

**Beyond the Binary, Too:  
Further Observations on a Portrait  
and a Poem by Michelangelo**

by Carl Smith

This essay is intended as a sort of pendentive response to an article by A. Victor Coonin, “Beyond the Binary: Michelangelo, Tommaso de’ Cavalieri, and a Drawing at Windsor Castle,” which appeared in *Artibus et Historiae* (2018, No.78). That article presents aspects of a small drawing sheet (RL 12764) held in the collection of HM Queen Elizabeth II at Windsor Castle, one whose *recto* is now generally (if not quite unanimously) accepted as having come from the hand of Michelangelo; an artist for the *verso*’s incomplete drawing is also suggested, with a possible circumstance for its creation.

It further considers why, over so many decades, scholars suggested (or insisted) that the *recto*’s figure, so exquisitely depicted, is female when, despite certain features that might be seen as feminine in appearance, the drawing’s subject is unquestionably male. Chief among observations presented in that regard are the figure’s prominent Adam’s apple and the *helmet* he wears, a metal helmet of a type worn by soldiers in the military of imperial Rome, one with extended ear/cheek guards and surmounted by a plume, and one worn by (among others) members of the mounted cavalry, the *cavalieri*. While the beginning of the plume (at the helmet’s center, directly above the figure’s nose) can indeed be difficult to identify in reproduction, it is clear enough when the sheet itself is examined. This essay focusses primarily on the subject’s eyes (with brief mentions of aspects of his nose, mouth, and chin), but it first considers an unusual addition to the helmet itself.



Windsor drawing

### ***Wings?***

While a plume is common to this type of helmet (it is almost to be expected), and while small ornaments attached to the helmet at the base of its plume can occasionally be seen, the helmet depicted in

this drawing has an additional embellishment so surprising when seen in the depiction of a human subject that it probably should be thought of, not as an ornament, but as an *attribute*.

Attached to the upper right side of the helmet is a bird's wing, one not fully extended, as if for flight, but neither fully folded, as if at rest. (Like the plume, the wing is sometimes difficult to identify in reproduction.) But why would such a military helmet sport a bird's wing and - even more puzzling - why would an artist attach such a wing *backwards*, with the longer of its feathers (known anatomically as *primaries*) lying above the figure's right eyebrow, while somewhat shorter feathers (known as *secondaries*) recede to lie above the ear? (Tips of the primary feathers from a presumed similar wing on the helmet's left side are just visible above the figure's left eyebrow.)



Windsor drawing (cropped; wing enlarged)

The second question is the easier to answer. Because the sheet is so small and space on it so limited, depicting a wing of this size if extended (i.e. opened for flight) would hardly have been possible. Attaching the wing in the more predictable front-to-back manner (rather than back-to-front as is the case here) would also have made it more difficult to identify, given the ambiguous appearance of the front edge of a bird's partially folded wing. But by attaching the wing 'backwards,' Michelangelo is able both to make clear what the wing is and to use its primary feathers in suggesting something

like a decorative brim for the front edge of the helmet - thereby making the 'attribute' both more beautiful and more fully integrated into the drawing's *concetto*. Whether this exquisite small drawing was intended to be seen by anyone other than the artist himself is debatable, but its prominent wings were surely meant to be noticed - and understood - by anyone who did see it, and they are therefore important to consider carefully.

In Coonin's article cited above, Figure 4. shows a small ancient coin bearing the image - in full profile - of a female figure wearing just such a helmet (with the expected plume) to which has been added a tiny opened wing. Depictions such as this are understood today to represent the warrior goddess Athena. In the case of the Windsor drawing, however, it seems far more likely that the noticeable wings were intended to associate the depicted figure with the male god Hermes (in the Greek tradition, or Mercury in the Roman). We are made aware, especially by his verse, that Michelangelo ascribed to Tommaso de' Cavalieri near god-like traits, while still finding him of remarkable human beauty and goodness (a degree of esteem for his younger friend he would continue to hold for three decades). It was Hermes, alone among all the gods, who freely communicated and commingled with both other gods and with mortals. In this writer's study *What's in a Name? Michelangelo and the Art of Signature*, more than a little space is devoted to considering the ways in which the artist Michelangelo seemed to identify with his namesake the archangel. Never is that association more poignant than with the liturgy of the Mass for the Dead (the *Requiem*), in whose Offertory prayer holy Michael is called upon to escort the souls of the departed to appear before Christ. Yet escorting the souls of the just-departed into the next life was (in Greek tradition) a task assigned to Hermes, suggesting yet another associative link to this winged *cavaliere*.

