**Art History and Artists - Michelangelo**

* **Occupation:** Sculptor, Painter, Architect
* **Born:** March 6, 1475 in Caprese, Italy
* **Died:** February 18, 1564 in Rome, Italy
* **Famous works:** *David*, the *Pieta*, and paintings on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel
* **Style/Period:** [Renaissance](https://www.ducksters.com/history/renaissance_art.php)

**Biography:**  
  
**Where did Michelangelo grow up?**  
Michelangelo Buonarotti was born in Caprese, Italy on March 6, 1475. He was still young when his family moved to Florence where Michelangelo grew up. His mother died when he was only six years old.  
  
Growing up in Florence during the [Italian Renaissance](https://www.ducksters.com/history/renaissance.php) was the perfect environment for young Michelangelo. Even as a child all he wanted to do was paint and be an artist. His father, a local government official, wanted Michelangelo to go to school, but he had little interest in school. At the age of thirteen he was apprenticed to Domenico Ghirlandaio, a painter and artist.  
  
**Training to be an Artist**

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Michelangelo's talents became apparent as he worked for Ghirlandaio. Within a year or so he was sent to the powerful [Medici family](https://www.ducksters.com/history/renaissance/medici_family.php) to continue his training under the sculptor Bertoldo di Geovanni. Michelangelo was able to work with some of the finest artists and philosophers of the time.  
  
Over the next few years Michelangelo produced many sculptures including *Madonna of the Steps*, *Battle of the Centaurs*, and *Bacchus*.  
  
**The Pieta**  
  
In 1496 Michelangelo moved to Rome. A year later he received a commission to make a sculpture called the *Pieta*. It would become one of the masterpieces of [Renaissance art](https://www.ducksters.com/history/renaissance_art.php). The sculpture shows Jesus after he was crucified lying on the lap of his mother Mary. Today this sculpture sits in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. It is the only piece of art that Michelangelo signed.

The Pieta

**Statue of David**  
Michelangelo's fame as a great artist began to grow. He returned to Florence and received another commission to create a large statue of *David*. It took him a couple of years to finish the giant statue. The piece of marble he began with was very tall and thin. Many people didn't think he could do much with it. He worked in secrecy, not letting anyone see it until it was finished.