

## MICHELANGELO BOUNARROTI

Michelangelo Buonarroti was born on March 6, 1475 in Caprese, Italy. He was a painter, sculptor, and architect. At the age of 13, he was apprenticed to Domenico Ghirlandaio, who at the time was painting a chapel in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence. Here, the young Michelangelo learned the technique of fresco (painting on fresh plaster before it dries); he would use this technique many years later in his work in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. At the age of 15, Michelangelo began to spend time in the home and in the gardens of Lorenzo de' Medici, where he studied sculpture under Bertoldo di Giovanni. It was during this time that he completed the Madonna of the Stairs and the Battle of the Centaurs. The political climate in Florence following the death of Lorenzo de' Medici may have led Michelangelo to leave the city, going first to Bologna and, after a brief return to Florence, to Rome. In Rome, he carved the Bacchus and then the Pietà which is in St. Peter's basilica in Rome.

Michelangelo returned to Florence where he began work on the David. Called the "Giant" by his fellow Florentines, this statue was completed in 1504. Later that year, Michelangelo was commissioned to undertake a fresco of the Battle of the Cascina, a work that was unfortunately later destroyed. During this same time period, Michelangelo produced several Madonnas; including the painting the Holy Family (also known as the Doni Madonna), a statue of the Madonna and Child (called the Bruges Madonna) which was purchased by a Flemish merchant and is now in Bruges, and two marble reliefs, the Taddei tondo and the Pitti tondo.

Michelangelo was called to Rome by Pope Julius II to create a tomb for him which was to contain forty lifesize figures, an endeavor that was never fully realized. In 1508, Michelangelo began work on the Sistine Chapel ceiling frescoes, a task that would occupy him until 1512. Upon completing the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo returned to the work on Julius' tomb, completing the figure of Moses and leaving unfinished two Slaves. Following Julius' death in 1513, he worked for Pope Leo X, Lorenzo de' Medici's son. At the Medici family's parish church in Florence, San Lorenzo, Michelangelo created tombs for Giuliano and Lorenzo de' Medici (II) and designed the Laurentian library, an annex to San Lorenzo.

In 1534, Michelangelo left Florence for Rome, where he was to spend the remainder of his life. He returned to the Sistine Chapel where he created the Last Judgment, another fresco, on the end wall. He designed the dome for St. Peter's and the Capitoline Square. He also worked on the Palazzo Farnese. His last paintings were the frescoes of the Conversion of St. Paul and the Crucifixion of St. Peter in the Pauline Chapel in the Vatican. Michelangelo died on February 18, 1564.