

Renaissance Artists

Michelangelo & Leonardo

Leonardo da Vinci

Italian Renaissance Artist 1452-1519

Leonardo da Vinci

Early Life (1452-1469)

- Leonardo da Vinci was born on April 15, 1452, in the town of Vinci, near Florence, Italy. He was the illegitimate son of Ser Piero da Vinci, a wealthy notary, and a peasant woman named Caterina.
- Despite his illegitimacy, Leonardo was raised in his father's household, receiving a basic education in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- His early years were spent in the rural countryside, where he developed a deep curiosity about nature.

Leonardo da Vinci

Early Life (1452-1469)

- Leonardo's early interest in nature and observation of the world around him set the foundation for his later work as an artist and scientist. Though he did not receive formal schooling in the classical languages and scholarly subjects, his natural talents were evident from a young age.

Leonardo da Vinci

Apprenticeship and Early Artistic Career (1469–1482)

- In 1469, at the age of 17, Leonardo was apprenticed to the renowned Florentine artist Andrea del Verrocchio. Verrocchio's workshop was one of the most prestigious in Florence. Here, Leonardo learned a wide range of skills, including painting, sculpture, and mechanical arts.
- It was in this workshop that Leonardo first demonstrated his exceptional talent, assisting Verrocchio on important projects, including the famous painting "The Baptism of Christ," where Leonardo is believed to have painted the angel.

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The Baptism of Christ

1472–1475 • Oil and Tempera on Panel • 70 in × 59 in • Uffizi Gallery, Florence

Image source: <https://catchlight.blog/baptism-of-christ/>

Leonardo da Vinci

Apprenticeship and Early Artistic Career (1469–1482)

- During his time with Verrocchio, Leonardo began to produce his own works, including drawings, sketches, and small paintings.
- His early works, such as "Annunciation" and "Ginevra de' Benci," show his mastery of light, shadow, and human anatomy, which would become hallmarks of his style.

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The Annunciation

1472-1475 • Oil and Tempera on Wood • 39 in × 85 in • Uffizi Gallery, Florence

Image source: <https://www.italian-renaissance-art.com/Annunciation.html>



Leonardo da Vinci

Milanese Period (1482–1499)

- In 1482, Leonardo left Florence and moved to Milan, where he entered the service of Ludovico Sforza, the Duke of Milan.
- Leonardo's role in Milan was multifaceted—he worked as a painter, sculptor, architect, and military engineer. His time in Milan marked a period of prolific creativity and innovation.

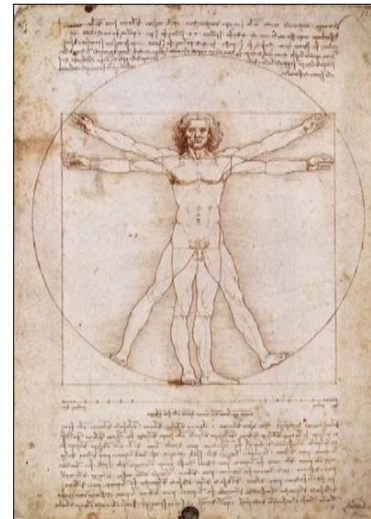
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Leonardo da Vinci

Milanese Period (1482–1499)

- Leonardo's interest in science and engineering flourished during this period. He conducted studies in anatomy, optics, hydraulics, and mechanics, recording his observations in detailed notebooks. These notebooks, filled with sketches and ideas, reveal his insatiable curiosity and multidisciplinary genius.
- The Vitruvian Man is a famous drawing that explores the proportions of the human body. Based on the ideas of the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius, the drawing shows a male figure in two superimposed positions, with arms and legs apart, inside both a circle and a square. It symbolizes Leonardo's deep interest in the relationship between art, science, and the human form.

