



**The Chartreuse David: A Florentine Souvenir,
Michelangelo's David and the Lens of Kitsch**

Samantha Robbie-Higgins

Submitted to OCAD University in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

In Contemporary Art, Design and New Media Art Histories

Toronto, Ontario, Canada August 2019

© Samantha Robbie-Higgins

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this MRP. This is a true copy of the MRP, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I authorize OCAD University to lend this MRP to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I understand that my MRP may be made electronically available to the public.

I further authorize OCAD University to reproduce this MRP by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

Samantha Robbie-Higgins

Abstract

This MRP has been based upon direct in-situ research and observation in Florence, Italy during the spring of 2018, of the subject artwork, Michelangelo's *David* (1501-1504). Observation and research into the production, distribution and sales of kitsch objects related to the chartreuse David souvenir in all forms available in Florence as well as globally online was also undertaken. Research on the historical development of the kitsch movement through an examination of Pompeo Batoni's works, the Grand Tour and the rise of global tourism and the souvenir industry was conducted through examination of writings and journals on the subject as noted in the bibliography and referenced within the body of the MRP.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I want to thank my mother, Caroline Robbie-Montgomery, who has since my first year in undergraduate school at OCAD University in 2010, accommodated me in every way academically, financially and emotionally. Your support and determination to see me succeed means the world to me. Thank you for always believing in me, even at times when I found it hard to believe in myself.

I also want to thank my faculty committee Dr. Heather Coffey and Dr. Amish Morrell for their enthusiasm and incredible knowledge/contributions to see this project succeed. Thank you for being so patient with me during this process and sharing so many wonderful stories and historical facts.

Thank you to my director, Dr. Keith Bresnahan and my Florence program instructor Dr. Martha Ladly for making the Graduate Florence Program a probable field-specific seminar for my program, so that future Contemporary Art, Design and New Media Art Histories students may also enjoy this opportunity of a lifetime.

Thank you to Professor Jessica Wyman for our ongoing weekly sessions to make this paper as good as it can be. Your contributions have helped me immensely and for that I thank you.

Last but not least, I would like to thank OCAD University faculty and staff for the incredible opportunities they have given me during my time here. I have learned an immense amount in the four years of my Undergraduate program from 2010 to 2014 and my Graduate years from 2017 to 2019. Thank you.

Table of Contents

Authors Declaration	1
Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	3
Table of Contents	4
List of Figures	5
Introduction	7
Section 1: Michelangelo's <i>David</i>	14
Section 2: The Souvenir	24
Section 3: Kitsch	33
Section 4: Graeco-Roman Lens Through Chartreuse David	43
Conclusion	52
Bibliography	57
Appendix: Figures	59

List of Figures

- Figure 1.1** Calvin Klein commercial, *Microfiber Underwear advertisement*, 2008. Screenshot courtesy of chitarita blogspot. <http://chitarita.blogspot.com/2010/05/art-isnt-easy.html>. P. 59
- Figure 1.2** Armalite Incorporated advertisement, 2014. Screenshot courtesy of CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2014/03/09/us/italy-us-arms-ad/index.html>. P.60
- Figure 1.3** Michelangelo's *David* as seen on Nickolodeon's *SpongeBob SquarePants*, 2001. Screenshots courtesy of Wiki Fandom. https://spongebob.fandom.com/wiki/Squidward%27s_accidental_statue. P. 60
- Figure 1.4** Store front of *Best of Florence*, photo courtesy of the author. P.61
- Figure 1.5** 360° views of Chartreuse David souvenir from *Best of Florence Souvenirs*, Via della Condota. Photo courtesy of the author. P.61
- Figure 2.1** Michelangelo, *David*, carrara marble. 1501-1504. Galleria dell'Accademia. 17 x 6.5 feet. Photo courtesy of the author. P.62
- Figure 2.2** Left: Donatello, *The Prophet David*, 1410. The Bargello Museum, Florence. 75 inches. Photo courtesy of the artist.
Right: Verrocchio, *David*, 1473-1475. 49 inches. The Bargello Museum, Florence. Photo courtesy of the artist. P. 63
- Figure 2.3** Polykleitos, *Doryphoros*, marble sculpture, 450 – 440 BC. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Screenshot courtesy of the Khan Academy. P. 63
- Figure 3.1** Ferrante Imperato, *Historia Dell'Naturale*, 1599. Image digitized by the Smithsonian Libraries. Photo courtesy of Biodiversity Library Blog. <https://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2017/03/ferrante-imperato-step-into-his-cabinet-of-wonders.html> P. 64
- Figure 3.2** Pompeo Batoni, *Sir William Gordon*, 1765-66, oil on canvas
Photo Courtesy of Wikipedia P. 64

Figure 3.3 Pompeo Batoni, Thomas Estcourt, 1772, oil on canvas. Photo courtesy of Wikipedia. P.65

Figure 3.4 Left: Pompeo Batoni, Thomas Dundas 1764. Right: Pompeo Batoni, Count Razumovsky 1766. Photo courtesy of Wikipedia. P. 65

Figure 4.1 Bust of Elvis Presley. Photo courtesy of the author. P. 66

Figure 4.2 Marilyn Monroe velvet painting. Photo courtesy of the author. P 66

Figure 4.3 Don Featherstone and his sea of pink flamingoes, Credit: Seth Resnick/Science Faction, via Corbis, New York Times. P. 67
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/24/business/don-featherstone-inventor-of-the-pink-flamingo-in-plastic-dies-at-79.html>

Figure 4.4 Lava lamps. Image courtesy of the Portable Press P. 67
<https://www.portablepress.com/blog/2015/07/lava-lampology/>

Figure 4.5 Jeff Koons, *Pluto and Proserpina*, 2010. Mirror polished stainless steel with color coating, 129 x 134 ¾ x 56 5/8 inches. 2010-2013. Photo credit: photographer, New York Times, weblink. P. 68

Figure 5.1 Polychromed ancient marble sculpture (400 BC) as seen on Stiftung Archaeologie website. Screenshot courtesy of the author. P. 69
http://www.stiftung-archaeologie.de/ParisAphaia_2.html.

Figure 5.2 *Trojan's Archer* in the west pediment of Aphaia Temple (400 BC). Screenshot courtesy of Atlasobscura P. 69
<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/ancient-sculpture-color-polychromy>

Figure 5.3. Donatello, *Stucco Narrative Tondi* in the Old Sacristy of San Lorenzo, Florence Italy. Screenshot courtesy of Tegglar. P. 70
<https://www.teggelaar.com/en/florence-day-3-continuation-12/>

Figure 5.4. Michelangelo, *Crucifixion*, 1492. Polychrome wooden sculpture. 142 x 135 cm, Basilica of Santo Spirito, Florence. Screenshot courtesy of Alchetron P. 70
[https://alchetron.com/Crucifix-\(Michelangelo\)](https://alchetron.com/Crucifix-(Michelangelo))

Introduction

“In this age of reproduction, *David* has become an image of quality made cheap. It’s a badge to be worn and traded like Marilyn Monroe and James Dean. Something once unique, now churned out by the millions; industry showing its mastery over art.” – Samuel West (narrator), in the BBC documentary ‘*The Private Life of a Masterpiece: Michelangelo’s David*’ (2001).

How can a kitsch object allow one to think about, or even uncover truths, concerning a highly praised Renaissance object of art? How might kitsch objects and Renaissance art be theoretically and aesthetically connected, given the many centuries between their production? From its art-historical significance in 1504, through its ongoing transformation into pop-cultural references, Michelangelo’s *David* (1501-1504) has become one of the most recognizable artworks of today. *David* (1501-1504) is an item that is now subcategorized within popular culture rather than solely within the Renaissance. As many items of popular culture tend to do, the objects that emerge from this subject matter are kitsch. Hence, an interesting direction of research is to examine Michelangelo’s *David* through the lens of kitsch. Like Hollywood celebrity figures such as Marilyn Monroe or Elvis Presley, *David* has been grouped into this sub-set of pop-culture for reasons that involved the artist’s reputation, the success of which grew consistently long after his death.

Kitsch is a term that first appeared in the art markets of Munich in the late nineteenth century as a means of selling cheap souvenirs to tourists following the Industrial Revolution. Kitsch's translation from the German word means "tacky" or "garbage;" since this was a means of distinguishing low and high art from one another.¹ The well-known arts-based community blog *Artsy* describes kitsch appropriately as a means of something 'other' from art:

The word "kitsch" originated in the 19th century to criticize art seen as being in poor taste, or which hopelessly copied "high art" but remained mediocre or lacking in refinement. In the 20th century, with the rise of industrial manufacturing, the term has become more generally associated with mass commodities or cheap entertainment, considered decorative or evocative of lowbrow taste.²

Despite the reputation kitsch has acquired through the twentieth and twenty-first century, it is inevitable that kitsch has inspired artists and filtered its way into the art market. For instance, contemporary artist Jeff Koons uses materials such as polished stainless steel and aluminium on large scale structures to create kitsch objects. In 2010, Koons re-created a series of antique sculptures in the style of modern kitsch and placed one of them directly in the Piazza Signoria in Florence. Koons was taking direct inspiration from antiquity and the Renaissance and modernizing it as a means of creating an intriguing juxtaposition

¹ Stephanie Brown, "On Kitsch, Nostalgia and Nineties Femininity," *Studies in Popular Culture* Vol.22, No. 3 (2000). Pp. 40-41.

² "Artsy: About Kitsch," *Artsy Online*, DOI: <https://www.artsy.net/gene/kitsch>.

of the old and new. Koons' work encapsulates the banality of the contemporary capitalist market, using kitsch objects or materials to disrupt the system of high and lowbrow culture. He humorously demonstrates art as commodity, relating it to how everyday kitsch objects are also commodities.

In our contemporary context, *David* has appeared in commercial advertisements ranging from the obvious, touting underwear for *Calvin Klein*© [Figure 1.1] to the far-fetched, sporting an automatic weapon for the gun manufacturer *Armalite Inc.*© [Figure 1.2]. *David* has even shown up on television in an episode of the Nickelodeon cartoon series *SpongeBob SquarePants* [Figure 1.3]. These are only some examples of the endless representations of *David* produced since the year 2000. Michelangelo and his masterpiece, however, were obviously not always a reference within popular culture. The meaning of *David* became blurred throughout the centuries by those who appropriated the statue, whether it was in artwork from periods such as the Enlightenment, or in 20th-century advertising.

