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## Michelangelo's Medici Chapel and Its Aftermath: Scattered Bodies and Florentine Identities under the Duchy

Claudia Lazzaro

When Michelangelo left Florence permanently in September 1534, his most famous Florentine project, the New Sacristy of San Lorenzo, or the Medici Chapel as it has been known since the late 18th century, had only two of its celebrated sculptures in place and others scattered on the floor.<sup>1</sup> The state that the chapel was in for the next thirteen years—and to some extent the next twenty-seven until it was finished as we see it now and as Federico Zuccaro depicted it in the 1570s (figs. 1 and 3)—determined how its contemporaries perceived and experienced the statues in it. This meant both the literal vantage points from which the sculptures could be viewed, and more broadly, the kinds of influence they might have. The visitors who entered the chapel, some even before its completion, reacted to the statues that they saw in letters and both literary and historical texts. Artists made countless copies of the sculptures in various media from the early 1530s through the end of the century. They drew the statues from almost every conceivable point of view, and sculptors made models of both individual statues and parts of their bodies.



Fig. 1. Michelangelo, Medici Chapel, 1519-34, San Lorenzo, Florence.  
Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

The scattering of the figures in the chapel—literally in the statues strewn on the floor in its early, unfinished state as well as in the repeated copies of separate sculptures seen from multiple

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<sup>1</sup> See Raphael Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen und Nachzeichnungen der Skulpturen Michelangelos: eine Geschichte der Kunstbetrachtung* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2000), 128, for the date of the Medici Chapel designation.

vantage points but not in place on the tombs, and similarly in verbal accounts of each of the statues individually—is key to their resonance for Florentines. The uses of the statues in the chapel at different moments in the 16th century to communicate Florentine artistic, social, and political identity derived from its unfinished state, not the coherent whole we see today and on which modern preoccupations with a unified iconographic program in the chapel depend.<sup>2</sup> Any discussion of the influence of the Medici Chapel in the 16th century demands taking into account not only how it was viewed and the way in which the statues were copied, but also the intentions of artists and patrons in “citing” its sculptures at various moments in time. The visual language of *fiorentinità*, or Florentineness, that the chapel presented differed for artists, intellectuals, and patricians, especially in the 1530s and 1540s, and for Duke Cosimo de’ Medici from the time of the founding of the Academy of Design in 1563. After Michelangelo’s death and elaborate funeral in 1564, the chapel took on new associations for a broader audience beyond Florence in the first prints of the tombs with the principal sculptures in place.

### Michelangelo’s Medici Chapel

The basic facts of the inception of the chapel and Michelangelo’s work there are well established.<sup>3</sup> At the moment of the resurgence of the Medici family in Florence—through the prestige of first one Medici pope, Leo X, then another, Clement VII—the Medici Chapel in San Lorenzo commemorated the last two legitimate members of the family line. These two, Giuliano de’ Medici, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent and brother of Pope Leo X, and Lorenzo, the pope’s nephew and Lorenzo’s grandson, died in 1516 and 1519 respectively. The commission to Michelangelo by Cardinal Giulio de’ Medici, the cousin of Pope Leo and later himself Pope Clement VII, assured that the chapel would be novel and elicit an immediate response, as indeed was the case. A significant event occurred within the fifteen years from the chapel’s inception in 1519 until Michelangelo’s departure from Florence in 1534—the imperial siege of the city in 1529–30. During this tumultuous time, Michelangelo participated in the defense of the Florentine republic against the Medici pope. After the reinstatement of the Medici in 1530 he was pardoned and returned to work, despite his own complicated and conflicted politics.

The purpose of the New Sacristy—as a burial chapel with continual masses and prayers for the souls of the deceased—extended the role of the church of San Lorenzo as a Medici burial

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<sup>2</sup> The role of the architecture in the chapel in constructing a visual language of Florentineness is beyond the scope of this study. For the reception of Michelangelo’s Florentine architecture, see Caroline Elam, “‘Tuscan dispositions’: Michelangelo’s Florentine Architectural Vocabulary and Its Reception,” *Renaissance Studies* 19, no. 1 (2005). Cammy Brothers, “Designing What You Cannot Draw: Michelangelo and the Laurentian Library,” in *Michelangelo e il linguaggio dei disegni di architettura*, ed. Golo Maurer and Alessandro Nova (Venice: Marsilio, 2012), 162–64, contrasts later drawings of the Laurentian Library with Michelangelo’s, but her examples could also suggest the interests of later architects.

<sup>3</sup> For the basic information, documents, and chronology of the execution of the chapel, see Charles de Tolnay, *The Medici Chapel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), 26–60 and 123–61; James S. Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (1961; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Martin Weinberger, *Michelangelo the Sculptor* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967); Caroline Elam, “The Site and Early Building History of Michelangelo’s New Sacristy,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 23, no. 1–2 (1979); Giulio Carlo Argan and Bruno Contardi, *Michelangelo architetto* (Milan: Electa, 1990); William E. Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: The Genius as Entrepreneur* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); and Joachim Poeschke, *Michelangelo and his World: Sculpture of the Italian Renaissance* (New York: Abrams, 1996).

site.<sup>4</sup> The chapel celebrates the two *capitani*, Giuliano and Lorenzo, as well as the two most illustrious family members, the *magnifici*, Lorenzo the Magnificent and his brother Giuliano. The famous wall tombs on either side are dedicated to Giuliano, captain of the church, and Lorenzo, governor-general of the Florentine militia, while the double tomb of the *magnifici* was never completed. Pope Leo instigated the conferral of ducal titles on both captains—Giuliano, duke of Nemours, and Lorenzo, duke of Urbino—as well as honorary Roman citizenship in a ceremony on the Capitoline Hill in Rome in 1513.<sup>5</sup> Befitting their roles as captains, dukes, and Roman citizens, Michelangelo portrayed the seated *capitani* in ancient Roman-style armor with bodies reminiscent of the Belvedere Torso and with distinctive gestures, which did not correspond with their characters any more than the statues' appearance did with their living prototypes.<sup>6</sup>



Fig. 2. Michelangelo, Tomb of Giuliano de' Medici, 1519-34, Medici Chapel, San Lorenzo, Florence.  
Photo: Scala/Art Resource, NY.

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<sup>4</sup> See L. D. Ettliger, "The Liturgical Function of Michelangelo's Medici Chapel," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 22, no. 3 (1978): 288, for the burial in San Lorenzo of Cosimo il Vecchio, Giovanni d'Averado, Piero il Gottoso, and his brother Lorenzo.

<sup>5</sup> See Fabrizio Cruciani, *Il teatro del Campidoglio e le feste romane del 1513* (Milan: Polifilo, 1968), 21–67, for a description of the spectacles.

<sup>6</sup> A few modern scholars have argued that the identities of the dukes have been switched, most extensively Richard C. Trexler and Mary Elizabeth Lewis, "Two Captains and Three Kings: New Light on the Medici Chapel," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, n.s., 4 (1981); and Richard C. Trexler, "True Light Shining vs. Obscurantism in the Study of Michelangelo's New Sacristy," *Artibus et Historiae* 42 (2000).

Among the many novelties are pairs of nude figures, male and female, reclining on each sarcophagus—*Night* and *Day* on that of Giuliano (fig. 2) and *Dawn* and *Dusk* on that of Lorenzo—figures whose identities were understood in the 1540s, if not immediately.<sup>7</sup> Michelangelo’s well-known words on a drawing of pilaster bases (Casa Buonarroti 10A) suggest their meaning for him: Day and Night pronounce that they have brought Giuliano to death.<sup>8</sup> As Hubertus Günther succinctly explains, time has destroyed Giuliano’s life, and further, his death “has taken away the light from the day, as if the course of the sun had been interrupted.”<sup>9</sup> Personifications—abstract ideas and places given human form—are commonly featured in ancient Roman sculpture, and some ancient sarcophagi incorporated representations of time, such as the four seasons. However, personifying times of day in human form was unprecedented.<sup>10</sup> With no familiar context for these representations of time, and because of the way they were available to be physically viewed, both the statues of the dukes and the nudes were primarily striking to their contemporaries for their visual qualities—their beauty, novel body types, complex poses, and expressiveness, if with somewhat different resonance than in modern scholarship.

### The Completion of the Chapel after 1534

The celebrated interior of the Medici Chapel as it now exists is not all that Michelangelo planned and, after his departure from Florence, over the next twenty-five years it contained both more and less than it does in its modern state.<sup>11</sup> Shortly before Michelangelo left in 1534, he had the completed statues of Giuliano and Lorenzo installed in their niches, and for some time these were the only sculptures in place on the wall tombs.<sup>12</sup> Still missing from the unfinished sacristy were the sculptures that currently occupy the incomplete double tomb of the *magnifici*—the *Madonna and Child* carved by Michelangelo and *Saint Cosmas* and *Saint Damian* executed by his assistants, Giovanni Angelo Montorsoli and Raffaello da Montelupo.<sup>13</sup> They were not

<sup>7</sup> Anonimo Fiorentino, *Il codice Magliabechiano*, ed. Karl Frey (Berlin: G. Grote’sche, 1892), 113: “la Notte, la Aurora, il Bruscho [...] et il Giorno.” Frey notes that the author substituted “Bruscho” for the name he did not know (ibid., 373). Nevertheless, this text, written between 1536 and 1546, is the first to identify all four figures. Bouk Wierda, “The True Identity of the Anonimo Magliabechiano,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 53, no. 1 (2010): 157–68, identifies the author as the Florentine humanist and art connoisseur Bernardo Vecchietti. Vasari names all four in his 1550 Life of Michelangelo, in Giorgio Vasari, *La vita di Michelangelo nelle redazioni del 1550 e del 1568*, ed. Paola Barocchi (Milan: Ricciardi, 1962), 1:61.

<sup>8</sup> The drawing is widely discussed, but see especially Creighton E. Gilbert, “Texts and Contexts of the Medici Chapel,” *Art Quarterly* 34 (1971): 402–6, and generally 391–409, on the inscriptions on Michelangelo’s drawings.

<sup>9</sup> Hubertus Günther, “Michelangelo’s Works in the Eyes of His Contemporaries,” in *The Beholder: The Experience of Art in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Thomas Frangenberg and Robert Williams (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 66.

<sup>10</sup> See Frank Zöllner, “The Sculptor 1513–1534,” in *Michelangelo, 1475–1564: Life and Work*, ed. Christof Thoenes and Frank Zöllner (Cologne: Taschen, 2010), 228, for representations of time in ancient sculpture. See Maia Wellington Gahtan, “Michelangelo and the Tomb of Time: The Intellectual Context of the Medici Chapel,” *Studi di storia dell’arte* 13 (2002): for a thorough iconographic study of the theme of time.

<sup>11</sup> For the chronology of the chapel in the 16th century after Michelangelo’s departure in 1534, see Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 129–45, and Zygmunt Ważbiński, *L’Accademia Medicea del Disegno a Firenze nel Cinquecento: idea e istituzione* (Florence: Olschki, 1987), 1:80–95.

<sup>12</sup> Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence: Sansoni, 1906), 6:634 (Life of Montorsoli): “Avendo Michelagnolo finite, con l’aiuto del frate [Montorsoli], e poste su le statue del duca Lorenzo e Giuliano [...] [Michelangelo] andò a Roma.”

