

KIDS @ CAM – At Home Family Projects

Spotlight on CAM's Collection

MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI

About the Artist:

“Genius is eternal patience” – Michelangelo

Italian Renaissance painter and sculptor Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475 – 1564) was considered the greatest living artist in his lifetime, and ever since then he has been seen as one of the greatest artists of all time. A number of his works in painting, sculpture, and architecture rank among the most famous in the world. His practice of several arts was not unusual in his time. Michelangelo worked in marble sculpture all his life and in the other arts only during certain periods. Some of his most famous sculptures include the *David* and the *Pieta*.

One of Michelangelo's best known works is his painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Some say he painted the ceiling entirely while lying on his back (while others claim he was standing and arching his head back). In order to do this, he built a large wooden scaffold so that he could climb it and be close enough to the very high ceiling to paint it, which in total covered 12,000 square feet. This project took him over four years to finish, between 1508 and 1512.



ART AT HOME – Upside Down Painting

What you'll need:

- Paints in sturdy containers
- Paintbrushes (one in each paint color so you don't need to clean them between uses).
- Large sheet of thick paper or poster board
- Masking tape
- Table to work under (one that works height-wise for your child's reach)
- Floor cover (if working inside)
- Clothes that can get messy (you can use bandanas or shower caps to cover your hair, swimming goggles to protect your eyes, etc.)
- Items for quick clean up if there are spills or drops (towels, rags, sponges, etc.)

Set up your work area first and make sure it is comfortable. Tape your paper securely under the table, check that you are able to reach the bottom of the table when lying underneath it, place a floor cover beneath the table, arrange your paints so that they are easy to reach and make sure your cleaning supplies are close at hand.

- Step 1 – Do your set up as listed above.
- Step 2 - Move yourself under the table and get comfortable.
- Step 3 – Using your paints, begin to create your painting. The subject is entirely up to you.
- Step 4 – Continue painting until you feel you are done.
- Step 5 – Leave the painting under the table for a few hours so it is completely dry.
- Step 6 – Take your painting carefully off the table.
- Step 7 - Give your painting a title and sign it.
- Step 8 – Clean up your work area.

Tips:

- Draw a simple sketch on the paper before taping it to the table to make the painting process a little easier.
- Work outside if the weather is nice. It's always fun to work in fresh air and getting messy is less of a concern.
- Don't focus in the finished project – this activity is about the experience of painting something above your head so you can have a better understanding of what Michelangelo experienced.

Questions to ask one another:

- Describe how it felt to paint lying on your back. What did you like and not like?
- Now that you've created art in the style that Michelangelo created the Sistine Chapel, does it change how you feel about his work?

Follow Up Project Idea:

- Look for close up images of the Sistine Chapel. Choose one that you like the most. Try to re-create this painting as an upside-down painting.

