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Correction

Correction: Abrahams (2024). The Unseen Truth of God in Early Modern Masterpieces. *Arts* 13: 158

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In the original publication (Abrahams 2024), reference (Holt 1957, p. 314) was not cited. The citation has now been inserted in Section 2 and should read:

> Most major art, as represented here by the three artists, works similarly for similar reasons, guarding its most profound meaning from the general public while preserving it for a few. The resulting dichotomy of meaning, both within their own works and between major and minor art, helps explain Michelangelo's insistence that very few of his colleagues could understand his paintings in the Sistine Chapel, even those who spent hours copying them (Clements 1954, pp. 331–32). Dürer had made the same point, writing that only "*good* painters [italics added]" can properly judge the finest painting because the ability to do this "is denied to others, like a foreign language." (Hutchison 1990, p. 111; Holt 1957, p. 314). Even the poet Pietro Aretino, who knew Michelangelo personally, admitted that he could not understand his pictures (Spike 2016, p. 27). This strongly suggests that patrons, theologians, and lesser artisans would not have understood them either. Today, though, the internet has become a Rosetta Stone, allowing anyone to visually compare all forms of art more closely. So, to explain the hidden purpose of such art in greater detail, works by the trio will be explored through three compositional strategies. Each is still used today, but barely known. They are the pervasive use of the artist's physiognomy, as discussed above; the presence of the artist's initial(s); and the conversion of a studio gesture into a narrative one, as in Cellini's *Perseus*. I will not, to be clear, address the theological justifications for depicting the invisible God, well covered by medievalists, but how artists crafted and justified such images to themselves. The proposed resolution resituates their work within the return journey to God, Michelangelo's poetry, and a contemporary spiritual practice.

In the original publication (Abrahams 2024), reference (Fingesten 1959, p. 19) needs to be replaced with reference (Petrarch 1992, p. 265). Reference (Petrarch 1992, p. 265) was not cited. The citation has now been inserted in Section 6 and should read:

> The human mind cannot escape itself, which is what that saying, occasionally credited to Michelangelo, implies: "every painter paints himself". The adage originated in Tuscan literature between 1477 and 1479, though similar notions are prominent in early Buddhist texts, Chinese art theory, Greek philosophy, and early Christianity. The painter is a metaphor for the mind in all of them (Fong 1984, pp. 3, 94; Bush and Shih 1985, pp. 96, 205–6; Hamar 2014; McNichol 2020; Kachru 2020). However, despite the maxim's known importance to Renaissance artists, the phrase is generally reduced to the banal trope that art conveys the artist's sensibilities. Yet, Michelangelo's variations on the phrase suggest otherwise. He claimed that sculpting any face unavoidably results in self-representation. One madrigal goes "As, working in hard stone to make the face of someone else, one images his own. . ." (Nims 1998, p. 122). Michelangelo had no interest in mimetic portraiture and, taken literally, the claim sounds absurd; read instead

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as the conception of a thought inside his head, it is undeniably true.[16] Human beings only experience what is outside them via sensory data flowing through them, or originating within them. They cannot know what it is like to be someone else. Everyone can only imagine another being as a male or female version of themselves. Petrarch, whom Michelangelo admired, wrote in a letter to Boccaccio that "each applies to others what he has experienced in himself", a thought the sculptor repeated in a poem: "I only see what's most like me inside that heart of yours" (Petrarch 1992, p. 265; Nims 1998, p. 63). This means that human experience of external reality is colored, or even created, by our internal one—by our thoughts, feelings, and imagination—making perception of the exterior world, in large part, a self-reflection. Sir Walter Raleigh put it well: "We are trapped, as it were, inside our own heads." (Maus 1996, pp. 4, 7–8). Thus, Michelangelo's description of inevitably portraying his own face refers not to his physical practice, but to his mental conception, because we all paint our own reality every second of the day, making "every painter paints himself" (or herself) a universal truth. It is how the mind works.

The newly added references are listed below:

(Holt 1957) Holt, Elizabeth Gilmore. 1957. *A Documentary History of Art: The Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. New York: Doubleday, vol. 1.

(Petrarch 1992) Petrarch, Francis. 1992. *Letters of an Old Age: Rerum Senilium, Libri I–XVIII*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, vol. 1.

A correction has been made to the layout of the following sentences, and the word wielders has been changed to wielder's.

If my rough hammer shapes the obdurate stone
to a human figure, this or that one, say,
it's the wielder's fist, vision, and mind at play
that gives it momentum—another's, not its own.

But the heavenly hammer working by God's throne
by itself makes others and self as well. We know
it takes a hammer to make a hammer. So
the rest derive from that primal tool alone.

Since any stroke is mightier the higher
it's launched from over the forge, one kind and wise
has lately flown from mine to a loftier sphere.

My hammer is botched, unfinished in the fire
until God's workshop help him supervise
the tool of my craft, that alone he trued, down here. (Nims 1998, p. 28).

With these corrections, the order of some references has been adjusted accordingly. The authors state that the scientific conclusions are unaffected. This correction was approved by the Academic Editor. The original publication has also been updated.

Reference

Abrahams, Simon. 2024. The Unseen Truth of God in Early Modern Masterpieces. *Arts* 13: 158. [CrossRef]

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