The statue has a celebrity-status draw for tourists, who visit Florence to specifically see *David*. Today, almost everyone living in the Western world has at some time or another seen the image of *David*, most likely not in history books but in popular culture. The historical art context of Michelangelo's sculpture is thus mediated through the kitsch object. For contemporary

artists who are aware of art history, *David* is the ersatz of high culture, recognizable to anyone with or without a background in art history. In the form of a souvenir to be bought, the consumer is then capable of taking a piece of the Renaissance home. Along with other Renaissance masterpieces such as Sandro Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* (1484-1486) or Leonardo da Vinci's *La Gioconda* (1503-1506), iconic works of art like *David* are turned into items of kitsch, such as snow globes, hand-held fans, magnets, aprons and miniature statues. When this happens, different ways of visualizing 'object' and 'art' merge into one. By looking at reproductions of Michelangelo's *David* across time one can examine how this sculpture shifted from high art to kitsch.

In Florence Italy, there are many souvenirs that appear to be kitsch due to their humorous or their sentimental effect. One such souvenir that is displayed in many Florentine shops are the miniature, brightly coloured replicas of Michelangelo's *David* made by Perseo [Perseus] Souvenirs since 1993. This local company hand-crafts Michelangelo artworks [Figure 1.4]. In the spring of 2018, I spent six weeks in Florence for my university's graduate Florence program, offered to students interested in the Italian Renaissance. My purpose in Florence was to explore contemporary art in a medieval city heavily decorated with Renaissance artwork. My interest lay with these miniature, coloured *David* souvenirs, for they evoked something more than just a representation of the Renaissance, also being contemporary objects. For further inspection, I purchased a twelve and a half centimeter chartreuse-coloured David, on a base

that sits four centimeters by four centimeters in width [Figure 1.5]. To explain its aesthetic, the pose is identical to the original and this gives the object its instant recognizability; everything else, however, is inaccurate. Proportionately, the head is too small and appears squashed. Its forehead is more dramatically furrowed. The nose is pointed further outward and its lips are lopsided in relation to the rest of the face. As one would expect in a small souvenir, there is little definition in the musculature, contrasting with its historical prototype, *David*. The mass-produced object presents an interesting point of departure from what the *David* once was, pointing to how the masses understand iconic artworks today.

To this day, I am still more interested in the smaller, colourful souvenir than the famous version I have seen on several visits to the Galleria dell'Accademia in person. I came to the realization that what I was intrigued by was a kitsch side to Michelangelo's *David*; perhaps because this *oggetto strano*³ resonated more with my time than the original statue. The size, colour and its functionality as a souvenir stand in contrast to its original, making it new, exciting and interesting to the consumer.

³ Italian for 'strange object'.

This paper will explore different historical periods, first with the production of *David* between 1501 and 1504, and its importance and meaning in sixteenth-century Florence. Second, it will investigate the souvenir and its rise in popularity during the Grand Tour and Pompeo Batoni's (1708-1787) mid-eighteenth-century portraits of wealthy aristocratic travellers. The Grand Tour and Pompeo Batoni are the point of focus in this section as a means of understanding how objects of voyage have changed through time. Contemporary theorists of the souvenir such as Rolf Potts will be contrasted with this history. Third, kitsch will be investigated through its twentieth-century concept by Clement Greenberg (1909 – 1994). As a contrast, the ideas of later theorists such as Gillo Dorfles, and most recently Bill Brown, John Morreall and Monica Mjellman will be used to support a counterargument against Greenberg. Finally, I will discuss polychrome sculpture in ancient Greece — a history that predates Michelangelo — and discuss its relevance to the souvenir *David*.

Audiences typically know *David's* image, but not its story throughout time. The biblical tale of David and Goliath was used to position Michelangelo's *David* as a symbol for the Republic of Florence, eventually bringing together a story and an object within popular culture. Kitsch objects are commodifiable objects of culture; and kitsch has much to offer for its sentimental impact. Through the examination of kitsch objects like the chartreuse *David* we can better understand not just the use of art objects in the production and circulation of cultural meaning, but the ideas through which we make sense of them. It has been

argued that the original *David* sculpture has been examined and academically dissected so heavily, that it should be vaulted for at least two to three centuries before releasing it to the public again.⁴ This chartreuse *David* is not *merely* a tacky object as kitsch is commonly considered, but the foundation for a set of theories that help argue that society's notion of kitsch is open to reinterpretation. It is not tacky or ugly, but exuberates a type of kitsch-like strangeness that is academically and historically intriguing as well as humorous; opening up a new possibility of seeing something which appears outrageous, yet true to historical and contemporary fact.

⁴ A 2013 article in Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC News) by Kate Evans suggested that Michelangelo's *David* (1501-1504) be hidden from the public for several centuries because it is known among art history scholarship that Michelangelo's masterpiece has now become the 'ersatz' of high culture. <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/booksandarts/4794208>.

Section 1: Michelangelo's *David* (1501-1504)

Over the later period of the Italian Renaissance, *David* (1501 – 1504) became the ultimate symbol of which the Florentine people are still proud to this day. Michelangelo's *David* was for Florence “a symbol of republican liberty, which was protected by God which no enemy would ever be able to overthrow.”⁵ It metaphorically underlined themes of triumph, strength, and glory for the city, with its capability to confidently face any one of its foes no matter how powerful or great. Art historian Paul Barolsky writes that “David [is] a protector of the *patria* (the homeland), a tradition most highly developed in the art— above all, in the proud line of statues of David from Donatello to Michelangelo.”⁶ Prior to the completion of *David*, from 1492 until 1501, Florence encountered tensions and threats coming from the Holy Roman Empire, Naples and France, since this was during the Great Wars of Italy between 1494 and 1559.⁷ It was the consistent threat of war that strengthened *David's* symbolism, which was partly the basis for its popularity in the sixteenth century.

⁵ Antonio Paolucci, *David: Michelangelo*, Thames and Hudson Ltd., London 2006. Page 6.

⁶ Paul Barolsky, Machiavelli, Michelangelo and “David,” *Notes in the History of Art*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Spring 2004). p. 32. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23206849>.

⁷ In 1492, Lorenzo di Medici had died from gangrene, which was a direct invitation for other leading forces such the Italian born Dominican friar and preacher Girolamo Savonarola to take over the city. Second, Florence was under threat by other key figures in power, such as King Charles VIII of France (1470 – 1498). In 1494 King Charles marched into Tuscan territory to reach the Kingdom of Naples. Simultaneously the Pope, Alexander VI (Rodrigo de Borgia, 1431 – 1503) was sending threatening letters to Savonarola in 1497 demanding to silence his [Savonarola's] accusations against the Pope and his family. This was all during the height of Savonarola's success in Florence. This success was Savonarola's influence of Florentine citizens to abandon all vanities such as pagan books, make-up, brightly coloured costumes and paintings into his infamous *Bonfire of the Vanities* on February 7, 1497. His other demand was to appoint Jesus Christ as the King of Florence.

In 1408, The *Operai*⁸ of Santa Maria del Fiore commissioned the sculptors Donatello (1368 – 1466) and Nanni di Banco (1385 – 1421) to begin a set of twelve marble Old Testament prophets atop the buttresses of the then dome-less cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore. Although their work was sufficient, it was realized the statues were too small to be seen from a great height, thus the commission remained in an ambivalent state for several decades.⁹ On April 16, 1463, the artist Agostino di Duccio (1418 – 1468), a collaborator and pupil of Donatello's, was then commissioned by the *Operai* to create a sculpture atop the buttress of the Cathedral.¹⁰ Duccio began his project in the quarries of Carrara, a town north-west of Florence. This labor-inducing process required a team of men and oxen to bring the marble down from the mountain and back to the city. Despite the efforts, Duccio broke his contract with the *Operai* when deciding to use one gigantic slab of marble, instead of the four pieces of marble that would later be assembled as the *Operai* wanted.¹¹ This was a common process that was

⁸ The *Operai* were a group of noblemen participating in the commerce and government of Florence, and part of the trading guilds during this period. The *Operai* were under the membership of the wool-trading guild named the *Arte della Lana*. Florence at this time was a guild republic, where there were three sets of guilds, such as the *Arti Maggiori* (greater trades), the *Arti Mediane* (the middle trades) and the *Art Minor* (the minor trades). The system worked to hire emerging artists for commissions around the city.

⁹ Donatello had sculpted a David (1408 – 1409) and Banco the prophet Isaiah (1408). Because of their small scale, the statues were not deemed fit to sit atop the cathedral. Thus, Nanni di Banco's *Isaiah* remained in the *Operai* art collection, while Donatello's *David* was placed around different locations in the city through time. It now sits in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello in Florence. In 1415, the commission had begun to change in terms of the scale and figure when Donatello and Filippo Brunelleschi (1377 – 1486) collaborated with one another through art and architecture. Donatello had constructed a Hercules which was to be gilded in gold. See Victor A. Coonin, *From Marble to Flesh: The Biography of Michelangelo's David*, (Prato: Collana The Florentine Press, 2014), P. 31.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 32.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 36.

more cost-efficient and safer. As a result, Duccio was then pardoned from the commission.¹²

It is necessary to note that when Duccio brought the colossal slab of marble down from the Carrara mountains, he was the first artist to attempt to sculpt something from a single block of marble since Roman antiquity. Coonin states that “nothing like it had been quarried since ancient Roman times. There must have been a perfect storm of circumstances that told the experts at the quarry that this particular specimen, as imperfect as it was, could actually be freed from the mountainside and transported safely to port. In effect, the mountain had chosen the massive block to be the *David*.”¹³ This quote reflects the fact that the block of marble was a true material of Renaissance ideals, the carving of which was to achieve the level of mastery from the ancient world, making Michelangelo's *David* appear bold and competitive to other artists.

The commission was then handed to Antonio Rossolino in May of 1476 to complete.¹⁴ Rossolino, like Duccio, was heavily inspired by Donatello, with both artists using similar methods. There is little written about Rossolino's process with the worked marble. Art historian and Michelangelo expert Victor A. Coonin claims that “Rossolino's name disappears completely from the blocks documentation.”¹⁵ Coonin also states that “Antonio was an excellent sculptor,

¹² Ibid. p. 36.

¹³ Ibid. p. 42.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 48.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 50.

whose works are charming and elegant, but by the 1470s he was working in a relatively conservative vein and would offer little risk, even if offering little true innovation.”¹⁶ For twenty-five years after Duccio and Rossolino, the marble was abandoned and the commission was eventually handed to Michelangelo after his immaculate job with the *Pieta* in 1499.

Born in Arezzo on March 6, 1475, Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni (1475-1564) is celebrated as one of the foremost Italian Renaissance artists in history. This is due to the fame of works such as the *Pieta* (1499) made in Rome, Florence’s *David* (1501-1504) and later the *Sistine Chapel* ceiling in Vatican City (1508-1512). Michelangelo once humorously told his second biographer Ascanio Condivi (1525 – 1574) that he was gifted with the technique of sculpting, by suckling the milk of his wet nurse as an infant.¹⁷ In Condivi’s biography *The Life of Michelangelo* (1553), his wet nurse came from a family of stone masons, thus according to the artist this paved the path to his skills with marble, or so he claimed.

