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# art & man

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See page 9 of this issue

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MICHELANGELO  
and the Art of Drawing

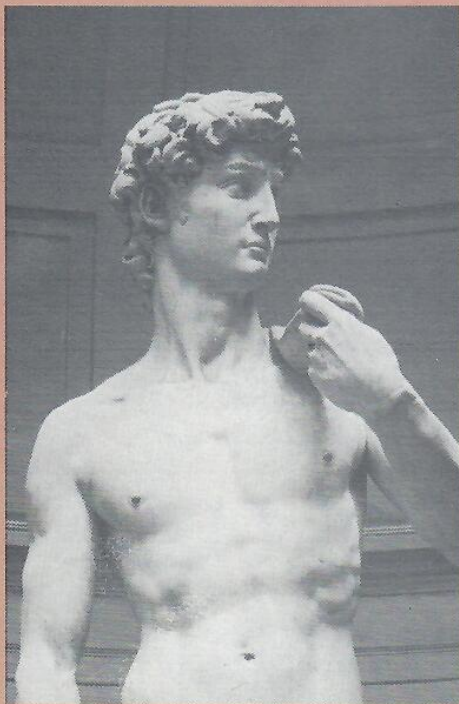
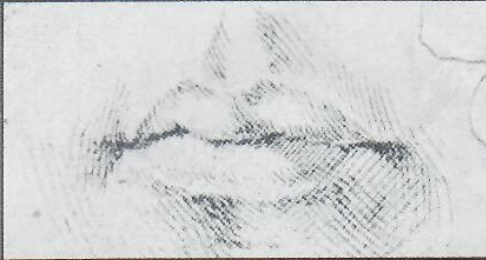
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Michelangelo. The dome of St. Peter's Cathedral, Rome. Photo by Photo Researchers, Inc.



# MICHELANGELO



Who is the greatest artist of all time? Many people would name Michelangelo, who created some of the world's most famous masterpieces —like St. Peter's Cathedral, the *David* sculpture, and the Sistine Chapel. Where did he get his ideas? How did he begin creating? Find out on the next few pages.

**T**ake away any one of the three works shown here and today's art would be quite different. Michelangelo's vision of the world was unique, and he saw things in a way that no one before him ever had. Michelangelo had hundreds of ideas on every subject, but how was he to communicate them to other people? He

couldn't just start carving an enormous block of marble, or begin painting a vast ceiling. He had to visualize his thoughts in some way, so he turned to the most vital creative tool any artist can use—drawing. As he himself put it, in his journals, "I drew and drew, then drew some more." He went through the same struggles any artist does. It is only by looking at his *drawings* that we can see just how his ideas developed and how

Michelangelo, *David*, 1501–1504. Academy, Florence. Photo, Editorial Photo Archives.

Michelangelo, *The Creation of Adam* (detail from the Sistine Chapel, Rome). Photo, Editorial Photo Archives.



## and the secret of creation



the final work sometimes changed completely from his first concept.

Michelangelo's talent would have made him a great artist no matter where or when he appeared in history, but he was lucky to have been born in a very special time and place. In the 15th century in Europe, art and culture were going through a great period of revival. This rebirth, or *Renaissance*, occurred first in Italy and reached its height in the city of Florence. Florence was the art center of the world, due mainly to the influence of several rich and powerful families. One, the Medici family, ran the government for 60 years. The Medici were interested in art and culture and they hired dozens of great artists to decorate their city with sculptures, frescoes, and paintings.

Michelangelo grew up in this exciting, stimulating atmosphere, joined the workshop of a master artist, and was soon doing sculptures for the Medici. He went to Rome and immediately became well-known for his first sculpture

the "Pietà" (see page 9 for the story behind the creation of this work). Back in Florence, he stunned the city with his remarkable sculpture called the "David" (*left*). Carved from an 18-foot-high block of marble which had been ruined by another sculptor years before, this sculpture was unlike anything anyone had ever seen. It was enormous, superhuman, arrogant, unconventional, and flawlessly carved down to the last detail. The "David" made Michelangelo a legend. The Pope ordered him to Rome where he worked for four years on a magnificent painting for the Sistine Chapel in St. Peter's Cathedral (the detail, above, shows the creation of the first human by the hand of God). Michelangelo also designed St. Peter's Cathedral (see photo, above left) when he was in his eighties. At his death, one critic said, "Nothing like Michelangelo has ever appeared before or ever will again."

