

MICHELANGELO'S DRAWINGS FOR *APOSTLE* STATUES FOR THE CATHEDRAL OF FLORENCE

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by Michaël J. Amy

On 24 April 1503 Michelangelo undertook to carve twelve over-life-sized *Apostles*, each four and a quarter “braccia” high (8 ft. 1¾ in., or 248.2 cm.), for the cathedral of Florence, at the rate of at least one completed statue per year.¹ However, because he was repeatedly called away from Florence by Pope Julius II, Michelangelo produced nothing more than an unknown number of preparatory studies for the sculptures and one unfinished statue of the *Apostle Matthew* (fig. 1). In this essay, I will focus upon Michelangelo's drawings for the *Apostle* statues, as these have not been previously studied as a group.² Wax or terracotta models for the *Apostle* statues no longer survive.

We will want to keep the proposed arrangement of the sculptures inside Santa Maria del Fiore in mind, as we consider the problem of Michelangelo's drawings for the *Apostle* statues. The contract of 1503 states that the statues were to replace “paintings” in the cathedral or be installed elsewhere.³ The images referred to are the Apostles with the crosses of the consecration that were painted in 1436 at the bottom of the colossal pilasters abutting the eight narrower sides of the four great crossing piers and in the center of the aisle-walls in the first and third bays (fig. 2; the areas in question, marked 1 through 12, are now occupied by the fifteenth-century statues of prophets [9–12] and sixteenth-century statues of apostles [1–8] that were installed from 1563 to circa 1587 inside all-unifying aediculae designed by Bartolommeo Ammannati to form a cycle of *Apostle* statues). The twelve would thereby be divided into six pairs, and each statue would be placed opposite its counterpart located across a considerable span of space. The vagueness of Michelangelo's original mandate indicates that alternative installations were considered in 1503.

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¹ For references to the varying transcriptions of Michelangelo's contract, see Michaël J. Amy, “Imagining Michelangelo's St. Matthew in Its Setting,” *Santa Maria del Fiore, The Cathedral and Its Sculpture*, ed. Margaret Haines (Fiesole 2001) 149, n. 1. For a brief history of the *Apostle* commission, see Amy, “Imagining” 149–151.

² The sheets that are discussed in this essay are examined in greater depth in Michaël J. Amy, “Michelangelo's Commission for Apostle Statues for the Cathedral of Florence,” (Ph.D. diss., New York University 1997); see p. X for the list of catalogue entries. There, the reader will also find my reasons for rejecting several drawings previously proposed as preparatory studies for the *Apostle* statues.

³ For the preexisting paintings in Santa Maria del Fiore, see Michaël J. Amy, “The Revised Attributions and Dates of Two 15th Century Mural Cycles for the Cathedral of Florence,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* XLII (1998) 176–189.

The unfinished *St. Matthew* of 1506 (fig.1) shows us that Michelangelo realized that exaggerated “rilievo” was required for a statue to register fully in the church’s dark and spacious interior. It tells us that its author recognized that considerable “varietà” was needed to disrupt the monotony of a cycle of twelve standing draped religious statues. I have argued elsewhere that Michelangelo envisioned his cycle as an “istoria” enacted in sacred space.⁴ In the second book of his treatise on painting, Alberti observes that

The first thing that gives pleasure in a “istoria” is a plentiful variety ... Though variety is pleasing in any “istoria,” a picture in which the attitudes and movements of the bodies differ very much among themselves, is most pleasing of all. So let there be some visible full-face, with their hands turned upwards and fingers raised, and resting on one foot; others should have their faces turned away, their arms by their sides, and feet together, and each one of them should have his own particular flexions and movements ... If suitable, let some be naked, and let others stand around, who are halfway between the two, part clothed and part naked. But let us always observe decency and modesty. The obscene parts of the body and all those that are not very pleasing to look at, should be covered with clothing or leaves or the hand ... Lastly, as I said, I think one should take care that the same gesture or attitude does not appear in any of the figures. A “istoria” will move spectators when the men painted in the picture outwardly demonstrate their own feelings as clearly as possible ... Yet these feelings are known from movements of the body.⁵

It is helpful to bear this passage in mind as we look for drawings for the *Apostle* statues. Michelangelo’s remarkable talent for “invenzione all’antica” resulted from his complete mastery of “contrapposto,” the compositional method that is crucial to our understanding of his projected cycle.⁶ The *Apostle* commission offered Michelangelo the opportunity to self-image himself as the new Donatello.

The fact that four blocks of marble were delivered in Florence during the first phase of the *Apostle* commission (1503–1508) confirms that Michelangelo conceived of his cycle in terms of pairs.⁷ Paired figures invite comparison.⁸ The paired *Apostles*’ rich

⁴ See Amy, “Imagining” (n. 1 above) 149–166.

⁵ “Primum enim quod in historia voluptatem afferat est ipsa copia et varietas rerum ... Sed in omni historia cum varietas iocunda est, tamen in primis omnibus grata est pictura, in qua corporum status atque motus inter se multo dissimiles sint. Stent igitur alii toto vultu conspicui, manibus supinis et digitis micantibus, alterum in pedem innixi, aliis adversa sit facies et demissa brachia, pedesque iniuncti, singulisque singuli flexus et actus extent, Sintque nudi, si ita deceat, aliqui, nonnulli mixta ex utrisque arte partim velati partim nudi assistant. Sed pudori semper et verecundiae inserviamus. Obscoenae quidem corporis et hae omnes partes quae parum gratiae habent, panno aut frondibus aut manu operiantur ... Denique, ut dixi, studendum censeo ut in nullo ferme idem gestus aut status conspiciatur. Animos deinde spectantium movebit historia, cum qui aderunt picti homines suum animi motum maxime prae se ferent ... Sed hi motus animi ex motibus corporis cognoscuntur.” Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting and On Sculpture, The Latin Texts of “De Pictura” and “De Statua”*, ed. Cecil Grayson (London 1972) 78–81.

⁶ As Justi observed; see Carl Justi, *Michelangelo, Beiträge zur Erklärung der Werke und des Menschen* (Leipzig 1900; Berlin 1922) 368. On “contrapposto,” see the outstanding article by David Summers, “Contrapposto: Style and Meaning in Renaissance Art,” *Art Bulletin* 59 (1977) 336–361.

⁷ For the delivery of the four blocks of marble for the *Apostles*, see Michaël J. Amy, “The Dating of Michelangelo’s *St. Matthew*,” *Burlington Magazine* 142 (2000) 493–496 and 808. Michelangelo states in the draft of a letter of December 1523 that he only began carving one *Apostle* statue; see *Il Carteggio di Michelangelo*, eds. Giovanni Poggi et al. (Florence 1973) 3.7 no. DXCV. This is corroborated by the fact that the three remaining blocks were allotted to Jacopo Sansovino (one block), Andrea Sansovino (two blocks; however, he did not accept this commission), and then Andrea Ferrucci (one block) and Benedetto da Rovezzano (one block); see Giovanni Poggi, *Il Duomo di Firenze, Documenti sulla decorazione della*

stances in “contrapposto” would reinforce each other by contrast, while being checked by their symmetrical arrangement inside the church and placement upon identical supports or inside identical containers. Significantly, the very paradigm of pairs conceived in “contrapposto” could then be found in the crossing of Florence Cathedral, namely in the great *Organ-Lofts* by Luca della Robbia and Donatello placed above the entrances to the sacristies on opposite sides of the church’s principal axis (fig. 2).

The task of identifying studies by or after Michelangelo for the *Apostle* statues is complex, considering that we have little documentation pertaining to this commission and that the sculptor initiated work upon only one statue. The contract of 1503 failed to specify how the *Apostles* were to be represented and—unlike the commission of 1501 for fifteen statuettes for the *Piccolomini Altar*⁹—it did not require the submission of preparatory drawings. Michelangelo’s freedom from such constraints gave him the license to devise a most unorthodox pose for his first *Apostle*.

The transitional pose of the *St. Matthew* (fig. 1) tells us that we may look for male figures assuming unconventional stances. The unprecedented amount of flesh bared by this *Apostle* invites us to consider studies of the male nude—even highly finished ones—in addition to draped figure studies. It is worth remembering in this instance that a highly finished drawing of a young female nude in Paris (Louvre 726r, Corpus 31r) is preparatory for the draped kneeling female in the bottom left corner of Michelangelo’s unfinished painting of the *Entombment* in London (National Gallery), which was presumably begun in Rome in 1500.¹⁰ Alberti states: “For a clothed figure we first

chiesa e del campanile tratti dall’archivio dell’Opera, ed. Margaret Haines (Florence 1988) 2.147–149 nos. 2160, 2162, 2163 and 2165. Schulz’s claim, “When a commission called for many statues, Michelangelo would start several at the same time and carve the same section of each to the same extent,” is consequently incorrect; see Juergen Schulz, “Michelangelo’s Unfinished Works,” *Art Bulletin* 57 (September 1975) 370.

Michelangelo also thought in terms of paired statues when he was engaged with work on the *Piccolomini Altar* and the *Julius Tomb*. He carved two pairs of new statuettes for the *Piccolomini Altar* (Siena Cathedral), left his first pair of *Slaves* (Paris, Louvre) for the *Julius Tomb* unfinished, and left two subsequent pairs of *Slaves* (Florence, Galleria dell’Accademia) for the *Julius Tomb* likewise unfinished. Although a greater number of statues was required for each of these projects, Michelangelo decided to proceed by pairs. Significantly, the *Piccolomini Saints* could be evaluated two by two (“da due in due”), if Cardinal Piccolomini so desired; see *Le lettere di Michelangelo Buonarroti*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence 1875) 616–617 no. III.

⁸ Alberti tells us: “Large, small, long, short, high, low, wide, narrow, light, dark, bright, gloomy, and everything of the kind, which philosophers termed accidents, because they may or may not be present in things—all these are such as to be known only by comparison” (“Nam magnum, parvum, longum, breve, altum, infimum, latum, arctum, clarum, obscurum, [luminosum], tenebrosum et huiusmodi omnia, quae cum possint rebus adesse et non adesse, ea philosophi accidentia nuncuparunt, huiusmodi sunt ut omnis earum cognitio fiat comparatione”); Alberti, *On Painting* (n. 5 above) 52–53.

⁹ The contract of 5 June 1501, for fifteen statuettes for the *Piccolomini Altar*, stated that Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini would determine the identity, poses, drapery—or lack thereof, if nudes were requested—and gestures of the *Apostles* and *Saints* that were to be carved. Additionally, Michelangelo was ordered to submit preliminary drawings for approval before he began carving his statuettes. See Harold Mancusi-Ungaro Jr., *Michelangelo: The Bruges Madonna and the Piccolomini Altar* (New Haven and London 1971) 13–14 and 64–69. No drawings for this cycle of statuettes survive.