Nor would this be Michelangelo's only winged visual association to Tommaso. Of the extraordinary gift (or, traditionally, "presentation") drawings in red chalk done for the young Roman and sent to him in Rome via others, several - indeed *most* - of them feature impressive depictions of wings: the now lost (apparently) *Rape of Ganymede*, known to us today in copies by others; the *Fall of Phaeton*; *The Dream*. But in graphic art, arguably the *ne plus ultra* depiction of a bird's extended wings - an image frightening in its splendor - is that found in the magnificent *The Punishment of Tityos*.



*The Punishment of Tityos* (cropped)

The *poet* Michelangelo was nothing if not an associative player with words, which we note anew when remembering his highly finished (if enigmatic) drawing in red chalk known as *Archers Shooting at a Herm*, or when we recall that, as a young man sitting at the table of Lorenzo de' Medici, among his dining companions was Marsilio

Ficino, engaged in those same years with his Italian translation of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. (While these are admittedly less direct links to the god Hermes, they are hardly less so poetically, especially in Italian.)

Chief among the various attributes of Hermes (or Mercury) have always been his wings - most often, at least for the ancients, the winged sandals that identified him as “messenger of the gods.” In later centuries, he is more often depicted wearing a winged helmet, one that is almost without exception round, with a gently flaring brim (often referred to in modern times as a “doughboy” helmet) to which small but fully extended wings have been attached, as is the case with Pajou’s famous statue of *Mercury* in the Louvre. Occasionally, as in Antico’s small bronze statue in the Bargello’s collection, the wings extrude directly from his head of dense curls, emanating from just *under* his doughboy-style helmet.



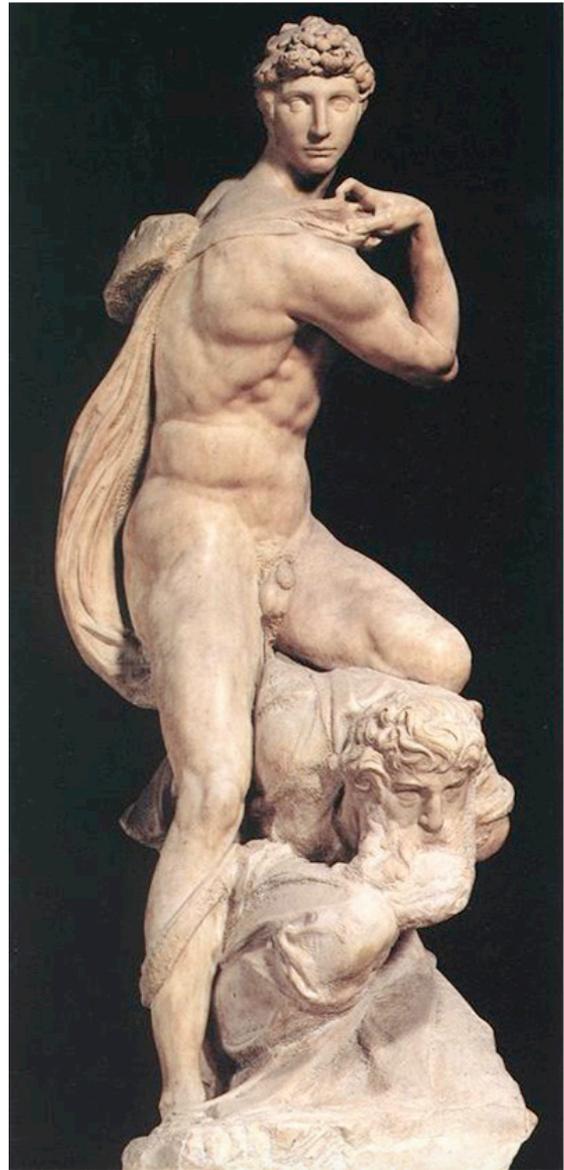
*Mercury* (Pajou)



unusual thickening around the bridge of the nose, and the chin's prominent dimple.