<sup>13</sup> Anton Francesco Doni, Letter to Alberto Lollio, 1549, in *Disegno*, facsimile edition of Venice, 1549, ed. Mario Pepe (Milan: Electa, 1970), 48: “La stanza dove lavora [Michelangelo], che v’è una Madonna che scese di Paradiso

assembled until 1559, at the time of the transfer of the remains of Lorenzo the Magnificent and his brother Giuliano to the chapel.<sup>14</sup> Other statues were scattered in the empty space of the chapel, some resting on heavy wooden supports with enough room to walk around them, others perhaps on the floor.<sup>15</sup> It may have seemed to those who viewed the unfinished chapel more a miscellaneous sculpture collection than a set of cohesive tomb monuments.

Assembly of the remaining statues, aside from the dukes', began only in 1546, when *Night and Day* and *Dawn and Dusk* were mounted on their respective sarcophagi by Michelangelo's collaborator, Niccolò Tribolo.<sup>16</sup> Full-scale clay models of two of the four river gods that Michelangelo planned to rest at the base of each tomb remained in the chapel, probably until 1555. One of these survives in the Casa Buonarroti.<sup>17</sup> Two large trophies, about 4' 8" (142cm) in height, carved by Michelangelo's assistant Silvio Corsini, also rested on the floor of the chapel in these years. Now in the entrance hall, their intended location was on the attic of the tombs, above the *capitani*.<sup>18</sup> Both are depicted in Zuccaro's drawing, one on the floor at the far right, with an artist standing on it, the other with artistic liberty Zuccaro placed atop the double pilasters of the tomb of Lorenzo (fig. 3). Although the architecture of the dukes' tombs was complete, the windows were not glazed and walls not plastered until the end of 1556 or early 1557.<sup>19</sup> From 1561, the masses and perpetual prayers that Pope Clement VII had ordered thirty years earlier began.<sup>20</sup> Shortly after the New Sacristy became a functioning chapel with the door permanently open, for a brief time the newly founded Accademia del Disegno held meetings in San Lorenzo, perhaps in the chapel, while services and prayers took place in the chapel's choir.<sup>21</sup> Until then, the chapel remained a work in progress, which did not deter either artists or the public from visiting and celebrating the sculptures there.

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a farsi ritrarre." Pepe understands this as proof that in 1549 the *Madonna and Child* was still in Michelangelo's workroom (ibid., 80 n. 192). For the saints, see Till Verellen, "Cosmas and Damian in the New Sacristy," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 42 (1979): 274–77.

<sup>14</sup> Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 135.

<sup>15</sup> Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo*, 92, discusses the bench-like trestle tables that supported the full-size clay models of all the figures, which undoubtedly served for the marble blocks as well. They would have been not unlike modern ones, illustrated in an Alinari photograph, Wallace, 94, fig. 47. The river gods were intended to rest on the floor without a base, as the models may have as well. Wallace also documents the sawhorses and sturdy wood supports for larger blocks of marble (ibid., 111). Wallace reproduces an old photograph of Giuliano's tomb without any statues, as the earliest visitors would have seen it (ibid., 90, fig. 43).

<sup>16</sup> Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 132.

<sup>17</sup> Doni, *I marmi* (Venice, 1552; repr., ed. Ezio Chiòrboli [Bari: Laterza, 1928]), 2:20, has his fictional tourist see two models of river gods (*bozze di terra*), for the *due Figuroni di Marmo* that Michelangelo wanted to make. Rosenberg notes that Doni's text records his memories from 1542/3 (*Beschreibungen*, 128, and n. 277). Ważbiński suggests that Vasari removed the river gods after 1555 (*Accademia medicea*, 1:82 n. 40). For the Casa Buonarroti model, see Jeannine O'Grody, "Michelangelo: The Master Modeler," in *Earth and Fire: Italian Terracotta Sculpture from Donatello to Canova*, ed. Bruce Boucher (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 37–38.

<sup>18</sup> Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo*, 131 and 134, fig. 84. Cristina Acidini in *1564/2014 Michelangelo: incontrare un artista universale*, ed. Cristina Acidini, Elena Capretti, and Sergio Risaliti (Florence: Giunti, 2014), 315, cat. 6.10, dates their current placement to the 1940s.

<sup>19</sup> Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 134–35.

<sup>20</sup> Ettliger, "Liturgical Function," 295; Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 135.

<sup>21</sup> See Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 136–38 and n. 335, for the Accademia del Disegno meeting in San Lorenzo from October 1563 until 1567/68; if they actually met in the chapel is unclear. Raphael Rosenberg, "Artists as Beholders: Drawings after Sculptures as a Medium and Source for the Experience of Art," in Frangenberg and Williams, *The Beholder*, 105, suggests that prayers were confined to the choir.

## The Chapel's Fame

Well before the New Sacristy was either completed or fully open to the public, the intellectuals and artists who entered, especially after Michelangelo's departure from Florence in 1534, admired its sculptures as "chosa mirabilissima" ["wondrous"], "chosa di grande maraviglia" ["marvelous"], and "stupende bozze" ["stupendous"].<sup>22</sup> Although unfinished, the chapel was considered worthy of being viewed by dignitaries and distinguished foreign visitors: in 1536 the Emperor Charles V stopped in the chapel after mass at San Lorenzo, and even the Frankfurt jurist Johann Fichard gained admission on his travels through Italy.<sup>23</sup> A year later, in March 1537, a great crowd entered on a day when the chapel was open to the public following masses for the assassinated Duke Alessandro de' Medici.<sup>24</sup> In the 1540s Florentine patricians and writers frequented the sacristy as well. The prolific author Anton Francesco Doni visited three or four times in 1543, recorded a fictional visit in his *I Marmi*, and in 1549 urged his friend, the Ferrarese writer Alberto Lollio, to spend a day viewing all the "marvelous things" (*cose mirabili*) in San Lorenzo.<sup>25</sup> Others clearly did as well: for instance, at the end of 1545 or early 1546, the Florentine intellectual and political thinker Donato Giannotti discussed in his *Dialoghi* the often-quoted quatrain about *Night* written by Giovanni di Carlo Strozzi and Michelangelo's epigram in response.<sup>26</sup> In March 1547, shortly after the Times of Day were finally installed on the tombs, the Florentine historian Benedetto Varchi assumed widespread familiarity with them when he referred to them in a famous public lecture, the second of two *Lezzioni*, or "Lessons," to the Accademia Fiorentina, the Florentine academy dedicated to the explication and promotion of Florentine literary classics.<sup>27</sup> After the required masses and prayers had begun in the choir and the chapel was officially open Vincenzo Borghini, Benedictine monk, scholar, prior of the Ospedale degli Innocenti, and prominent figure in the Medici court, wrote to Duke Cosimo in a

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<sup>22</sup> Giovanbattista Mini refers to *Night* as "chosa di grande maraviglia" and *Dawn* as "chosa mirabilissima" (Letter to Bartolomeo Valori, 29 September 1531, in *Il carteggio di Michelangelo*, ed. Giovanni Poggi, Paola Barocchi, and Renzo Ristori [Florence: Sansoni, 1973], 3:329). Doni called the river gods "stupende bozze" (*I marmi*, 2:22). Other contemporary comments are cited below; and see Vasari, *Vita di Michelangelo*, ed. Barocchi, 3:953–96, for excerpts from various 16th-century texts.

<sup>23</sup> In early May 1536 Emperor Charles V, after his week's visit in Florence, went to see "quella maravigliosa sagrestia" (Benedetto Varchi, *Storia fiorentina* [Florence: Salani, 1963], 2:540). For Fichard, who mistook *Night* for Minerva, see August Schmarsow, "Excerpte aus Joh. Fichard's 'Italia' von 1536," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 14 (1891): 378: "Sed tamen hoc tempore multo magis commendatur et celebrator Michael Angelis Buonaroti cuius aliquot statuæ marmoreæ Herculis, Minervæ etc [...] videntur."

<sup>24</sup> See Roberto Ridolfi, "Diario fiorentino di anonimo delle cose occorse l'anno 1537," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 116 (1958): 560, who noted *infinite persone*.

<sup>25</sup> Doni, Letter to Alberto Lollio, 1549, in *Disegno*, 48; and Ważbiński, *Accademia Medicea*, 1:76 n. 5.

<sup>26</sup> For the date it was written, see Donato Giannotti, *Dialoghi di Donato Giannotti, de' giorni che Dante consumò nel cercare l'Inferno e 'l Purgatorio*, ed. Deoclecio Redig de Campos (Florence: Sansoni, 1939), 27–28 and 45. James M. Saslow dates Michelangelo's epigram to 1545–46 (*The Poetry of Michelangelo: An Annotated Translation* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991], 419).

<sup>27</sup> Benedetto Varchi, *Due lezzioni di M. Benedetto Varchi, nella prima delle quali si dichiara un sonetto di M. Michelagnolo Buonarotti, nella seconda si disputa quale sia più nobile arte la scultura, o la pittura, con una lettera d'esso Michelagnolo* (Florence: Torrentino, 1549), 117. For Varchi's comments, see Leatrice Mendelsohn, *Paragoni: Benedetto Varchi's Due Lezzioni and Cinquecento Art Theory* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982), 138–42 and 161–63. In the same years, Michelangelo's associates made an effort to publish a selection of his poems. Raymond Carlson argues that the first lecture aimed at promoting Michelangelo's poetry by giving access to a wide range of individuals, and discusses Varchi's knowledge of Michelangelo's poems and the publication efforts ("'Eccellentissimo Poeta et Amatore Divinissimo': Benedetto Varchi and Michelangelo's Poetry at the Accademia Fiorentina," *Italian Studies* 69, no. 2 [2014]: 170–77).

letter of February 1563 that as soon as a visitor comes to Florence he immediately runs to see the chapel.<sup>28</sup> By the end of the century, hundreds of people had visited, as chronicles, travel diaries, and letters witness.<sup>29</sup> All went to see the marvels and pay homage to the sculptor that Varchi called “una delle luci della fiorentina gloria” [“one of the lights of Florentine glory”].<sup>30</sup>

Michelangelo’s Medici Chapel immediately became one of the major “texts” of Florentineness, which contemporaries needed to study, much as the Accademia Fiorentina scrutinized Dante and other classic Florentine literary texts. The viewers of the chapel who recorded their responses in the decades before its formal opening were for the most part patricians, intellectuals, connoisseurs, and biographers. Their commentaries, especially when most sculptures remained in the open space, remarked on each statue individually, beginning not only with their beauty, but also their monumentality: so Doni’s fictional account in *I Marmi* has the Florentine guide point out *questi Capitanoni, questi Figuroni* [“these great captains, these great figures”].<sup>31</sup> Some authors list the statues one after the other, generally by category of *capitani* and personifications; only in 1584 does Raffaello Borghini in *Il Riposo* assemble the scattered bodies by naming them as they are grouped on the tombs.<sup>32</sup> Both Doni and Vasari also list body parts of the dukes: “manoni di Dio, teste, busti, braccia, gambe, stinchi, et piedi” [“great, godlike hands, heads, busts, arms, legs, shins, and feet”],<sup>33</sup> and “con una testa e gola, con incassatura d’occhi, profilo di naso, sfenditura di bocca, e capegli sì divini, mani, braccia, ginochia e piedi” [“his head, his throat, the setting of his eyes, the profile of his nose, the opening of his mouth, and his hair all made in splendid artistry, along with his hands, arms, knees, and feet”].<sup>34</sup>

The disparate 16th-century commentaries further concentrate on the impact of Michelangelo’s sculptures on the viewer, the emotions represented, and how the poses and expressions convey the significance of individual figures. Doni is particularly eloquent about their effect: they steal the soul of those who admire them, stupefy the viewer, and turn the beholder to stone.<sup>35</sup> One of Varchi’s two sonnets on the statues, which he read to the Accademia Fiorentina in 1547, suggests that *Night* and *Dawn* can make men fall in love.<sup>36</sup> Vasari instead focused on the emotional content conveyed by their poses and expressions, especially of *Night*

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<sup>28</sup> Karl Frey, ed., *Der Literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasaris* (Munich: Georg Müller, 1923), 1:716.