¹⁰ Both works are illustrated in Michael Hirst, “The Artist in Rome, 1496–1501,” in Michael Hirst and Jill Dunkerton, *Making & Meaning: The Young Michelangelo* (London 1994) 56 pl. 42 and 68 pl. 52; Hirst discusses the painting on 57–71. See also Michael Hirst, *Michelangelo and his Drawings* (New Haven and London 1988) 63. For the drawing of the young girl, see Paul Joannides, *Inventaire général des dessins Italiens, VI, Michel-Ange, élèves et copistes* (Paris 2003) 61–65 no. 2. The drawings for the so-called pen-sive *Apostle* in London and Florence (figs. 4–5) tell us that these figures were first drawn as nudes before being covered with drapery. However, these are not highly finished studies. Significantly, Raphael’s pen

have to draw the naked body beneath and then cover it with clothes.”¹¹

We are looking for male figure studies belonging to the years 1503–1508, and exhibiting poses such as we would expect to find in Michelangelo’s marble statuary of this period. This first condition is often difficult to ascertain, considering the remarkable consistency of Michelangelo’s drawing style over long stretches of time, as far as drawings serving the same function are concerned.¹² The second condition is almost as perplexing, for the unfinished *St. Matthew*—the sole surviving monumental statue by Michelangelo begun within the time frame we are considering—marks a radical break away from the master’s earlier sculpture.¹³

To complicate matters, not all figure studies that seem to work well when translated into marble statuary, are actually preparatory for sculpture. Some of these studies may be independent drawings, while others may be preparatory for paintings or relief-sculptures—not all of which are necessarily documented. Our task becomes less daunting when the artist provides his drawn figures with bases, plinths, pedestals, or enclosing niches or aediculae. However, these forms usually appear within the context of Michelangelo’s architectural elevations.¹⁴ Once we disregard the latter, we are forced to conclude that only a limited number of Michelangelo’s studies for statuary survive.¹⁵ (This becomes all the more surprising when we remember that three-dimensional figures, which are meant to be viewed from different angles, require multiple preparatory studies.)¹⁶ In fact, there are more than a few statues by Michelangelo for which not one drawing survives. I am thinking of the *Crucifix* for Santo Spirito in Florence, the (lost) *Hercules*, the kneeling *Angel* and the standing *Saints Proculus* and *Petronius* for the *Tomb of Saint Dominic* in Bologna, the lost *St. John the Baptist*, the two *Cupids*, the *Bacchus*, the *Pietà*, the four figures that were carved for the *Piccolomini Altar* in Siena (eleven more were ordered), the *St. Matthew*, and the (destroyed) colossal bronze seated *Julius II*—to limit myself to statuary from the first two decades of Michelangelo’s career.¹⁷ All of these statues were preceded by drawings and/or

and ink drawing in the Städelsches Kunstinstitut at Frankfurt (inv. 379) is a highly finished study of nude men in preparation for the draped men in the lower left of Raphael’s *Disputa* in the Stanza della Segnatura; see Hugo Chapman et al., *Raphael, From Urbino to Rome* (London 2004) 239, pl. 82. “Corpus” is in reference to Charles de Tolnay, *Corpus dei Disegni di Michelangelo*, 4 vols. (Novara 1975–1980), in which most of the drawings mentioned in this article are reproduced in color and to scale.

¹¹ “Sed veluti in vestiendo prius nudum subsignare oportet quem postea vestibus obambiando involuamus”; Alberti, *On Painting* (n. 5 above) 74–75.

¹² See Hirst, *Michelangelo and his Drawings* (n. 10 above) 26–31. We will be on firmer ground when we will be examining sheets that contain studies that can be linked to other known projects.

¹³ See Amy, “Imagining” (n. 1 above) 151–154.

¹⁴ See for example the drawings by or after Michelangelo for the *Julius Tomb* (Uffizi 608Er, Corpus 56r), the *Façade of San Lorenzo* (Casa Buonarroti 45Ar, Corpus 497r, and Casa Buonarroti 100Ar, Corpus 506r), the *Tomb of the Magnifici* for the *Medici Chapel* (British Museum 1859-6-25-543r, Corpus 189r, Louvre 837r, Corpus 194r, and Louvre 686v, Corpus 193v), the *Tomb of a Duke* for the *Medici Chapel* (Louvre 838r, Corpus 186r), a *Tomb* (Casa Buonarroti 93Ar, Corpus 275r), another *Tomb* (Oxford, Christ Church 0993r, Corpus 282r), and an *Altar* (Oxford, Christ Church 0992r, Corpus 280r). I have not found architectural plans or elevations that can be connected to the first phase of the *Apostle* project.

¹⁵ Michelangelo destroyed large numbers of his drawings; see Hirst, *Michelangelo and his Drawings* (n. 10 above) 16–21.

¹⁶ As Hirst, *Michelangelo and his Drawings* (n. 10 above) 62, reminds us.

¹⁷ The attribution of the *Crucifix* presently in the Casa Buonarroti to the young Michelangelo is still subject to debate; see Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt and Elena Capretti, catalogue entry in *Giovinezza di Michelangelo*, eds. Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt et al. (Florence and Milan 1999) 288 no. 36. The attribu-

three-dimensional models, which are now lost.

The fact that several surviving preparatory drawings for statuary show the projected figures without bases, plinths, pedestals, niches or aediculae, makes the situation even more confusing. Witness these studies for the (lost) bronze *David* (Louvre 714r, Corpus 19r), the *Madonna and Child* in Bruges (Uffizi 233Fr, fig. 5; and British Museum 1859-6-25-564r, Corpus 46r), a *Slave* (Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts 197r, Corpus 62r), the *Risen Christ* in Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome (formerly London, Brinsley Ford Collection, Corpus 94r-94v), and a (never realized) *Hercules and Antaeus* group (British Museum 1859-6-25-557r, Corpus 236r, and Ashmolean Museum Parker 317r, Corpus 237r). Thus, it will come as no surprise that not one of the studies I accept (group 1 below)—or tentatively propose (group 2)—as preparatory for *Apostle* statuary shows the figure raised on top of a base, plinth or pedestal, or framed by a niche or aedicula. However, the base and plinth could not be entirely ignored during the design stage, for these forms—which helped to assure the statue's stability—had to be extracted from the same block as the figure. The design and proportions of the pedestal, niche or aedicula—though often intimately related to those of the statue—could eventually be established by the sculptor at a later stage. It is worth noting that since the statues' final location remained open, the *Apostle* contract does not specify how Michelangelo's sculptures were to be displayed, whether on pedestals or inside niches, or even whether the figures were to stay indoors. Additionally, there is no evidence that Michelangelo would be entrusted with designing pedestals, consoles, niches or aediculae for his statues, once the location of the statues was determined. That task could eventually be delegated to Simone del Pollaiuolo (il Cronaca), the Capomaestro of the Opera del Duomo, or to Giuliano da Sangallo, who likewise witnessed Michelangelo's *Apostle* contract of 1503.

There is no evidence that Michelangelo set out for Carrara in 1503 or 1504. Instead, he presumably drew up a contract to procure marble for the *Apostle* statues, and pursued work on the colossal *David* in Florence. Drawn or modeled figure studies—now lost—enabled him to determine the dimensions and shapes of the blocks that were required. The contours of the marble blocks were perhaps recorded on separate sheets of paper—as they would later be in stereometric drawings for unrelated projects—and dispatched with written instructions to Carrara.¹⁸ The first block of marble arrived in Florence in late December 1504, while Michelangelo was engaged with work on the cartoon for the *Battle of Cascina*. Approximately two months later, the artist left for Rome to initiate work on the *Julius Tomb*. The next three blocks were

tion of a marble statue in New York (Services Culturels de l'Ambassade de France) to Michelangelo and its tentative identification as the *Cupid* for Jacopo Galli is far from being universally accepted. For that statue, see Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt and James David Draper, catalogue entry in *Giovinetta di Michelangelo*, loc. cit. 300–305 no.39, and passim. As far as the colossal *David* is concerned, a pen and ink study for a right arm in Paris (Louvre 714r, Corpus 19r) and a red chalk drawing for a left forearm and hand, and part of a torso, likewise in Paris (Louvre 706v, Corpus 3v), have been related to that statue; see Joannides, *Inventaire général des dessins Italiens* (n. 10 above) 68–73 no. 4, and 59–61 no. 1, respectively. The relations between these drawings and the colossus are not conclusive. Hartt's identification of a small three-dimensional model as a preparatory study for the colossal *David* is almost universally rejected; see Frederick Hartt, *David by the Hand of Michelangelo, The Original Model Discovered* (New York 1987).

¹⁸ For stereometric sketches for blocks intended for statuary, see for example de Tolnay, *Corpus* (n.10 above) 3.106 no. 475.

delivered at the Opera del Duomo in March 1506, only a few weeks before Michelangelo's precipitate return to Florence following the shelving of the *Julius Tomb* project.¹⁹

GROUP I. PREPARATORY STUDIES FOR THE APOSTLE STATUES: BRITISH MUSEUM 1895-9-15-496, UFFIZI 233F, AND LOUVRE 12691

Michelangelo's earliest surviving sketch for an *Apostle* statue is a small, lightly drawn, schematic, unfinished and cut pen and ink study, in the top left corner of the verso of a sheet in London (British Museum 1895-9-15-496v, Corpus 36v, fig. 3).²⁰ Since it records the initial idea for this figure's pose, the man is rendered in the nude—for the body's stance must be established before an artist goes through the trouble of draping it. This "primo pensiero" becomes easier to read when we turn to what is the next drawing in the surviving sequence of studies, along the left margin of the recto (fig. 4). Here, the figure is drawn on a scale that is more than twice the size of the previous study, with fluid outlines that give it a more organic quality. We now see a standing nude turned in profile towards the right, with its right foot raised on top of a block. The actor's right elbow is propped on top of a codex supported by the raised right leg and held upright by the left hand—as the first and subsequent sketches confirm. The raised right hand braces the head, which is turned inwards, away from the viewer. In the next, slightly larger drawing on the right (fig. 4), Michelangelo turned the pensive figure's head and torso somewhat more towards the viewer, and modified the relation of the right hand and foreshortened raised forearm—now placed along a diagonal—to the head. The complexity of the figural design was thereby increased. The artist then proceeded to add drapery onto the figure, as is confirmed by the fact that the man's legs are fully visible beneath his garment. A rather improbably arranged mantle flung over the right shoulder and tied with a sash above the waist, billows at the back and opens up at the front and on the side, thereby revealing the man's muscular shoulder, right arm and torso. A large fold of drapery falls over the left hand holding the book, as the raised right knee draws the garment tightly around the weight-bearing leg. Michelangelo supplied shading as he drew the drapery, thereby increasing the "rilievo" of the figure and defining a light source at the top left that wraps the *Apostle's* face and chest in shadows.

The figure was then sketched with pen and ink once again as a nude, though on a larger scale and with slight variations, on a different sheet (Uffizi 233Fr, Corpus 37r, fig. 5).²¹ This actor was then dressed with a long sleeved shirt and mantle flung across the shoulders, left arm and raised right thigh. (The legs that remain fully visible beneath the drapery prove that this figure was originally a nude.) Finding an effective

¹⁹ Amy, "The Dating of Michelangelo's St. Matthew" (n. 7 above) 493–496 and 808.

²⁰ For this sheet, see Johannes Wilde, *Italian Drawings in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum, Michelangelo and his Studio* (London 1953) 4–9 no. 3. The parts of the figure that were located above the breast were cut off. When we compare this figure to the ones that were based upon it (see below), we recognize that the figure a) holds a rectangular object propped on top of its right thigh, b) has placed its left forearm on top of this object, and c) has positioned its right elbow on top of its left wrist. The bottom half of the right leg and the entire left leg were omitted.

