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Michelangelo Gilles Néret
The passion and the glory: The great Renaissance artist’s devotion to beauty

A tortured, suffering soul, Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni (1475–1564) funneled his God-fearing passion into the creation of some of the most revered and celebrated works in the history of art. Attempting to reconcile the apparently conflicting forces that inhabited him: earthly passions and fear of God. The edifice devoted to beauty, celestial and infernal alike, that Michelangelo raised to the glory of God has no equivalent. His predecessors aspired to Heaven through faith alone; Michelangelo sought to rise through the contemplative exaltation of beauty.

His passions found expression in the human body as it emerged from the Creator’s hand. And they did so even on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. This exposed him to a chorus of derision from prudish critics, who accused him of exhibiting paganism in a place of religion, and who clothed his immodest Titans in painted “breeches.” It was Michelangelo’s curse to remain a colossus outside of and apart from his time. The spectacle of such glory was too much for his contemporaries.

About the Series:
Each book in TASCHEN’s Basic Art series features:

- a detailed chronological summary of the life and oeuvre of the artist, covering his or her cultural and historical importance
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