### ***A Relative?***

In Florence, we can see and study a work by Michelangelo that has travelled hardly at all in five centuries, standing today not far from the studio where it was first carved. While the work is often called *The Victory*, we know neither the statue's intended name nor its purpose - a bit of an odd circumstance for so striking a work from so famous a hand. Too many writers to enumerate have interpreted the piece as portraying the younger Cavalieri's subjugation of the older Michelangelo,\* and indeed the crouched older figure, dressed in the garb of a Roman foot soldier and clearly captive of the youth astride him, bears a marked resemblance to known likenesses of the artist - in whose own words we read,



*The Victory*

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\*For a valuable survey of the various understandings of the statue's intended location and differing interpretations of its meaning, see Edith Balas's *Michelangelo's Double Self-Portraits*.<sup>1</sup>

“Since it’s true that, in hard stone, one will at times  
make the image of someone else look like himself...” (No. 242)

and we remember as well these few lines from one of his most often  
cited poems (No. 98),

“...If, to be happy, I must be conquered and chained,  
it is no wonder that, naked and alone,  
an armed cavalier’s prisoner I remain.”

Physically, of course, the older figure in *The Victory* is neither naked  
nor alone; *emotionally* is likely another matter. As for the cavalier’s  
armaments, Michelangelo himself makes regular use in his verse of  
one of his era’s most frequently-used poetic conceits, that of glances  
from another’s eyes as arrows or wounding darts.

But if the captive is garbed as a common infantryman, the youth so  
effortlessly restraining him, with chiseled musculature and noble  
bearing, is himself nude but for a cape slung over a shoulder. Far  
from exhibiting any vigilance over his prisoner, his alert but  
somewhat distracted pose seems to suggest that he might, at any  
moment, jump off and fly away - not so much like a bird on the  
wing as a Renaissance Superman with his cape. Once again, flight,  
and a messenger god paused and poised for a moment. He wears no  
sandals, seeming not to need them. Much could be said (as much  
has already been said) about this beautiful, enigmatic work, but a  
few small, telling details need mentioning. Even in reproductions of  
middling quality, a viewer can note the unusual thickening around  
the bridge of the youth’s nose, his delicate mouth, and his chin’s  
prominent dimple.

But in the end, the eyes seem to have it once again. The crouched, trapped older man is blind - or rather, has been blinded - at least in his left eye; it is a grotesque thing to look at.



*The Victory (lower figure)*

With your beautiful eyes I see a gentle light  
my blind ones could never see...

When light illuminating the statue is just right, a sort of gentle light can seem to emanate from the youth's eyes, as it often appears to do from such smoothed *statuario* marble as this. But what does he see, this youth astride the older man - what *can* he see? His eyes are, after all, completely blank - or so they appear. Yet into the outer edge of the young man's right eye, Michelangelo has carefully incised a cornea and a pupil, so the youth does have one seeing eye - the other is indeed blank - while beneath him his captive, the

older man, stares dejectedly ahead with *his* one eye; the other has been obliterated.



*The Victory* (upper figure)

Thinking a moment more about the youth's right eye might lead one to wonder: if a marble statue were to want, for some reason, to wink at a viewer, how might it do that? Like this, perhaps? Or maybe this unusual but obviously not unintentional bit of visual play with their eyes should be thought of differently, perhaps in a manner more akin to some of Michelangelo's famously imaginative wordplay.

Although he wrote and drew with his right hand, we know (by his own admission) that he was naturally left-handed,<sup>2</sup> but to be seen writing with one's left hand - i.e. with one's *sinister* hand (*la mano*

*sinistra*) - was, in effect, to appear to be sinister oneself, to seem a cheat, a swindler - a *mancino*. The right hand was the correct one, the hand compatible with propriety and virtue. The *mano destra* was the *mano giusta*, and the one suitable for use by a gentleman.

So when we return to the figures that comprise *The Victory* and reconsider their eyes, we note that the older man's eye, the one that looks to have been plastered over so it can no longer see, is his *left* eye. It no longer sees things in a 'sinister' way. Nor does he; perhaps he no longer *thinks* them? Well above him - in every sense of the word - the youth, his distracted captor who seems indifferent to his plight, gazes casually off into the distance with his own lone eye - the *right* one, the virtue-seeing eye.

“...Now on the right foot and now on the left,  
shifting back and forth, I search for my salvation.

My bewildered heart distresses me;  
I'm like one who can't see heaven,  
who gets lost on every path and misses his goal...” (No. 162)

And, returning once again to the first poem (No. 89), we find these words:

By your mind I'm lifted ever upward,  
at your whim I pale or blush...

