

Selected Press Images

1.



Pontormo was one of the most original mannerist artists working in sixteenth-century Florence. This sheet is remarkable as a record of Pontormo's unusual method of sketching a live model as he moved through a succession of poses. On the left, the artist superimposed in black chalk the various positions on top of each other, whereas on the right, the figure's pose is fixed in red chalk but the repeated lines around his form create an aura that suggests movement and a psychological presence.

2.



Michelangelo—arguably one of the greatest figures in Western art—relied on drawing as a tool to explore, shape, and express his artistic conceptions and observations. This exquisitely executed bust of a woman is part of a series of three drawings depicting divine figures that the artist conjured from his imagination and presented as a gift to a friend. Several attempts have been made to specify the subject of this famous work, but it seems that Michelangelo's intention was to produce a work driven by intellectual and aesthetic concerns, rather than a strictly narrative one.

3.



An important figure in the transition between mannerism and the baroque period at the end of the sixteenth century, **Santi di Tito** emphasized in his works a narrative clarity and simplicity of expression. This preparatory drawing is for a fresco in a chapel dedicated to St. Luke, the patron saint of the arts, in the church of Santissima Annunziata in Florence. Intended as an allegorical representation of architecture, its subject employs the story of Solomon directing the building of the temple, presented in a straightforward composition that directs the viewer's eye to the main figures elegantly highlighted in brilliant white.

4.



Vasari defined **Andrea** as a "faultless" painter, and his perfectly balanced compositions were a guiding force in the history of Florentine Renaissance art. His close observation of reality elevated his draftsmanship to a form of expression liberated from the technical and formal constraints of earlier graphic art. This drawing is part of an extensive series of preparatory studies for the *Madonna of the Stairs*, one of Andrea's most emblematic works. Made from a live model, this study exhibits his characteristically free use of soft red chalk to capture the effect of chiaroscuro and a fluid sense of movement.

5.



With Bronzino and Vasari, **Salviati** was a leading Florentine mannerist painter. One of Salviati's great graphic masterpieces, this drawing belongs to a group of designs for a series of tapestries commissioned for a Florentine noble palace and depicting the seasons and the Ages of Man. This design for the Age of Gold depicts the first representatives of the human race. Their masterfully drafted nude bodies surrounded by peaceful and abundant nature are a sign of their innocence. Although the tapestries no longer exist, this highly finished and detailed drawing gives some sense of their luxurious quality.

6.



Known as the first chronicler of the lives of Renaissance artists, **Vasari** had a prominent career as artist to both the Medici court in Florence and the papal court in Rome. This drawing comes from one of the most important commissions of Vasari's career: Pope Julius III hired him to oversee the design and construction of his family's funerary chapel in Rome, a project supervised by Michelangelo. Probably a study for the figure of John the Evangelist, this drawing displays Vasari's exceptional ability to conjure a figure in his mind and transfer it flawlessly to paper.

7.



This sheet shows **Andrea's** talents as a draftsman of the highest order. A study for an altarpiece depicting the *Lamentation of Christ* (1524) for the church of San Pietro at Luco, this drawing monumentalizes the figures and highlights their perfect formal interconnection and the powerful emotional tension elicited by the dramatic subject. Andrea's consummate skill is evident in his use of hasty chalk strokes and wash to successfully create a chiaroscuro effect that conveys the significance of the event.

8.



Rosso was one of the most expressive artists working in Florence during the first half of the sixteenth century. This presentation of the Virgin and Child with saints, constructed on a diagonal composition of dynamic and restlessly posed figures, is characteristic of his energetic style. Although this drawing cannot be connected with a known painting by his hand, it recalls several of his other altarpieces of the same subject and may well have been made in anticipation of a patron's approval.

9.



Trained by Bronzino and deeply familiar with Michelangelo's sculpture, **Allori** was often commissioned to supply designs for the ducal tapestry workshop. This detailed representation of a crowd paying homage to Bacchus is the only preparatory drawing that survives from a series intended as models for tapestries with scenes from Bacchus's life. Finely executed in a wide variety of techniques, this is a typical example of the increasing interest in exuberant decoration that characterized Florentine draftsmanship of the later sixteenth century. (Image 9) **Bronzino** was a favored painter of the Medici court and one of the greatest Florentine draftsmen of the sixteenth century. In 1540 he was commissioned to decorate the private chapel of Cosimo I's wife, Eleonora of Toledo. This exceptional drawing is preparatory for one of the many nearly life-size figures that adorn the chapel's intimate space. The meticulous rendering of naturalistic details, such as the play of light over the figure's pronounced musculature, indicates that Bronzino probably drew this study from life. (Image 10)

10.