<sup>29</sup> Rosenberg, “Artists as Beholders,” 105.

<sup>30</sup> Varchi, *Storia fiorentina*, 2:540, at the visit of Emperor Charles V: “il quale [Michelangelo] meritamente una delle luci della fiorentina gloria dir si puote.”

<sup>31</sup> Doni, *I marmi*, 2:20. Ascanio Condivi reinforces this with reference to *Day* and *Night*: “due figuroni, maggiori del naturale” (*Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti* [Rome, 1553; repr., ed. Giovanni Nencioni (Florence: Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1998)], 41).

<sup>32</sup> Raffaello Borghini, *Il Riposo*, facsimile edition of Florence, 1584, ed. Mario Rosci (Milan: Edizioni Labor, 1967), 1:163. In an imaginary tour of the chapel, Ridolfo Sirigatti indicates *Dawn*, *Dusk*, and *Lorenzo* on the left, and on the right, *Night* with *Day* and *Giuliano* nearby.

<sup>33</sup> Doni, Letter to Michelangelo, 12 January 1543, in Poggi, Barocchi, and Ristori, *Carteggio* (1979), 4:161–62.

<sup>34</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 7:196. The translation is from Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, trans. Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter E. Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 456.

<sup>35</sup> Doni, Letter to Michelangelo, 12 January 1543, in Poggi, Barocchi, and Ristori, *Carteggio*, 4:161: “rubba l’anime di coloro che la mirano;” Doni, *I marmi*, 2:20: “cominciate a rimirar questi Capitanoni [...] e poi stupite;” and Doni, Letter to Lollo, 1549, in *Disegno*, 48: “habbiate avvertenza non vi rapire in estasi nel considerare quelle figure di marmo, e di non vi trasmutare in pietra.” Vasari, *Vite*, 7:195–196, also uses the phrase “fece stupire” and *Dawn* “can arouse the melancholy in one’s soul” [“da fare uscire il maninconico dell’animo”].

<sup>36</sup> Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 162: “Piu non mi par Bettin del dritto fore, / Leggendo, che de’Marmi huom s’innamora” [“It does not seem to me improper any more, Bettini, / To read how men can fall in love with marble forms”].



and *Dawn*, and their moods—mourning and grief.<sup>37</sup> The current designation of these statues as allegories reflects a modern concern with deciphering a unified program for the chapel,<sup>38</sup> beyond what Ascanio Condivi, the authorized biographer of Michelangelo in 1553, and Francesco Bocchi, author of the first guidebook to Florence in 1591, make clear: they are collectively about time.<sup>39</sup> Varchi's exceptional attempt to interpret the imagery of the tombs in his second lecture to the Accademia Fiorentina aimed at demonstrating the analogy between the meaning of the tomb sculpture and Dante's vision of the cosmos in the *Divine Comedy*.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, accounts of the sculptures for the most part convey the experience of the chapel as containing individual, marvelous, beautiful, and stirring statues, but not their role within the composite of tomb monuments. As visitors and intellectuals came to know the chapel as fragmented parts, not a coherent whole, so too did the artists who similarly flocked there to engage with them.

## Copies and Context

At the same time that the Medici Chapel was an essential stop for tourists, dignitaries, and intellectuals, it also became a destination for artists, who began making drawn copies of the statues, starting from the 1530s. Giorgio Vasari was among the earliest to have access to the chapel, in late 1532 or 1533 while Michelangelo was off in Rome, and to study and draw the figures before the statues of the dukes were installed.<sup>41</sup> In his *Lives*, Vasari recorded that in 1536 “all the sculptors and painters of Florence” gathered there, making drawings and reliefs.<sup>42</sup> Although a number had entered earlier, between 1546 and 1556 artists had free access even before the completion of the chapel.<sup>43</sup> They produced many drawings, sculpted models, and casts of the statues, especially *Giuliano* and *Lorenzo*, and *Night* and *Dawn*, but also *Day* and *Dusk*, if slightly fewer. Raphael Rosenberg has cataloged the existing drawings and found about sixty after the original sculptures by thirty different hands in the 16th century.<sup>44</sup> This must be only a

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<sup>37</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 7:196, on *Dawn*: “onde di storce con amaritudine, dolendosi nella sua continovata bellezza in segno del gran dolore;” and on *Night*: “non solo la quiete di chi dorme, ma il dolore e la malinconia di chi perde cosa onorata e grande.”

<sup>38</sup> I find “personification” a more accurate term, but also one not used in the 16th century. “Allegories” has become fixed in the art historical literature in English, Italian, and German, but Georg Satzinger also calls them personifications in “Warum Michelangelo?,” in *Der Göttliche: Hommage an Michelangelo*, ed. Georg Satzinger and Sebastian Schütze (Munich: Hirmer, 2015), 22. The term “Times of Day” came into scholarly texts late as well. A cursory look over the sources reproduced in Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 169, suggests that Wölfflin's German *Tageszeiten* in 1898 was an early usage. Tolnay used both “Allegories” and “Times of Day” (*Medici Chapel*).

<sup>39</sup> Condivi, *Vita di Michelagnolo*, 41, “un omo e una donna, significando per queste il Giorno et la Notte, et per ambi due, il Tempo che consuma il tutto.” Francesco Bocchi, *Le bellezze della città di Florenza*, facsimile edition of Florence, 1591 (Farmborough: Gregg, 1971), 266: “sopra due Sepulture ha figurate il Buonarroto quattro figure, le quali tutte e quattro significano il Tempo.”

<sup>40</sup> Varchi, *Due lezioni*, 117: “[the tombs of the dukes] [...] volendo[...] significare, che per sepolcro di ciascuno di costoro, si conveniva non solo un'Emisperio, ma tutto 'l Mondo ad uno pose la notte, è 'l giorno et à l'altro l'aurora, è 'l crepuscolo, che gli mettesero in mezzo, et coprissero, come quegli fanno la terra; la qual cosa fu medesimamente osservata in più luoghi di Dante.” See Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 138–42, especially 139, for a discussion of Varchi's theory.

<sup>41</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 7:656. While Michelangelo was in Rome, Vasari studied the statues “per alcun tempo con molta diligenza, così come erano in terra.” See also Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 129.

<sup>42</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 6:574: “dove allora essendo volti a disegnare e fare di rilievo tutti i scultori e pittori di Firenze.”

<sup>43</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 6:285, and Rosenberg, *Beschreibungen*, 134.

<sup>44</sup> Rosenberg distinguishes these sixty from others after reproductions or casts (“Artists as Beholders,” 105). Rosenberg catalogs drawings after all of Michelangelo's sculptures (*Beschreibungen*, 201–63).

fraction of the total, since we know of others that did not survive, such as the drawings of the statues of the dukes that Vasari sent in 1535 to the author and satirist Pietro Aretino.<sup>45</sup> In 1563, Vasari claimed in a letter to Duke Cosimo that, “as the whole world knows,” the sacristy was a school of the arts.<sup>46</sup> Raffaello Borghini, in *Il Riposo* of 1584, implies that copying the statues was by then more precisely a requirement: “all those who wish to become capable men in sculpture should make these their study.”<sup>47</sup>

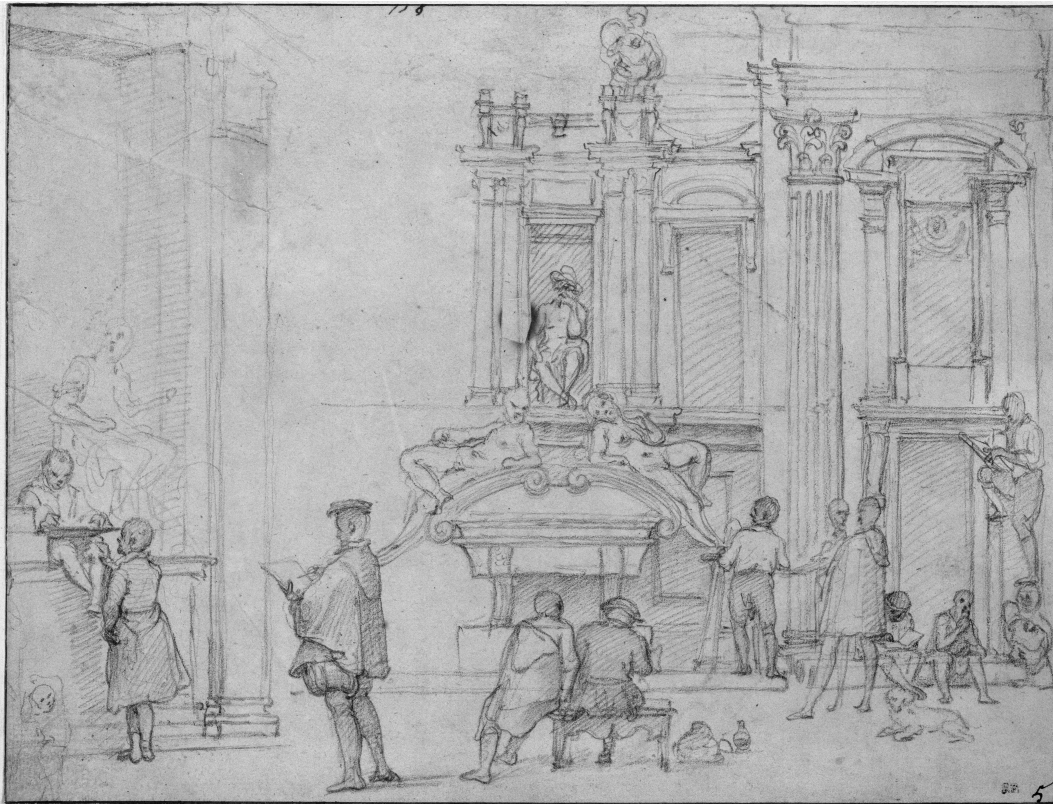


Fig. 3. Federico Zuccaro, *Artists Sketching in the New Sacristy*, c.1575–79, Louvre, Paris.  
Photo: © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY.

Two drawings in the Louvre by Federico Zuccaro of about 1575–79 (fig. 3) evoke the everyday activities of artists sketching and discussing in the chapel in its then finished state,

<sup>45</sup> In a letter from before 7 September 1535, Aretino acknowledged receipt of the drawings of the “due capitani,” in Frey, *Literarische Nachlass*, 35.

