cultured” courts of the Renaissance.

While there, Castiglione put together a book called The Courtier describing the ultimate characteristics of men. According to The Courtier, the perfect man should be well educated, in peak physical condition and be able to do everything with Sprezzatura, or effortless grace. Essentially, Castiglione says that a real man should be able to do just about anything physically and intellectually and make it look easy.

Castiglione’s ideal was a new and important concept because it was the first to integrate emotional and physical ideals into one unit.

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Cellini



The last artist we're going to look at in the Renaissance is Benvenuto Cellini. Cellini was a rascal – getting kicked out of his hometown for fighting before the age of 20, and then wandering the world, fighting as a mercenary, getting into dangerous liaisons with married women and young boys, and generally being irresponsible and adventurous.

Cellini was also, however, a genius in metalworking. Training in goldsmithing from a young age, Cellini moved on in his adult years to bronzeworking.

His statue of Perseus, holding the head of Medusa is a masterwork in bronze. It is free standing, dramatically posed and shows the best of the renaissance ideal in both precision and dramatic manipulation.

We know a lot about Cellini, because he is one of the first artists to unapologetically write his own autobiography. He most likely dictated the work to one of his assistants as he was casting the Perseus, and his autobiography, while it doubtless takes large liberties with the truth, gives a glimpse into the mind and culture of the late Renaissance.

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I say that the art of sculpture is eight times as great as any other art based on drawing, because a statue has eight views and they must all be equally good.
- **Benvenuto Cellini**

Cellini also broke into a new area of art – Northern art. As the Renaissance wound down, there was a great deal of foment – and money – in Northern Europe. This solid gold salt-shaker crafted by Cellini was a commission for a northern patron, indicating the play of money spreading across Europe.

The saltcellar depicts the earth and the sea intertwined, forever lovers and forever divided.

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