²¹ For this sheet, see Paola Barocchi, *Michelangelo e la sua scuola, I disegni di Casa Buonarroti e degli Uffizi* (Florence 1962) 1.3–6 no. 1.

drapery arrangement obviously required several studies. The *Apostle* was then drawn with pen and ink over black chalk on a sheet now in Paris (Louvre 12691r, fig. 6), where we find him turned three-quarters towards the left with his head turned three quarters towards the right, and his face and large areas of his torso exposed to view.²² The “rilievo” of this figure promised to give rise in the statue to strong light and dark contrasts, which would in turn magnify the plasticity and drama of the pose. Views from three-quarter angles were of particular importance, for those were the views one would most often obtain of the statues placed at the bottom of the colossal pilasters abutting the eight narrower sides of the four great crossing piers and at the center of the aisle walls in the first and third bays, inside the cathedral. (One of the reasons why the fresco paintings of 1436 needed to be replaced by sculpture had to do with visibility, for over-life-sized white marble statuary could be perceived from a distance inside the dark church, as well as from angles painting was illegible from). The rotation of the actor in space points towards the use of a three-dimensional model. We know that in this instance we are looking at a drawing from life, for this mustachioed male appears in several drawings by Michelangelo of the first decade of the sixteenth century²³, including the small “pensiero” in the bottom left corner of the sheet in the Uffizi (fig. 5), to which we shall return.

Cordellier noted that cut sketches appearing on the verso of the sheet in Paris (left margin) complete cut studies drawn on the verso of the sheet in London (top margin, fig. 3). The sheets in Paris and London were consequently part of a single larger whole.²⁴ The cut sketches prove that the *Apostle* study (recto) presently in the Louvre (fig. 6) was originally located at the top of the sheet (recto) now in the British Museum (fig. 4), and turned ninety degrees clockwise in relation to the two smaller *Apostle* studies below.²⁵

²² See Dominique Cordellier, “Fragments de jeunesse: Deux feuilles inédites de Michel-Ange au Louvre,” *Revue du Louvre* 41 (1991) 48–55; and Joannides, *Inventaire général des dessins Italiens* (n. 10 above) 73–75 no. 5. The reason that we here have a drawing in black chalk underneath the pen drawing may have to do with the fact that this study is more complex than the preceding ones for the same *Apostle*, as the parts of the body that were previously hidden by overlapping limbs, or arranged parallel to the plane, are now depicted in foreshortening. The use of pen and ink over a black chalk underdrawing occurs in a number of Michelangelo's studies belonging to the period 1503–1508.

²³ As Cordellier and Joannides also observe. Other drawings executed after this mustachioed model include Louvre 685r (Corpus 26r) and Louvre 722r (Corpus 30r). Significantly, the pensive figure on Uffizi 233Fr (right, fig. 5) appears to wear the cap that was worn in sculptors' workshops to protect one's hair from dust. A knot, resembling that of a kerchief tied around the head, appears at the top of the figure's head in the study in the Louvre (fig. 6). Joannides states with regard to the drawings for the pensive *Apostle* in London, Florence, and Paris: “It would have been difficult for another sculptor to make a three-dimensional rendering from this drawing, but, in fact, a version of the figure, included in a large retable in Zaragoza, was carved in the early 1520s by Michelangelo's friend Alonso Berruguete. It seems most probable that Berruguete had either been given a model by Michelangelo or had been allowed to copy one”; see Paul Joannides, *Michelangelo and His Influence, Drawings from Windsor Castle* (Washington and London 1996) 21.

²⁴ Cordellier made an unconvincing attempt to join the right margin of Uffizi 233Fr (fig. 5) to the left margin of British Museum 1895-9-15-496r (fig. 4), and thus to reassemble all the surviving sheets with studies for the pensive *Apostle* as fragments of one much larger whole; see Cordellier, “Fragments de jeunesse” (n. 22 above) 52 and 54–55 fig. 15.

²⁵ Thus, once the artist had drawn the standing draped figures, first on the sheet in the British Museum (recto, right), and then on the sheet in the Uffizi (recto, right), he turned the former (originally larger) sheet ninety degrees counter-clockwise and drew the standing draped male (now in the Louvre) in three quarter view on the left. Michelangelo often rotated the sheets he drew upon, in order to use as much of the available space as possible. (The sheets in London and Florence are among the earliest we possess showing

We thus have a remarkable set of drawings recording the genesis of the pensive *Apostle*, from its first formulation in the geometric scheme on the verso of the sheet in London (fig. 3) to its complete definition in the drawing in the Louvre (fig. 6). Drapery passages and anatomical details were possibly worked out separately. Sadly, the statue the studies for the pensive *Apostle* are preparatory for was never begun.

Robinson connected the studies for the standing pensive figure in London (recto, fig. 4) to Michelangelo's commission for *Apostle* statues as early as 1876. His proposal has won almost universal acceptance.²⁶ He considered these drawings to be preparatory studies for the *St. Matthew* (fig. 1), a hypothesis several scholars accepted. However, the agitated *St. Matthew*, with his head turned violently towards his right as he looks over his forward thrust shoulder, his codex pressed against his left shoulder with his raised left hand, and his raised and bared left leg turned inward, differs in many respects from the study for the contemplative *Apostle* (fig. 4). All the studies for the *St. Matthew* are lost. The pensive figure's dating—which is ascertained by studies on the recto and verso of the sheets in the British Museum that are linked to the commission for the *Battle of Cascina*—the characteristics shared by the contemplative figure and the unfinished *St. Matthew* (fig. 1), and the figure's plausibility as a marble statue by Michelangelo, make its connection to the *Apostle* commission almost irrefutable.

Both the British Museum study (recto right, fig. 4) and the unfinished statue (fig. 1) show a standing draped male holding a codex, with the right arm and large parts of the torso exposed, and one bare foot raised on top of a block. Codices—by then the traditional attributes of the *Apostles*, though *Prophets*, *Evangelists*, *Church Fathers*, and other *Saints* could be shown holding them—were also included in earlier *Apostle* cycles for the cathedral.²⁷ The idea of placing the raised and projecting arm and leg on

Michelangelo doing just that. These sheets also contain Michelangelo's earliest surviving "primo pensieri" drawings, the first records of this artist's "idee" for a single motif, that were characteristically sketched on a small scale; see Hirst, *Michelangelo and his Drawings* [n. 10 above] 32–33). Nevertheless, the addition of a figure study to a sheet that is two thirds filled with smaller drawings is unusual.

²⁶ J. C. Robinson, *Descriptive Catalogue of Drawings by the Old Masters, forming the Collection of John Malcolm of Poltalloch, Esq.* (London 1876) 21 no. 59. Only Valentiner, Mancusi-Ungaro, and Perrig have rejected the connection between the British Museum studies and the *Apostle* commission for Santa Maria del Fiore. See Wilhelm R. Valentiner, "Michelangelo's Piccolomini Statuettes and the Madonna in Bruges" (1942), in Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *Studies of Italian Renaissance Sculpture* (London 1950) 217–220; Mancusi-Ungaro, *Michelangelo: The Bruges Madonna* (n. 9 above) 34; Alexander Perrig, *Michelangelo Studien IV, Die "Michelangelo"-Zeichnungen Benvenuto Cellinis* (Frankfurt am Main and Bern 1977) 67–69; and Alexander Perrig, *Michelangelo's Drawings, The Science of Attribution* (New Haven and London 1991) 19 and 30. Perrig's attribution to Cellini of a number of drawings traditionally ascribed to Michelangelo is almost universally disregarded or rejected.

²⁷ The book *Evangelists and Apostles* hold represents the New Testament. Although "scrolls, as the ancient type of book, are more often given to the Old Testament authors," *Prophets* are occasionally shown holding codices. See George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (New York 1959) 105, 111 and 173. The evangelists Matthew and John were also apostles. Matthew's symbol and attribute is the winged man, in reference to his account of the Christ's Incarnation. Matthew may be shown with a moneybag, in reference to his profession as tax collector prior to his calling, or a book or pen as the author of one of the Gospels. The axe, instrument of his martyrdom, is occasionally displayed. John's principal attributes are the eagle, symbol of the lofty heights of his inspiration, and the book in reference to his Gospel. The cauldron filled with boiling oil, or the cup with a snake, are occasionally displayed in reference to the attempts made upon John's life. See Ferguson 75 and 81. Michelangelo's contract does not state how his *Apostles* were to be portrayed. Significantly, the eight 16th-c. *Apostles* that were eventually carved for the cathedral are all shown holding a codex, and John and Matthew are accompanied by their symbols, the eagle and winged

one side of the body and having the figure look in the opposite direction, appears both in the figure at the British Museum and in the far more nervous *St. Matthew* of 1506. Furthermore, as Wilde has observed, the drawn figure's compact pose could easily have been extracted from the block the *St. Matthew* was carved from, for the relation of height to width in the pen study is of the order of 2.5:1, and the relation of height to depth in the unfinished statue (without the base) is 2.9:1.²⁸ Additionally, all the pensive figure's limbs are supported—for marble has low tensile strength—and placed close to the body, as is characteristic of so much of Michelangelo's statuary. Wilde's contention that the profile view proffered in the British Museum study is the principal view of the projected statue is on the other hand incorrect, for we cannot see the *Apostle's* face from this side, and his raised arm and leg block our view of major parts of his body. Additionally, since the over life-sized statues were either to replace paintings inside the cathedral or be installed elsewhere, they were in all likelihood meant to be backed by architecture. If we follow Wilde's reasoning, this *Apostle* would be turning away from the viewer as he examines the architecture on his left, which makes little sense. Instead, the drawing in the Louvre (fig. 6)—published in 1991 by Cordellier—confirms that the study in London depicts the left side of the projected statue. The drawing in London enabled the artist to determine how deep each part of the figure lay within the block.²⁹ The distance between each part of the projected statue and the front plane of the block, was of special importance to a sculptor whose technique of carving consisted in methodically removing layers of stone parallel to the front face of the block, thereby gradually releasing the figure enclosed in the marble (fig. 1).³⁰ If frontal views of the pensive *Apostle* were drawn, as seems likely, then these are now lost.

The studies for the pensive *Apostle* are usually dated between April 1503 and March 1505, but we can be more precise. The large standing nude seen from the rear on the recto of the sheet in Florence (fig. 5) was almost certainly drawn before the study for the pensive *Apostle* to the right of it, for large drawings usually precede smaller studies on the same side of a sheet.³¹ (In addition, right-handed artists usually

man respectively. The latter two *Apostles* are shown with an open codex, in the act of composing their Gospels. Vincenzo de' Rossi's *St. Matthew* is shown dipping his pen with his right hand in the quill tended to him by his symbol. Benedetto da Rovezzano's *St. John* holds his right hand raised in mid-air, just prior to pursuing the act of writing. For the earlier cycles of *Apostles* at the cathedral see Gert Kreytenberg, "Tre cicli di apostoli dell'antica facciata del Duomo fiorentino," *Antichità viva* 16.1 (1977) 13–29; Amy, *Michelangelo's Commission* (n. 2 above) 10–32; and Amy, *The Revised Attributions and Dates* (n. 3 above) 176–189.

²⁸ Wilde, *Italian Drawings* (n. 20 above) 6 no.3.

²⁹ See also Popp, who first argued that the studies on British Museum 1895-9-15-496r show the left side of the projected statue: "In der Ansicht, in der die Bewegung für die Disposition im Block am deutlichsten und ohne Verkürzung herauskommt, nicht in der Hauptansicht der Statue"; Anni E. Popp, "Bemerkungen zu einigen Zeichnungen Michelangelos," *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* 59 (1925–1926) 138.

³⁰ Hirst has drawn attention to other drawings by Michelangelo that show side views of planned statuary; see Hirst, *Michelangelo and his Drawings* (n. 10 above) 3–4 and figs. 1–4.