As a minor, Michelangelo began serving as an apprentice to Domenico Ghirlandaio (1449 – 1494) at the age of thirteen in 1488, and, after one year, left his studio to work in the Medici Palace in the presence of Lorenzo di Medici (Il Magnifico)¹⁸ after Lorenzo was impressed by a faun he had sculpted, according to

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 49.

¹⁷ William E. Wallace, “Michelangelo’s Wet Nurse,” *Arion* Vol. 17, No. 2, 2009. P. 51.

¹⁸ Italian for ‘The Magnificent’.

Michelangelo's first biographer, Giorgio Vasari, in *Lives of the Artists*.¹⁹ While residing at the palace, Michelangelo was fortunate enough to work from the Medici art collection and receive constant commissions from Lorenzo.²⁰ It would be this privilege in the Medici palace and his consistent dedication to drawing and sculpture from antiquity that made *Michelangelo's David* so impeccable.

Now standing in the Galleria dell'Accademia, on Via Ricasoli in Florence, *David* [Figure. 2.1] stands seventeen feet high and nearly seven feet in width. Typically, when the subject of David was sculpted by those who came before Michelangelo, such as Donatello (1386 – 1466) and Verrocchio (1435 – 1488), the prophet was depicted as a youth *after* the succeeded battle, with David resting his foot on the severed head of Goliath [Figure. 2.2]. But the pose of Michelangelo's *David* shows that David is presenting himself in front of Goliath *before* the battle takes place, which was new and inventive for the time. He looks out onto his foe with discernment, preparing his action of attack, ready to grab his sling wrapped across his back and a rock clasped in his right hand. His left knee bends outward, as if he is eager to move towards his targeted enemy. The statue

¹⁹ According to Giorgio Vasari, the artist first came to prominence when he was discovered by Lorenzo de Medici (1449-1492). Lorenzo had stumbled on a thirteen-year-old Michelangelo when he was visiting Ghirlandaio's workshop and noticed the young artist carving the head of a satyr, but with all of its teeth intact. Lorenzo noted this to Michelangelo, who immediately chiselled two of the teeth out of the mouth, bringing it back to *Il Magnifico* for further inspection. From then on, Michelangelo lived among nobility of the highest status, with Lorenzo guiding and teaching him poetry, philosophy, science and art. The artist would go on to have an indecisive relationship with the powerful family during its political turmoil. Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Artists*, (New York: Dover Publications Inc, 2005). Pp. 114-115.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 115.

was executed between 1501 and 1503, and then completed and revealed in September 1504. Vasari claimed that *David* exceeded all other statues before it, including ancient Greek statues. In *Lives of the Artists*, Vasari writes:

The work fully completed, Michelangelo gave it to view, and truly may we affirm that this statue surpasses all others, whether ancient or modern, Greek or Latin. Neither the Marforio at Rome, The Tiber and the Nile in the Belvedere, nor the Giants of Monte Cavollo can be compared with it, to such perfection of beauty and excellence did our artist bring his work...Never since has there been produced so fine an attitude, so perfect a grace, such beauty of head, feet and hands; every part is replete with excellence; nor is so much harmony and admirable to be found in any other work.²¹

In order to appreciate the value and praise placed on *David*, it is important to describe the context of Renaissance aesthetics and art history. This quote by Vasari is a bold one, for the Renaissance was a time deeply indebted to the study of Graeco-Roman antiquity and aesthetics. Many, if not all artists and scholars within Florence and outside Tuscan borders dedicated their time to discovering ancient scriptures and artworks, because their purpose was to bring those ideologies back that were once forgotten. Thus, for Michelangelo to surpass ancient art is claiming Michelangelo's talent is next to divine. The Renaissance acknowledged and yearned for the ancient world in all of its aspects, hence for a young, talented and motivated artist like Michelangelo, it was ideal for him to not only study the Medici's art collection of ancient statuary but to have the privilege to live and dine under Lorenzo de' Medici's roof, the same patron

²¹ Ibid. pp. 120-121.

and Florentine leader responsible for the commissioning of what is now the most famous Renaissance paintings and sculptures in the world.

The study of Graeco-Roman statuary came from the deep belief and practice of studying Humanist philosophy, which arose from the preceding fifteenth century. Humanism or what scholars of the time called *studia humanitatis*, is a discipline in grammar, rhetoric, poetry, moral philosophy, history from classical antiquity and the values and benefits that derive from it. The practice of studying Renaissance humanism was to strive for human goodness, not only in scholarship but in daily life. To no surprise, while humanist literature was being practiced among scholars, artists like Michelangelo interested in *studia humanitatis* produced work like *David* in a very Graeco-Roman manner based on its contrapposto pose and its distinct style, different from David sculptures made before it.

Contrapposto is an Italian term for “set against,” and was a frequently used pose in Ancient and indeed Renaissance art. It is a relaxed, standing pose where most of the weight sits on one leg which simultaneously turns the torso and shoulders off-axis, creating a natural yet difficult pose for the artist to construct. Contrapposto demonstrates complexities of how the body moves when it rests on one leg. One example of an ancient contrapposto sculpture is Polykleitos’ *Doryphoros* (450 – 440 BC) [Figure 2.3]. *Doryphoros* bends his left knee outward, as if stepping into a scene, where the left arm is lifted with the left leg underneath. This subtle shift in movement creates a composition where different

angles are present, similarly to the pose the *David* holds. *David* perfectly represents the ideal contrapposto pose, where *David's* left leg is slightly lifted, and the placement of his shoulders and arms help shift the torso on an angle. In Classical studies, sculpting a contrapposto pose centered around creating the natural human body as closely as possible, and at this time in Greek culture, there was a growing interest in human capability and knowledge.

Although the contrapposto is a very distinct feature in *David*, another noticeable trait of Michelangelo's sculpture is the style in which the biblical David is described. For instance, in the Bible, David is depicted as a young shepherd boy who should not be capable of facing an overbearing giant such as Goliath. Yet Michelangelo purposely gave his *David* a sense of prowess, idealizing the story told in the Bible and strengthening *David's* symbolism in Florence. Michelangelo was making an idealized male form that mimicked Graeco-Roman statuary such as *Doryphoros* (450 – 440 BC) as well as demonstrating and symbolizing victory. The time of *David's* production was also when ancient sculptures were beginning to resurface from beneath the city of Rome, and important Roman copies of Hellenistic Greek sculptures were being recorded, examined and used as reference to make new works of art.

As it has already been established, *David's* original location was meant to sit atop of the buttress spur on Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral. However, on

January 25, 1504²² a meeting was held by the *Operai del Duomo* to change the location of Michelangelo's *David*. Once *David* had been relocated after its completion, its purpose and symbolism changed. Art historian Saul Levine writes that the location of "David was charged with controversy, and if the proposal to place it in front of the Cathedral had been accepted, its political impact would have been considerably reduced."²³ What Levine means by this is that *David's* specific location in front of the Palazzo Vecchio (Florence's City Hall), and its orientation facing south towards Rome, Naples, and other Florentine foes, became immediately political and a challenge to those who were the city's enemies. The placement of *David* in the Palazzo Vecchio immediately changed the narrative of what *David* meant to Florence, which then continued to transform and expand over time, its symbology strengthened.

What is most fascinating, and what some tourists may be unfamiliar with, is that many Florentines of the sixteenth century criticized or even despised *David* upon its completion, at least initially. It has been noted by historians that during the transport of *David* from the *Opera del Duomo* workshop to the Piazza della Signoria, there were a group of political protestors who began to pelt stones at *David* during its transportation process.²⁴ This was due to the socio-political issues that the statue raised, for *David* was a symbol of, and had been

²² Saul Levine, "The Location of Michelangelo's David: The Meeting of January 25, 1504," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 56, No. 1, March 1974. P. 31.

²³ Ibid. p. 31.

²⁴ David S. Skidder and Noah D. Oppenheim, "Revive Your Mind: Complete Your Education and Roam Confidently with the Cultured Class," (United States: Rodale Inc, 2006). P. 108.

commissioned by, the Florentine Republic; a symbol directly opposed to the Medici regime that was once loved by its citizens.²⁵ While Florence was indeed historically administered by a Republican government of elected officials, prior to the Florentine Republic the Medici family had dominated the city state for nearly a century as a result of the family's success in commerce and banking. The Medici family also reigned during a time where Florence was at the height of its political, financial and artistic success, and Renaissance historians would give them credit for this.

This notion of *David* once being hated, similar to how kitsch objects are criticized today, points to interesting connections between Michelangelo's *David* and the chartreuse *David* souvenir. The nature of the chartreuse *David* is not only as a kitsch replica of a popular piece of Renaissance art, but it is also a souvenir, an object of voyage and travel that the tourist takes home with them. Following the completion of *David*, the act of collecting the souvenir became a phenomenon in Europe in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries during the rise of the Grand Tour, which often centred around Italy.

²⁵ Joe Boyle, "How Michelangelo's David Hit 500," BBC News, September 8 2004. Accessed 7/11/2019. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/3634730.stm>.

Section 2: The Souvenir

Souvenirs have been collected since the “Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land, [which] became fashionable in the centuries following the Crucifixion.”²⁶ Thus, the act of collecting souvenirs has been practised for well over a millennium. This research, however, begins with the “wonder chambers” of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Travel writer Rolf Potts writes that “with the religious relic trade of previous centuries, collecting and displaying these worldly curiosities became an aristocratic pursuit.”²⁷ Among these aristocratic nobles were German princes who were interested in *Wunderkammern*, or in German the “wonder chamber.” During the same time, Ferrante Imperato (1525 – 1615) a man who specialized in apothecarial studies, displayed his *Dell’Historia Naturale* [Figure. 3.1] inside the Palazzo Gravina in Naples. Rooms like the German *Wunderkammern* and the Italian *Dell-Historia Naturale* became so popularized they “essentially became purchasing agents for commercialized exotica.”²⁸

Wunderkammern became the basis for a fascination with both the natural and artificial worlds. Cultural studies scholar Celeste Olaquiaga notes that the fascination of *Wunderkammern* came from a history of “a happy interregnum between theology and science, the age of wonder began in the Middle Ages with display of relics and memorabilia (marvels both natural and artificial) by local

²⁶ Rolf Potts, *Souvenir* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018), P. 11.

²⁷ Ibid. P. 27.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 28.

churches.”²⁹ Olaquiaga also articulates that “the encyclopedic collections that articulate during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the dramatic rise and fall of naturalia grew directly out of the compilation of sacred objects, relics and rarities in Schatzkammern, royal treasure chambers.”³⁰ Over the years the popularity of foreign and exotic objects grew, and the objects displayed for the spectators were completely new to the Renaissance eye.