### ***Toward A Chronology***

The relevance of these three works to each other and the possibility of their being mutually informative in some way will depend in large part upon when they were each created, and whether any thematic

similarities or resemblances between them might indeed result from their having been drawn from a common well of ideas.

While the years 1532-34 were for Michelangelo both turbulent and exalted ones, the 1520s had been an almost relentlessly painful decade, for him and for most other Florentines. Those years had brought the city endless political upheaval, poverty, famine, and disease; they had brought him personally the deaths of several family members and frustrations of every sort with his work. By the early 1530s his output had slowed markedly, and his letters reveal an unusual degree of dissatisfaction. For some time, he had been considering moving to Rome, where he had visited and worked numerous times previously. (At this point, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel had been finished for twenty years, the *Pietà* for more than thirty.)

In the autumn of 1532, Michelangelo was once again in Rome, where he was introduced by friends (we are told) to the Roman nobleman Tommaso de' Cavalieri, a young man of still uncertain age, but of great wealth and social prominence, superior education, artistic inclinations and abilities, and a remarkable physical and personal beauty. The two quickly became (at a minimum) friends, confidants, and admirers of one another despite the considerable difference in their ages. Following Michelangelo's move to Rome in the fall of 1534, there began a series of collaborations on various projects that would continue until after his death, when Tommaso helped oversee the completion of architectural works Michelangelo himself did not live to complete.

But during the years 1532-34, with Michelangelo back in Florence, what had been a general slowing of his output, especially in poetry, suddenly became a virtual torrent of new and often ecstatic poems, poems about love and admiration and adulation, as well as poems

involving art. He created the unprecedented group of drawings on mythological subjects as gifts for Tommaso in Rome. His letters to friends in Rome reveal a consuming interest in everything about the young man, what he said and what he did. And it is in these same years of feverish intensity that the three works considered here were created.

In the scholarly literature, there seems little dissent to the common assertion that *The Victory* group was carved in Florence between 1532 and 1534. All available annotated editions of Michelangelo's *Rime* - without exception - ascribe the poem to the years 1532-34 and understand it to be a poem written for Tommaso de' Cavalieri (Girardi, Saslow, Barelli, Corsaro and Masi). (see Poems, below)

About the drawing sheet itself, there is more diversity of opinion, as is to be expected given the issues surrounding it (detailed above and in the article cited). However, as regards the *dating* of the drawing, most of those commenting on it ascribe it to those same years. (In a more recent evaluation, A. Gnann, citing some others, suggests it might come from a decade later.)<sup>3</sup> There have been scholars who rejected the attribution to Michelangelo, and a few (among them T. Pöper) continue to do so. F. Hartt, long an admirer of the work, and C. de Tolnay both asserted those same years, but with still greater specificity (Tolnay, 1532-33<sup>4</sup> and Hartt, 1533-34<sup>5</sup>). Ultimately, the majority believe the Windsor drawing to come from that period of Michelangelo's life in Florence when he longed to be in Rome instead, a desire he would eventually satisfy in September of 1534.

### ***Summary***

Having examined three diverse works by Michelangelo - a drawing sheet, a sculptural group, and some lines of a poem (the complete

translation follows) - we should see whether further perspectives or insights might be gained by considering the three works in closer juxtaposition, a not unreasonable question given the chronology detailed above. What can we take from these works (individually or collectively) given the information we have? What, if anything at all, can be inferred as to their collective significance for their maker? Both the drawing and the poem were kept by Michelangelo until the end of his life, even though we have more than adequate reason to understand that he destroyed most of his drawings, either when he was finished using them or else shortly before he died. Unlike the poems, which were kept closely guarded and shared only with his friends (an intended edition of a selection of them never came to fruition), the statuary group remained in Florence when he moved to Rome in 1534, there being little possibility at the time of his transporting so large and cumbersome a work there himself (or at his own expense), and he seems to have assumed he would return to Florence at some point, although he was never able to do so.