³¹ The small studies for a mother and child group on the recto of Uffizi 233F were drawn after the study for the pensive *Apostle*. Most scholars have correctly identified several of these drawings as preliminary ideas for the marble *Madonna and Child* group in Bruges. Although Michelangelo received his first payment from the Mouscron of Bruges in December of 1503 (perhaps towards the purchase of marble), the sculpture was only sent off to Bruges in August 1506. A payment of 50 ducats in October 1504 could indicate that work on this sculpture was initiated at that time. However, it need not, for—as far as we can tell—the Mouscron had no means of verifying the amount of progress that was made on the marble group.

draw from left to right, in order to avoid smudging work that is already completed). The battle scene on the recto of the sheet in London (fig. 4, left) most likely precedes the pensive nude drawn at a right angle to it, along (what is presently) the left margin, for thick lines were used to distinguish the latter's hands, arms, chest, codex and raised leg, from the visually interfering scene of combat. The nude in Florence and the battle scene in London are preparatory for the *Battle of Cascina*, a commission first documented in September 1504.³² The studies for the pensive figure are consequently almost certainly of the last third of 1504.

A statement by Condivi supports this conclusion. Michelangelo's biographer tells us that the artist "remained for some time doing almost nothing in these arts, dedicating himself to the reading of poets and vernacular orators and to writing sonnets for his own pleasure," after the completion of the colossal *David* and prior to his departure for Rome.³³ The *David* was installed on the "ringhiera" in front of the Palazzo della Signoria on 8 June 1504, and Michelangelo departed for Rome in late February or early March of the following year. The reason I mention this is that Michelangelo's earliest surviving verses appear on the verso of the sheet in London (fig. 3).³⁴ These six lines almost certainly preceded all the studies on the verso—including the first scheme for the pensive *Apostle*—for they appear to govern the arrangement of these drawings into quadrants.³⁵ Thus, Michelangelo was devising a new pose for an *Apostle*, many months after ordering marble from Carrara and almost certainly prior to the arrival of the first block in Florence in late December 1504, judging from the small studies for the Bruges *Madonna* that were undoubtedly executed after the study for the pensive *Apostle* on the sheet in the Uffizi (fig. 5), for we know that Michelangelo had received his second payment for the Bruges *Madonna* in October 1504. Approximately one and a half years following the conception of the pensive *Apostle* scheme—and after discovering new realms of expression and feeling during work on the first *Julius Tomb* project—the contemplative figure was cast aside as something perhaps slightly "retardataire" (somewhat too close to those quiet Piccolomini *Saints*) and replaced in April 1506 or shortly thereafter by a new set of "modelli," including the

³² For the earliest known document referring to the commission for the *Battle of Cascina*, see Luisa Morozzi, "La 'Battaglia di Cascina' di Michelangelo: nuova ipotesi sulla data di commissione," *Prospettiva* 53–56 (1988–1989) 320.

³³ "Se ne stette alquanto tempo quasi senza far niuna cosa in tal arte, dandosi alla lezione de' poeti e oratori volgari e a far sonetti per suo diletto"; see Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti*, ed. Giovanni Nencioni (Florence 1998) 22. However, Condivi mentions work on the (lost) bronze *David*, the Bruges *Madonna and Child* group, and the *Doni Tondo*, after discussing the colossal *David* and before alluding to Michelangelo's readings and writings. See Giorgio Vasari, *La vita di Michelangelo nelle redazioni del 1550 e del 1568*, ed. Paola Barocchi (Milan and Naples 1962) 1.23, for a different account of Michelangelo's activities following the completion of the colossal *David*.

³⁴ See Wilde, *Italian Drawings* (n. 20 above) 5 no. 3.

³⁵ The purpose of the capital studies (?) on the verso of the British Museum sheet is uncertain. These drawings preceded the smaller, initial scheme for the pensive *Apostle*, since the verso was not used to develop the pensive *Apostle's* pose any further. Wilde suggested that these drawings could be studies for capitals for the house the Cathedral Operai promised to erect on Michelangelo's behalf, in partial compensation for carving the *Apostles*. This seems unlikely. There is another possibility, namely that Michelangelo began imagining capitals for niches or aediculae for the *Apostle* statues; see also Claudia Echinger-Maurach, catalogue entry in *Giovinetta di Michelangelo* (n. 17 above) 174 no. 2. If that is not the case, then these studies could be pure "invenzione all'antica", serving to trigger Michelangelo's "fantasia" and hone his drawing skills.

(lost) preparatory studies for the unfinished *St. Matthew*.³⁶ By then, Michelangelo had mastered the art of wresting entirely new figures out of pre-cut blocks of marble—witness the *Bacchus* and the colossal *David*. The four blocks that lay waiting for him in Florence inspired Michelangelo to new heights.

ANTECEDENTS FOR THE PENSIVE APOSTLE

The motif of the elbow resting on top of a codex propped upright on top of a thigh, and of the raised hand bracing the head (figs. 4–6), reappears approximately half a year after the conception of the pensive *Apostle* in the figure of the *Prophet* seated on the right in Michelangelo's elevation drawing of 1505 for the *Julius Tomb* in New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund 1962, 62.93.1, Corpus 489r, fig. 8).³⁷ In this study for an over-life-sized marble statue for the second story of the *Tomb*, Michelangelo once again confronts two of the principal sources for the pensive *Apostle*, namely Luca della Robbia's seated *Saint Mark* (fig. 9) on the bronze doors of the north sacristy of Florence Cathedral (fig. 2), and Luca's seated *Saint Matthias* (fig. 10) from the cycle of twelve enameled terracotta *Apostle* roundels in the Pazzi Chapel (cloister of Santa Croce, Florence).³⁸

When we reverse the middle section of Luca's *Matthias*, we obtain a scheme resembling the one appearing on the verso (top left) of the sheet in the British Museum (fig. 3)—although the thigh bearing the codex is lowered in the drawing.³⁹ However, since apostles and saints were usually depicted standing in monumental Florentine statuary, Michelangelo had to raise the foot of the leg supporting the codex on top of a tall object, in order to maintain della Robbia's striking scheme in a standing figure. A remarkably innovative pose was thereby achieved.⁴⁰

³⁶ As we have noted, Michelangelo was working on the cartoon for the *Battle of Cascina* when the first block of marble for an *Apostle* statue arrived in Florence. Had he not departed for Rome in late February or early March 1505 in order to initiate work on the *Tomb of Pope Julius II*, then he would presumably have begun carving the pensive *Apostle* in 1505.

³⁷ See Michael Hirst, "A Project of Michelangelo's for the Tomb of Julius II," *Master Drawings* 14 (1976) 375–382, who originally dated the drawing to 1513; and Michael Hirst, *Michelangelo Draftsman* (Milan 1988) 26–28 no. 9.

³⁸ For the two works by Luca della Robbia, see John Pope-Hennessy, *Luca della Robbia* (Ithaca, NY 1980) 68–72 and 258–261 no. 47 (for the bronze doors); and 39–40 and 236–238 no. 9 (for the Pazzi Chapel roundels). The *St. Mark* is depicted in the central panel of the right wing of the bronze door of the *Sagrestia delle Messe*, close to the locations proposed for Michelangelo's *Apostle* statues (fig. 2). He is shown seated, turned three-quarter towards his left, holding a codex upright on top of his left thigh with his right hand. His left upper arm rests on top of the codex and his head is braced by his raised left hand. The left thigh is positioned a little higher than the right, although the left foot is not raised off the ground. This scheme reappears somewhat modified in the frontally poised, seated *Apostle* in the Pazzi Chapel, a source of obvious importance since it belongs to the most recent cycle of *Apostle* sculpture in Florence preceding the series ordered in 1503. Once appropriated by Michelangelo—witness also his later *Lorenzo de' Medici* in the Medici Chapel (San Lorenzo, Florence)—Luca's scheme could be recuperated for the carved personification of *Sculpture* placed at the center of Michelangelo's own *Tomb* in Santa Croce, Florence. This tomb was planned by Vincenzo Borghini and designed by Vasari, and the *Allegory of Sculpture* was carved by Valerio Cioli; see John Pope-Hennessy, *Italian High Renaissance & Baroque Sculpture* (London 1963; London 2000) 178, pl. 160.

³⁹ "The foremost means of masking dependence is reversal"; Ernst H. Gombrich, "The Style 'all'antica': Imitation and Assimilation" (1961), *Norm and Form, Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (Oxford 1966; Chicago 1985) 124.

⁴⁰ Interestingly, the left foot of the *Madonna* in Bruges is raised on top of a rock in order to support not a codex but the Word, the Christ child who stands between the Virgin's legs and leans against her left thigh.

There are precedents in Renaissance statuary for the motif of the significantly raised foot—i.e., a foot raised completely off the ground. Donatello had raised the right foot and leg of the *Abraham* for the cathedral's campanile—this statue would be of critical importance in 1506 for the development of the pose of the *St. Matthew* (fig. 1). The campanile with its great series of *Prophets* was—like the Pazzi Chapel with its cycle of *Disciples*—an obvious place to turn to for ideas for an *Apostle* cycle. Thus, it comes as little surprise to note that the pensive *Apostle* (fig. 4) is close in spirit to Donatello's meditating, bearded campanile *Prophet*, who places his left arm across his torso in order to brace his right elbow with his clenched left hand holding onto drapery, as he supports his head with the other hand. Donatello's cycle of *Prophets*, which incorporates figures in active or contemplative poses, provided Michelangelo with a wealth of ideas for figures conceived in contrapuntal relationships. The pensive *Apostle's* bared right arm has a precedent in two other *Prophets* for the Campanile, namely Donatello's *Jeremiah* and *Habbakuk*, and the uncovered parts of his chest have an antecedent in the *Jeremiah*. The studies for the pensive *Apostle* and the unfinished statue of *St. Matthew* thus tell us that Michelangelo used formal means to establish symbolic connections between the *Witnesses of Christ* for the cathedral and the *Prophets* on the campanile who announce the coming of the Messiah. This conceit also served to support the young artist's claims to being Donatello "redivivus."

Donatello's bronze *David* provides a precedent for the raised leg turned inwards, which we find in more pronounced form both in the study in the bottom left corner of the sheet in the Uffizi (fig. 5) and in the *St. Matthew* (fig. 1). Michelangelo studied this statue of *David* with particular care, as he was asked in 1502 to produce a bronze copy of it, thus openly competing with the Quattrocento master. The motif of the significantly raised leg turned inwards appears in yet another statue of the same prophet—though one not by Donatello—namely in the unfinished marble *Martelli David* in Washington.⁴¹

However, other fifteenth-century sculptural precedents for the motif of the significantly raised foot appear only in bronze statuettes and in relief sculpture. For the former, witness Bellano's *David* in Philadelphia and Verrocchio's *Putto with a Dolphin* in Florence.⁴² For the latter, witness the *Apostle* depicted in the fourth panel from the top on the left wing of the *Apostles' Door* in the Old Sacristy of San Lorenzo, Florence. This figure stands slightly bent over in profile towards the left, with his right foot raised on top of a block as he writes in a codex that is propped open on top of his raised right thigh. Significantly, the *Apostles* are paired (in this case, as "disputantes") inside each panel of this door traditionally ascribed to Donatello, as were the painted *Apostles* spread inside Florence Cathedral—although a far greater margin of space

⁴¹ See Ursula Schlegel, "Problemi intorno al David Martelli," *Donatello e il suo tempo, Atti dell' VIII convegno internazionale di studi sul Rinascimento* (Florence 1968) 245–258.