These *Wunderkammern* were rooms popularized in Europe that held objects of all kinds as means of discovery and wonder of the sixteenth century.³¹ Many objects were of massive scale such as ostrich eggs, whale jaws and gigantic shells, as a means of amusing guests privileged enough to enter. There was the ability to see wild animals up close through taxidermy, and there were also small paintings, bas-reliefs, and miniature sculptures. Wonder chambers became more popularized in Europe, and as time went on, turned into a means of academic influence. As Potts notes, “as natural and cultural curiosities were gathered, itemized, and analyzed in cities around Europe, [wonder chambers] (and

²⁹ Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectors and Curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500-1800*, trans. Elizabeth Wiles-Portier (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1990), p. 64. Quoted in Celeste Olaquiaga, *The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of the Kitsch Experience*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1998). P. 211.

³⁰ Celeste Olaquiaga, *The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of the Kitsch Experience*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998). P. 218.

³¹ The sixteenth century was also the same time during the colonization of the Americas. This was a time where many ‘foreign’ animals and objects that came from outside of Europe were of first discovery, and therefore a time of amazement and fascination for whichever discovered object under investigation. Quoting Celeste Olaquiaga, “although natural marvels have always aroused interest, the age of wonder was greatly impelled by those events that marked the beginning of the modern era in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: the voyages of discovery, the colonization of America and the rebirth of a classical past that had been forgotten for almost a thousand years.” See Celeste Olaquiaga, *The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of the Kitsch Experience*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998). P. 214.

similar aristocratic and merchant-class souvenir collections) became repositories of practical knowledge and intellectual inquiry.”³²

During this era of discovery “intellectual curiosity... surpassed pilgrimage as the main motivation behind non-commercial travel for the upper-class Europeans – and the souvenirs these new wanderers brought home began to influence the way entire nations viewed the rest of the world.”³³ Over time, leading into the seventeenth until the nineteenth century, the Grand Tour of Europe became an event among aristocrats who practiced collecting memorabilia and relics as a means of pedagogical influence.

There were many reasons why The Grand Tour became such a phenomenon in Europe. Along with *Wunderkammern*, there were several books published in the seventeenth century that encouraged people to travel, as this was understood to be the purest form of experience and knowledge. A Roman Catholic priest named Richard Lassels (1603-1668) wrote a book that was published after his death, *The Voyage of Italy* (1670), that strongly encouraged those to travel to Italy if they were serious about studying architecture, the arts and classical antiquity. Another text was John Locke’s (1632 – 1704) *Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (1689). His argument about knowledge coming from physical stimuli was widely accepted and adopted in Britain. According to Locke,

³² Rolf Potts, *Souvenir*, (New York: Bloomsbury Press Ltd, 2018). P.28.

³³ Rolf Potts, *Souvenir*, (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 1998). P. 23.

through human understanding of time, duration, space, abstract ideas and thought (to make brief) are attained by external objects and the action of travel.³⁴

Visitors to Italy on the Grand Tour were typically British and French aristocrats, among other wealthy merchant classes. They travelled through Western Europe with Italy being their main destination, in order to discover the marvels of Italian antiquity, history, ethnography, geography, scientific discoveries and of course, art. Art historian Christopher M. S. Johns quotes that “most eighteenth-century visitors to Rome came to see the sights, enjoy church ceremonies, witness popular festivals, meet compatriots of social and political influence, and purchase souvenirs of various types, including small mosaics (usually framed), cameos, coins, medals, prints (usually of the city and its environs), and occasionally, a picture or a small statue.”³⁵ The demand for objects of art, geography and science, among other subjects, became so high that an industry of forgery was born. As Potts explains, “English demands for bits of ancient pottery and mosaic was so persistent that local artists began to forge and sell authentic looking facsimiles.”³⁶ This demand for objects fed the forgery market and the selling of it became common practice, one that certainly still exists

³⁴ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975. Pp. 6-7.

³⁵ Christopher M. S. Johns, "The Entrepot of Europe," 17-46. Essay in Bowren, Edgar Peters and John Rishel, *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2000. P. 39.

³⁶ Rolf Potts, *Souvenir*, Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, New York, 2018. P. 30.

today but is now on a global scale. Where these objects were once made only for a few wealthy elites, they are now churned out by the millions.

One leisurely activity for the Grand Tourist was to have their portraits painted as a souvenir, as documentation of their experiences. An artist who made a name for himself and became popular for this style of portraiture was Pompeo Batoni in Rome. Batoni (1708-1787) was born in Lucca Tuscany and trained as an engraver in his father's goldsmith workshop. Batoni seized an opportunity to work as an artist in Rome and never returned to Lucca. What is interesting about Batoni is not his personal history, or his portrait sitters, but rather the compositions he created with the subject surrounded by antiques and relics as a means of visually displaying the sitter's identity. In this case, objects in these portraits became an extension of the individual's knowledge and practises of their daily travels.

In many of Batoni's paintings, there are busts and miniature sculptures of Roman Emperors, Greek philosophers and Gods/Goddesses from antiquity. For instance, in the portrait of the British military officer *Sir William Gordon* (1765-66), a sculpture of the Greek Goddess *Athena* rests next to him [Figure 3.2]. Another portrait of *Thomas Estcourt* (1772), looks away from the bust of Homer [Figure 3.3]. Other examples of roman statuary such as the *Laocoön*, *The Apollo Belvedere*, *The Belvedere Antinous* and *The Vatican Ariadne* appear in the portraits of Thomas Dundas (1764) and Count Razumovsky (1766) [Figure 3.4]. These objects were carefully inserted and he "discussed with each client the

proposed presentation”³⁷ as a means of displaying the sitter’s knowledge gained from history, philosophy and geography during their voyages in Italy. Batoni’s biographer Anthony M. Clark wrote that “one of the most memorable features of his portraits is the emblematic use of antiquities and views of Rome to establish his sitters’ presence in the Eternal City and to depict them as learned, cultivated and leisured aristocrats.”³⁸ Batoni, according to Clarke “deserves credit for popularizing, if not inventing, the portrait type of a casually posed sitter in an open-air setting, surrounded by classical statuary and antique fragments, and often set against the backdrop of a classical building.”³⁹

Today one understands the objects that sit in the Batoni’s portraits as antique because they are objects concerning history, such as *Athena* and *Homer*, the *Laocoön* and other ancient sculpture. It also referenced an identity and a status of an individual, and since many (if not all) of them were aristocratic travellers, the object had a purpose of reflecting ‘refinement’ and ‘finesse.’ Many of his later portraits included both sitter and carefully placed objects in the composition, as a means to note and to demonstrate the worth of their expeditions. These portraits, that are now housed in private collections and national galleries, are obviously objects of history today. Because these are artworks of the Enlightenment, history has already been set in stone. Batoni’s antiques are obviously not the equivalent to a kitsch object, for the time between an antique in the eighteenth century and a

³⁷ Anthony M. Clark, *Pompeo Batoni: The Complete Catalogue*, Oxford: Phaidon Press Ltd. P. 51.

³⁸ Ibid. pp. 49-50.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 50.

kitsch object in the twenty-first century are too far apart historically. It is too difficult to assume a connection between Batoni's objects and twenty-first century kitsch objects. Albeit in the concept of kitsch, ancient monuments and historical relics have become objects adapted by kitsch, as one will see in the upcoming section. The chartreuse David is still in the process of formation within tourist culture and kitsch culture today – thus it has not yet been grounded in cultural studies or in history because it is new. The Renaissance and the Enlightenment are two eras that have existed, ended and written about in records; thus, it is a history that is set in stone. Kitsch is something that is still in the process of formation because scholars are still making sense of it in the world. Whereas a historical artifact from centuries ago may be subject to an act of discovery, the kitsch object is based on an act of interpretation, new in the discourse of art history and art in general.

To make sense of what this means, art historian Leonard Barkan writes specifically about narratives that were constructed over time in the Renaissance, but as they were being developed, history was still in the making. He states that “to emphasize those [David] of special and enduring fame offers the same promises and pitfalls as does any other focus on a traditional canon: it records the cases that are most fully documented that have touched the greatest number of individuals, but it tends to take their status for granted and fails to give a full

picture of the culture where the canon itself is in the process of formation.”⁴⁰

Kitsch, as *David* once was in the Renaissance, is still in the process of formation within contemporary culture and contemporary art.

Although Batoni’s objects range far from the discourse of kitsch, the chartreuse *David* is interesting when considering a string of narratives, because it is a combination of both Michelangelo’s *David* as a product of High Renaissance culture in Florence, which was later a city commonly visited by the average grand tourist, where miniature sculptures of classical art were purchased. According to a personal letter written by travellers, Florence was a city that exuberated artistic excellency, thus must have been truly inspiring to the eighteenth-century traveler. Art historian Jeremy Black accounts a quote by a tourist named Sir William Lee (1729 – 1778) in 1752, where the traveller refers to Florence as “a most agreeable place abounding in every species of virtue that one can wish to see; sculpture, painting and the arts carried to the greatest perfection.”⁴¹ Many of these travellers while making their way to Italy must have undoubtedly been heavily inspired by Michelangelo’s *David*, gazing at its beauty while making their way into the Piazzale degli Uffizi. When conducting research on such an object, the chartreuse *David* considers segments of history ranging from what it represents from the Renaissance, as well as its functionality as a souvenir in the Grand Tour era.

⁴⁰ Leonard Barkan, *UnEarthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Europe*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). Pp. 2-3.

⁴¹ Beinecke, Ms. 52 Box 3, 15 Oct. Quoted in Jeremy Black, *Italy and the Grand Tour*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003). P. 45.

Today, the chartreuse David is an object of kitsch, and according to author Monica Kjellman-Chapin it is capable of being “dismissed as facile, lowbrow, or one-off, throw-away aesthetics, [yet] kitsch is surprisingly mobile and complex.”⁴²

⁴² Monica Kjellman-Chapin, *Kitsch in History, Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013). P. x.

Section 3: Kitsch

Kitsch is an idea that has existed for just over a century. While it is a late nineteenth-century phenomenon, it is more widely associated with the modern twentieth-century, starting in Europe and later emerging in the United States after WWII (1939 – 1945).⁴³ After this period “the United States became a global influence in economic, political, military, cultural and technological affairs. The unprecedented growth of the U.S. economy translated into prosperity that resulted in millions of office and factory workers being lifted into a growing middle-class that moved to the suburbs and embraced in consumer goods.”⁴⁴ As the middle-class grew in suburban America, consumer items accumulated, and kitsch objects proliferated.