That the poem was either composed directly for or was inspired by Tommaso de' Cavalieri (and thus written 'to' him in an idealized way, whether or not it was ever shown to him as other such poems were) and that it emerged as a result of the intense feelings of admiration and affection he engendered in the artist seems to be accepted in scholarly literature without reservation. Some of its memorable poetic conceits and metaphors were in regular use by poets at the time, and the poem in question is but one of a half-dozen that deal with the beauty of Tommaso's eyes. But that among such conceits - flight while lacking wings of one's own and sight lacking eyes of one's own - could somehow feature prominently, one way or another, in three contemporaneous works and yet be merely coincidence is beyond credible suggestion. At a minimum, they were potent, simultaneously active and inter-active visual and verbal

associations in Michelangelo's fevered creative mind during this exceptionally productive period.

It is difficult to imagine standing before Michelangelo's *The Victory* with a copy of his *Rime* in hand, reading the poems from this tormented yet exalted period of his life, without seeing *The Victory* as a self-portrait of sorts, as a depiction of his own personal and emotional state. Three of his poems from the time mention *cavaliere* and one, his own captivity to a *cavaliere*; eight poems refer to his beloved's eyes and/or face; four refer to wings, and in still others those attributes are combined. In No. 61, for instance, he intones, "...I see in the eyes of this unique and joyous angel my peace, my repose, and my salvation...", while in No. 59, he writes

"...if one soul in two bodies is made eternal,  
raising both to heaven with similar wings..."

If Leonardo da Vinci's fascination with the mechanics of flight is well known, Michelangelo's use in his verse of wings and flight as metaphors for lofty aspiration and a desire for spiritual ascent is surely unrivaled, occurring as it does in well over a dozen poems. Such conceits - those of eyes, of wings and flight, and of fire and ice - recur throughout his own poetic works just as they do in the works of others of his day, both as motivators for and enablers of such aspiring.

"...Far from hindering empty passion from flying higher,  
love stirs and wakes us, and feathers our wings;  
and from that first step, with which it's not satisfied,  
the soul can mount up and rise to its creator..." (No. 260)

What is most interesting and perhaps most important for us to note is how readily images of diverse types of wings conflate to common

purpose - angels' wings, gods' wings, birds' wings, poets' wings - all of them used as emblems of aspiration and longed-for ascent. In a deeply-felt and surely pivotal poem (perhaps an unfinished sonnet), Michelangelo employs what might be his most powerful use of winged imagery:

***Di te con teco, Amor*** (No. 271)

By you and with you, Love, for many years  
I've fed my soul and - if not in full, in part -  
my body as well; and with admirable art, with hope,  
desire has kept me strong.

But now, alas, my thoughts take wing  
and draw me to a surer, nobler place.  
And of your vain paper promises,  
and of your honor...  
of these do I lament and weep.

(author's translation)

And what of the Windsor drawing sheet: is it a portrait drawing, an image of some perhaps idealized young man's face, or might it be literally a drawn portrait, an exact likeness of one particular face - maybe even the face of Tommaso de' Cavalieri? Or might it be a *likeness*, a graphic creation that manages somehow to capture the oft-described beauty of the young man's countenance but yet not be an exact representation of it? The question is, alas, one we are unlikely ever to be able to answer with complete assurance.

What is clear, at least to this writer, is that each of these three works from Michelangelo's hand is referential in some way to the same individual and that, when seen collectively, they are mutually informative in what could be thought of as a kind of triple-

triangulation. And it is more than possible that, when considered together, the three works provide us with a portrait that is at once broader, deeper, and more multi-dimensional than any individual portrait could be, whether it were a portrait of the artist's subject or, perhaps, of the artist himself.

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Numbers employed in referring to Michelangelo's poems follow the numbering scheme of E. Girardi, J. Saslow, A. Mortimer, J. F. Nims, and some others. Shorter English excerpts of poems other than this author's own translations of No. 89 and No. 271 all come from J. Saslow's *The Poetry of Michelangelo: An Annotated Translation*, while Nos. 89 and 271 come from the libretto to the author's own cantata for men's chorus and chamber orchestra, *Set My Heart Aright: A Michelangelo Portrait* and are copyright 1995.

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Complete poem, ***Veggio co' be' vostr' occhi*** (No. 89)

With your beautiful eyes I see a gentle light  
my blind ones could never see;  
On your feet I bear a burden  
my lame ones could never bear.

With your wings I fly though featherless;  
By your mind I'm lifted ever upward,  
At your whim I pale or blush,  
cold in the sun, warm in the cold of winter.

In your desire alone is my desire;  
my thoughts are forged in your heart,  
my works are breathed in your breath.