<sup>46</sup> Vasari, Letter of 16 February 1562, in Frey, *Literarische Nachlass*, 719: “Ella con tutto il mondo sa, ch’ell’ è stato, è et sarà, fin che durerann gli annj, la scuola delle nostre arti.”

<sup>47</sup> Borghini, *Il Riposo*, 1:163. The translation is from Raffaello Borghini, *Il Riposo*, trans. and ed. Lloyd H. Ellis, Jr. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 118. For copies and influence of all Michelangelo’s works from the 16th century into the 21st, see Satzinger and Schütze, *Der Göttliche*. For copying by and influence on Florentine artists specifically, see Sandro Bellesi, “Michelangelo e le arti a Firenze dalla metà del Cinquecento al primo Seicento: alcuni episodi sulla pittura e sul disegno,” in *L’immortalità di un mito: l’eredità di Michelangelo nelle arti e negli insegnamenti accademici a Firenze dal Cinquecento alla contemporaneità*, ed. Sandro Bellesi and Francesca Petrucci (Florence: Edifir-Edizioni, 2014), 59–68.

albeit with considerable artistic license.<sup>48</sup> The artists depicted range from apprentices to academy members, distinguished by their dress. In the drawing that features the tomb of Lorenzo, the atmosphere is extraordinarily casual: artists climb up on the tombs, sit high on a ledge, stand on the sculpted trophy while balanced with one foot on the volute of the door frame, sit on a door sill, use a drawing table, or stand back to draw from a distance. Near the bench they must have brought in to view the tomb, there are also a dog and a carafe of wine. Most significantly, in this intimate space the copyists observe the statues from different heights, not just ground level, and various points of view. This corresponds with the history of copying from the 1530s, when some artists drew the statues while they were still on the floor, others after their installation. Zuccaro's drawing encapsulates the ways that artists came to understand Michelangelo's forms and demonstrates the academic practice that created a Florentine artistic elite.

The drawings that survive are all copies of single figures, not the statues in context or with nearby architecture or sculpture. In this sense, they correspond with the accounts of visitors who remarked on each in turn, influenced by the way they were first encountered. Most striking about the drawings, those dating both before and after the installation of the statues, is the great variety of vantage points. This practice emerged from the particular state of the chapel in its early years, with the exceptional accessibility of the sculptures and the ability to move around the works and view them from above, below, and the side. For instance, Paul Joannides suggests that Francesco Salviati's drawing, probably of 1539, of *Dawn* in the British Museum, seen from a steep angle, was drawn from a low chair while the original statue rested on a trestle or bench (fig. 4).<sup>49</sup> In other drawings, Salviati viewed the same figure from different positions—a drawing in Chatsworth depicts the statue from below, but not from the side, and a later one in Edinburgh from close to eye level with the figure tilted nearly into a plane.<sup>50</sup> Each emphasizes a different aspect of the model: the British Museum sheet focuses on the position of legs and arms and the torsions of the body as well as the anguish in her expression; the Edinburgh drawing instead foregrounds the mass and muscularity of her body. There are also drawings that provide a canonical frontal view of the figure, some highly finished, as Giovanni Battista Naldini's later fine image of *Night*, which conveys both the materiality of the sculpture and its expressive quality (fig. 5).

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<sup>48</sup> The drawings are generally dated to when Zuccaro painted the Florence cathedral dome, although Ważbiński dates them to 1565, when Zuccaro worked on Francesco de' Medici's wedding festivities and was admitted to the Accademia del Disegno (*Accademia Medicea*, 1:89). They are discussed only briefly by Paul Joannides, *Michel-Ange, élèves et copistes* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2003), 276–78, cats. 155 and 156; Cristina Acidini Luchinat, *Taddeo e Federico Zuccari: fratelli pittori del Cinquecento* (Milan: Jandi Sapi, 1999), 2:102; and Susan Tipton in *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, ed. Cristina Acidini Luchinat (New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the Detroit Institute of Arts, 2002), 351–52, cat. 215.

<sup>49</sup> Paul Joannides, "Salviati and Michelangelo," in *Reactions to the Master: Michelangelo's Effect on Art and Artists in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis and Paul Joannides (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 83.

<sup>50</sup> Joannides discusses the British Museum *Dawn*, Salviati's *Dawn* in Edinburgh, which he dates about 1545–46, and the Chatsworth sheet in *Francesco Salviati (1510–1563) o la bella maniera*, ed. Catherine Monbeig-Goguel (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1998), 96–97, cat. 8. For the Chatsworth drawing, see Philippe Costamagna, "L'Étude d'après les maîtres et le rôle de la copie dans la formation des artistes à Florence au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle," in *Disegno: Actes du Colloque du Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes* (Rennes: Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1991), 54, and fig. 10; and Michael Jaffé, *Old Master Drawings from Chatsworth: A Loan Exhibition from the Devonshire Collection* (Alexandria, VA: International Exhibitions Foundation, 1987), 120, cat. 71.



Fig. 4. Francesco Salviati, *Dawn*, c.1539, British Museum, London.  
Photo: © Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig. 5. Giovanni Battista Naldini, *Night*, Windsor Castle.  
Photo: Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2016.

Such works might have been intended for reproduction, as has been proposed of drawings by all three of the most prolific artists working in the chapel—Battista Franco, Salviati, and Naldini—or perhaps for collectors.<sup>51</sup> The abundant copies of the statues from different angles resonate with Cellini’s belief that the sculptor needs to examine a figure from different views, or *vedute*, and to harmonize them with the principal view.<sup>52</sup> Whether influenced by Michelangelo’s own concerns and practice or contemporary notions as articulated by Cellini, Bocchi in his 1591 guidebook makes a particular point of noting with respect to *Dawn* that, “e come che altri si muti di logo, onde si fa diversa veduta, tuttavia riesce l’industria rarissima, et stupenda” [“as one moves around, taking in different views, the workmanship appears extraordinary and stupendous”].<sup>53</sup> It is also possible that the availability of so many points of view of these statues—many more before their installation than in Michelangelo’s intended placement—and the countless drawings that took advantage of this, influenced 16th-century viewing and thinking about sculpture. In any case, the sheer number of drawn copies in part results from the special character of the chapel—the accessibility of the statues and the plentiful potential viewpoints. Indeed, Zuccaro’s drawing makes clear that the habit of observing them from different heights and angles continued even well after their installation on the wall tombs.

While copyists drew the statues from various angles both before and after their installation, a number of drawings represent them from positions that would not have been feasible once they were mounted: from these it is clear that artists also utilized three-dimensional reproductions.<sup>54</sup> Naldini’s head of *Giuliano* in the British Museum, for example, dating long after the sculpture was put in place in its niche, is seen from a very high position and at an angle impossible from any perch within the chapel.<sup>55</sup> A drawing in the Ashmolean Museum of *Dusk* resting on a mobile cart with thin wooden struts and wheels illustrates the mechanics of this practice (fig. 6).

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<sup>51</sup> Raphael Rosenberg proposes that Battista Franco’s drawings of the Times of Day were made either to prepare prints or as equivalents to them, and attributes the only two known prints after Michelangelo’s statues, of *Dusk* and *Dawn*, to Franco, dating them about 1538 (“The Reproduction and Publication of Michelangelo’s Sacristy: Drawings and Prints by Franco, Salviati, Naldini and Cort,” in Ames-Lewis and Joannides, *Reactions*, 114–118 and figs. 6.2 and 6.3). These, from the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin, must be the same as the anonymous mid-16th-century master in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris that Tolnay notes (*Medici Chapel*, 155). Georg Satzinger accepts the attribution in Satzinger and Schütze, *Der Göttliche*, 205, cats. 138 and 139. Rosenberg further hypothesizes that Naldini’s drawings of *Giuliano* and *Lorenzo* in Princeton were either used or commissioned for Cornelis Cort’s prints of 1570, discussed below (“Reproduction,” 120, 125, and 129). Joannides notes that Salviati’s *Dawn* in Edinburgh, later etched by Jan de Bisschop and published in 1671, may have been created for such a purpose (“Salviati and Michelangelo,” 74).

<sup>52</sup> Raphael Rosenberg, “Le vedute della statua’: Michelangelos Strategien zur Betrachterlenkung,” in *Benvenuto Cellini: Kunst und Kunsttheorie im 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Alessandro Nova and Anna Schreurs (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003): 217–18. Benvenuto Cellini in “Sopra l’arte del disegno” writes: “gli è di necessità di levar di quella bella grazia di quella prima veduta per accordarsi con tutte l’altre prestandole allo intorno” (*I trattati dell’oreficeria e della scultura*, ed. Carlo Milanese [Florence: Le Monnier, 1857], 218); and in “Sopra la differenza nata tra gli scultori e pittori,” he notes the effort in harmonizing with “cento vedute o più” (*ibid.*, 231).

<sup>53</sup> Bocchi, *Bellezze*, 275. The translation is from Francesco Bocchi, *The Beauties of the City of Florence: A Guidebook of 1591*, trans. and ed. Thomas Frangenberg and Robert Williams (London: Harvey Miller, 2006), 249. Bocchi also observes that *Night* is beautiful whether seen from left or right, although the view from directly in front is overwhelmingly stupendous (*Bellezze*, 268–69, and *Beauties*, 243). Rosenberg discusses Bocchi’s responses in “Vedute della statua,” 225–26.

<sup>54</sup> Joannides, like Rosenberg, is concerned with distinguishing between copies of original statues and of reproductions. Joannides suggests that gesso casts were made from Tribolo’s early terracotta statuettes, and many others must have been available as well (“Salviati and Michelangelo,” 74).

<sup>55</sup> Maria Cecilia Fabbri in *The Medici, Michelangelo*, 331–32, cat. 191, dates it c.1570.

Joannides points out that the cart is too flimsy to support anything heavier than a plaster reduction, which he estimates to be fairly large, about half that of the original.<sup>56</sup>



Fig. 6. Anonymous, *Dusk*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.  
Photo: © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

In some examples, it is not easy to determine whether the copyist drew from the original statue or a model, as is the case with Salviati's *Giuliano* in the British Museum, drawn from a high point of view and a little to the side (fig. 7).<sup>57</sup> The result in this case is an emphasis on the hands and position of the arms and legs, which is less evident in the view from below within the chapel (fig. 8). The distinction between copying from the original and from a model was apparently not as important to artists as the practice of viewing from different angles. The use of reductions or casts allowed them to continue the practice that had become essential to the understanding of Michelangelo's sculptures and closely identified with the chapel itself. In this way, artists could study Michelangelo's body poses, their expressions, the transformation into flesh, revealing muscles, bulges, and indentations, and the surface treatment of the marble. Again we can see a kind of parallel with 16th-century verbal responses, which attempt to characterize the effect on the viewer and describe the emotions conveyed by each figure. What ensued for artists was also a repertoire of images that could be reused in other contexts and given new identities.

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<sup>56</sup> See Joannides, *The Drawings of Michelangelo and His Followers in the Ashmolean Museum* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 346–47, cat. 85, which Joannides attributes to Ludovico Carracci. Rosenberg attributes it to the Circle of Federico Zuccaro (*Beschreibungen*, 206, NZ 21).

<sup>57</sup> Joannides, "Salviati and Michelangelo," 71 and 74.



Fig. 7. Francesco Salviati, *Giuliano de' Medici*,  
British Museum, London.  
Photo: © Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig.8. Michelangelo, *Duke Giuliano de' Medici*,  
c.1526–32, Medici Chapel, Florence.  
Photo: Author.