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Vitruvian Man

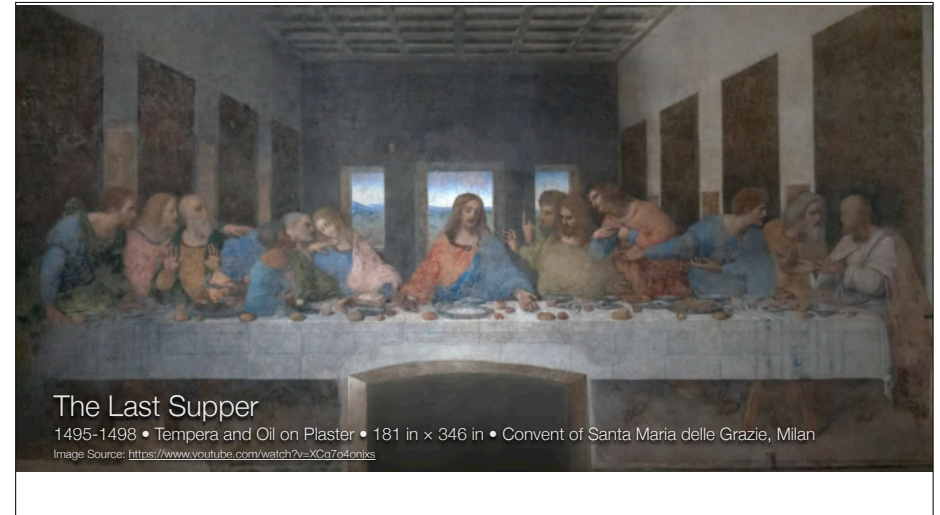
© 1490 • Pen and Ink on Paper • 13,5 x 9,5 inches • Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice (usually kept in storage due to fragility)
Image source: <https://www.isotopo-de-vinci.net/vitruvian-man/>

Leonardo da Vinci

Milanese Period (1482–1499)

- While in Milan, Leonardo created some of his most famous works.
- “The Last Supper” (1495-1498), is a masterpiece of composition and emotion that was painted on the wall of the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie.
- This monumental fresco depicts the moment Jesus announces that one of his disciples will betray him. Leonardo’s innovative composition, capturing the emotions of the apostles, and his use of perspective, make this work a masterpiece of Renaissance art. Despite its fragile state, it remains one of the most studied and revered works in the history of art.

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The Last Supper

1495-1498 • Tempera and Oil on Plaster • 181 in × 346 in • Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan

Image Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCq7o4oniks>

Leonardo and the Last Supper



Leonardo da Vinci

Milanese Period (1482–1499)

- During this period, Leonardo also began work on an ambitious equestrian statue of Ludovico Sforza’s father, which, although never completed, demonstrated his innovative approach to sculpture.

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Leonardo da Vinci

Return to Florence and Later Career (1500–1516)

- After the fall of Ludovico Sforza in 1499, Leonardo returned to Florence, where he continued his artistic and scientific endeavors.
- During this period, he painted the famous “Mona Lisa” (1503-1506), perhaps the most iconic work of art in history.
- This portrait of Lisa Gherardini, also known as La Gioconda, is renowned for her enigmatic smile and the masterful use of sfumato, a technique of subtle blending of colors and tones.
- The painting's mysterious expression and perfect composition exemplify Leonardo's mastery of portraiture and have captivated viewers for centuries..

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Leonardo da Vinci

Return to Florence and Later Career (1500–1516)

- During this period, Leonardo also worked on various engineering projects, including designs for fortifications, canals, and military devices. His work for Cesare Borgia, the son of Pope Alexander VI, allowed him to apply his engineering knowledge to real-world problems.
- His continuing fascination with the human body led him to conduct extensive anatomical studies, often dissecting cadavers to understand muscle structure, organ function, and the skeletal system. His anatomical drawings are considered some of the most accurate and detailed of the Renaissance.

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Leonardo da Vinci

Return to Florence and Later Career (1500–1516)

- During this period, Leonardo also created the “Battle of Anghiari,” a large fresco in the Palazzo Vecchio, which was left unfinished, and “St. John the Baptist” (1513-1516), his last known painting.