No matter how many complex and gigantic masterpieces Michelangelo

completed, each had its very beginnings in those first few lines drawn on a sheet of paper. Looking at these drawings admits us into his private world of creativity. Michelangelo himself did not want us to see this creative process. He didn't want anyone to glimpse the struggles he went through before he finally arrived at the completed work, so, before he died, he hunted up as many of his drawings as he could find, and burned them. Some survived, and a few appear above and on the following pages.

In this issue, you'll learn more about drawing and Michelangelo. You'll see how some modern artists have used drawing to express themselves, and you'll meet a young artist who talks about the importance of drawing to his art. Finally, *Art & Man's* first workshop of the year will give you a chance to explore drawing as the first step toward building a complete artist's vocabulary. As the year goes on, each month you'll be learning more ways to express yourself creatively.



Michelangelo. *Studies for the Libyan Sibyl*, 1511.  
Red chalk. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New  
York. Purchase, 1924. Joseph Pulitzer Bequest.

Michelangelo.  
The Sistine Chapel  
Ceiling, 1508 - 1512.  
Photo by  
Alain Keler/Syigma.



Michelangelo.  
Self-portrait painting a prophet  
as a monster on the Sistine Chapel  
ceiling. Casa Buonarroti, Florence.

When will this nightmare be over?  
My chin is growing into my stomach,  
My beard has become part of my arm,  
My face is a mosaic of color,  
Now I drink and breathe only paint,  
My body is twisted backward in a circle,  
And my sanity is completely gone.  
I hate this place.  
Why am I here? I'm not even a painter!

1511. Sonnet by Michelangelo.

## FOUR YEARS OF AGONY

This poem and sketch were done by Michelangelo when he had been working on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel for three years. As his sketch above shows, he painted the whole thing bent over backwards. He did this alone, working day and night, going without food and sleep, standing on a scaffold three stories above the ground. It is said, when he came down and tried to take his boots off, they had been on so long, the skin came off with them. How did Michelangelo get himself into this situation and how was he able to create one of the great masterworks of the centuries?

In 1508, while the Medici family was making the city of Florence famous, Pope Julius II wanted to make the city of Rome the new center of Renaissance art. One of his projects was the decoration of his favorite chapel in St. Peter's Cathedral. He had heard of the young Florentine artist who had just finished the wonderful sculpture of "David," and sent for him. Michelangelo came to Rome but kept insisting he was a sculptor and couldn't possibly paint an entire ceiling. But finally he decided to prove to everyone that he was also the greatest painter of the age.

First he looked at the unusual shape of the ceiling, then he started to do sketch after sketch. When he had planned his composition, he filled his studio with models and drew them. He

did quick, action drawings, anatomical drawings, line drawings. He made a "file" of drawings of many models in all kinds of poses. Since paper was expensive, he covered each sheet, back and front with small sketches.

For one corner of the ceiling, Michelangelo planned to have a twisting figure holding a book. He placed models in that position and made more drawings (see sketches, left). When he wasn't quite sure of the structure, he did diagrams of the bones and muscles. The figure would rest on the toes and hands, so he did special details of those areas. The painted figure was to be a woman, and Michelangelo was only able to get male models. In the detail of the head, bottom left, you can see how he changed his model's face into that of a woman. Since the ceiling was curved and would be seen from below, Michelangelo had to do more drawings to counteract the distortion. (Notice, in the painting, how the knees slope and are slightly too long. This would look normal, seen from the ground.) And, even though each sketch is put down at random, the whole page of drawings looks composed.