Clearly, numerous three-dimensional reproductions were also in circulation in these years. A number of museums own 16th-century examples and others are noted in the scholarly literature, all in different degrees of finish and faithfulness to their model, and in various sizes, and materials—wax, clay, terracotta, gesso, and bronze.<sup>58</sup> Vasari records those by two associates of

<sup>58</sup> Tolnay lists wax models of the dukes in the National Gallery of Scotland and of the Times of Day in the Ashmolean Museum, as well as mid-16th-century terracotta examples in a private collection in New York (*Medici Chapel*, 155). Others are noted by Ludwig Goldscheider, *Michelangelo's Bozzetti for Statues in the Medici Chapel* (London: privately printed, 1957), 12–13, 15–16, and 18–19, and Douglas Lewis, “Genius Disseminated: The Influence of Michelangelo’s Works on Contemporary Sculpture,” in *The Genius of the Sculptor in Michelangelo’s Work* (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1992), 179–99, including the large clay models of *Night* and *Dawn* in Caracas (193). In addition, there is a small terracotta *Night* in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome, a larger terracotta *Dawn* in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, as well as *Dawn* and *Night* of about 1560–65 by Johann Gregor van der Schardt, and larger terracotta figures of *Day* and *Dusk* in the Hermitage. Larger gesso copies by Egnazio Danti are in Perugia. For *Night* in Palazzo Venezia, from the second half of the 16th century, smaller than Tribolo’s Bargello copies by a third, see Maria Grazia Vaccari in *Venere e Amore: Michelangelo e la nuova bellezza ideale / Venus and Love: Michelangelo and the New Ideal of Beauty*, ed. Franca Falletti and Jonathan Katz Nelson (Florence: Giunti, 2002), 170–71, cat. 15, and Alessandro Cecchi in *Il sogno nel Rinascimento*, ed. Chiara Rabbini-Bernard, Alessandro Cecchi, and Yves Hersant (Livorno: Sillabe, 2013), 62, cat. 2. For the Victoria and Albert reductions from the Praun collection, see Boucher, *Earth and Fire*, 170–71, cat. 31. For the Hermitage terracottas, see Sergej Androsov in *La lanterna della pittura: l’Adolescente dell’Ermitage e i disegni della Casa Buonarroti: Michelangelo e l’idea della scultura*, ed. Massimo Bertozzi and Umberto Baldini (Florence: Maschietto & Musolino, 2000), 52–55. For Egnazio Danti’s *Dawn* and *Dusk* in Perugia (in addition to *Night* and *Day* by another artist), see Dimitrios Zikos in *I grandi bronzi del Battistero: l’arte di Vincenzo Danti, discepolo di Michelangelo*, ed. Charles Davis and Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi (Florence: Giunti, 2008), 324–25, cat. 10.

Michelangelo, Tribolo's terracotta copies made soon after 1534,<sup>59</sup> and more than two decades later Daniele da Volterra's gesso copies of all the statues in the chapel in 1557.<sup>60</sup> Both models and casts of Michelangelo's Medici Chapel sculptures served artists' education in workshops. Tintoretto purchased at considerable expense large gesso copies of the Medici Chapel figures, and perhaps original models, which he and the artists in his studio copied.<sup>61</sup> The Florentine collector, merchant, and sculptor Ridolfo Sirigatti, one of the interlocutors in Raffaello Borghini's *Il Riposo* of 1584, owned life-size casts of all of Michelangelo's New Sacristy statues, which he displayed in his palace in Florence.<sup>62</sup> These reproductions, while not of costly materials, also reinforced the interest of patricians and collectors in the chapel.

In addition to figures seen from different positions, artists also drew and modeled the body parts that were striking enough for Doni and Vasari to list them. Rosenberg has postulated that from the middle of the 16th century casts of heads and hands were available and apparently widely popular.<sup>63</sup> A drawing of the hand of *Giuliano* in the Getty Museum attributed to Bronzino could only be seen from a very tall ladder, or most likely, from close-up observation of a cast (fig. 9).<sup>64</sup> In Bartolomeo Passarotti's drawing of *Dawn* in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, from about 1550, the statue viewed from above is surrounded by detached feet in various sizes and seen from different angles (fig. 10).<sup>65</sup> Models of hands and feet were rumored to be part of Michelangelo's practice, and in 1563 the Venetian sculptor Alessandro Vittoria purchased a terracotta model of the foot of *Day* as an original by the master.<sup>66</sup> Rare study models of hands, arms, legs, and other body parts from the Medici Chapel sculptures, recently attributed to the Dutch sculptor Johann Gregor van der Schardt and kept in his workshop, have survived because they were later acquired by the Nuremberg silk merchant and collector Paul von Praun in the late

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<sup>59</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 6:66: "ritrasse di terra nella sagrestia di San Lorenzo [...] tutte le figure che aveva fatto Michelangelo di marmo, cioè l'Aurora, il Crepuscolo, il Giorno e la Notte." Three are in the Bargello Museum in Florence; the *Night* (once in the possession of Vasari) is missing. For *Dawn*, see Maria Grazia Vaccari in *Venere e Amore/Venus and Love*, 168–69, cat. 14, with a date of 1534–37.

<sup>60</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 7:63: "formò di gesso quasi tutte le figure di marmo." See also Letizia Treves, "Daniele Da Volterra and Michelangelo: A Collaborative Relationship," *Apollo* 154 (2001): 36–45, but there is no trace of these copies.

<sup>61</sup> Caterina Furlan, "La 'fortuna' di Michelangelo a Venezia nella prima metà del Cinquecento," in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte: atti del convegno internazionale di studi*, ed. Paola Rossi and Lionello Puppi (Venice: Il Poligrafo, 1996), 19–25, and David R. Coffin, "Tintoretto and the Medici Tombs," *The Art Bulletin* 33, no. 2 (1951): 119–25.

<sup>62</sup> Borghini, *Il Riposo*, 1:20.

<sup>63</sup> Rosenberg, "Reproduction," 120 and 134 n. 33. Rick Scorza publishes a drawing by Francesco Morandini (called il Poppi) of hands, including one of *Giuliano*, after such casts ("Vasari, Borghini and Michelangelo," in Ames-Lewis and Joannides, *Reactions*, 197–98, fig. 9.9).

<sup>64</sup> George R. Goldner attributes the drawing to Bronzino and dates it c.1545–52 in Carmen C. Bambach, Janet Cox-Rearick, and George R. Goldner, *The Drawings of Bronzino* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010), 188–89, cat. 46. Nicholas Turner, Lee Hendrix, and Carol Plazzotta, *European Drawings 3: Catalogue of the Collections* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1997), 18–20, cat. 8, prefer the more generic "Florentine School." Scorza relates it instead to Vasari's painting of Duke Cosimo in the central tondo of the Sala Grande in the Palazzo Vecchio (although the comparison is not convincing to me) ("Vasari, Borghini and Michelangelo," 197 and 209, n. 80). A drawing of the same hand by Bartolomeo Passarotti in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, suggests that such casts were widely available.

<sup>65</sup> Roger B. Ward notes the "curious combination of sweetness and vacuity in the face," and the similarity to Michelangelo's own drawings of a figure surrounded by individual studies (*Dürer to Matisse: Master Drawings from the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* [Kansas City, MO: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 1996], 59–61, cat. 10).

<sup>66</sup> Victoria J. Avery adds that, by 1567, Vittoria owned casts or copies of almost everything in the New Sacristy ("Alessandro Vittoria: The Michelangelo of Venice?," in Ames-Lewis and Joannides, *Reactions*, 166).



16th century.<sup>67</sup> Patricians were as interested in these objects and images as were artists. In addition to his life-size casts, the Florentine artist-collector Sirigatti owned “a thousand” such heads, arms, legs, and torsos, if not specifically of Michelangelo’s figures. The drawings, models, and casts not only separated the statues, and even body parts, from their context, they also made them available to the Florentine social and political elite to fashion themselves after.



Fig. 9. Agnolo Bronzino, *Study of a Man's Right Hand*, c.1545-52,  
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.  
Photo: Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.



Fig. 10. Bartolomeo Passarotti, Copy after Michelangelo's *Dawn*, c.1550,  
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City.  
Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, 39-37.

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<sup>67</sup> For the Praun collection, see Ursel Berger, “Eine Plastiksammlung mit dem Bildhauernachlass von Johann Gregor van der Schardt,” in *Die Kunstsammlung des Paulus Praun: die Inventare von 1616 und 1719*, ed. Katrin Achilles-Syndram (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag der Stadtrats zu Nürnberg, 1994), especially 55–60 on models after Michelangelo. Paul James LeBrooy published the models as Michelangelo’s originals in *Michelangelo Models formerly in the Paul von Praun Collection* (Vancouver: Creelman & Drummond, 1972). For the nine recently acquired by the Rijksmuseum, dated about 1560–70, see Frits Scholten, “Nine Models of Body Parts, Some after Michelangelo’s Evening,” *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 62, no. 3 (2014): 294–95.

## Fashioning a Florentine Gentleman

Through all the visitors to the chapel and the large number of copies in circulation, Michelangelo's statues became a common frame of reference for both Florentine artists and the public. This was particularly true in the 1530s and 1540s for intellectuals and the patrician elite, who became members of the Accademia Fiorentina after its founding in 1541. Both artists and visitors engaged with the statues of the dukes as well as the nudes, as the drawings and written accounts noted above affirm. As texts of Florentineness, however, the two sets of figures became inscribed differently in the Florentine visual tradition. In the new political and social world in the decades after the imperial siege of Florence and the reinstatement of the Medici as dukes in 1530, Michelangelo's *capitani* provided models for portraits of patricians wanting to affirm and redefine their Florentine identity. Two portraits, Bronzino's *Ugolino Martelli* in Berlin of about 1537, and Salviati's *Florentine Nobleman* in St. Louis of about 1545–48, present their young sitters as Florentine, first of all through reference to Michelangelo in their bodies and poses (figs. 11 and 12).<sup>68</sup> Although they draw on public and political models and presume familiarity with Michelangelo's statues, the patrons intended these portraits for a domestic setting and for consumption by family and their social and intellectual circles. The paintings display the different artistic sensibilities of their creators—Bronzino more somber, Salviati more colorful—both artists for whom Michelangelo was important in quite different ways. The two paintings, roughly a decade apart, also reflect the somewhat changed social circumstances between the 1530s and 1540s.<sup>69</sup> Scholars have noted the influence of Michelangelo's dukes on both portraits and its relationship to the patrons' concern with conveying their Florentine identity, but not in relation to how the statues were known and copied, how those studies made their way into portraiture, and the ideas of Florentine artistic practice that accompanied the transfer.