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Leonardo da Vinci

Final Years in France (1516–1519)

- In 1516, Leonardo accepted an invitation from King Francis I of France to work at the royal court. He moved to the Château du Clos Lucé, near the king's residence at Amboise. Although his health was declining, Leonardo continued to work on various projects, including architectural designs and scientific studies.
- Leonardo da Vinci died on May 2, 1519, at the age of 67. He was buried in the Chapel of Saint-Hubert in Amboise, France. His legacy as an artist, scientist, engineer, and inventor was firmly established by the time of his death.

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Leonardo da Vinci

Legacy

- Leonardo da Vinci is celebrated as one of the greatest artists of all time. His paintings, such as "The Last Supper" and the "Mona Lisa," are among the most revered works in art history. His ability to capture the subtleties of human expression, his mastery of perspective, and his innovative techniques revolutionized Renaissance art.
- Beyond his artistic achievements, his contributions to science, engineering, and anatomy were groundbreaking. His notebooks, filled with designs for machines, anatomical drawings, and studies of nature, showcase his visionary approach to understanding the world. Although many of his inventions were never built, his ideas foreshadowed modern developments in various fields.

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Leonardo da Vinci

Legacy

- Leonardo's work continues to inspire artists, scientists, and thinkers. His interdisciplinary approach and relentless pursuit of knowledge exemplify the spirit of the Renaissance, and his legacy as a universal genius endures to this day.

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Leonardo da Vinci

Summary of Significant Works

Work	Medium	Date	Location
The Baptism of Jesus	Oil and Tempera on Panel	1472–1475	Uffizi Gallery, Florence
The Annunciation	Oil and Tempera on Panel	1472-1475	Uffizi Gallery, Florence
Virgin of the Rocks	Oil on Panel	1483–1486	Louvre Museum, Paris
Vitruvian Man	Pen and Ink on Paper	1490	Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice
The Last Supper	Tempera and Oil on Plaster	1495-1498	Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan
Mona Lisa	Oil on Poplar Panel	1503-1506	Louvre Museum, Paris
St. John the Baptist	Oil on wood (walnut)	1513-1516	Louvre Museum, Paris
Battle of Anghiari			

Michelangelo Buonarroti

Italian Renaissance Artist 1475-1564

Michelangelo Buonarroti

Early Life (1475-1488)

- Michelangelo Buonarroti was born on March 6, 1475, in **Caprese**, a small town near Florence, Italy. He was the second of five sons born to Ludovico di Leonardo Buonarroti Simoni, a minor government official, and Francesca di Neri del Miniato di Siena.
- The Buonarroti family claimed noble heritage, but they were of modest means. Michelangelo's mother died when he was six years old, and he was sent to live with a stonecutter's family, which may have influenced his later interest in sculpture.

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Michelangelo Buonarroti

Early Life (1475-1488)

- Michelangelo grew up in Florence, a city that was the center of the Italian Renaissance. His father initially resisted his son's interest in art, wanting him to pursue a more stable profession, but Michelangelo's talent was undeniable.

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Michelangelo Buonarroti

Artistic Training and Early Works (1488-1505)

- At age 13, Michelangelo was apprenticed to Domenico Ghirlandaio, one of **Florence's** most prominent painters. Ghirlandaio's workshop was a hub of artistic activity, and Michelangelo quickly gained exposure to fresco painting and draftsmanship. However, Michelangelo's true passion lay in sculpture.
- In 1489, Michelangelo caught the attention of Lorenzo de' Medici, the ruler of Florence and a significant patron of the arts. Lorenzo invited Michelangelo to his court, where he was exposed to the works of great Renaissance artists, classical antiquities, and humanist scholars. During this time, Michelangelo sculpted his first major works, including the "Madonna of the Stairs" and the "Battle of the Centaurs."