⁴² For the bronze *David* in Philadelphia, see Volker Krahn, *Bartolomeo Bellano, Studien zur Paduaner Plastik des Quattrocento* (Munich 1988) 175–178. Krahn considers this sculpture to be the work of a Bellano imitator, and favors instead the statuette of *David* in New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art, see Krahn 170–178). In the latter sculpture, the left foot is not raised as high as in the statuette in Philadelphia. For Verrocchio's *Putto with a Dolphin*, see Andrew Butterfield, *The Sculptures of Andrea del Verrocchio* (New Haven and London 1997) 126–135 and 222–223 no. 20.

separated the latter.⁴³

The *Risen Christ* on Donatello's San Lorenzo *Pulpit*—then possibly in storage and thus perhaps not seen by Michelangelo—is likewise iconographically relevant.⁴⁴ This relief shows Christ standing stooped forward in profile towards the right, with his left foot raised on top of his sarcophagus in sign of his triumph over death. Figures in profile with one foot raised on top of a block also appear on a sheet with studies by Leonardo in Paris (pen and brown ink, Ecole des Beaux-Arts 34555A).⁴⁵ One youth leans forward in a pensive attitude in profile towards the left, with his arms crossed and resting upon his raised right leg.

The surviving evidence thus suggests that the motif of the significantly raised foot had little impact upon monumental marble statuary subsequent to the *Abraham* (1421), that is until it was reintroduced more than eighty years later when Michelangelo decided to raise della Robbia's seated figures to a standing position.⁴⁶ By the time Michelangelo began carving the *St. Matthew* in 1506 (fig. 1), he was in full command of the motif's potential to add life-giving “energia” and “varietà” to the image. He found the scheme irresistible, and returned to it again and again, thereby developing a highly influential signature-motif.⁴⁷

The significantly raised foot and the hand supporting the head in an attitude of thought are classical motifs that were revived by Donatello.⁴⁸ However, I have not found a single antique statue of a figure standing with one hand bracing its head, and with its weight-bearing elbow resting on top of an object placed on top of its raised leg. This invention appears to be Michelangelo's, as the embryonic figure on the reverse of the British Museum sheet independently suggests (fig. 3). The closest analogy I know to Michelangelo's scheme is in an antique statue of *Melpomene*, the Muse of tragedy, in Paris.⁴⁹ Here, the woman stands with her right hand supporting her head

⁴³ For the *Apostles' Door*, see John Pope-Hennessy, *Donatello Sculptor* (New York 1993) 187–193 and 338, n. 17, who attributed it to Michelozzo.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 292–304 and 349–350, nn. 35–50.

⁴⁵ Arthur E. Popham, *The Drawings of Leonardo da Vinci* (New York 1945; London 1994) pl. 48.

⁴⁶ Technical reasons may explain why the motif was avoided in monumental marble statuary. Anything jutting well beyond the central vertical axis of a standing figure may have been considered too risky, as statues need to be perfectly balanced and marble has low tensile strength. To be able to carve a figure with one foot significantly raised “all'antica”—and consequently with one leg bent and jutting out—may thus have been interpreted as a sign of great skill—a “dimostrazione dell'arte”, to use Vasari's phrase. Such a feat may have contributed—like the *St. Matthew's* unfinished state—to the myth of Michelangelo's “terribilità.”

⁴⁷ Michelangelo's use of the raised leg to create richer “contrapposti” deeply marked the Florentine school of sculpture: witness the reliefs carved by Bandinelli and his followers on the choir-enclosure of Santa Maria del Fiore, and the bronze and marble statuary by Giambologna and his followers.

⁴⁸ Justi noted that the raised foot has its source in Greek sculpture; see Carl Justi, *Michelangelo, Neue Beiträge zur Erklärung seiner Werke* (Berlin 1909) 205. Although I will focus upon classical statuary, both for the sake of brevity and because Michelangelo set out to carve statuary, we must not underestimate the importance of ancient coins, gems, relief sculpture, as well as other antique sources such as vase painting. A Hellenistic, mid-first century A.D. cameo showing *Neptune* with his left foot raised upon a rock (Naples, Museo Nazionale) was in the collection of Michelangelo's beloved late patron Lorenzo il Magnifico. One of the twelve large marble tondi inserted above the arches in the courtyard of Palazzo Medici (Florence), copies this gem. Lorenzo also owned a gem showing *Hippolytus and a Hunter*, with one man standing with his left foot raised on top of a base (Naples, Museo Nazionale); see *Il Tesoro di Lorenzo il Magnifico, Le gemme*, ed. Nicole Dacos et al. (Florence 1973) 42–44 no. 6, and 39 no. 1, respectively.

⁴⁹ See Solomon Reinach, *Répertoire de la statuaire Grecque et Romaine*, 5 vols. (Paris 1897–1924) 1.268.

and her elbow resting directly upon her raised right knee—the intermediate object between elbow and leg is missing.

The motif of the right hand supporting the head in an attitude of contemplation appears in antique depictions of standing and seated Muses and seated philosophers.⁵⁰ The right side of the torso and right arm are bared in the philosophers, as in Michelangelo's draped pensive *Apostle* in London (recto right, fig. 4). Additionally, several Muses and philosophers are shown with their right elbow resting on top of their left hand or wrist, as we find indicated in the studies for the pensive *Apostle* in London (recto right, fig. 4) and Paris (fig. 6). The motif of the foot raised on top of an object appears in a greater number of classical subjects, including athletes, Apollos, Neptunes, Muses and Venuses.⁵¹ Thus, Michelangelo combined two classical motifs in one figure as he planned *Apostle* statuary “all'antica” for the cathedral.

In antiquity, it was believed that divine inspiration came to mortals through the goodwill of the Muses. Donatello's *Prophets* and Michelangelo's pensive *Apostle* are divinely inspired. They seek enlightenment, like ancient philosophers. Since the classical motif of the raised foot often denotes victory—or superiority—it may symbolize the triumph of Christianity when included in the context of an *Apostle* cycle.

LOUVRE 855R

The figure study at the Louvre (fig. 6) served as point of departure for a new *Apostle* study. Although the latter is lost, it is known to us through a copy in black chalk in Paris that was first connected to Michelangelo's project for twelve *Apostle* statues by de Tolnay in 1975 (Louvre 855r, fig. 7).⁵² Both figures in Paris are turned three-quarter towards the left; their lower halves are almost identical if we exclude the drapery arrangement. However, Michelangelo transformed the pensive *Apostle*'s contemplative stance into a tense pose, by twisting the figure's head towards the right and placing its shoulders more closely parallel to the plane.⁵³ Once the man's right forearm and hand were freed, they could be lowered onto the top of the codex supported by the raised right thigh and hip, and the left hand needed to seize the right forearm in order to stabilize the codex placed at an angle on top of the thigh. The result is the depiction of a suddenly interrupted state of repose. These changes are too meaningful and the pose is of too high a quality for this to be a mere exercise carried out by a follower.

In this drawing, we are shown one of the three principal views of the projected sculpture. The front of the statue is established by the front plane of the block underneath the raised foot. The opposing axis in shoulders and hips would have been heightened when the sculpture was seen from the front, thereby increasing the dyna-

⁵⁰ Ibid. 1.167, 256, 274–275, 512–513 and 515; 2-1.630; and 5.314; and Phyllis Pray Bober and Ruth Rubinstein, *Renaissance Artists & Antique Sculpture: A Handbook of Sources* (London 1986; New York 1991) 78–79 no. 37–38.

⁵¹ Ibid. 1.137, 252, 319, 326, 428, 520 and 525; 2-1.27, 93 and 338; and 5.35 and 171.

⁵² De Tolnay, *Corpus* (n. 10 above) 1.51. For this sheet, see Joannides, *Inventaire général* (n.10 above) 200 no. 52. Cordellier, “Fragments de jeunesse” (n. 22 above) 51, fig. 11, believes this study is an original drawing by Michelangelo for an *Apostle* statue, perhaps because of the important “pentimenti” around the face and shoulders. He fails to examine this study's close relation to Louvre 12691.

⁵³ However, the flattening of the shoulders and the pure profile of the face may be the work of the copyist, who may have had trouble with foreshortening.

mism of the whole. The man's limbs are firmly supported and his compact, vertical stance can be easily inscribed within an imaginary rectangular block. The figure's massive proportions and its implications of violent motion achieved through bodily torsion, suggest a dating of 1506 for the lost original, based upon the dating of Michelangelo's unfinished *Apostle* statue (fig. 1). If it is indeed of 1506, then this drawing almost certainly replaced the design for the pensive *Apostle*, which lacked the heightened expression Michelangelo now sought to attain in his cycle—witness the *St. Matthew* (fig. 1). The statue the study implies would have worked splendidly opposite the *St. Matthew*, for these powerfully agitated figures reinforce one another while differing in a significant number of respects.

Michelangelo's "invenzione" reappears approximately three decades later and in a slightly different guise, in the study for a statue of *St. Peter* situated on the left in Bandinelli's elevation drawing for the double *Tomb for Popes Leo X and Clement VII* (Madrid, Museo de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, D/2381, fig. 11). Bandinelli's borrowing appears to confirm that Michelangelo's study was likewise for an *Apostle* statue, and possibly for a *St. Peter*—as the bearded type recorded in the copy in Paris suggests (fig. 7). We know that the project for twelve *Apostles* greatly interested Bandinelli, who—with the support of Pope Leo X's brother Giuliano de' Medici—obtained the commission to carve a *St. Peter* for Santa Maria del Fiore in January 1515.⁵⁴ However, I doubt that Bandinelli had access to one of Michelangelo's *Apostle* studies as early as 1515, for the *St. Peter* in Florence Cathedral is surprisingly un-Michelangelesque. Thus, I wonder if Michelangelo recuperated his unused "modello" in late 1534 or 1535, when he supplied the sculptor Alfonso Lombardi with designs for the papal *Tomb*, and if this "modello" ended in the hands of Bandinelli as the latter schemed to secure the prestigious commission.⁵⁵ What we can say beyond a doubt is that the drawing in Paris is not by Bandinelli, for it is of far too low a quality to be the work of such an accomplished draftsman.

GROUP 2. POSSIBLE PREPARATORY STUDIES FOR THE APOSTLE STATUES: LOUVRE

712R, LOUVRE 689R, AND BRITISH MUSEUM 1895-9-15-495R

Louvre 712r (Corpus 42, fig. 12) contains a drawing in pen and brown ink over black chalk of a male nude standing in "contrapposto," which may be a preparatory study for an *Apostle* statue.⁵⁶ This drawing reverses and slightly transforms the pose of the small

⁵⁴ See Poggi, *Il Duomo di Firenze* (n. 7) 2.150 no. 2172.

⁵⁵ The three quarter angle view of Michelangelo's figure became the principal view of the statue in Bandinelli's drawing. For the commission for the joint *Tomb*, see Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence 1906) 5.90 and 6.162–163; Detlef Heikamp, "Die Entwurfszeichnungen für die Grabmäler der Mediceer-Päpste Leo X. und Clemens VII," *Albertina Studien* 4.3 (1966) 134–152 (138–140 for the drawing in Madrid); and Ursula Kleefisch-Jobst, "Die Errichtung der Grabmäler für Leo X. und Clemens VII. und die Projekte für die Neugestaltung der Hauptchorkapelle von S. Maria sopra Minerva," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 51.4 (1988) 524–541. Interestingly, Bandinelli's pen and ink drawing for the central niche of the *Tomb of Clement VII* in Providence (Museum of Rhode Island School of Design 51.507) includes a seated *Apostle* (top right) with a pose close to that of Luca della Robbia's *St. Mark* (fig. 9) and Michelangelo's *Prophet* on the elevation drawing for the *Julius Tomb* in New York (fig. 8), though in reverse. See Heikamp 144, fig. 10. Another (anonymous) drawing for the *Tomb of Clement VII* at the Albertina in Vienna shows a standing draped niche statue of *St. John the Evangelist* (on the left) with the left foot raised on top of a block. See Heikamp 146, fig. 11.