Today, kitsch is everywhere: in souvenir stores, kiosks, flea markets, thrift stores, art markets, and vintage stores, to name a few – and has now made its way

⁴³ Following WWII (1939 – 1945), the Cold War (1946 – 1991) became a four-decade political tension between the United States and the Soviet Union, each of which had opposing views, but had a mutual goal was for the control of atomic weapons, known as the “arms race.” The United States supported capitalist ideologies while Soviet Union supported communist ideology. Although there was no physical conflict between these two opposing forces, they both contributed to making propaganda as a way of promoting their ideologies, and as the “arms race” was an ongoing affair, control for space exploration also became a competition between the two opposing forces. This was known as the “space race,” where everything that involved space exploration was the trend of modern American society. Thus a ‘futuristic’ style emerged as this popularity grew, becoming a modern identity for suburban American culture and now the hallmark of American kitsch. See Renee Tafoya, “American Kitsch (1940 – 1960),” in *NorthWest College Blog*, <https://visualartsdepartment.wordpress.com/kitsch/>.

⁴⁴ “Conclusion: Post-War America,” Lumen Candela Learning, <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/conclusion-post-war-america/>.

into European cities such as Florence through the continuous rise of tourism. The chartreuse David is an invigorating cross between kitsch and high culture; its function and aesthetic categorize it as a kitsch object, yet to look at a kitsch object that represents a string of history (the Renaissance, the Grand Tour and now the discussion of kitsch) based on its appearance as *David*, it invites the consumer to think about where a mundane tourist object such as the chartreuse David came from, and how *David* changed through time.

Kitsch, as it developed in the Munich art markets during the Industrial Revolution of the 1860s, became an alternative for those interested in collecting art, but unable to afford it. In philosophers John Morreall and Jessica Loy's article *Kitsch and Aesthetic Education*, they describe that "people had at least a little familiarity with fine art and were looking for something equivalent to it, though not something involving the education and expense required by fine-art connoisseurship. These people and the objects they sought came together in the new manufacture-commercial culture that came after the Industrial Revolution."⁴⁵

As such, kitsch is also defined by a strict distinction between high and lowbrow culture. Cultural theorist Umberto Eco writes how "the members of the 'upper' classes have always seen the tastes of the 'lower' classes as disagreeable or ridiculous. One could certainly say that economic factors have always played a part in such discrimination, in the sense that elegance has always been associated

⁴⁵ John Morreall and Jessica Loy, "Kitsch and Aesthetic Education," *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 23 no. 4, 1989. P. 63-64.

with the use of costly fabrics, colours and gems.”⁴⁶ Thus, kitsch, from its birth has always been classified as something that is ‘other’ than high culture, and for some individuals it was believed to be a threat to American modern art.

For instance, art critic and modern art enthusiast Clement Greenburg’s popular essay *Avant-Garde and Kitsch* (1939) called kitsch “vicarious experiences and faked sensations...[that] changes according to style but [something] always remains the same.”⁴⁷ Kitsch is liked merely for its aesthetic and nothing else. It also changes its physical form but asks nothing of the consumer, therefore the individual lacks a deep knowledge of what that object represents. On the other hand, kitsch has changed in the twenty-first century Kjellman-Chapin rightly considers that today, “kitsch’s energy has been renewed and its shape again shifted by its development as a tool of ironic send-up or as an agent of the critical spirit.”⁴⁸

Kitsch is therefore commonly a decorative object that is enjoyed for its ironic, sentimental or comical purposes that cater to the masses; its images and objects are easily traceable because of its repetition of elements found in popular culture. Typically, the objects that many people consider to be "retro" today, are also kitsch. For instance, American kitsch, as previously mentioned, has become a

⁴⁶ Umberto Eco, *On Ugliness*, (London: Maclehorse Press, 2011). P. 394.

⁴⁷ Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” *The Partisan Review*, 1939. P. 10.

⁴⁸ Monica Kjellman-Cahpin, *Kitsch: History, Theory, Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2013). P. x.

[https://www.academia.edu/4692022/Introduction to Kitsch History Theory Practice?auto=download](https://www.academia.edu/4692022/Introduction_to_Kitsch_History_Theory_Practice?auto=download).

staple in mid-twentieth century culture, and it grew rapidly after German kitsch. Examples of kitsch that are commonly seen today are busts of Elvis Presley [Figure 4.1], a poster of Marilyn Monroe painted in velvet [Figure 4.2] Don Featherstone's American pink flamingoes [Figure 4.3] and lava lamps [Figure. 4.4], to name a few. What makes these objects kitsch are their references to American culture, which one could assume are a mockery of the cultivated, European classes who once discriminated against the kitsch consumer. What once was the bust of Homer (for instance, in Batoni's painting) is now a bust of Elvis, or instead of a chandelier, we now use a lava lamp as a psychedelic substitute. Kitsch objects can also be commonly referred to as tchotchkes, trinkets, novelty items, knick-knacks, and collectibles. As these objects proliferated, theorists such as Greenberg saw them as a danger to art.

Clement Greenberg (1909-1994) was a well-known American art critic who wrote negatively about kitsch in his essay titled *Avant-Garde and Kitsch* (1939) in order to easily distinguish it from other works of art, but also to ultimately reject it entirely from the realm of art based on its function. In his essay, he explains the circumstances around modern art in the early twentieth century, where there was no 'one' "religion, tradition or authority that flourished nor would be questioned for validity."⁴⁹ Kitsch's 'scheme' that follows after the 'cultivated' rise of the avant-garde was a threat that Greenberg was trying to

⁴⁹ "Avant-Garde and Kitsch: Analysis," *Penn State University*, February 6 2014, <https://sites.psu.edu/1314passion/2014/02/06/clement-greenberg-avant-garde-and-kitsch-analysis/>.

expose to those who remained serious in their commitment to art. Greenberg's explanation of the avant-garde correctly states that it abides less in the act of representing art in a concrete form, but in an abstraction or nonrepresentation of artistic expression. Greenberg writes that:

The avant-garde poet or artist tries in effect to imitate God by creating something valid solely on its own terms, in the way nature itself is valid, in the way a landscape – not its picture – is aesthetically valid; something *given*, increate, independent of meanings, similar or originals. Content is to be dissolved so completely into form that the work of art or literature cannot be reduced in whole or in part to anything not itself.

The avant-garde was a solid, intellectual theology that was still cultivated and regarded as a serious form of art that could be theorized and contextualized for writers such as Greenberg. He writes that the avant-garde is the “imitation of imitating...and in a sense this imitation of imitating is a superior sort of Alexandrianism.”⁵⁰ But as kitsch surfaced, it started imitating the effect of imitation. To explain, avant-garde's methodology relied on the process leading to the work, concentrating on its materials, concept, and labour before a finished product. Meanwhile “kitsch emphasises the reactions that the work must provoke, and elects as a goal of its own operation the emotional reaction of the user,”⁵¹ to quote Eco.

It is understandable that for Greenberg's time, a relatively new phenomena such as kitsch that adhered to a mentality of ‘art as commodifiable’, would be a

⁵⁰ Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” *The Partisan Review*, 1939. P. 8.

⁵¹ Umberto Eco, *On Ugliness*, (London: Maclehorse Press, 2011). P. 397.

direct threat to art and its future development. For Greenberg, *Avant-Garde and Kitsch* (1939) was a means of defending creativity; the avant-garde kept a means to “keep culture moving”⁵² while kitsch was an entity that threatened the position of the elite. To quote Mjellman-Chapin, Greenberg’s view was that “kitsch could be infused with propaganda and thus operate as an ideal mechanism of political manipulation and social control.”⁵³ However, in the twenty-first century this is not the case. For those who are amused by kitsch and kitsch theory, kitsch not only sustains their interest in the artificiality of objects but their interest in the very nature of artificiality. Eco notes that connoisseurs of kitsch have an active interest in not only the object itself but what it imitates, such as classical Greek sculpture or a Renaissance artwork lauded in international museums. He states:

Those who like kitsch believe they are enjoying a qualitatively high experience. You just have to say there is one art for the uncultivated just as there is another for the cultivated, and that you have to respect the differences between religious beliefs, or sexual preferences. But while lovers of ‘cultivated’ art find kitsch kitsch, lovers of kitsch do not disdain the great art of the museums (which nonetheless often exhibit works that cultivated sensibility labels as kitsch).⁵⁴

At seventy years old, Greenberg’s essay is still of relevance for its impact on the discourse of kitsch, yet aged in contemporary art theory due to kitsch’s

⁵² Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” *The Partisan Review* (1939), p. 36.

⁵³ Monica Kjellman-Cahpin, *Kitsch: History, Theory, Practice*, (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2013). P xi.

⁵⁴ Umberto Eco, *On Ugliness*, (London: Maclehose Press, 2011). P. 397.

theoretical expansion beyond enacting a distinction between high and low art. Kitsch and the concept of its social operation has already made its way into museums and commercial galleries through the work of Jeff Koons. Koons, an American contemporary artist well known for his large-scale sculptures of kitsch subject matter, has showcased his work on an international scale and still practises his craft today. In one particular series conducted between 2010 and 2014, Koons and his studio assistants assembled a series of sculptures that resembled statues from the Baroque and Renaissance periods. On September 24, 2015, the artist and a team of workers installed a 129 x 60-inch stainless steel replicated sculpture of Gian Lorenzo Bernini's (1598 – 1680) *Ratto di Proserpina* (1621 – 1622) in the Piazza della Signoria in Florence, Italy, beside the nineteenth-century replica of Michelangelo's *David* [Figure 4.5]. This was a means of expressing, to a mass audience, our collective knowledge of art in a media-saturated world. Mass information and knowledge is mostly gathered by digital reproduction; thus, the replica of David and Koon's *Ratto di Proserpina* in the Piazza Signoria hints to how art is mostly seen on a screen today, and how most information is processed (especially in the discourse of art) through data and reproduced images.

The Koons project was initiated by an art dealer named Fabrizio Moretti for the twenty-ninth edition of the *Biennale Internazionale Dell'Antiquariato di Firenze*, organized by the Muse Association for Florence's Civic Museums. The glistening gold statue sat in the square for three months until December of 2015.

Moretti's idea was simple; to create a juxtaposition of the old and new. To quote a 2015 article from *The New York Times*:

High-end fairs specializing in old masters and antiques, such as BIAF, TEFAF Maastricht and the Biennale des Antiquaires in Paris, have struggled to retain and attract buyers in recent years. Mr. Moretti and BIAF's 88 participating dealerships were hoping that "Jeff Koons in Florence" — a three-month showing of those two sculptures, conceived by the city's mayor, Dario Nardella, and curated by Sergio Risaliti — would broaden international interest in Italy's oldest and most prestigious fair devoted to its own historic art.⁵⁵

What is notable about this quote is the first sentence. That being antique and old, master sculptures have been undesirable to the public in recent years – until an artist such as Koons, who uses references to the Renaissance with the aim of also referencing kitsch, devalues the elite system of value in the art market and art society. This plays as a tongue-in-cheek response to an old-fashioned bourgeois society that valued works like Michelangelo's *David* and Bernini's *Ratto di Proserpina*.

