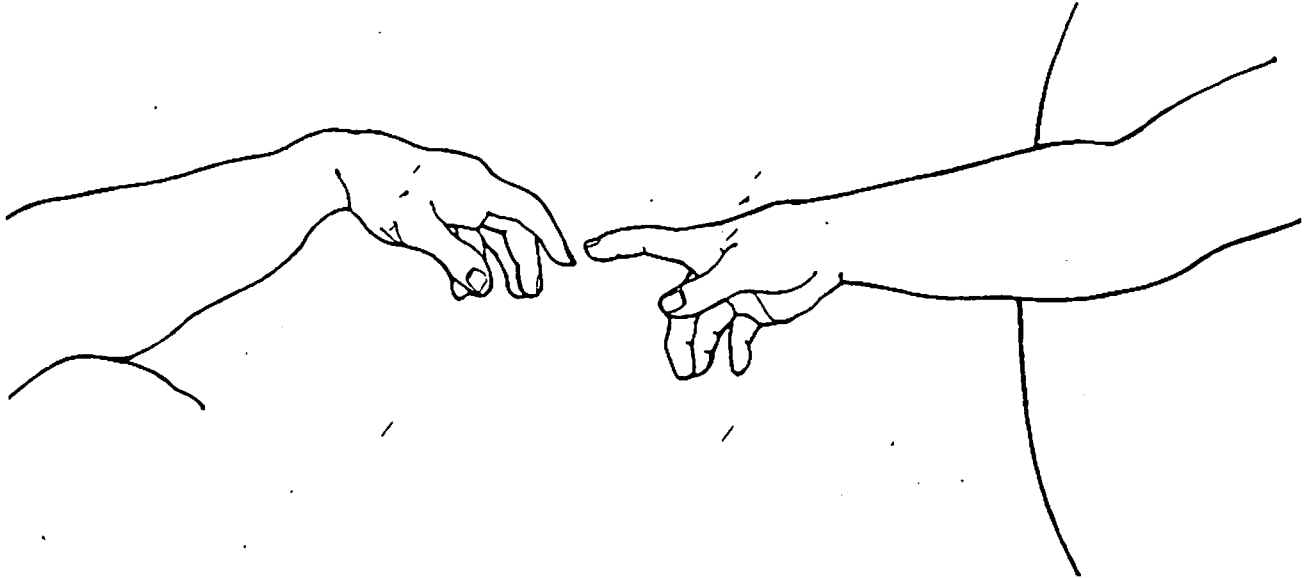


The Sistine Chapel



In 1508, Michelangelo began his most famous painting. He was commissioned to paint a fresco, a painting done on wet plaster, on the 10,000 square foot ceiling of the Sistine Chapel inside St. Peter's Basilica. In the picture, you can see the specially designed scaffold, which enabled Michelangelo to lie on his back to reach the ceiling. He worked long and hard on this project, locking out his assistants and doing all the work himself. He lay for hours at a time, with paint dripping into his eyes. He even slept in his clothes to save time. Despite the pleas from the Pope to finish quickly, and with almost non-stop painting, Michelangelo spent four years painting this magnificent work of religious art. The Sistine Chapel is still viewed today by over 7,000 people per day. It has recently undergone restoration and cleaning. The cleaning of *The Last Judgement*, which is on the wall above the altar, took four years. That is as long as it took Michelangelo to paint the whole ceiling!

Can you create pictures like Michelangelo? Now is your chance!

Materials

- 2" by 18" (30 cm x 46 cm) white drawing paper and pencil
- coloring materials (crayons, pens, pencils, pastels, or paints, etc.)
- tape

Preparation

Take the piece of drawing paper and tape it under your desk, table, or chair.

Create

Lie on your back under the paper and draw a picture. Try a castle scene, the streets of London in the 1600s, or one of your own choice. Add plenty of details and color. Do not forget your signature! And remember, you are lying down; do not expect perfection. When you finish, remove your picture and display in class (maybe on the ceiling). Imagine! Michelangelo spent four years of his life on his back painting a ceiling. What kind of problems do you think he faced?