In his portrait of Ugolino Martelli (1519–92), a learned young man from an established Florentine family who was about to embark on study in Padua with Benedetto Varchi, Bronzino made reference to the contrapposto pose and gestures of Michelangelo's *Giuliano* (figs. 2 and 8). Bronzino modeled several of his sitters, not only Ugolino, on this sculpture, beginning as early as the *Young Man with a Lute* of 1532–34,<sup>70</sup> well before very many artists had the opportunity to

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<sup>68</sup> On Bronzino's portrait of Ugolino Martelli, see Rudolf Wildmoser, "Das Bildnis des Ugolino Martelli von Agnolo Bronzino," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 31 (1989); Elizabeth Cropper, "Prolegomena to a New Interpretation of Bronzino's Florentine Portraits," in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Craig Hugh Smyth*, ed. Andrew Morrogh (Florence: Giunti Barbèra, 1985); ead., "L'arte cortigiana a Firenze: dalla Repubblica dissimilata allo stato paterno," in *Storia delle arti in Toscana.4: Il Cinquecento*, ed. Roberto Paolo Ciardi and Antonio Natali (Florence: Edifir, 2000); ead., "Preparing to Finish: Portraits by Pontormo and Bronzino around 1530," in *Opere e giorni: studi su mille anni di arte europea dedicati a Max Seidel*, ed. Klaus Bergdolt and Giorgio Bonsanti (Venezia: Marsilio, 2001); Alessandro Cecchi, "Il Bronzino, Benedetto Varchi e l'Accademia Fiorentina: ritratti di poeti, letterati e personaggi illustri della corte medicea," *Antichità viva* 30, no. 1–2 (1991), especially 19–21 and 23–24 on Martelli; and Maurice Brock, *Bronzino* (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), 115, 119–32. On Salviati's *Florentine Nobleman*, see Charles Seymour, "A Florentine Portrait of the Sixteenth Century," *Museum Monographs* 2 (1970); Philippe Costamagna, in Monbeig-Goguel, *Francesco Salviati (1510–1563)*, 240, cat. 92; and Mary Ann Steiner, *Handbook of the Collection. Saint Louis Art Museum* (St. Louis, MO: Saint Louis Art Museum, 2004), 157.

<sup>69</sup> Nicholas Scott Baker uses the two portraits to exemplify the changing roles of the "office-holding class" in these two decades (*The Fruit of Liberty: Political Culture in the Florentine Renaissance, 1480–1550* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013], 189–90 and 205–9).

<sup>70</sup> The precise dating of each is uncertain. The most closely related to Michelangelo's *Giuliano* among Bronzino's portraits is the *Young Man with a Lute*, and especially the preparatory drawing, generally dated 1532–34. For dating, see Bambach, Cox-Rearick, and Goldner, *Drawings of Bronzino*, 104, cat. 17; and Carlo Falciani and Antonio

enter the New Sacristy. In his portrait of an unknown Florentine youth, painted during the years the artist worked for Duke Cosimo in the Palazzo Vecchio, Salviati likewise made obvious reference to Michelangelo, in this case *Lorenzo* (fig. 13). The sitter shares with Michelangelo's duke a pensive expression and, most strikingly, a right arm modeled after *Lorenzo's*, with rotated shoulder, jutting elbow, turned wrist, and hand twisted outward to display an open palm.



Fig. 11. Bronzino, *Ugolino Martelli*, c.1537, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin.  
Photo: bpk, Berlin/ Gemäldegalerie/ Joerg P. Anders/ Art Resource, NY.

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Natali, *Bronzino, Artist and Poet at the Court of the Medici* (Florence: Mandragora, 2010), 245 and 260, cat. V.3; and for five portraits alluding to *Giuliano*, see Brock, *Bronzino*, 108–116.



Fig. 12. Salviati, *Portrait of a Florentine Nobleman*, c.1545–48, St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis.  
Photo: Museum Purchase.

These years, 1545–48, also marked a high point of interest among the patrician intellectual elite in Michelangelo not only as artist, but also as poet. Despite his absence from Florence, Michelangelo was elected to the Accademia Fiorentina in 1541. Soon after, Giannotti, in his dialogue set in 1545, presents Michelangelo as both a poet and a learned commentator on Dante. In March 1547, Varchi’s first lecture to the Accademia Fiorentina was devoted to an exegesis of one of Michelangelo’s sonnets with quotations from a number of others, and his second lecture included a comparison of Michelangelo as artist with Dante as poet.<sup>71</sup> Michelangelo became for intellectual Florentines an example of an educated and philosophical artist, a suitable model for an artist trained in his sculptures to represent the patrician educated class. Niccolò Martelli’s often-cited letter of 1544 relays Michelangelo’s explanation of his aims in the statues of the dukes as being not resemblance or even character, but to convey “una grandezza, una

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<sup>71</sup> See Carlson, “Eccellentissimo poeta,” especially 169–71 and 177, for both Giannotti and Varchi. Both may have other agendas along with inserting Michelangelo into the activities of the Accademia, but these are beyond the scope of this essay.

proporzione, un decoro, una grazia, uno splendore” [“grandeur, decorum, grace, and splendor”].<sup>72</sup> The poses of *Giuliano* and *Lorenzo* served as models for Bronzino and Salviati, as did the new notion of portraiture the statues embodied, one that aimed not at likeness, but at communicating a larger idea of which the individual was representative. Likewise, artists’ close scrutiny of individual statues and their body parts in the Medici Chapel opened up formal possibilities independent of the identity of the *capitani*.

Bronzino’s adaptation of Michelangelo’s *Giuliano* and Salviati’s of his *Lorenzo* employed overt references to Michelangelo’s sculptures to create an explicitly Florentine public style for patricians. Elizabeth Cropper and other scholars have emphasized the *fiorentinità* in Bronzino’s portraits—in particular, the artist’s search for a visual language to parallel a distinctive Tuscan verbal language that intellectuals and writers debated at the time, and his reference to the most famous Florentine artist to convey both painter’s and sitter’s attachment to the literary, artistic, and political traditions of the city.<sup>73</sup> Leatrice Mendelsohn argues that quotations from such an exemplary Florentine master paradoxically also enabled a contrary effect—to make evident an artist’s own personal or “private style.”<sup>74</sup> Neither Bronzino nor Salviati replicates the whole body of their models; instead they assemble parts and they alter the point of view from that which would be observable to a visitor in the chapel, which photographs taken there illustrate (figs. 8 and 13). In his portrait of Ugolino, Bronzino juxtaposes an upper body in a mirror image of *Giuliano*, with the legs instead turned in the same direction as the duke’s. The arms and hands are similar, albeit engaged with books, but left and right are reversed. It is as though Bronzino copied each of the parts and reassembled them differently.<sup>75</sup> Bronzino also models his Ugolino after a side view of Michelangelo’s statue at eye level, as he would have seen the original before its installation above the sarcophagus in 1534.<sup>76</sup>

How each artist selectively referred to his model is consistent with the kinds of copies that we have seen were common practice, which viewed either the statues or reproductions from myriad vantage points. Salviati represents the arm and hand of Michelangelo’s *Lorenzo* as they would be seen from a high point of view and a bit from the side, so that the arm projects out toward the picture plane and the open palm of his sitter’s hand is visible. We have seen him draw *Giuliano* from a similar viewpoint to emphasize hands and legs (fig. 7). We also know that Salviati, like other artists, used models and casts of both entire figures and body parts, and not only of Michelangelo’s sculptures. These allowed him to allude to his prototypes, while at the same time to distinguish his own works.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> The full phrase continues to the most quoted lines, that in a thousand years no one would know that they looked otherwise. Niccolò Martelli, Letter to Rugazzo, 28 July 1544, in *Il primo libro delle lettere* (Florence: printed by author, 1546), 49r.

<sup>73</sup> See Cropper, “Prolegomena;” Cropper, “Arte cortigiana;” Cropper, “Preparing to Finish;” and Brock, *Bronzino*, 106–107, who suggests a counterpart to Bronzino’s own poetic practices, in which references to Petrarch and others are varied and complex.

<sup>74</sup> For the duality of public and private style, see Leatrice Mendelsohn, “The Sum of the Parts: Recycling Antiquities in the Maniera Workshop of Salviati and His Colleagues,” in *Francesco Salviati et la bella maniera: Actes des colloques de Rome et de Paris, 1998*, ed. Catherine Monbeig-Goguel, Philippe Costamagna, and Michel Hochman (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2001), 109.

<sup>75</sup> Mendelsohn notes that in the *Portrait of a Youth* in the Uffizi, the hands extracted or excerpted from Michelangelo’s works are rotated and reattached to the torso (“Sum of the Parts,” 141).

<sup>76</sup> If that were the case, he would also have noted the grotesque head on the back of *Giuliano*’s armor, a possible inspiration for his own various masks.

<sup>77</sup> Alessandro Nova, “Salviati, Vasari, and the Reuse of Drawings in Their Working Practice,” *Master Drawings* 30, no. 1 (1992): 93, and Mendelsohn, “Sum of the Parts,” 126, and generally 107–48.



Fig. 13. Michelangelo, *Duke Lorenzo de' Medici*, c. 1526-32, Medici Chapel, Florence. Photo: Author.

The right arm and hand of Salviati's *Florentine Nobleman*, while clearly referring to those of Michelangelo's *Lorenzo*, are seen from a position that gives a fuller view of the hand, which underscores Salviati's own distinctive treatment of hands and fingers.<sup>78</sup> Copies, models, and casts aided in the assimilation of Michelangelo's works, and in turn, through reference to them, the formation of a collective Florentine style. But reshaping those works in unexpected ways was also fundamental to the construction of a Florentine artist's distinctive style.<sup>79</sup> The result, as in these portraits, is a body composed of parts borrowed and assembled, whose models were intended to be evident and to contribute to conveying both the skill of the artist and the character of the sitter.

Both Bronzino and Salviati adapted their models to images of gentlemen in the new political world of ducal Florence, first under Duke Alessandro until his assassination in 1537, then under his successor, Duke Cosimo. Bronzino exchanged the armor that conferred on *Giuliano* the grandeur of a Roman general for the elegant black silks of the court, a fashion promulgated by Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*, first published in 1528, a text immensely popular in

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<sup>78</sup> Mendelsohn observes that these are "longer, thinner, and tipped at ends, in comparison with Michelangelo's" ("Sum of the Parts," 142).

<sup>79</sup> Mendelsohn discusses copying from the antique and also notes that Michelangelo was considered a viable substitute for an antique original (*ibid.*, 117).

Florence.<sup>80</sup> Although the extended Michelangelesque contrapposto, with Ugolino's lower body and legs turned far in one direction, his upper body in another, would have been a difficult pose to assume, in the portrait it appears effortless, as Castiglione would have recommended. Salviati's young nobleman likewise wears black silk and holds leather gloves in his left hand. As Bronzino transformed a military captain into a gentleman, so too Salviati turned Michelangelo's masculine gesture of military command into a barely anatomically possible twisted arm and wrist as a display of *sprezzatura*. For this new duchy, both Bronzino and Salviati created a visual style that gives the widely shared notion of *sprezzatura* a specifically Florentine context.

The backgrounds of both portraits constitute another form of assemblage, making further claims about *fiorentinità* through additional references to both Michelangelo and the city of Florence. Bronzino's portrait situates the youth literally in the city, within a typically Florentine architecture with *pietra serena* stonework and Michelangelo's "kneeling windows" from the Medici palace, which later became ubiquitous in the city, the whole reminiscent of the Martelli family palace.<sup>81</sup> It also frames the youth in a cultural and intellectual context that a Florentine viewer of status would recognize. In a niche behind Ugolino stands the family's prized possession, a statue of David then believed to be by Donatello, *The David of Casa Martelli* recalling both artistic and political traditions in the city.<sup>82</sup> Three books—texts of Homer, Virgil, and Pietro Bembo, in Greek, Latin, and Italian—all of which the young Ugolino studied, evoke contemporary discussions about the appropriate model for Florentine writers.<sup>83</sup> The setting is no more a literal reproduction of the family palace and Martelli library than Ugolino is one of Michelangelo's *Giuliano*. Rather it compiles signifying elements in a similar way to the assemblage of the sitter's body, with a corresponding aim of representing both the erudition of the sitter and the education of the artist, in this case one who was himself a poet and later a member of the Accademia Fiorentina.