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Michelangelo Buonarroti

Artistic Training and Early Works (1488–1505)

- In 1496, Michelangelo moved to **Rome**, where he created his first major commission, the “Bacchus” and the famous “Pietà” (1498-1499) for St. Peter’s Basilica. These works showcased his mastery of the human form and established his reputation as one of the leading sculptors of his time.
- The Pietà is a poignant sculpture depicting the Virgin Mary cradling the dead body of Jesus Christ after the Crucifixion. Carved from a single block of marble, the sculpture is renowned for its delicate beauty, emotional depth, and the youthful appearance of Mary. It is one of Michelangelo's earliest masterpieces and remains a central piece of Christian art.

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Michelangelo Buonarroti

Florentine Period and “David” (1501–1505)

- In 1501, Michelangelo returned to **Florence** and received the commission for the colossal statue of “David,” which he completed in 1504.
- David is a monumental statue that depicts the biblical hero David, poised before his battle with Goliath. Standing at 17 feet tall, the sculpture is celebrated for its perfect proportions, detailed anatomy, and expression of human strength and beauty. It is considered one of the most iconic works of the Renaissance and a symbol of Florence.

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Michelangelo Buonarroti

Florentine Period and "David" (1501–1505)

- During this period, Florence was a republic, and the statue of David was seen as a representation of the city's independence, civic pride and strength against its rivals.
- Michelangelo's association with the Medici family and his work for the Florentine government reflected his growing importance in both artistic and political circles.

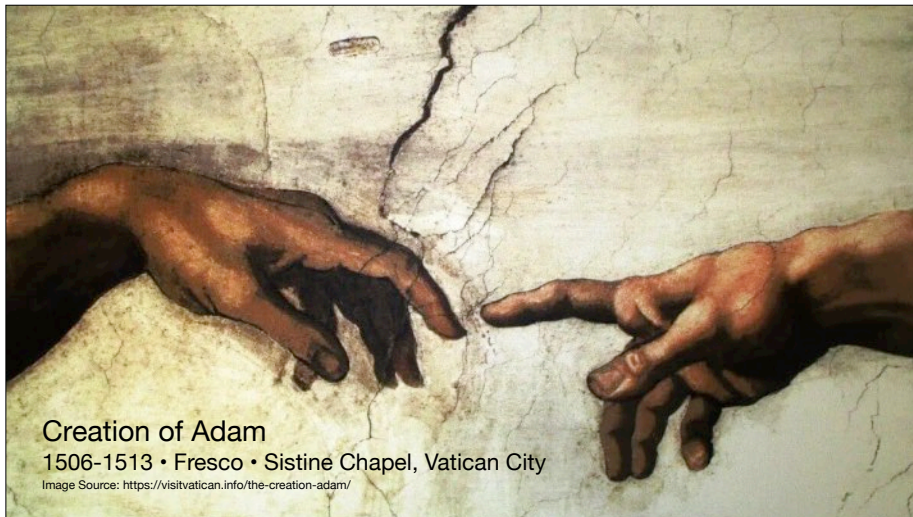
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Michelangelo Buonarroti

Roman Commissions and the Sistine Chapel (1505–1534)

- In 1505, Michelangelo was summoned back to **Rome** by Pope Julius II to work on a grandiose tomb project. However, the project was repeatedly delayed, and instead, Michelangelo was commissioned to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (1508-1512).
- Despite initial reluctance, Michelangelo created one of the greatest masterpieces of Western art, depicting nine scenes from the Book of Genesis, including the iconic "Creation of Adam" where God reaches out to touch Adam's hand, symbolizing the spark of life.
- The work is celebrated for its complexity, grandeur, and profound spiritual themes.