Alone, I am like the moon itself alone:  
our eyes see it in the heavens  
only as the sun enlightens it.

(author's translation)

## **Editions of Michelangelo's Poems**

Several of the large group of Michelangelo's poems to, for, or about Tommaso were quoted above. Only Michelangelo's friends saw his poetry during his lifetime, since the planned edition of a group of poems was abandoned with the death of his good friend Luigi del Riccio, closely involved with the project. Indeed, the *Rime* were not published until 1623, almost sixty years after the artist's death, in an insidiously bowdlerized edition prepared by his grand-nephew, known as Michelangelo the Younger. Himself a lyricist and librettist working in the prevailing seventeenth-century theatrical style, he not only changed the pronouns in the poems for Tommaso to female to make them more 'suitable' (and therefore more marketable), he also corrected - so he thought - the many 'defects' he found in his granduncle's poetic style, thereby removing some of the very traits that had made Michelangelo's verse so appreciated by the eminent literary figures of his own day. There would not be a responsible presentation of the unaltered texts until an 1897 edition prepared by the German scholar Karl Frey. Numerous editions of the poems based on the disastrous 1623 edition - some of them coming from well into the twentieth century - are still found in libraries today. No sense can be made of some of them.

When I first became interested in Michelangelo's poems more than four decades ago, translations in English were far fewer than today and, for several reasons, often less reliable. But reading the poems in the original Italian is a considerable challenge, owing in part to Michelangelo's floridly rhetorical style, to his frequent use of long-anachronistic Florentine idioms and older Tuscan spellings, and to his reliance on a Florentine tradition of eliding final written vowels to yield the expected scansion. (In a few fair copies of poems from later in his life, Michelangelo provides some apostrophes that imply this custom, but any such indications are often inconsistent - even within a particular poem.)

### *Italian Editions with Critical Commentary*

The established critical edition of the poems has long been that by E. Girardi: *Michelangelo Buonarroti - RIME* (Bari: Laterza, 1960) and his subsequent *Studi su Michelangelo Scrittore* (Florence: Olschki, 1974). While both volumes are out-of-print and difficult to locate, Girardi's numbering of the poems is still followed in most modern editions. An inexpensive volume of the poems, based upon

Girardi's work and with commentary by E. Barelli, is much easier to find: *Michelangelo - RIME* (Milano: Rizzoli [BUR], 1975).

A more recent and extensively annotated study of both the poems and the letters, edited by A. Corsaro and G. Masi, provides a great deal of critical information. However, the numbering of the poems does not conform to Girardi's scheme and is not easily compatible with most other editions: *Michelangelo Buonarroti RIME e LETTERE* (Milano: Bompiani, 2016).

#### *Italian/English Language Editions*

J. Saslow's annotated translation, with its extensive commentary, invaluable essays, helpful illustrations, and convenient facing-page translations is - and likely will remain - an essential volume for English-speaking Michelangelo lovers, especially those interested in his writings: *The Poetry of Michelangelo: an Annotated Translation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991). Saslow's translations lie somewhere between crisp modern prose and verse but do not attempt either to imitate or to replicate Michelangelo's meter or his rhymes.

C. Ryan's *Michelangelo: THE POEMS* (London: Dent, 1996) is also a facing-page translation, and it, too, provides valuable commentary and criticism, making it quite a good resource. Ryan's translations, although clear and frequently eloquent, are rendered directly into modern prose. The translations are also available in an inexpensive paperback: *Everyman's Poetry (No. 54) MICHELANGELO* (London: Dent, 1998). While the Italian text is provided, little of Ryan's useful commentary is, and the often fascinating poetic fragments are all omitted. Most frustratingly, the numbering of the poems does not correspond with that in his larger edition.

#### *English Language Versions*

While there have been numerous attempts to create poetic versions of Michelangelo's verse in idiomatic English usage - a task of near-impossible difficulty - there are two relatively modern ones that stand out and are (in my opinion) quite successful, although they differ considerably from each other.

The famed translator of Renaissance Italian poetry A. Mortimer has provided most of the poems (but only a few of the fragments) in an English *verse* version, together with a group of the artist's letters. *MICHELANGELO: POEMS AND LETTERS; Selections, with the 1550 Vasari LIFE* (London: Penguin Classics, 2007). There is no Italian, and - apart from his interesting and insightful Introduction - little commentary on the texts. These are poetic translations from the hand of an expert in the field.