To quote theorist Bill Brown, "Koons [has] made it clear how aggressively artists are willing to deploy kitsch to evade an aesthetic system for distributing value, just as architects have made it clear that kitsch can be deployed to humanize a built environment sterilized by modernism."⁵⁶ Koon's work

⁵⁵ Scott Reyburn, "Florence Turns Up the Celebrity Heat," *The New York Times*, accessed: August 17, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/05/arts/international/florence-turns-up-the-celebrity-heat.html>.

⁵⁶ Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, in *Early Writings*, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (New York: Penguin, 1992), p. 389, quoted in Bill Brown, *Other Things* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015). P. 218.

challenges audience members to see how we systematize value and objects in the realm of art. Hence, the chartreuse David falls under this systematization, existing in an ambivalent state of art and kitsch based on its history but also its functionality. Mjellman-Chapin clarifies that kitsch has a different meaning in the twentieth century than it did in the nineteenth. She rightly claims that “one might argue that today we have reached a kind of taste reversal as far as kitsch is concerned, with kitsch compendia and other publications, [where] the notion of ‘kitsch as cool,’ as sites like *cuteoverload.com* and *worldofkitsch.com* forging different forms of appreciation – indeed, different sensibilities and emotional responses – around objects previously viewed with disdain.”⁵⁷ Perhaps, in the near future, kitsch’s meaning will be reversed and reinterpreted as something other than the antithesis of art, and highly regarded among art scholars. For instance, as of May 2019, Koons’ *Rabbit Sculpture* (1986) just recently sold at auction at 91.1 million dollars (USD) at Christies in New York City. Kitsch is becoming increasingly popular as we make our way into the first quarter of the twenty-first century and continues to be open for interpretation.

Italian art critic Gillo Dorfles rightly notes that monuments such as Greek, Roman, Renaissance and Baroque sculptures became kitsch in the twentieth century, an observation that can be applied to Michelangelo’s *David* and its contemporary chartreuse version:

⁵⁷ Monica Mjellman-Chapin, *Kitsch: History, Theory, Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2013). P.xiv.

At a certain point in history, monuments became associated with kitsch, (it had never previously been so) and one might well ask why this unforeseen aesthetic and ethnic debasement of their values came about, or why monuments have not adapted to the times. Perhaps instead of evoking authentic religious, patriotic or mystical sentiments, they evoke only the customary *ersatz* for these sentiments and have suffered the fate of becoming sentimental.⁵⁸

Monuments like *David* and their sentimentality are significantly distanced from our time in regard to religious and politics beliefs. People today are familiar with *David* seemingly because it once meant something to Florentine people of the Renaissance and it is extremely popular, even for those without any in-depth knowledge of art. One may also assume that monuments have become kitsch in our time because before the Industrial Revolution, monuments and statues had to be copied manually, and could not be reproduced mechanically with little to no human effort. Monuments were documented by being drawn or cast, and therefore making copies of works of art and sculpture was time-consuming and laborious. Florence, like any other city in Italy, produces vast quantities of kitsch to be sold in souvenir stores. The effect is that kitsch objects like the chartreuse *David* connect the High Renaissance to our contemporary culture, stitching together tourism and the activity of seeing art.

⁵⁸ Gillo Dorfles, "Monuments," in *Kitsch: The Art of Bad Taste*, (New York: Universe Books, 1969). P. 79.

Section 4: Chartreuse David Through a Greco-Roman Lens

So far, this paper has navigated its way into the history behind the chartreuse David in its historical and contemporary dimensions. It has explored the period of its prototype's production in the early sixteenth century, and examined the chartreuse *David*'s functionality as a descendent of a category of souvenirs that arose throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the nineteenth century, kitsch arose as a product of the Industrial Revolution and became disruptive to the modern art of the twentieth century. In the twenty-first century it challenged the hierarchies and values of contemporary art. This section contends with none of that, for the chartreuse David, with its blinding neon yellow-green colour, alludes to an era that predated even Michelangelo's original Renaissance statue; that being Hellenistic Greece between 323 BC and 31 BC. The intentionally lurid colour of the miniature, kitsch chartreuse David intersects with the history of colour that is beginning to resurface in scholarly discourse concerning ancient art. What holds true to the history of ancient monuments was that many of them were polychrome and not monochrome, and that becomes a direct correlation between the sculptures of the ancient world and our object under investigation.

In 2014, two art historians, Ulrike Koch-Brinkmann and Vinzenz Brinkmann, introduced a project which completely revolutionized the ways in

which the public viewed marble statuary from Graeco-Roman antiquity. On Brinkmann's website, they describe the exclusion of polychrome sculpture as a viable option for discussion for decades, noting: "the original appearance of Ancient Greek and Roman art and architecture was a topic that triggered lively discussion in the nineteenth century...[but by] the twentieth century, abstraction in thought and form alike became prevalent in the Western world. The matter of the sensual appearance of ancient art – especially regarding the use of colour and ornament – was long factored out."⁵⁹ Polychrome sculpture was not something that was commonly written about, thus the discourse started to dwindle out in discussions about history and art.

With advances in technology for scanning, that can register previously hidden light spectrums such as UV, along with stereo microscopy and absorption spectroscopy,⁶⁰ it is possible to see that many surviving ancient sculptures have small touches of yellow paint mixed with green, next to blues and pink as well. All of these hues are now clearly noticeable on the marble through these new modes of access [Figure 5.1]. Brinkmann's project began in 1980 on the Temple of Aphaia, located on the island of Aegina of the Saronic Islands of Greece, which is approximately twenty-seven kilometers south of Athens. The project continues to be an ongoing investigation into how marble statues were conceived and

⁵⁹ Vinzenz Brinkmann, "Reconstructions: Archer from the Temple of Aphaia, Glyptothek Munich (Version B)," *Stiftung Archaeologie*, <http://www.stiftung-archaeologie.de/foundationen.html>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

presented in Ancient Greece. What has become evident through this research was that several statues dating as far back as 500 BC were polychromed with a wide range of colours, as can be seen on this digital reconstruction of Aphaia's *Trojan Archer* (also known as *Paris*), which dates to 480 BC [Figure 5.2].

Paris crouches on one knee, ready to pull his sling back while looking out to the distance. The sculpture has an incredibly vibrant colour palette that is intricately patterned on the legs and arms of his *anaxyrides*, which are “long tight fitted trousers, a long sleeve pullover and a vest. On his head he wears a peaked, soft leather Scythian cap, with the cheek straps tied to a button in the back.”⁶¹ The colours are exquisite; ranging from red, blue, green, yellow, brown, malachite and flesh tones. This is in direct contrast to long-held perceptions of the classical white or cream marble as indicative of elegant statuary and which were seemingly so influential for Renaissance artists such as Michelangelo.

It is generally held by other scholars that the artists of the Renaissance were not aware of the polychrome nature of many the statues they were studying. Scholar Riley Winters wrote in a 2017 article:

Unbeknownst to those fifteenth and sixteenth century pre-archaeologists, those faint traces of colour were indicative of a once elaboratively decorative sculpture – not just of residue from these pieces being long misplaced. It is because of this lack of knowledge that Renaissance sculptors intent on copying Greek and Roman forms carved their statues in unpainted,

⁶¹ Vinzenz Brinkmann, Renee Dreyfus and Ulrike Koch-Brinkmann, *Gods in Color*, San Francisco: Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 2014. P. 105.

white marble; as far as they knew unpainted white marble was precisely the way their ancient forebearers had sculpted.⁶²

The irony surrounding this new discovery is that it brings coloured kitsch objects such as the chartreuse *David* into a new light. If ancient Greece and Rome did not always produce the (what is considered ‘elegant’) restrained white statuary typically associated with these time periods, then one cannot question that the polychrome nature of the miniature kitsch *David* is feasibly closer to its Greco-Roman roots than the original *David*. Statues such as the *Trojan Archer* (480 BC) turn the general public’s perception of marble and its absence of colour on its head.

With this knowledge, one might question what Renaissance artists thought of colour in their sculptures during this time, as it is seen repeatedly in this new scholarly research concerning ancient polychrome sculpture that vibrant colour upon marble sculpture ceased to exist by the time of Michelangelo’s period. In order to understand this, ancient writings and artists need to be accounted for. Art historian Una Roman D’Elia explains this further regarding the ancient sculptor Praxiteles (b. 395-330 BC) and the Athenian painter Nicias (332 BC). D’Elia quotes the ancient historian Pliny the Elder, who, “when asked which of his own marble statues he liked best, he [Praxiteles] answered ‘Those which the hand

⁶² Riley Winters, “A More Colorful Ancient Greece: Pigment Proves Classical Statues Were Once Painted,” *Ancient Origins Magazine*, 2017. Accessed 04-07-2019 2:22PM. <https://www.ancient-origins.net/artifacts-other-artifacts/more-colorful-ancient-greece-pigment-proves-classical-statues-were-once-021409>.

Nicias has touched.””⁶³ D’Elia goes on to explain that the Renaissance sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti took note of this textual passage, and that many passages by Pliny the Elder (b. 23-79 AD) were filled with references to polychrome statuary. D’Elia adds that Donatello’s time in the quattrocento (1400s) was spent painting *stucco tondi* with hints of colour as a means of longing for the past [Figure 5.3]. Polychrome sculptures were known to Renaissance artists from the duecento⁶⁴ up until the time of Michelangelo.⁶⁵ She writes:

Artists imitated this colourful antiquity by painting and gilding their marble sculptures from the duecento to the end of quattrocento – a continuous tradition of polychrome sculpture from the early imitations of Roman marble sculpture until the time of Michelangelo. Technical examinations have revealed that such eminent monuments in the history of classicizing marble sculpture as the pulpits of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano, Arnolfo di Cambio for the façade of the Duomo of Florence, the statues placed in the exterior niches of Orsanmichele, the tombs of Leonardo Bruni and Carlo Marsuppini and the reliefs of the Tempeo Malatestiano were originally gilded and painted in blue, red, green, and other hues. New technical examinations continue to reveal traces of polychromy. In other words, it is not the Renaissance that had lost the colours of antiquity, but rather we that have lost the colours of the Renaissance.

The ultimate question for this section thus revolves around Michelangelo’s potential knowledge of polychrome statues. If he was aware of this, why did he discontinue the tradition? Art historian Mortimore Borne notes that “the sculptors of the Renaissance, from Donatello to Michelangelo, and right into the twentieth

⁶³ Una Roman D’Elia, “How the Quattrocento Saw Colour,” *Notes in the History of Art*, Spring 2016. Accessed October 3 2018. P. 217.