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Creation of Adam

1506-1513 • Fresco • Sistine Chapel, Vatican City

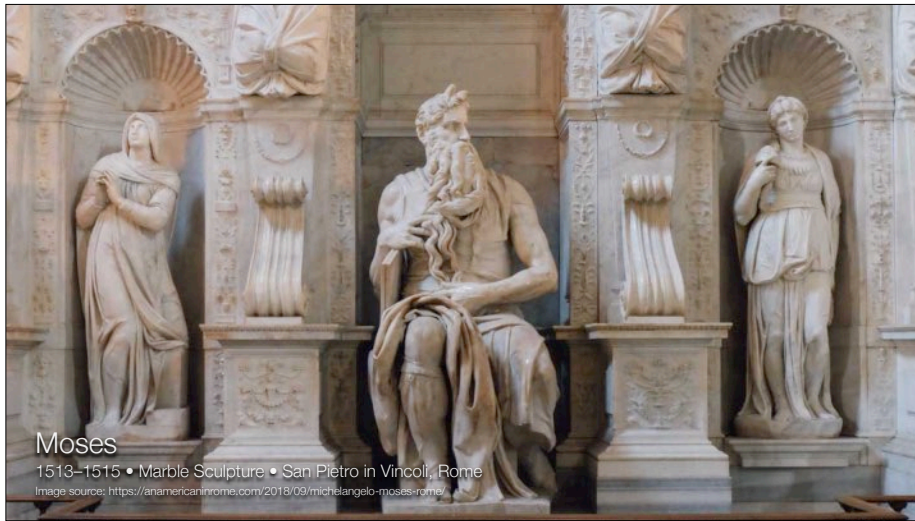
Image Source: <https://visitvatican.info/the-creation-adam/>

Michelangelo Buonarroti

Roman Commissions and the Sistine Chapel (1505–1534)

- Michelangelo continued to work for Pope Julius II. Between 1513 and 1515 he completed "Moses," originally carved to adorn the grand tomb of the Pope.
- The sculpture depicts Moses with a powerful presence, holding the tablets of the Ten Commandments, and is noted for its detailed rendering of the human form, particularly the muscles and flowing beard. The figure's intense gaze and dynamic posture have made it one of Michelangelo's most admired sculptures.
- One feature of particular interest is the "horns" on Moses' head, based on the Latin Vulgate translation of Exodus 34:30, "Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of **his face was horned**...."

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Moses

1513–1515 • Marble Sculpture • San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome

Image source: <https://anamericaninrome.com/2018/09/michelangelo-moses-rome/>

Michelangelo Buonarroti

Roman Commissions and the Sistine Chapel (1505–1534)

- Between 1536 and 1541 Michelangelo returned to the Sistine Chapel to paint "The Last Judgment" on the altar wall.
- The fresco is a dramatic depiction of the Second Coming of Christ and the final judgment of souls. It features a swirling composition of angels, saints, and the damned, with Christ at the center as the judge.
- The work reflects Michelangelo's mastery of the human form and his ability to convey intense emotion.

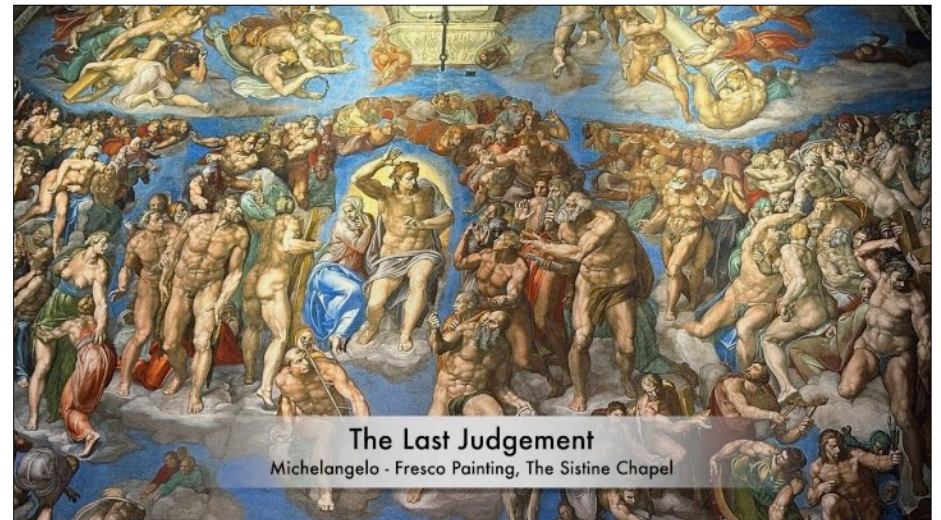
OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT (Version GPT-4) [Large language model]. OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>