⁵⁶ For this sheet, see Joannides, *Inventaire général* (n. 10 above) 78–80 no. 7.

male nude standing in the bottom left corner of Uffizi 233Fr (fig. 5). Since the parts in the study in Paris that are drawn with the greatest amount of hesitation are the parts that differ most from the small sketch in Florence⁵⁷, the latter must precede the former. Consequently, we shall first turn to the drawing in Florence.

The small study in Florence has been repeatedly linked to the project for twelve *Apostle* statues. However, the object the man leans against has never been satisfactorily identified, and its translation into over life-sized marble statuary has never been adequately explained. The Piccolomini *Saints* (delivered in 1504) and the unfinished *St. Matthew* tell us that Michelangelo's single standing figures were governed by firm vertical axes at this point in his career. The fact that this type of axis guiding the distribution of weights is absent from the small study in Florence suggests that the latter cannot be a sketch for an over-life-sized statue. Instead, this figure is almost certainly preparatory for the *Christ Child* resting against his mother's raised left leg in the marble *Madonna and Child* group in Bruges.⁵⁸ In fact, Uffizi 233Fr (fig. 5) contains several studies for the group in Bruges—in addition to one of the studies for the pensive *Apostle*. The reason why an adult posed for the child, is that children of a tender age are unable to hold such a highly asymmetrical pose. Michelangelo's mustachioed model was available, and it is he who assumed the pose desired for the infant. The object the man leans against may be nothing more than a studio prop (possibly the banister of a staircase) standing in for the thigh of Mary.

The "pensiero" at the bottom of Uffizi 233Fr is—like the pensive *Apostle*—indebted both to antiquity and to the sculpture of Donatello. The standing male nude achieves a remarkably sinuous and graceful silhouette by leaning towards his left with his left elbow placed high above his shoulder on top of the unidentified object, his right arm placed across his torso, and his raised left leg overlapping his weight-bearing knee, in a development of a classical Apollo type—clearly an appropriate source for a figure of Christ.⁵⁹ Michelangelo departs from this Apollo type by turning the man's head in pure profile towards his right, raising the foot of the leg in repose upon a block (the heel is raised off the block) and reverting to a "figura serpentinata." When we turn to the fourth panel from the top of the left wing of Donatello's *Martyrs' Door* (Old Sacristy, San Lorenzo, fig. 13), we see a man clad in ample drapery, leaning towards his left against the frame that contains him and his companion. The man's head is turned three quarter towards his left, the left elbow he leans against is raised high

⁵⁷ The head was first sketched lower with black chalk, prior to being incompletely drawn with pen and brown ink. In the study in the Uffizi, the hand of the arm placed across the torso rests upon a vertical support, whereas in the study in Paris it grabs the figure's side and is faintly drawn with pen and brown ink. Finally, the raised right forearm—that part of the study in Paris that differs most from the drawing in Florence—is faintly drawn with pen and brown ink. Both figures also have features in common with the *Putto* on Louvre 688v, for which see *ibid.* 98–102 no. 13.

⁵⁸ The main differences between the drawn male and the carved *Child*—aside from their age and proportions—are that the man's head is turned in profile towards his right, his left elbow is raised much higher than his shoulder, his left hand lies in front of his left breast, and the knee of his left leg in repose completely overlaps the knee of the weight-bearing leg. The similarities between the two poses become more striking when the Bruges *Christ Child* is seen from a three quarter angle from the right.

⁵⁹ See Reinach, *Répertoire* (n. 49 above) 1.251, and 2-1.92 and 99. Significantly, Giambologna's bronze statuettes of *Astronomy* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) and *Apollo* (Florence, Palazzo della Signoria) come remarkably close to Michelangelo's small "pensiero." For these works, see *Giambologna, 1529–1608, Sculptor to the Medici*, ed. Charles Avery and Anthony Radcliffe (London 1978) 68 no. 12 and 88 no. 36.

above his shoulder and his left hand is placed flat on top of his head, his right arm supporting an open codex is placed across his torso as his right hand holds onto the panel's frame, and his left leg is in repose with the heel of his left foot raised off the ground. The most significant differences between Donatello's and Michelangelo's figures standing in "contrapposto"—aside from the latter's state of undress—have to do with the turn of the head, the positioning of the right shoulder and the placement of the left forearm, hand and leg.⁶⁰ Michelangelo paraphrased the pose of a martyr who offered his life out of love for Jesus, as he planned the Bruges *Christ Child*.

We know that Donatello's revival of poses intimating at or actually defining "figura serpentina" provided Michelangelo with additional means of enhancing the "varietà" of his projected cycle, for we find an approximation of this type of figural design in the unfinished *St. Matthew* (fig. 1).⁶¹ *Matthew's* legs have relatively close

⁶⁰ The left leg of Michelangelo's figure is raised higher than the right leg and overlaps the right knee. However, in both figures the right arm is placed almost in the exact same position across the chest and the left arm is raised higher than the shoulder. Also, in both figures the right shoulder is twisted forward and the diagonal beginning in the raised left upper arm continues through the shoulders.

⁶¹ *St. Matthew's* twisting in contrasting directions is most striking when the statue is seen from three-quarter angles from the right and left. The feature in Michelangelo's sculpture that departs most from a "figura serpentina" is the right arm firmly anchored along the right side of the body. On the "figura serpentina," see David Summers, "'Maniera' and Movement: The 'Figura Serpentina,'" *Art Quarterly* 35.3 (1972) 269–301. However, Summers overlooks Giovanni Pisano's, Brunelleschi's, and Donatello's roles in the revival of a pronounced form of "contrapposto" that either intimates at or turns into a "figura serpentina." Giovanni's most conspicuous figures in such strong "contrapposto" are carved seated actors filling triangular fields. Two such figures can be found in the spandrels of the *Pulpit* in San Andrea (Pistoia) and two others, carved by a follower, can be found in the two top corners of the square field enclosing the main oculus of the façade of Siena Cathedral. See Michael Ayrton, *Giovanni Pisano, Sculptor* (New York 1969) pls. 149–150; and Antje Middeldorf Kosegarten, *Siensische Bildhauer am Duomo Vecchio, Studien zur Skulptur in Siena, 1250–1330* (Munich 1984) 349 no. XV.B, and figs. 185–186, respectively. Brunelleschi's bronze relief depicting the *Sacrifice of Isaac* was also almost certainly known to Michelangelo—it includes an unforgettable "figura serpentina" in the nude *Isaac*; see John Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture* (London 1958; London 2000) 9 pl. 1. The *Isaac* in Donatello's *Abraham and Isaac* group for the Campanile strongly hints at a "figura serpentina," and one of Donatello's small freestanding bronze *Putti* for the top of the *Siena Baptistery Font* provides a definitive example of the type. Another *Putto*, this time in a bronze relief for the high-altar of the Santo (Padua), shows that this principle of figural construction in "contrapposto" continued to interest the master and his circle in later years; see Pope-Hennessy, *Donatello Sculptor* (n. 43 above) 86–87 and 329 n. 10 (for the *Putti* on the Siena Baptistery font), and 219 and 342, n. 31 (for the *Putti* on the altar in Padua). Thus, it comes as little surprise to note that Bertoldo's unfinished bronze statuette of *Apollo* in Florence (Museo Nazionale) is a "figura serpentina"; see James David Draper, *Bertoldo di Giovanni, Sculptor of the Medici Household, Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO and London 1992) 167–176 no. 17. As Michelangelo's instructor in the Medici Garden at San Marco (Florence), Bertoldo taught the young artist Donatellesque methods of composition. A "figura serpentina" is also intimated in the *Zacharias* of Jacopo della Quercia's bronze relief depicting the *Annunciation to Zacharias in the Temple* on the *Siena Baptistery Font*; see James Beck, *Jacopo della Quercia* (New York 1991) 1.179–182 no. 15, and 2.317 fig. 136. It is well known that Michelangelo was deeply marked by Quercia's work. A striking "figura serpentina" also appears in the figure of *Arithmetic* on Antonio del Pollaiuolo's *Tomb of Pope Sixtus IV*; Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture* 173, pl. 159. Significantly however, aside from Donatello's *Isaac*, none of these Quattrocento examples consist of marble or even monumental statuary. Alberti's condemnation of artists who "represent movements that are too violent, and make visible simultaneously in one and the same figure both chest and buttocks, which is physically impossible and indecent to look at" may have something to do with this; Alberti, *On Painting* (n. 5 above) 84–85: "Motus enim nimium acres exprimunt, efficiuntque ut in eodem simulacro et pectus et nates uno sub prospectu conspiciantur, quod quidem cum impossibile factu, tum indecentissimum visu est." A "figura serpentina" appears in the *Satyr* behind Michelangelo's *Bacchus* (1496–1497). It may constitute the earliest carved standing "serpentine" figure since antiquity. For the *Bacchus*, see Eike D. Schmidt, catalogue entry in *Giovinetta di Michelangelo* (n. 17 above) 362–364 no. 54.

parallels in the legs of the small figure on Uffizi 233Fr (bottom left, fig. 5) and—flipped—in the legs of the nude on Louvre 712r (fig. 12). The latter were incompletely traced in red chalk on the verso of Louvre 712, thereby approximating the legs of the unfinished statue.

The male nude on Louvre 712r (fig. 12) stands in “contrapposto” with his right arm and leg raised and his head thrown back and turned sharply towards his left—in a variation on the *St. Matthew*, in reverse. The way in which the figure looks over its forward jutting shoulder with its eye wide open and its mouth partly agape, the use of opposite axes in shoulders and hips, and the positioning of the legs all have parallels in the *St. Matthew* (fig. 1), thus suggesting that this drawing was executed in 1506. However, this is not a preparatory study for the unfinished statue, for the placement of the arms and the curvature of the torso differ markedly from it.

The male nude on Louvre 712r is often considered a preparatory study for the soldier appearing in the top right of the grisaille copy (Norfolk, Holkham Hall) after Michelangelo’s (lost) cartoon for the *Battle of Cascina*. However, only the soldier’s head—of which the placement differs—the top of his torso and raised right forearm are visible in Aristotile da Sangallo’s copy, as the rest of his body is hidden behind the bodies of two of his companions. There is consequently little reason to believe that the full-length nude on Louvre 712r is preparatory for the bust-length figure depicted in the cartoon.

Other scholars have suggested that this drawing could be preparatory for marble statuary. A firm vertical axis anchors the man’s pose, which to the exception of the lightly sketched raised arm can be easily inscribed within an imaginary block of marble. Those initially believed that the standing male nude could be a study for a slave for the *Tomb* of Pope Julius II.⁶² He subsequently suggested that it could be preparatory for a Victory for the first *Julius Tomb* (1505), while noting that he was not sure that Victories were planned at that early stage.⁶³ I propose instead that this drawing—so closely linked to the “pensiero” for the Bruges *Christ Child*—could be a study for an *Apostle* statue (i.e., a statue of a witness of Christ), bearing in mind that the position of the lightly sketched raised right arm—of which the hand seems intended to hold an attribute—remains open to change.⁶⁴ The source of this figure in a classical Apollo

⁶² Henry Thode, *Michelangelo, Kritische Untersuchungen über seine Werke* (Berlin 1908) 1.103–104 and 159. De Tolnay considered the male nude to be a copy after a (lost) design for a *Slave* for the first *Julius Tomb* (1505–1506)—the lightly sketched raised arm being the copyist’s addition; see Charles de Tolnay, *The Tomb of Julius II* (Princeton 1954) 146–147 no. 39A. He observed close parallels between the study in Paris and the unfinished *St. Matthew* (fig. 1), and believed the latter could have been based upon the original “modello” for the (presumed) *Slave*. Significantly, the legs in the drawing in Paris reappear, attenuated and in reverse, in the *Dying Slave* in the Louvre (1513–1516), as Frederick Hartt, *Michelangelo Drawings* (New York 1971) 48 no. 39, also noted.