This painting on the Sistine ceiling, right, was done from the sketches, left. The drawings have now become a Sibyl, a mythological being who could foresee the future. She holds an enormous book of prophecies. In Renaissance painting,

the color gold stands for wisdom. Michelangelo wanted to show the human being as *perfect*, so, in the final painted version, he combined a head from one sketch, feet from another, the back from a third.

Michelangelo painted 342 other figures like this one on the Sistine chapel ceiling. As an eyewitness says, "when the chapel was opened, the whole world could be heard running to Rome to see it. A more perfect work has never been done and never can be done."

Michelangelo. *The Libyan Sibyl*, 1511. Detail from the Sistine Ceiling, The Vatican, Rome. Photo, Editorial Photo Archives.



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# DRAWING: The Key to Creativity

We've seen that, although Michelangelo did some of the greatest drawings ever created, he only did them as plans and studies for what he considered his "real" art—the sculptures, paintings and buildings he designed. Only recently has *drawing* been thought of as a major art form. Every artist since Michelangelo's time has developed a special drawing style to express his or her own special ideas. On these three pages, you'll see some of them.



Rembrandt. *Portrait of a Seated Actor*, 1653. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Rosenwald Collection.

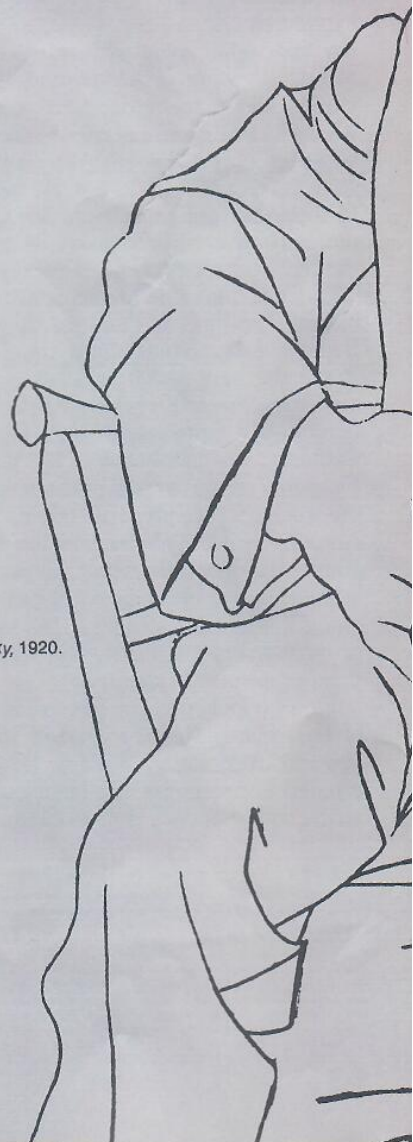
## REMBRANDT VAN RIJN (1606–1669)

Rembrandt was one of the greatest painters, printmakers, and draftsmen of all time. He did many complex and carefully composed drawings, but in his quick sketches he captured people's *gestures* more fully than almost any other artist. In a few seconds, Rembrandt's brush scribbled the exact pose and attitude of an actor (above), slumped in a chair, talking and gesturing. The light and heavy lines, thick and thin washes don't show exactly what this model looks like, but completely capture his essential movements. This work shows one of the most important things to keep in mind when doing a drawing—to *leave out* everything that does not express the basic idea you want to communicate. Compare Rembrandt's drawing with the portraits of Ingres and Picasso. Why do you think those artists included elements like tiepins, buttonholes, and wrinkles and Rembrandt did not?

## PABLO PICASSO (1881–1973)

Perhaps the greatest artistic genius of this century, the Spanish artist Picasso produced an amazing number of art works in an incredible variety of styles and media. But the first step in creating each new work was always a drawing. Picasso did many radical, abstract, and controversial paintings, sculptures and prints. But he also did many simple, realistic line drawings as a change of pace. This *contour* drawing, right, of the composer Igor Stravinsky is made up of a few simple, clear, continuous lines. Each characteristic detail is described—the wrinkles in a suit that is too big, the smallish head, the prominent nose and very large folded hands. The thin lead pencil line, which hardly leaves the paper, can almost be felt moving around the outside *contours* of the figure.