11.



In 1545 **Stradanus** left Antwerp for Italy, where he worked under Vasari's supervision on the decoration of the Palazzo Vecchio, producing frescoes and paintings and more than a hundred tapestry cartoons. This sheet is a study for one of the large central ceiling compartments in the Salone dei Cinquecento, which commemorates a Florentine victory over Pisa. Its strong dark washes dramatically contrast with sharp accents in white gouache, creating a lively and engaging representation of this military scene. In typical mannerist fashion, the historically unimportant but prominent figure of the halberdier directs the viewer's attention to the background where the head military officer is astride a magnificent horse and bearing the commander's baton.

12.



Despite his ambitious and impatient temperament, **Bandinelli's** skills as a draftsman and sculptor earned him admiration at the Medici court. This magnificent drawing is one of many instances in which Bandinelli depicted the features of Duke Cosimo I dei Medici. The sharp contours and polished appearance of surfaces suggest that this was a study for a sculpture. The result is a portrait of extraordinary intensity and power, in which Bandinelli's capacity for psychological introspection is unfettered by any obligation to provide an encomiastic likeness of his sovereign. Instead, the sitter's status is made perfectly clear by his dignified bearing and imperious, piercing gaze.

Michelangelo, Vasari, and Their Contemporaries
Drawings from the Uffizi

IMAGE CAPTIONS

- 1. Pontormo** (1494–1556)
Two Studies of Male Figures, (1521–21)
Black chalk and red chalk, red wash, heightened with white chalk (v.)—Red chalk (r.)
11 1/4 x 16 1/16 in. (285 x 408 mm)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 6740F
- 2. Michelangelo Buonarroti** (1475–1564)
Bust of a Woman, Head of an Old Man and Bust of a Child, mid 1530s
Black chalk
14 1/10 x 19 15/16 in. (357 x 252 mm)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 18719F
- 3. Santi di Tito** (1536–1603)
Solomon Building the Temple of Jerusalem, (after 1570)
Black chalk, brown wash, white heightening, on faded blue paper, squared in black chalk
10 11/16 x 8 15/16 in. (272 x 227 mm)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 752F
- 4. Andrea del Sarto** (1486–1557)
Studies of a Male Model Seated on the Ground, ca. 1523
Red chalk and red wash
265 x 200 mm (10 7/10 x 7 7/8 in.)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 318 F
- 5. Francesco Salviati (Francesco de' Rossi)** (1510–1563)
The Age of Gold, (1543–48) Pen and brown wash, white heightening over traces of black chalk
16 5/16 x 21 in. (414 x 533 mm)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 1194E
- 6. Giorgio Vasari** (1511–1574)
Male Figure Seated on a Stool, (1555–65)
Black chalk
14 5/16 x 8 3/8 in. (353 x 253 mm)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 14274
- 7. Andrea del Sarto** (1486–1557)
Lamentation of Christ, ca. 1524
Black chalk and gray wash
276 x 226 mm (10 7/8 x 8 7/8 in.)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 642 E
- 8. Rosso Fiorentino** (1494–1540)
Virgin and Child with SS. John the Baptist, Margaret, and Sebastian and an Elderly Male Saint (Joseph?), (1522–25)
Black chalk and gray wash
13 x 19 15/16 in. (331 x 253 mm)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 479F
- 9. Alessandro Allori** (1535–1607)
The Triumph of Bacchus, 1586/87
Black chalk, pen, light brown-gray wash, and white heightening on tinted paper, squared in red chalk
11 1/6 x 18 9/16 in. (281 x 471 mm)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 740F
- 10. Bronzino (Agnolo di Cosimo)** (1503–1572)
Male Nude Seen from Behind, 1540–46
Black chalk, gray wash on paper tinted with yellow ochre
16 5/8 x 6 1/2 in. (422 x 165 mm)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 6704F
- 11. Giovanni Stradanus** (1523–1605)
The Capture of Vicopisano, ca. 1563–65
Pen and brown ink, brown wash, heightened with white gouache, on faded blue paper
377 x 185 mm (14 13/16 x 7 1/4 in.)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 1184 E
- 12. Baccio Bandinelli** (1493–1560)
Portrait of Duke Cosimo dei Medici, ca. 1544
Black chalk, stumped
268 x 204 mm (10 9/16 x 8 in.)
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi; 15010 F

For high-resolution images please contact:

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