⁶³ Henry Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance* (Berlin 1912) 3.278.

⁶⁴ The motif of the hand raised up to the level of the head can be traced back to Donatello’s leaning *Martyr* on the *Martyr’s Door* in the Old Sacristy at San Lorenzo, though there the hand is placed on top of the head. The way in which this motif appears in the drawing in Paris seems antithetical to Michelangelo’s more compact conception of statuary. Significantly, this motif appears repeatedly in the work of Raphael and his followers (cf. the *Jonah* and *Elijah* carved by Lorenzetto for the Chigi Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome, who both hold drapery in their raised left hand). Did Michelangelo imagine his figure holding drapery in his raised right hand while—perhaps—pressing the codex against his torso with his left forearm (somewhat like Donatello’s leaning *Martyr*)?

(i.e., a prefiguration of Christ), via Donatello's *Martyr*, may corroborate this identification.

LOUVRE 689R

A pen and ink study from life in Paris showing a powerfully built male nude standing in a transitional pose in "contrapposto," may likewise be a preparatory drawing for an *Apostle* statue (Louvre 689r, Corpus 23r, fig. 14).⁶⁵ The man's head is thrown back and turned in profile towards his right as he looks over his right shoulder, his right arm and left leg are raised, and his torso is tilted forward and towards his left. The elbow of his bent right arm juts forward and outward, as he raises his right hand higher than his right shoulder. His slightly raised left hand is placed in front of his raised left leg, which is turned outward with the left foot thrust deepest in space. Both arms are placed relatively close to the torso and the whole can easily be inscribed within the contours of a rectangular block. However, the curve of this man's body is unusual for Michelangelo's monumental statuary of the first decade. The body's slight arc and forward lunge—as well as this figure's unusual set of proportions—separate this study from the *St. Matthew* (fig. 1), which is constructed along a firm vertical axis. However, little in this drawing appears to be final. The numerous "pentimenti" inform us that the raised right arm and both legs were heavily modified. This study's principal focus was clearly the massive, highly detailed torso, fraught with reminiscences of Antique sculpture.

Here, Michelangelo once again drew inspiration from one of the *Prophets* on the Campanile of Florence Cathedral, namely from the bearded *Prophet* whose right hand is raised higher than his right shoulder, whose head is somewhat thrown back and turned three quarter towards his right, and whose slightly raised left hand holding a scroll is placed beside his left thigh (fig. 15).⁶⁶ The parallels between both works are more striking when the *Prophet* is perceived from a three quarter angle from below, which is how Michelangelo saw this niche statue. In the case of the Quattrocento statue however, it is the right foot that is pulled back and turned outward. Significantly, we find the motifs of the head turned to look over the forward thrust shoulder, one hand—holding an attribute—raised almost to the level of the shoulder that is pressed forward and the other hand—grasping drapery—lowered to the level of the opposite thigh, reversed in one of Jacopo della Quercia's carved *Prophet* reliefs for the tabernacle crowning the *Siena Baptistery Font* (fig. 16). The same *Prophet* inspired Michelangelo's colossal *David* begun in 1501. It makes perfect sense for Michelangelo to remember these two *Prophets* as he conceived the pose for his *Apostle* (fig. 14), for the witnesses of Christ succeeded those who announced his coming. Also, Michelangelo sought to self-image himself as the worthy successor of the great sculptors of the Quattrocento (Donatello, Luca della Robbia, and Jacopo della Quercia).

Although the study on Louvre 689r (fig. 14) differs from the *St. Matthew* (fig. 1) in

⁶⁵ Joannides, *Inventaire général des dessins Italiens* (n. 10 above) 93–97 no. 12.

⁶⁶ See Pope-Hennessy, *Donatello Sculptor* (n. 43 above) 17–20 and 320, n. 20. Unlike Pope-Hennessy, I do not believe this statue is by Donatello.

several significant respects, it should be dated to 1506, as each of these powerfully built men is shown in strong “contrapposto,” with one arm and leg raised, the torso twisted towards the right, the head turned sharply in the opposite direction, the forward thrust shoulder located over the weight-bearing right leg, and the lowered hand seizing drapery at thigh level. However, the relation between the arms is reversed. The drawn figure’s lowered left hand lifts (imaginary) drapery and its raised right hand may be intended to hold additional cloth, a codex or another attribute.⁶⁷

Several scholars considered the study in Paris to be preparatory for monumental marble statuary. Berenson suggested that this figure could be intended as a pendant to the *Victory* for the second *Julius Tomb* (1513–1516),⁶⁸ and Thode opted tentatively for a *Victory* for the first *Julius Tomb* (1505–1506).⁶⁹ However, there is no indication that this male nude is part of a projected scheme comprising one figure raised on top of another. Popp and Baumgart believed this drawing to be a copy after a lost study of 1505 for a *Slave* for the *Julius Tomb*.⁷⁰ This figure’s mobility argues against this hypothesis. De Tolnay considered this to be a drawing by Michelangelo of circa 1501 for a *David* that was transformed around 1505, perhaps into a *Slave*.⁷¹ More recently, Echinger-Maurach proposed that this drawing could be preparatory for Michelangelo’s colossal *David* begun in 1501.⁷² However, this figure requires a deeper block than the one that was then available. Additionally, this man turns around his axis—something the *David* clearly does not do.

Others believed this drawing was preparatory for painting. Wilde connected this figure to the *St. John* bearing the dead Christ in Michelangelo’s unfinished London *Entombment* (now dated 1500–1501).⁷³ However, this nude’s gestures cannot be those of a man bearing a considerable weight. For this reason, we must also dismiss Joannides’s suggestion that the study is preparatory for an executioner lifting bodies in an undocumented painting of a *Martyrdom of the 10,000* (assumed by Joannides to have been planned in 1506).⁷⁴

BRITISH MUSEUM 1895-9-15-495R

Finally, the bust of a bearded male in London also merits consideration as a potential (fragmentary) study for an *Apostle* statue (British Museum 1895-9-15-495r, *Corpus*

⁶⁷ The left hand is shown with the index pressed against the thumb and the remaining three fingers separated from the first two. This is the gesture we make when we lifting something light. Considering the position of the left leg, the man must be pulling up (imaginary) drapery in order not to trip over it.

⁶⁸ Bernard Berenson, *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters* (London 1903; Chicago 1938) 1.203, and 2.208–209 no. 1589.

⁶⁹ Thode, *Michelangelo, Kritische Untersuchungen* (n. 62) 1.159 no. XXII, and 3.220–221 no.478; and Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance* (n. 63) 3.278.

⁷⁰ Anni E. Popp, “Two Torsi by Michelangelo,” *Burlington Magazine* 69 (1936) 202; and Fritz Baumgart, “Die Jugendzeichnungen Michelangelos bis 1506,” *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 10 (1937) 256.

⁷¹ De Tolnay, *Corpus* (n.10 above) 1.41 no. 23.

⁷² Echinger-Maurach, catalogue entry in *Giovinette di Michelangelo* (n. 17 above) 374 no. 59.

⁷³ Wilde, *Italian Drawings* (n. 20 above) 4 (as a study of ca. 1503–1504). Hirst, *Michelangelo and his Drawings* (n. 10 above) 64; and Hirst, “The Artist in Rome” (n. 10 above) 69 and 139 no. 22, believes this drawing is an early idea, of ca. 1500–1501, for the *St. John*.

⁷⁴ See Paul Joannides, “Bodies in the trees: a mass-martyrdom by Michelangelo,” *Apollo* 140 (1994) 11.

16r, fig. 17).⁷⁵ It is all that remains of a larger study drawn from life with pen and ink, after Michelangelo's mustached model. It shows a man with his head turned in profile towards his right, his chest turned ever so slightly towards his right, his upper arms hanging by his sides, and drapery thrown over his right shoulder. We know nothing about the placement of this male's forearms and hands, the arrangement of the lower part of his body, how the drapery fell beneath his chest, whether the man held something or even whether he was standing.

The man, with his ruffled hair, eye wide open and mouth agape, appears stunned. His movement seems arrested. Thus, he compares well to the unfinished *St. Matthew*, (fig. 1), who is likewise shown with his head in profile towards his right and his chest partly covered with drapery, and should therefore be dated to 1506.⁷⁶ However, this study is not preparatory for the *St. Matthew*, which is a more dynamic figure with the head thrown slightly back, the right shoulder thrust forward and the drapery cutting diagonally across the torso.

CONCLUSION

The drawings I have assembled here are divided into two groups. The first group comprises the studies for the pensive *Apostle* (figs. 3–6) as well as that scheme's interesting transformation recorded in the copy in Paris (fig. 7). These drawings are undoubtedly connected to Michelangelo's commission for twelve *Apostle* statues. These studies and the unfinished statue of *St. Matthew* allow us to partially reconstruct Michelangelo's changing ideas for his cycle of *Apostle* statuary for the cathedral of Florence and provide us with precious information for assembling additional drawings, by or after Michelangelo, which may be preparatory for the *Apostle* statues. The status of the drawings constituting our second group (figs. 12, 14, and 17) is up for debate.

Aside from Louvre 689r (fig. 14), all the drawings I have discussed here are usually dated between 1503 and 1506, the very years when Michelangelo was involved with the *Apostle* commission. I date the studies for the pensive *Apostle* to the last third of 1504. The other drawings for *Apostle* statues that are known to us (in one case through the intermediary of a copy) should be dated no earlier than April 1506—when Michelangelo returned to Florence following the debacle of the *Tomb*—and no later than November of that same year—when Michelangelo was forced to join Pope Julius II in Bologna—based upon the parallels between these figure studies and the unfinished statue of *Matthew*.

The three blocks that had recently arrived in Florence, and the block that lay waiting for Michelangelo since December 1504—all excavated according to his specifications—inspired the artist to come up with new poses for the *Apostles*, after a hiatus—rich in experiences—of over one year. If we exclude the studies for the pensive *Apos-*

⁷⁵ Wilde, *Italian Drawings* (n. 20 above) 3–4 no. 2. Paul Joannides, catalogue entry in *Giovinetta di Michelangelo* (n. 17 above) 222 no. 13, believes this study showed a bust-length figure from the start. Hugo Chapman, *Michelangelo Drawings: Closer to the Master* (New Haven 2005) 67–68, recently compared this study to an Antonine marble portrait bust (ca. 130–150 A.D.) at the British Museum. This sculpture suggests to him that Michelangelo had a similar marble in mind, though in the drawing the artist “has gone far beyond any classical source,” and “it seems likely that Michelangelo was working from a live model.”

⁷⁶ Justi, *Michelangelo, Neue Beiträge* (n. 48 above) 204, also noted the relationship between the drawn and the carved head. See also Joannides (n. 75 above).