Salviati also amassed multiple references to Florence, but instead of Bronzino's representation of the urban and cultural world, he denotes the city through an allegorical mode, which Varchi, in his second lecture of 1547, was at pains to demonstrate that Michelangelo shared with Dante.<sup>84</sup> The implication of the painting is that both artist and sitter participated in this Florentine and Michelangelesque mode as well. The pink sky of the landscape setting signifies dawn and is a reminder that the newly installed statue of *Dawn* reclines on the tomb of Lorenzo. The giant flower, a species of morning glory, blooms in the early morning, at dawn. The female nude arising from the flower represents *Fiorenza*, the city of flowers, and alludes to Cosimo's garden at Castello, where Tribolo translated Michelangelo's novel imagery of nude

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<sup>80</sup> Baldassarre Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, ed. Daniel Javitch (New York: Norton, 2002), 89: "I think that black is more pleasing in clothing than any other color." The text also had a Florentine connection, since the same Giuliano, duke of Nemours, featured among the interlocutors. Baker adds that it was published five times in Florence between 1528 and 1537 (*Fruit of Liberty*, 202).

<sup>81</sup> See Cropper, "Prolegomena," 151–55, on the discrepancies that make it clear Bronzino did not intend an accurate depiction of the palace or the precise location of the statue.

<sup>82</sup> *The David of Casa Martelli* in the National Gallery in Washington is now attributed to Bernardo or Antonio Rossellino and dated c.1461/79. See also Arnold Victor Coonin, "Donatello, Desiderio da Settignano and the Martelli," in *Desiderio da Settignano*, ed. Alessandro Nova, Gerhard Wolf, and Joseph Connors (Venice: Marsilio, 2011), 49, 54–55, 349, and pl. VI, as by Donatello.

<sup>83</sup> For different theories of the significance of the texts, especially Homer's *Iliad*, see Cropper, "Prolegomena," 155–57; Cropper, "Arte cortigiana," 103–5; Brock, *Bronzino*, 124–28; and Baker, *Fruit of Liberty*, 142–82.

<sup>84</sup> Varchi, *Due lezioni*, 117: "dovendo fare i sepolcri al duca di Nemors et al duca Lorenzo de' Medici, spresse in quattro marmi, a guise che fa Dante nè versi, il suo altissimo concetto." See n. 39 for the shared allegorical significance, and Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 138–42.

personifications into those of cities—Fiesole and Florence—the latter, like Salviati’s figure, following the ancient statue type of Venus Anadyomene.<sup>85</sup> The allegorical mode continues with the river god in the distance representing the Arno River, inspired by Michelangelo’s models for river gods, then still on the floor of the Medici Chapel.<sup>86</sup> Salviati, who typically recycled imagery with Michelangesque associations, also produced a monochrome painting of the Arno River for Baccio Valori.<sup>87</sup> Finally, to the right of the lion is the traditional Medici emblem of the *broncone*, a new branch emerging from the dead stump of a laurel tree, a symbol of renewal and also of Medici hegemony in Florence. Salviati draws on a common frame of reference of both artist and patrician, each educated in the school of the Medici Chapel, asserting both of their affiliations with Florence in his own idiosyncratic style that at the same time displays a distinctively Florentine artistic manner.

### Constructing a Medici Dynasty

As patricians valued images of themselves modeled on Michelangelo’s *capitani* for their ability to evoke Florentineness in taste and erudition, so too a few decades later, with the duchy firmly established, Duke Cosimo followed their precedents to construct for himself an image of ducal authority. He did this in two projects, the central tondo of the Sala Grande in the Palazzo Vecchio and the sculpture on the Uffizi *testata*, the short wing between the two long galleries (figs. 14 and 15). Both involved initial projects and later changes in plans, but an early iteration of each included a seated Cosimo, with the addition at the Uffizi of reclining nude personifications. The project for the Uffizi ensemble predated Vasari’s tondo, since marbles for the personifications were being quarried already in the fall of 1563.<sup>88</sup> That Duke Cosimo was thinking simultaneously about the Uffizi, the Medici Chapel, and the Accademia del Disegno at the time of its official founding in January 1563 is clear in a letter he wrote the next month to Vasari, architect of the Uffizi, which mentions all three.<sup>89</sup> The assigning of Cosimo as protector of the newly formed Academy of Design along with Michelangelo as guide and father may have suggested to the duke, his artists, and advisors to link Cosimo visually with Michelangelo’s

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<sup>85</sup> Many ancient bronze statuettes of Venus Anadyomene are similar in pose with one hand to her hair, among them Metropolitan Museum, acc. no. 96.9.408. The nude figure confirms that Tribolo’s model for the Fountain of Florence at Castello was known in the 1540s. On Tribolo’s *Fiesole* and the Fountain of Florence at Castello with antecedents in Michelangelo’s figures, see Claudia Lazzaro, “Figuring Florence: Gendered Bodies in Sixteenth-Century Personifications and Their Antique Models,” in *Receptions of Antiquity, Receptions of Gender in European Art, 1300–1600*, ed. Marice Rose and Alison C. Poe (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 351–52, 375–79, and 384–86.

<sup>86</sup> For a similar river god symbolizing Florence in Salviati’s drawing for the festivities of Duke Cosimo’s wedding of 1539, see Janet Cox-Rearick, “Friendly Rivals: Bronzino and Salviati at the Medici Court, 1543–48,” *Master Drawings* 43, no. 3 (2005): 293, fig. 1.

<sup>87</sup> Bocchi, *Bellezze*, 178, noted by Costamagna, *Francesco Salviati (1510–1563)*, 240. Joannides suggests that the recto of a drawing he attributes to Salviati after Michelangelo’s *Night* and *Venus and Cupid* in the British Museum may be by Michelangelo himself (“Salviati and Michelangelo,” 71 and 76). It depicts the head of a lion, very like the one in the portrait.

<sup>88</sup> In September 1563 marble for two statues and a coat of arms was quarried, but the date of the commission for the statue of the duke is uncertain. For the statues and chronology of work, see David Summers, *The Sculpture of Vincenzo Danti: A Study in the Influence of Michelangelo and the Ideals of the Maniera* (New York: Garland, 1979), 165–74 and 305–7; Francesco Santi, *Vincenzo Danti scultore (1530–1576)* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1989), 46–47, cat. 12; Roger J. Crum, “Cosmos, the World of Cosimo: The Iconography of the Uffizi Façade,” *The Art Bulletin* 71 (1989); and Anne E. Proctor, “Vincenzo Danti at the Medici Court: Constructing Professional Identity in Late Renaissance Florence” (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 2013), 115–73.

<sup>89</sup> Cosimo to Vincenzo Borghini, 9 February 1563, Medici Archive Project (MAP) no. 350, v. 219, f. 40.



image of ducal grandeur.<sup>90</sup> This can best be illustrated by beginning with the project that survives as originally intended, Vasari's tondo in the Palazzo Vecchio.



Fig. 14. Giorgio Vasari, *Apotheosis of Cosimo*, detail, 1565, Sala Grande, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence.  
Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

A first plan to illustrate the glorification of Florence in Vasari's central tondo evolved instead into the exaltation of a seated Duke Cosimo crowned by a subsidiary figure of Florence (fig. 14).<sup>91</sup> Known as the *Apotheosis of Cosimo*, it was the last part of the ceiling to be

<sup>90</sup> See Ważbiński, *Accademia Medicea*, 1:86, for their designations.

<sup>91</sup> Among the reasons proposed for the changed plan are to create a parallel to Augustus, granducal ambitions, and the abdication to Cosimo's son Francesco.

completed, some time after January 1565.<sup>92</sup> Whatever political events lay behind the change, the scene in its final form establishes a clear reference to Emperor Augustus, as scholars have noted, as well as to Michelangelo's statue of Duke Giuliano. Both of these associations participate in the political message of inserting Cosimo into a single dynasty that stretched from the ancient emperor and Roman founding of Florence through the lineage of the *capitani* in the Medici Chapel, to Cosimo's family line.

The pose of the seated Duke Cosimo in ancient Roman-style armor recalls that of Michelangelo's *Giuliano*, with legs in the same position; however, as with Bronzino's *Ugolino Martelli*, the upper body, arms, and hands are similar, but reversed. The duke's body is steeply foreshortened, which emphasizes his muscular legs, but also the disjunction of juxtaposed body parts—massive legs, one arm, hands, upper chest and shoulders, and head. The substantial Michelangelesque body distinguishes the duke from his elegant courtiers in their refined silks. Nevertheless, like the bodies of Bronzino's and Salviati's sitters, Vasari's is also an assemblage of allusive parts. As those artists repurposed isolated body parts deriving from Michelangelo's dukes to shape an expression of *sprezzatura*, so Vasari also drew on another aspect of Florentine artistic practice—viewing Michelangelo's sculptures from multiple points of view—to reinforce the status and role of his subject. The very low vantage point from which the foreshortened Cosimo is seen places the viewer in a suppliant position of kneeling before the commanding Michelangelesque seated figure.

The Uffizi project initially featured an over life-size statue of the seated Cosimo (later replaced with Giambologna's standing figure), flanked by the existing reclining male *Rigor* and female *Equity*, executed by Vincenzo Danti (fig. 15).<sup>93</sup> Although the planned statue itself would not have replicated Vasari's foreshortened duke, the view from street level might indeed have resembled the image in the tondo. Scholars disagree on whether the seated statue was ever executed and why it was replaced, first with Danti's standing *Cosimo as Augustus* in the Bargello, completed in 1573, and later with Giambologna's statue in 16th-century armor and helmet, which was installed in 1585.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, Vasari promoted the seated version, perhaps to retain the visual relationship with his own tondo figure, and in the 1568 edition of his *Lives* affirmed that Danti had made a model and was awaiting the marble to complete the statue.<sup>95</sup> The initial project must have been known at the time, because a sketch of the Uffizi façade of about 1566 shows a seated statue together with the reclining ones.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ettore Allegri and Alessandro Cecchi, *Palazzo Vecchio e i Medici: guida storica* (Florence: SPES, 1980), 251. Work began in 1563 and was completed in 1565. See also Carlo Cinelli, "Vasari e l'apoteosi di Cosimo," in *Palazzo Vecchio*, ed. Carlo Francini (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2006), 218–227.

<sup>93</sup> For Michelangelo's influence on Danti, see Cristina Acidini, "Vincenzo Danti e Michelangelo," in Davis and Paolozzi Strozzi, *I grandi bronzi del Battistero*.