The Last Judgment

1536–1541 • Fresco • 45 x 36 feet • Sistine Chapel, Vatican City

Image source: <https://www.thegeographicalculture.com/post/underpants-in-the-sistine-chapel>



The Last Judgement

Michelangelo - Fresco Painting, The Sistine Chapel

Michelangelo Buonarroti

Final Years (1534–1564)

- In his later years, Michelangelo increasingly turned to architecture. His most significant contribution was as the chief architect of St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, a position he assumed in 1546.
- He redesigned the basilica's dome, which became an enduring symbol of the Renaissance and a model for domes in Western architecture.

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Dome of St Peter's Basilica

Image source: <https://www.basilicasanpietro.va/en/saint-peters-the-dome.html>

Michelangelo Buonarroti

Final Years (1534–1564)

- Michelangelo was also a prolific poet, writing hundreds of sonnets and madrigals that reflected his spiritual beliefs and personal struggles.
- Although he never married, Michelangelo formed close relationships with several individuals, including the noblewoman Vittoria Colonna and the young artist Tommaso dei Cavalieri, whom he admired deeply.

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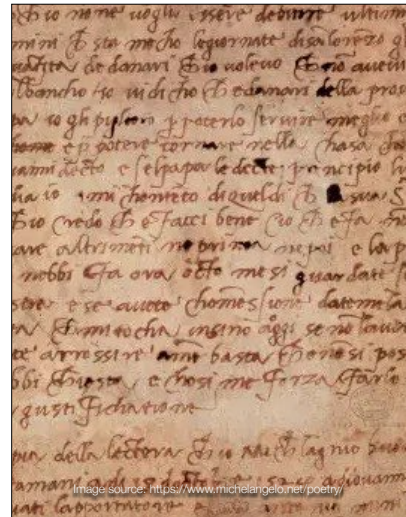


Image source: <https://www.michelangelo.net/poetry/>

Celestial Love

Michelangelo Buonarroti

No mortal thing enthralled these longing eyes
When perfect peace in thy fair face I found;
But far within, where all is holy ground,
My soul felt Love, her comrade of the skies:
For she was born with God in Paradise;
Nor all the shows of beauty shed around
This fair false world her wings to earth have bound:
Unto the Love of Loves aloft she flies.
Nay, things that suffer death, quench not the fire
Of deathless spirits; nor eternity
Serves sordid Time, that withers all things rare.
Not love but lawless impulse is desire:
That slays the soul; our love makes still more fair
Our friends on earth, fairer in death on high.



Michelangelo Buonarroti

Death and Legacy

- Michelangelo continued to work until his final days. He died on February 18, 1564, at the age of 88 in **Rome**. His body was returned to **Florence**, where he was honored with a grand funeral and buried in the Basilica of Santa Croce.
- Michelangelo's impact on Western art is immeasurable. His work in sculpture, painting, and architecture set new standards of artistic achievement and influenced generations of artists.
- His mastery of the human form and his deep religious convictions are evident in his sculptures and paintings, which became benchmarks for future artists and mark him as one of the defining figures of the Renaissance.

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Michelangelo Buonarroti

Significant oWorks

Work	Medium	Date	Location
Madonna of the Stairs	Bronze Sculpture	1490-1492	National Museum of Bargello, Florence
Battle of the Centaurs	Marble Sculpture	1491-1492	Casa Buonarroti, Florence,
Bacchus	Marble Sculpture	1496-1497	Bargello National Museum ,Florence
Pietà	Marble Sculpture	1498-1499	Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence
David	Marble Sculpture	1501-1504	Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence
Sistine Chapel Ceiling	Fresco	1508-1512	Sistine Chapel, Vatican City
Moses	Marble Sculpture	1513-1515	San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome
The Last Judgment	Fresco	1536-1541	Sistine Chapel, Vatican City

Questions & Discussion