⁶⁴ Ibid. P. 218.

⁶⁵ Ibid. P. 218.

century such sculptors as, for example, Auguste Rodin, were unequivocally opposed to the addition of paint in their sculptures. They looked upon such practice as a vulgarism that did violence to their work.”⁶⁶ What Borne fails to explain was *why* Michelangelo may have seen this practice as vulgar. There is one wooden sculpture in particular that is attributed to Michelangelo, titled *Crucifix* (1492) [Figure 5.4], that hangs in the Basilica di Santo Spirito in Florence today. This was sculpted after the time of Lorenzo de Medici’s death, when Michelangelo lived with Augustine monks in the church of Santo Spirito.⁶⁷ Journalist Sobani Ghosh notes that when it was discovered in 1962, after it was thought to be lost, art historians opposed the idea that this sculpture was done by Michelangelo. This was due to its overpainted aesthetic; specifically, a reason to believe it was not completed by the famous Renaissance artist because he typically left his sculptures pure marble. But what Ghosh also adds is that Michelangelo had the privilege to study the human anatomy to a highly detailed degree. Hence this rendering of flesh may be polychromed, but was potentially done in order to understand and faithfully render the colours of human skin, and not to intentionally imitate the brightly hued colours used in ancient Greece.

This leads one to claim that Michelangelo would have ultimately rejected polychrome sculpture in his later years, as it did not reflect his philosophy on art

⁶⁶ Mortimer Borne, “Chromatic Versus Polychrome Sculpture,” *Leonardo*, Vol. 1 No. 3, (Summer, 1971), P. 257.

⁶⁷ Sarbani Ghosh, “Nude Crucifixion Sculpted by a Teenage Michelangelo Returns to Florence,” *Artnet News*, April 5 2017. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/michelangelo-sculpture-returned-to-florence-basilica-916139>.

practises. It is known within scholarly debate in Renaissance studies that for many Renaissance men, their devotion to art centered around a devotion to God and the divine perfection of God. Perhaps Michelangelo was strict with his materials; where exploration with colour was for a two-dimensional surface (painting), and the other to be left alone (sculpture), for a painted statue might interfere with the aesthetic that Michelangelo claimed to have loved more than painting. Another fact to note about wooden sculptures in particular in Renaissance Italy is that many of them *were* polychromed, while status of marble seemingly remained white. Terracotta was also usually painted.⁶⁸ Hence there seemed to be a system within the Renaissance which acted differently from ancient artists and may have distinguished between media with regards to the application of paint. However, in our postmodern world, *David* has now been reproduced over a million times, with no concept of a system in art anymore and no rules to bind them. *David* is now in a time where he has been used for violence in advertising, for religion in history books, for decoration in front of homes, for reinterpretation in all aspects.

David once followed a timeline that was more focused on humanistic ideology, whereas now, *David* is an epicentre of Renaissance Art. Renaissance Art, through different interpretations by artists and thinkers, has re-stitched *David* through their way of seeing the world in their time. It can thus be argued that Michelangelo's *David* today follows a line of kitsch, for there seems to be a

⁶⁸ Una D'Elia, Heather Merla and Rachel Boyd, "Renaissance Polychrome Sculpture in Tuscany," Queens University Library, 2015. <https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/handle/1974/14832>.

fascination with altering it as a work of art based on the distance of time. As Sontag notes “time liberates the work of art from moral relevance, delivering it over to the sensibility...another effect: time contracts the sphere of banality. (Banality is, strictly speaking, always a category of the contemporary.) What was banal can, with the passage of time, become fantastic.”⁶⁹

The irony of coloured kitsch David souvenirs having more of a similarity to Ancient art, despite the Renaissance’s yearn for the methodologies and techniques used by ancient artists is playful as it is humorous. Kitsch’s characteristic also plays a benign, ironic and humorous role in art by its aesthetics, and yet if it were not for the existence of the chartreuse David, this correlation would cease to be discovered. Typically, in a sense, kitsch is almost childlike – it uses ‘pretty,’ ‘adorable’ or ‘over-the-top’ features to give it that tacky aesthetic that art scholars love to hate. It is the childlike aesthetic (and hence why kitsch is usually brightly coloured or cute looking) that alludes to the sentimentality that is placed on kitsch. The active connection between bright colour and kitsch is when an everyday object is heavily brightened with colour. Fore example, a toy pony would not be considered kitsch; however, if it is painted in a neon pink or green, doused in glitter with miniature artificial flowers wrapped around its mane, it would be. Colour can play an important role, and can ultimately decide if

⁶⁹ Susan Sontag, “Notes on Camp” in *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, New York: Picador, 1964. P. 285.

something is kitsch if it is a colour that is not normally associated with the nature of that object or thing.

Conclusion

For such a small object that may seem mundane at first glance, the chartreuse *David* allows one to dive into a combined history of different periods. The chartreuse *David* represents Michelangelo's *David* (1501 – 1504), which was incredibly symbolic for those who suffered from the endeavors of the Italian Wars in the late fifteenth century. Additionally, its orientation and placement in the Piazza Signoria as a political stand-point significantly changed its meaning upon its divergence from its intended position on Santa Maria del Fiore, altering how citizens and those beyond Tuscan borders would interpret *David*. The fact that it was once hated by a group of citizens helps one consider that an object in its time is received differently from how we interpret it today. Kitsch suffered this same early fate at the hands of modern art writers such as Greenberg, yet today it is creatively reinterpreted.

Wunderkammern, as the German princes called them, were widespread in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, shortly after the completion of *David*. As the Enlightenment began to arise, the coexistence of objects of naturality and artificiality in personal collections became a growing phenomenon and a means of discovery. Among many of these artificial objects were miniature sculptures in *Wunderkammern*; however, they were associated with and owned by a particular society and an elite group of people, making them inaccessible to the rest of the public.

This chartreuse *David* souvenir, which today is seen as kitsch, oddly derives from a history of objects owned by the aristocracy, and from the Grand Tour and the wonder chambers of Europe. After the Industrial Revolution and the rise of mechanical reproduction, however, a souvenir object derived from aristocratic origins ultimately became kitsch, because access to this object shifted from just the elite few to the everyday masses. It seems true, yet unjust that once the masses started to acquire objects of kitsch—as though for them it were an open door into a private world—these objects are now considered ‘garbage’ and ‘uncultivated’. Fortunately, as we see today, kitsch in recent scholarship has been interpreted more positively in culture and in art through the popularity of Jeff Koons and other artists. This shows that an aesthetic once universally hated can change across time.

Ironically, for an object deemed kitsch, it traces back to a history that goes beyond even its representational, Renaissance form. Its colour is arguably evoking polychromic statues in Greece, which for its time was appropriate, yet when seen today some may find utterly ridiculous, in a sense making it humorously kitschy depending how one interprets it. But it also proves that this perspective is related to a discombobulated view of ancient aesthetics. One can hypothesize that this miniature sculpture would have gone against what Michelangelo would have considered appropriate for sculpture in his time, making it unfit for his technical standards for how art *should* be made. The arrival of kitsch shook this cultivated class and, quite frankly, possibly frightened them.

The chartreuse *David* is significant today because it is open for interpretation, even if it is not an object of art. It is, as we have seen with Koons, an object that challenges notions of aesthetic value. It also represents many entities of scholarly research, of which a fraction has been examined here in this paper—from its functionality as a souvenir, its prototypical form as a High Renaissance statue, and a history deriving from bourgeois culture to mass culture. It makes one wonder about not only this specific object, but about many of the kitsch objects and souvenirs tourists may come across today in medieval cities — each, like Florence, having particular histories and therefore particular objects that replicate and respond to their own histories. Kitsch's fundamental purpose is to cater to those interested in the object for its aesthetic purposes; yet if one is interested enough, they may find that the object they purchased has a long history behind it. These objects of kitsch consumer culture may, as we have seen, be woven back into the fabric of art history.

Bibliography

- Barkan, Leonard. *UnEarthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Europe*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
- Barolsky, Paul. Machiavelli, Michelangelo and “David.” *Notes in the History of Art*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Spring 2004). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23206849>.
- Borne, Mortimer. “Chromatic Versus Polychrome Sculpture.” *Leonardo*, Vol. 1, No. 3, (Summer 1971). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1572300>.
- Bowren, Edgar Peters and John Rishel. *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2000).
- Boyd, Rachel, Una D’Elia and Heather Merla. “Renaissance Polychrome Sculpture in Tuscany.” (Kingston: Queens University, 2015).
-
- Boyle, Joe. “How Michelangelo’s David Hit 500.” BBC News, September 8 2004. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/3634730.stm>.
- Black, Jeremy. *Italy and the Grand Tour*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Brown, Bill. *Other Things*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015.
- Brown, Stephanie. “On Kitsch, Nostalgia and Nineties Femininity.” *Studies in Popular Culture*. Vol. 22. No. 3. (2000).
- Clark, Anthony M. *Pompeo Batoni: The Complete Catalogue*. Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1999.

Coonin, Victor A. *From Marble to Flesh: The Biography of Michelangelo's David*. Prato: The Florentine Press, 2014.

D'Elia, Una. "How the Quattrocento Saw Colour." *Notes in the History of Art*, Spring 2016.
<file:///C:/Users/Sam/Downloads/D'Elia%20How%20the%20Quattrocento%20saw%20Colour.pdf>.

Doreflès, Gillo. *Kitsch: The Art of Bad Taste*. (New York: Universe Books, 1969).

Eco, Umberto. *On Ugliness*. (London: Maclehorse Press, 2011).

Ghosh, Sarbani. "Nude Crucifixion Sculpted by a Teenage Michelangelo Returns to Florence." *Artnet News*, April 5 2017. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/michelangelo-sculpture-returned-to-florence-basilica-916139>.

Greenberg, Clement. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch." *The Partisan Review*, 1939.
<http://sites.uci.edu/form/files/2015/01/Greenberg-Clement-Avant-Garde-and-Kitsch-copy.pdf>.

Kjellman-Chapin, Monica. "Kitsch in History, Theory, Practice." (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2013).

Levine, Saul. "The Location of Michelangelo's David: The Meeting of January 25, 1504." *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 56 No. 1. March 1974.

Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975). Originally published in 1689.

Marx, Karl. Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, in *Early Writings*, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (New York: Penguin, 1992).

Morreall, John and Jessica Loy. "Kitsch and Aesthetic Education." *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 23. No. 4. 1989.

Olaquiaga, Celeste. *The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of the Kitsch Experience*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998).

Paolucci, Antonio. *David: Michelangelo*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2006).