<sup>94</sup> Summers identifies the first, seated Cosimo with a statue of Perseus in the Boboli garden ("Vincenzo Danti," 172–74). In Summers' view it was abandoned perhaps because it was "ugly," with "fatal flaws" (ibid., 174). For the sculpture's reworking in 1577 when it went to Pratolino, and for the transfer to the Boboli in 1776, see Santi, *Vincenzo Danti*, 58–9, cat. 27, and fig. 58. Both Crum and Proctor suggest that the association with both Hercules and Augustus in Danti's Bargello statue was desired (Crum, "Cosmos," 245; Proctor, "Vincenzo Danti," 168–69).

<sup>95</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 7:632.

<sup>96</sup> Florence, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi 2128A recto, attributed to the architect Giovanni Antonio Dosio and illustrated in Karla Langedijk, *The Portraits of the Medici, 15th–18th Centuries*, (Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 1981), 1:475. The figure in the sketch resembles the lower body and legs of the Boboli *Perseus*, with a vertical outstretched arm rather than a raised one.



Fig. 15. Vincenzo Danti, *Rigor and Equity*, 1564–66, and Giambologna, *Duke Cosimo*, 1585, Uffizi, Florence. Photo: Author.

In this eminently public place, facing the charged site of the Piazza Signoria, the identification of Cosimo with Giuliano was unmistakable with the addition of nude sculptures in an arrangement obviously similar to the Medici Chapel.<sup>97</sup> The ensemble is another assemblage of Michelangelesque elements—a large-scale seated Cosimo in the original plan, reclining personifications, and also outsize volutes. These recall Michelangelo’s distinctive usage of volutes at San Lorenzo—on the Medici Chapel sarcophagi; attached to the chapel door frames, on one of which a copyist rests his foot in Zuccaro’s drawing (fig. 3); and the giant examples at the lower level of the Laurentian Library vestibule. About the same time that images of the Times of Day, especially *Night* and *Dawn*, entered the Florentine visual tradition in painted versions for private consumption, Cosimo also appropriated these as images of his rule.<sup>98</sup> The flanking figures, completed in 1566, proclaimed not the duke’s demise, but the idealized

<sup>97</sup> The similarity is noted by Summers, “Vincenzo Danti,” 166 and 173, and widely in the Danti scholarship.

<sup>98</sup> In the 1560s and 1570s there was a market for painted copies and versions of Michelangelo’s female nudes, including *Night* and *Dawn*. For example, around 1565, Michele Tosini, called Michele di Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio, painted several, among them the *Night* and *Dawn* along with *Venus and Cupid* that Alamanno Salviati owned, now in the Galleria Colonna in Rome. See Jonathan Katz Nelson, who dates Tosini’s paintings about 1565 (Falletti and Nelson, *Venere e Amore*, 166–67, cat. 13); and Heidi J. Hornik, *Michele Tosini and the Ghirlandaio Workshop in Cinquecento Florence* (Brighton, U.K.: Sussex Academic Press, 2009), 90–93. Sculptors also produced bronze statuettes from the third quarter of the 16th century, including those by Pietro da Barga, discussed by Giacomo de Nicola, “Notes on the Museo Nazionale of Florence II: A Series of Small Bronzes by Pietro Da Barga,” *The Burlington Magazine* 29, no. 165 (1916), especially 363–64 and n. 7. Tolnay, *Medici Chapel*, 155–56, lists a number; Lewis, “Genius Disseminated,” 194, and figs. 77–78, mentions several; and Volker Krahn illustrates *Dusk* and *Dawn* from a private collection (“Kopien—Nachahmungen—Studienobjekte: Michelangelos Nachleben in der Kleinplastik der 16. Jahrhunderts,” in Satzinger and Schütze, *Der Göttliche*, 59–60, figs. 3–5).

principles that sustained his rule: the strict enforcement of the law (rigor), tempered with discretion and equity (in his administration of justice).<sup>99</sup> Danti's lounging nudes display none of the bodily torsions or emotions of Michelangelo's and their poses are variations, not replicas, of their models, but they affirm Cosimo's embrace of Michelangelo's allegorical mode for his political propaganda along with the master's sculpted bodies. The duke further assimilated Michelangelo's acclaimed nudes with his own person by giving them as state gifts, for example the small-scale alabaster reproductions of the Times of Day presented to the court of Augustus, Elector of Saxony in Dresden.<sup>100</sup>

Representations of Cosimo's family members, his father and his son, inscribed instead the distinctive arm of Michelangelo's *Lorenzo*—which Salviati had earlier emphasized—into Medici dynastic symbolism, with the role of negotiating between past and present visual traditions. A large painting in Turin of uncertain date, formerly attributed to Salviati but clearly by a lesser artist, portrays the standing figure of Cosimo's father, the celebrated condottiere Giovanni delle Bande Nere, wearing his son's armor and assuming with his right arm the gesture of Michelangelo's *Lorenzo*.<sup>101</sup> It is a composite image of generations (father and son), family lines (principal and cadet Medici), and social positions (military captain and duke), fusing them in body and dress through the overt reference to Michelangelo. A similar gesture of arm and hand appears in Giovanni Caccini's over life-size posthumous statue of Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici, Cosimo's son (fig. 16).<sup>102</sup> The marble sculpture of 1594 occupies a niche in the Sala Grande of the Palazzo Vecchio, in the Udienza—the north wall where the duke's throne was located—the last to be added to a series of distinguished Medici family members of both lines.<sup>103</sup> Francesco likewise wears his father's armor—in a sense, that is—the *all'antica* armor of Danti's *Cosimo as Augustus* (originally for the Uffizi façade). Standing majestically, Francesco resembles his father in Danti's statue, in his armor, baton, and stance with one foot raised and head turned sharply, but with the dramatic arm grafted on.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Bocchi, *Bellezze*, 45, discussed in Summers, “Vincenzo Danti,” 168, and Crum, “Cosmos,” 246.

<sup>100</sup> These are close copies of the originals, with the exception of a sun face attribute added to *Day*. They first appear in an inventory of 1587, while a later inventory of 1640 lists them as a gift of Duke Cosimo, who died in 1574. Although there is no documentation of the gift, there were exchanges between these courts. The artist and date is uncertain, presumably before 1574. See Antje Scherner, “Skulpturengeschenke der Medici an der Dresdner Kunstkammer,” in *Giambologna in Dresden: Die Geschenke der Medici*, ed. Dirk Syndram, Moritz Woelk, and Martina Minning (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2006), 66–69; and also noted by Stefan Albl, in Satzinger and Schütze, *Der Göttliche*, 207–8, cats. 140a–d.

<sup>101</sup> Luisa Mortari rejects the attribution to Salviati (*Francesco Salviati* [Rome: Leonardo-De Luca, 1992], 165, cat. 215). The armor is the same as that in Bronzino's portrait of Cosimo in the Uffizi. Carolyn Springer sees the father in the armor of his son as a deliberate reversal of patriarchal transmission (*Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010], 142–44 and 211, n. 38).

<sup>102</sup> Johann Karl Schmidt, *Studien zum Statuarischen Werk des Giovanni Battista Caccini* (Cologne: Wienand, 1971), 51–57, 154–56; Langedijk, *Portraits of the Medici*, 2:881–84, cat. 42.

<sup>103</sup> On the Udienza program, see Detlef Heikamp, “Sculptura e politica: le statue della Sala Grande di Palazzo Vecchio,” in *Le arti del principato mediceo* (Florence: SPES, 1980), 201–54; and Allegri and Cecchi, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 37–39. The statue was commissioned by Francesco's brother Ferdinando on the occasion of the baptism of his son, the future Cosimo II, undoubtedly precipitated by Francesco's recent death.

<sup>104</sup> Schmidt, *Statuarischen Werk*, 53–55, notes the relationships to Danti's *Cosimo as Augustus* and Donatello's *David*; and Langedijk, *Portraits of the Medici*, vol. 2, 1983, 881, also notes Donatello's bronze *David*.



Fig. 16. Giovanni Caccini, *Duke Francesco de' Medici*, 1594, Udienza, Sala Grande, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. Photo: Author.

The arm akimbo with turned wrist evokes other Florentine heroes, among them Donatello's bronze *David*, the *Martelli David*, depicted in Bronzino's portrait of *Ugolino Martelli* (fig. 11), and Castagno's *Farinata degli Uberti*. However, as first conceived by Michelangelo in his *Lorenzo* and particularly as the statue was later observed from a high position by Salviati and Caccini, the projecting arm, unlike a more or less natural hand on hip pose, is twisted forward so that the elbow juts out in front of the body and the hand with turned wrist, resting on the upper thigh, faces the viewer. Although recalling earlier Florentine heroes, in its idiosyncratic form the arm stands out as a purposefully signifying element. Detached from Michelangelo's *Lorenzo* and applied to another body, the arm had been in Salviati's portrait a marker of both artistic authority and patrician culture. Under the Medici dukes, it acquired another significance, as a Medicean identifier, aligning members of the family with each other and with Florence. This progression depended on the artistic practices of intense scrutiny of body parts and copying from different points of view, and also on the visual Florentine identity that had already emerged from these practices among the patrician classes.

## Conclusion

It was the particular situation of the Medici Chapel in its unfinished state, before all the statues were installed or removed, that permitted the extraordinary ability to examine the sculptures close up and all around. The resulting copies, of individual sculptures, hands, feet, and heads from every angle, established a basic understanding of these figures, which continued long after

they were all mounted. Vasari said the chapel became a school of the arts, and it was so for intellectuals and patricians as well. They too had an intimate experience of the individual statues and, finding in them the expressiveness and philosophical ideas of poets, they claimed Michelangelo as a paradigm for their own sense of Florentine culture. When Cosimo modeled himself on the *capitani*, it was through this history of copies, vantage points, and the reuse of the sculpted forms to convey Florentine identity that the portrayals of Vasari and Danti could insert him not only into the principal line of the Medici celebrated in the chapel, but also into the Florentine artistic tradition that developed out of the experience of the chapel and the patrician class's association with it. Cosimo's recycling of Michelangelo's nudes in *Rigor* and *Equity* may have inspired the interest in the later century in painted and bronze versions of the Times of Day, to further align their patrons with the latest manifestations of the Michelangelesque in Florence. As each group, class, and individual studied, admired, inhabited, and displayed the Medici Chapel sculptures, the figures accumulated associations, ways of being seen and understood, and definitions of Florentineness.



Fig. 17. Cornelis Cort, *Tomb of Lorenzo de' Medici*, 1570, British Museum, London. Photo: © Trustees of the British Museum.

The scattered bodies of Michelangelo's sculptures ultimately returned to the context of the chapel in 1570 in the Dutchman Cornelis Cort's three engravings, which for the first time in the history of copying reassembled the statues in place on the wall tombs (fig. 17).<sup>105</sup> In these engravings, the tombs are seen from a distance and in canonical frontal views, although Rosenberg argues that Cort's images are composed of individual studies, as the statues are seen

<sup>105</sup> Rosenberg, "Reproduction," 126–30.

from somewhat different positions.<sup>106</sup> They constitute another kind of assemblage, reuniting the parts in a facsimile of the whole to which they belonged. The market for these prints extended well beyond Florence: they were enormously successful, enough so to yield six editions by 1621, when the plates had migrated to Rome.<sup>107</sup> These inexpensive reproductions reinserted the sculptures into their setting, representing Florence to the world beyond the city, not to the natives who had experienced the chapel intimately, and no longer signifying the distinctive Florentine artistic tradition and cultural identity embedded in their history.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 126–29

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 129.

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