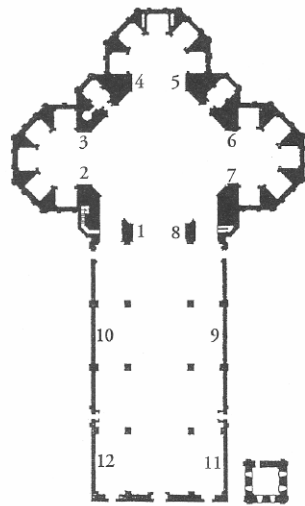
tle—which were no longer an option in 1506—the fragmentary drawing in the British Museum—which is arguably the most problematic study under review, as a result of its fragmentary state—and the block for the *St. Matthew*—for which no drawing survives—then we are left with a different figure study for each of the three remaining blocks of marble (figs. 7, 12 and 14). This does not mean that each of these figures would eventually have been carved, for one or more unrecognized or lost studies may have supplanted one or more of the studies we have identified, unbeknownst to us. Additionally, it is well known that Michelangelo was prone to make significant changes to his designs while a project was underway.

Aside from British Museum 1895-9-15-495r (fig. 17)—of which the lower two thirds are almost certainly missing—all the drawings gathered here depict men standing in “contrapposto” with one foot significantly raised and the head turned towards the opposite side. (The fact that Michelangelo employed the motif of the significantly raised foot in all six *Slaves* he began carving for the *Julius Tomb*, suggests that he had no qualms in repeatedly using this motif in his *Apostle* cycle). If we imagine the *Apostles* placed against the colossal pilasters flanking the crossing piers of Santa Maria del Fiore, we can easily envision most of them looking towards the high altar underneath the dome (fig. 2), upon which—as in an “istoria”—they witness the repeated transubstantiation and sacrifice of Christ.

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FIG.1. Michelangelo, St. Matthew, marble statue, Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia.
Photo Credit: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.



● Ground plan of Santa Maria del Fiore.

The location of the XVI-century Apostle statues:

1. Jacopo Sansovino, St. James Major
2. Vincenzo de' Rossi, St. Thomas
3. Andrea Ferrucci, St. Andrew
4. Baccio Bandinelli, St. Peter
5. Benedetto da Rovezzano, St. John the Evangelist
6. Giovanni Bandini, St. James Minor
7. Giovanni Bandini, St. Philip
8. Vincenzo de' Rossi, St. Matthew

The location of the XV-century Prophets:

9. Bernardo Ciuffagni, Prophet
10. Bernardo Ciuffagni, King David
11. Nanni di Banco, Isaiah
12. Bernardo Ciuffagni and Nanni di Bartolo, Prophet.

FIG.2. Plan of Florence Cathedral. Photo Credit: Trachtenberg/Hyman, *Architecture, from Prehistory to Post-Modernism, The Western Tradition*, ©1986, p.275. Repr. by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, NJ (numbers added by Michaël Amy).

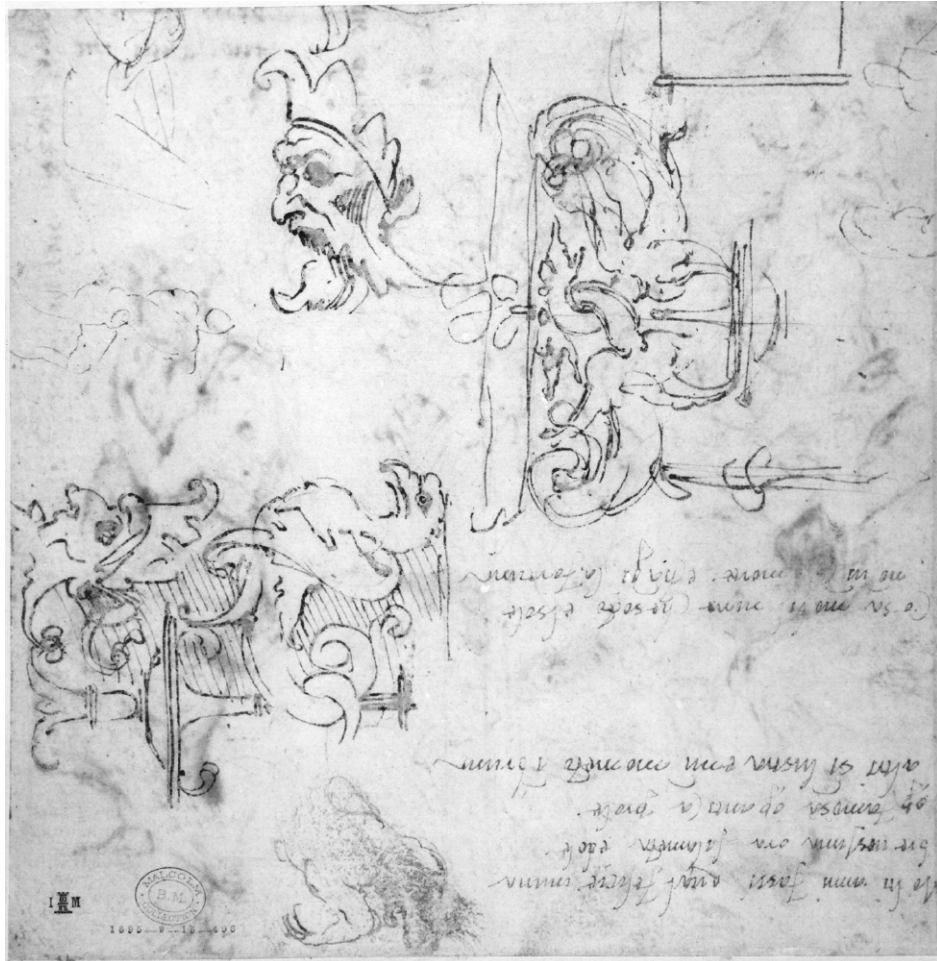


FIG.3: Michelangelo, Grotesque Ornaments, Figure Studies, and Verses, pen and ink drawing, London, British Museum 1895-9-15-496 verso. Photo Credit: © Copyright the Trustees of The British Museum



FIG.4. Michelangelo, Two Standing Figures and a Battle Scene, pen and ink drawing, London, British Museum 1895-9-15-496 recto. Photo Credit: © Copyright the Trustees of The British Museum



FIG.5. Michelangelo, Figure Studies and Grotesque Ornament, pen and ink and black chalk drawing, Florence, Uffizi 233F recto. Photo Credit: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.



FIG.6. Michelangelo, Standing Draped Male, pen and ink over black chalk drawing, Paris, Louvre 12691 recto. Photo Credit: R.M.N., Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts graphiques.



FIG.7. Copy after Michelangelo, Standing Draped Male, black chalk drawing, Paris, Louvre 855 recto. Photo Credit: R.M.N., Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts graphiques.



FIG.8. Michelangelo, Prophet, detail from the Elevation for the Tomb of Pope Julius II, pen and ink drawing, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1962 (62.93.1). Photograph, all rights reserved, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



FIG.9. Luca della Robbia, St. Mark, bronze relief, Florence, Cathedral, North Sacristy Door. Photo Credit: Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore/Nicolò Orsi Battaglini



FIG.10. Luca Della Robbia, St. Matthias, glazed terracotta relief, Florence, Santa Croce, Pazzi Chapel. Photo Credit: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

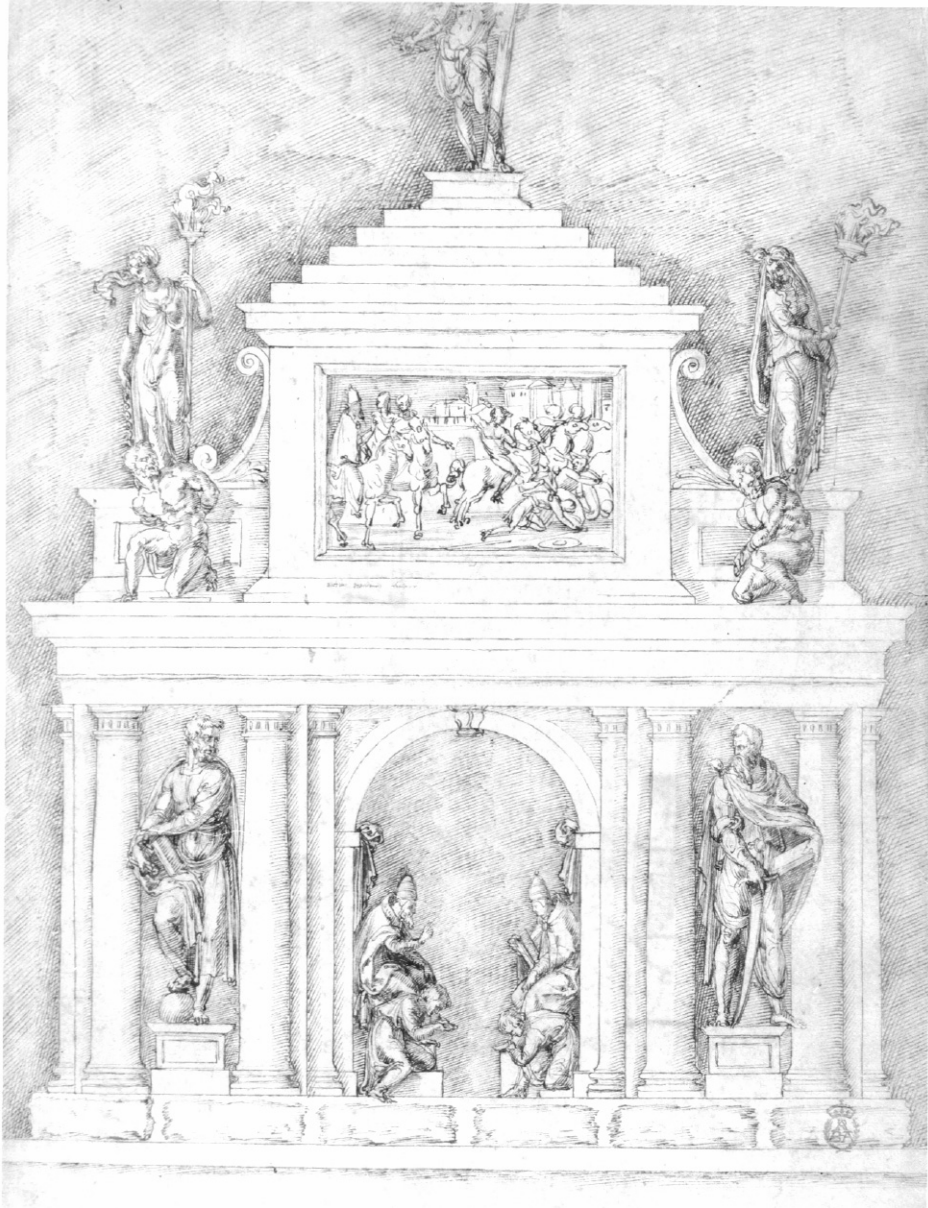


FIG.11. Baccio Bandinelli, Elevation for the Tomb of Popes Leo X and Clement VII, pen and ink drawing, Madrid, Museo de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando D/2381. Photo Credit: Museo de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando.



FIG.12. Michelangelo, Standing Male Nude, pen and ink over black chalk drawing, Paris, Louvre 712 recto. Photo Credit: R.M.N., Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts graphiques.



FIG.13. Donatello, Two Martyrs, bronze relief, Florence, San Lorenzo, Old Sacristy, Martyrs' Door. Photo Credit: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.



FIG. 14. Michelangelo, Standing Male Nude, pen and ink drawing, Paris, Louvre 689 recto. Photo Credit: R.M.N., Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts graphiques.



FIG.15. Prophet, marble statue, Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo. Photo Credit: Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore/Nicolò Orsi Battaglini



FIG.16. Jacopo della Quercia, Prophet, marble relief, Siena Baptistery Font. Photo Credit: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.



FIG.17. Michelangelo, Bust of a Bearded Male, pen and ink drawing, London, British Museum 1895-9-15-495 recto. Photo Credit: © Copyright the Trustees of The British Museum.

