



# Michelangelo and the Reinvention of the Human Body

*James Hall*

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**Michelangelo and the Reinvention of the Human Body** James Hall

**A brilliant new comprehensive critical analysis of Michelangelo's art, focusing on his depiction of the human body.**

Michelangelo's art is exhilarating, but also bewildering: What is the source of its power? In this imaginative and detailed study, the art critic James Hall explores some of the major puzzles of Michelangelo's work-his stern Madonnas and their lack of maternal responsiveness; his concern with colossal scale and size; the way that anatomical dissections affected his attitude toward the human body; and the placing of solitary, heroic figures against backgrounds of chaotic, troubling crowds. Hall arrives at a more precise, nuanced appreciation of the body language of Michelangelo's figures, and offers new explanations of many sculptures, paintings, and drawings, including David, the narratives of the Sistine Chapel ceiling, and the monumental figures of his middle and late period.

Hall dispels both the idea of Michelangelo as an artist-superman and as brilliant but unbalanced, obsessed with the male nude. Instead he redefines him as the first artist to put the body center stage, making it the focal point of his quest for psychological and spiritual meaning. Lively and thought-provoking, *Michelangelo and the Reinvention of the Human Body* is a bold critique that will reshape the way we see this iconic artist's work, throwing a vividly revealing light on the originality and power of his genius.

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