Pomian, Krzysztof. *Collectors and Curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500 – 1800*. Trans. Elizabeth Wiles-Portier. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).

Potts, Rolf. *Souvenir* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018).

Reyburn, Scott. "Florence Turns Up the Celebrity Heat." *The New York Times*. October 2, 2015. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/05/arts/international/florence-turns-up-the-celebrity-heat.html>.

Rugg, Whitney. "Kitsch." *The Chicago School of Media Theory*. Winter 2002. <https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/kitsch/>.

Sontag, Susan. *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*. (New York: Picador, 1964).

Wallace, William E. "Michelangelo's Wet Nurse." *Arion* Vol. 17 No. 2. 2009.

Winters, Riley. "A More Colourful Ancient Greece: Pigment Proves Classical Statues Were Once Painted." *Ancient Origins Magazine*. 2017.

Appendix: Figures



Figure. 1.1: Calvin Klein commercial, *Microfiber Underwear advertisement*, 2008. Screenshot.

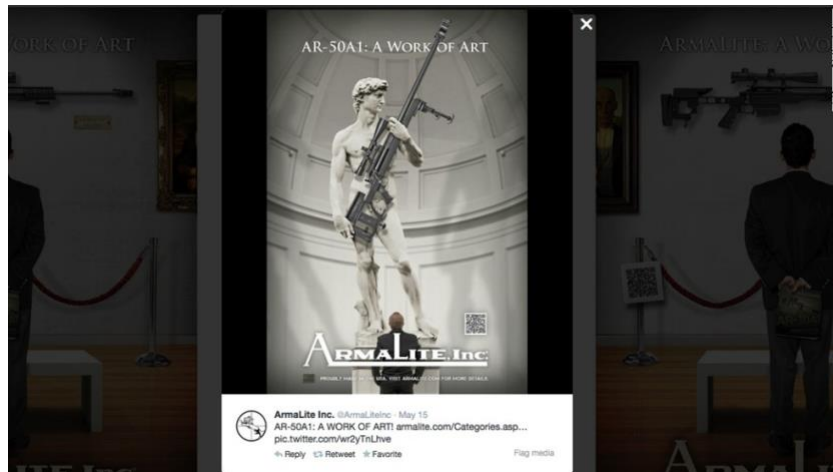


Figure 1.2: ArmaLite Incorporated advertisement, 2014. Screenshot accessed on Twitter.



Figure 1.3: Michelangelo's *David* as seen on Nickelodeon's *SpongeBob SquarePants*, 2001. Screenshots accessed at: https://spongebob.fandom.com/wiki/Squidward%27s_accidental_statue.



Figure 1.4: Store front of *Best of Florence*. Image courtesy of the author.



Figure 1.5: 360° view of Chartreuse David souvenir from *Best of Florence Souvenirs*, Via della Condota. Images courtesy of the author.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/05/arts/international/florence-turns-up-the-celebrity-heat.html>

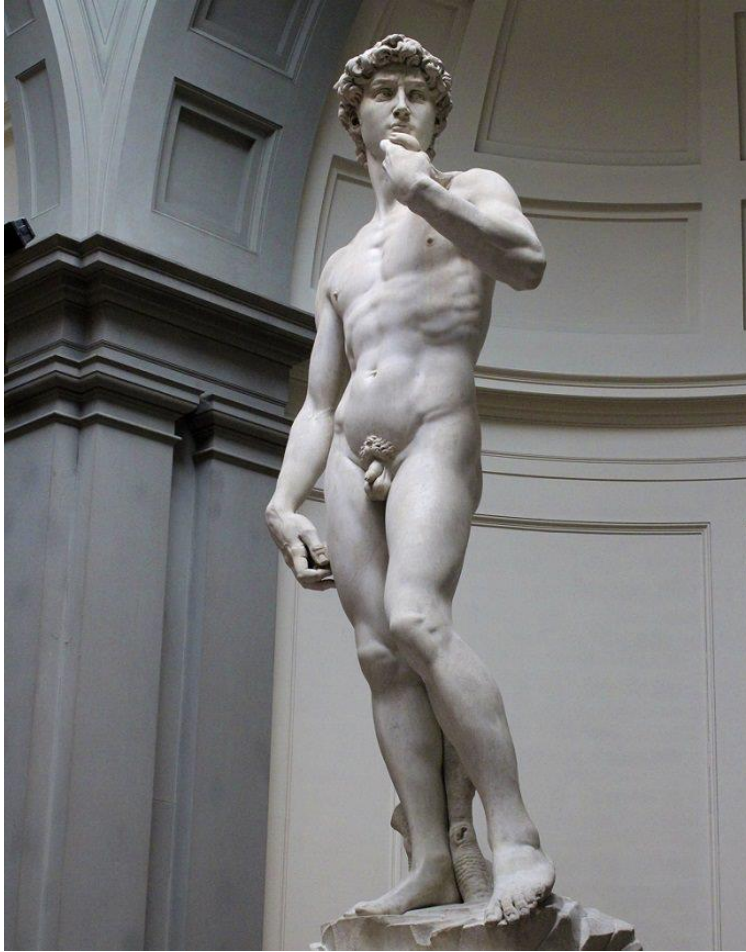


Figure 2.1: Michelangelo, *David*, carrara marble. 1501-1504. Galleria dell'Accademia. 17 x 6.5 feet. Image courtesy of the author.



Figure 2.2: **Left:** Donatello, *The Prophet David*, 1410. The Bargello Museum, Florence. 75 inches. **Right:** Verrocchio, *David*, 1473-1475. The Bargello Museum, Florence. 49 inches. The Bargello Museum, Florence. Images courtesy of the author.



Figure 2.3: Polykleitos, *Doryphoros*, marble sculpture, 450 – 440 BC. Museo Archaeologico Nazionale, Naples. Screenshot accessed at: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/ancient-mediterranean-ap/greece-etruria-rome/a/polykleitos-doryphoros-spear-bearer>.



Figure 3.1: Ferrante Imperato, *Historia Dell'Naturale*, 1599. Image digitized by the Smithsonian Libraries. Photo accessed at Biodiversity Library Blog - <https://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2017/03/ferrante-imperato-step-into-his-cabinet-of-wonders.html>.



Figure 3.2: Pompeo Batoni, *Sir William Gordon*, 1765-66, oil on canvas.

Photo accessed on Wikipedia:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Gordon_\(British_Army_officer\)#/media/File:William_Gordon_Batoni.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Gordon_(British_Army_officer)#/media/File:William_Gordon_Batoni.jpg).



Figure 3.3: Pompeo Batoni, *Thomas Estcourt*, 1772, oil on canvas. Photo accessed on Pinterest at: <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/278589926927218152/>.



Figure 3.4: **Left:** Pompeo Batoni, *Thomas Dundas* 1764. **Right:** Pompeo Batoni, *Count Razumovsky* 1766. Images accessed at Flickr. Left: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/renzodionigi/4160174971>. Right: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/renzodionigi/4159883157/lightbox/>.



Figure 4.1: Bust of Elvis Presley. Image accessed at: <https://picclick.com/Vintage-Rare-Life-Sized-Elvis-Presley-Chalkware-Bust-132827390149.html>.

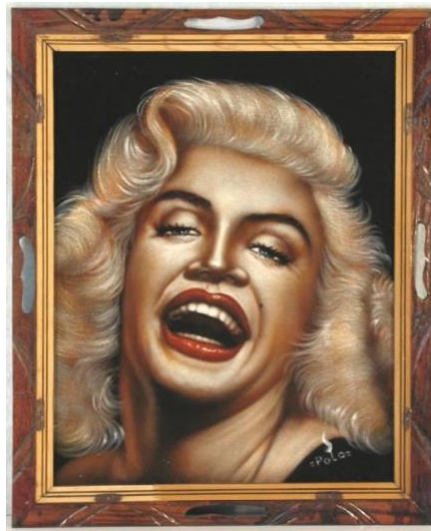


Figure 4.2: Marilyn Monroe velvet painting. Image accessed on Pinterest. <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/113786328058706905/>.



Figure 4.3: Don Featherstone and his sea of pink flamingoes,
Credit: Seth Resnick/Science Faction, via Corbis, New York Times.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/24/business/don-featherstone-inventor-of-the-pink-flamingo-in-plastic-dies-at-79.html>.



Figure 4.4: Lava lamps. Image accessed at: <https://www.portablepress.com/blog/2015/07/lava-lampology/>.



Figure 4.5: Jeff Koons, *Pluto and Proserpina*, 2010. Mirror polished stainless steel with color coating, 129 x 134 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 56 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. 2010-2013. Image by Maurizio Degl' Innocenti/European Pressphoto Agency.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/05/arts/international/florence-turns-up-the-celebrity-heat.html>.

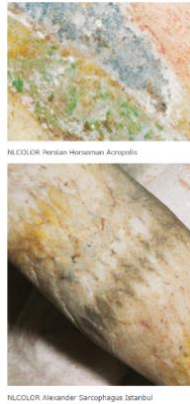


Figure 5.1: Polychromed ancient marble sculpture (400 BC) as seen on Stiftung Archaeologie website. Screenshot accessed at http://www.stiftung-archaeologie.de/ParisAphaia_2.html.



Figure 5.2: *Trojan's Archer* in the west pediment of Aphaia Temple (400 BC). Screenshot accessed at Atlasobscura

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/ancient-sculpture-color-polychromy>



Figure 5.3: Donatello, *Stucco Narrative Tondi* in the Old Sacristy of San Lorenzo, Florence Italy. Screenshot accessed at <https://www.teggelaar.com/en/florence-day-3-continuation-12/>

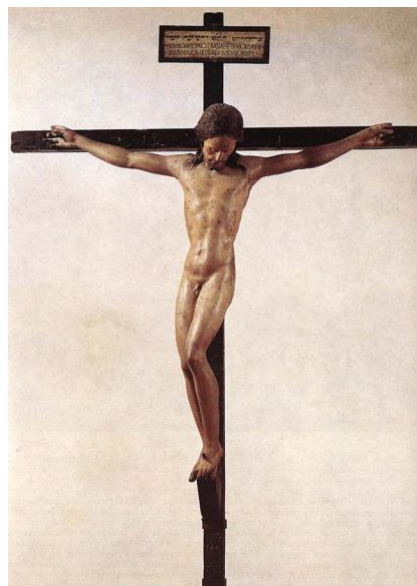


Figure 5.4: Michelangelo, *Crucifixion*, 1492. Polychrome wooden sculpture. 142 x 135 cm, Basilica of Santo Spirito, Florence. Screenshot accessed at: [https://alchetron.com/Crucifix-\(Michelangelo\)](https://alchetron.com/Crucifix-(Michelangelo))