

# Blanchette

## Bruce's Studio News

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Selfie with Ralph in front of the Met

### An Inspirational Beginning for 2018

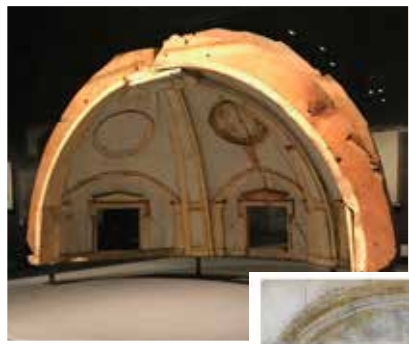
An exhibition touted as a "Once in a Lifetime" opportunity to see an expansive collection of drawings and architectural designs by Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564) has been brought together at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC, but ends soon. The show runs from November 13, 2017 through February 12, 2018. Many of the works came from disparate collections both public & private. This was a show I wanted to see and I had the opportunity to do so last week. New York City is always worth a day trip, or more, even if you know it means some financial preparation. (I knew I wasn't in Walpole anymore when I ordered a cafeteria sandwich and a coffee and I paid \$18.50 for the meager lunch!)

This trip was one I planned as a joint adventure with my brother Ralph who I hadn't seen for a while. Ralph lives close enough to the city to make Penn Station only a two hour trip by Amtrak. Although our tastes in art don't always coincide, the Michelangelo exhibition was an apt opportunity that we could both agree upon! The attraction of Michelangelo's drawings as well as proximity of the Met's ancient Greek collections attracted him, and I spent my time additionally perusing the Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) special exhibit and the more contemporary David Hockney (1937-) retrospective which were nearby. All three were inspirations to me, as is any trip to this massive museum and its collections.

Having just sponsored 30 weeks of Life Drawing in my studio for my artist friends last year, I found that the Renaissance master's small ink, chalk & wash figure drawings, were what most interested me. Seeing them in person was fascinating. The few marble sculptures in the exhibition, and Michelangelo's design model for the vault of the Chapel of the King of France, cobbled together from chunks of wood by his carpenters, also intrigued me. The exhibition was large and initially crowded, but in time thinned out enough to be able to spend plenty of time with artworks of interest.

I also was pleased to spend part of my afternoon comparing the portrait drawings of Hockney to those by Michelangelo. The wall of drawings by this contemporary painter was impressive to me because my life drawings have been an important creative continuum for a very long time. It is interesting to me to look at the most immediate techniques of these two artists and realize that all artists, including myself, are closest to the interplay of *vision, mind, and process* when we draw from life. No matter the genius of these artists, I can feel the connection without doubt or envy. This is because there are no mistakes in drawing when it is an artistic process in the service of clearer seeing and invention. That's what is the most interesting part at viewing the works of the masters... unlike painting or sculpture you can observe the struggle of even the greatest artist... whose efforts sometimes belie perfection.

### Michelangelo



Design model for dome (above)



Architectural design for a window



Apollo-David unfinished Marble



Drawing Studies



This early abstract painting was a counterpoint to his large painted double portraits.



Portrait study for painting (detail)



### Hockney

Exhibition wall of portrait drawings

### Rodin



These small terra cotta studies, and cast bronzes from them, were Rodin's three-dimensional sketches from life preparing the way for larger works of sculpture. They are small, around 12 to 16 inches in height.