J. F. Nims, the American poet, produced readings of Michelangelo's challenging poems that so capture the author's rhetorical sensibility that some can seem to be originals rather than translations: *The Complete Poems of MICHELANGELO* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998). There is no Italian given nor text criticism; many (if not quite all) of the fragments are present.

Readers should, of course, be aware that the editions, translations, and studies mentioned above are the ones that have served me best in my own work over the years. There are several others, all of them worthy in their way; some are beautiful as well. No-one undertakes studying - much less *translating* - Michelangelo's poems lightly, at least not for very long.

### **Selected Literature on Tommaso de' Cavalieri**

Those interested in learning more about Tommaso de' Cavalieri and his friendship with Michelangelo will not find an over-abundance of reliable information even today. (That said, however, there is more every year.) Until the last quarter of the twentieth century, scholars spoke of the relationship between the two men as being strictly neo-platonic in nature; other viewpoints were unacceptable. That began to change, and perhaps the publication in 1983 of R. S. Liebert's hugely important *Michelangelo: A Psychoanalytic Study of His Life and Images* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983) can be suggested as the turning point that opened the discussion to more diverse awarenesses. We cannot know the exact nature of the relationship, beyond a fair degree of certainty that it evolved and changed over its thirty-year duration as almost any relationship would. But what we might do if we seek a deeper understanding of the near-cauldron that was Michelangelo, from which emerged not only this relationship but so much of the art related in some way

to it, is to use a few adjectives to describe it (if *not* to characterize) it. It was: spontaneous; it was mutually and deeply felt; it was as intense as any documented in visual art, in verse, or in the half-dozen breath-taking letters between them that survive.

However one may feel about Tommaso de' Cavalieri himself or about their friendship, any lover of Michelangelo's art owes the younger man a debt of profound gratitude. Even a partial list of the works we have today with which Tommaso was in some way involved is astonishing. And he seems, by all surviving accounts, to have been as commendable a person, as trustworthy a friend, as responsible a citizen, and as stalwart a supporter and defender of his friend the artist as can be imagined. Who among us would not hope to be so remembered some five centuries after his death?

To date, the most extensive study of the life of Tommaso and his friendship with Michelangelo remains that by the eminent German scholar C. L. Frommel, published some forty years ago (in German): *Michelangelo und Tommaso dei Cavalieri* (Amsterdam: Castrum Peregrini Presse, 1979).

Some of the most informative sources in recent years have been articles in scholarly print journals, several of which are listed here; most are available through online sources:

“Tommaso de' Cavalieri nella Roma di Clemente VII e Paolo III”  
(M. Marongiu)<sup>6</sup>

“Tommaso de' Cavalieri” (M. Marongiu)<sup>7</sup>

“Michelangelo's Open Secrets” (M. Ruvoldt)<sup>8</sup>

“Tommaso de' Cavalieri, formerly Orsini: Michelangelo's Muse  
and Medici Cousin” (M. Ruvoldt)<sup>9</sup>

“Donne Belle e Crudele: Michelangelo's Divine Heads in Light  
of the *Rime*.” (L. Pericolo)<sup>10</sup>

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## Notes

1. Edith Balas, *Michelangelo's Double Self-Portraits* (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Mellon University Press, 2004), 1-49.
2. Raffaello da Montelupo, "Autobiografia di Raffaello da Montelupo," in *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, vol. 4 by G. Vasari, ed. G. Milanesi (Florence: Sansoni, 1906), 551-62.
3. Achim Gnann, *Michelangelo: The Drawings of a Genius* (Vienna: Albertina, 2010), 368.
4. Charles de Tolnay, *Corpus dei Disegni di Michelangelo*, vol. 2 (Novara: De Agostini, 1976), 99.
5. Frederick Hartt, *Michelangelo Drawings* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1970), 259.
6. Marcella Marongiu, "Tommaso de' Cavalieri nella Roma di Clemente VII e Paolo III," *Horti Hesperidum* 3, no. 1 (2013): 257-319.
7. Marcella Marongiu, "Tommaso de' Cavalieri," in *Michelangelo: Divine Draftsman & Designer*, ed. Carmen Bambach et al. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2017), 387-389.
8. Maria Ruvoldt, "Michelangelo's Open Secrets," *Early Modern Studies* 11 (2013): 105-125.
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