Picasso. *Igor Stravinsky*, 1920.



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Line is the essence of creative expression.  
Each of these five great artists used line in a very personal way.  
Discover some of their secrets for yourself. . . .

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JEAN-AUGUSTE INGRES (1780–1867)

The French artist Ingres did some of the greatest portrait drawings ever created. There is no doubt that this is exactly the way this French count looked, yet the portrait, below, shows more about him than a photo could, and in a very different way. The sensitive *contour* line barely sketches in the coat and hands. The focus of interest is his face, which is completely *modeled*, with dark, tonal areas of charcoal. The white highlights give the head a feeling of volume. Look at the eyes, mouth, and expression of this man. What kind of person does he look like? How does Ingres show this? Look at the pose, the clothes and medals this rich man is wearing. What do you think the purpose of this portrait was?



Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres. *Portrait of the Comte Emilien de Nieuwerkerke*, 1856. Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA.

Charles White. *Preacher*, 1952.



◀ CHARLES WHITE (b. 1918)

Charles White, an American painter, graphic artist, and muralist, uses drawing to express an *idea*. The heroes of Afro-American history and folk-culture are his subjects, and he uses his artistic techniques to protest the treatment of black people in U.S. history. In drawings like *Preacher*, left, done in pen and ink on cardboard, White uses perspective and *foreshortening* (he *exaggerates* the sizes of parts of the figure, like the large hands and small head) to emphasize the power and strength of the preacher and his message. Building up masses of tiny lines to create dark and light contrasts in the modeling of the figure gives even more dramatic impact.

◀ ISABEL BISHOP (b. 1902)



When Isabel Bishop was in high school, she decided she would become an illustrator. She went to art school, took a life-drawing class, and discovered that drawing was what she wanted to do for the rest of her life. Isabel Bishop has sketched and painted from her studio window in lower Manhattan for the past 45 years. She draws passersby in all kinds of city settings—students, secretaries, and office workers in stores, subways, parks, and offices. In this drawing, left, Bishop shows the relationship between two figures, and uses perspective, overlapping the figures to show depth. The basic gesture, anatomy and proportion of the two “office girls” had to be sketched out before the final drawing was done. Otherwise their poses and clothing wouldn’t look so natural.

Isabel Bishop. *Office Girls*, 1932.



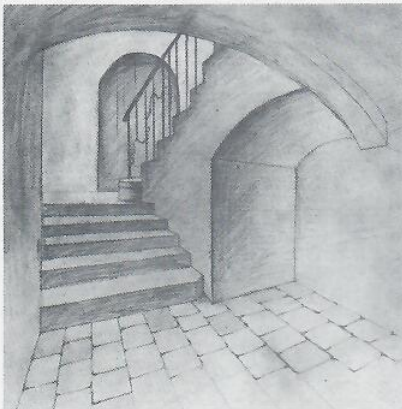
**Artist of the Month**

# John Iorio: On Drawing

When John Iorio sees something he likes, his first impulse is to grab his sketchbook and get it down on paper. In this interview he tells you how he goes about it.



Drawing is second nature to an artist, and by now it's second nature to 17-year-old John Iorio. He's been drawing for as long as he can remember. As a kid, he'd walk down to a Connecticut harbor near his home and spend hours trying to capture the freighters in all their detail. But it wasn't until high school that he started getting really serious about drawing. This month he will be attending Yale University. We visited John at his classroom studio last spring to find out what he's been learning at the Taft School in Watertown, Connecticut.



A finished perspective drawing of a hallway in John's school.

### How long have you been drawing?

I was always drawing. When I was little, I'd even be drawing when I was being punished. I'd sit in the corner and draw the door knob or something else in the room. And I would always try to make it as exact as I could.

### It sounds as if you were quite "serious" about drawing.

No, I just did it for kicks—to keep from getting bored, to impress my friends. It wasn't until I started studying with my teacher here that I started taking it seriously.

### What exactly did you learn?

He started us out with very basic things and made us see how important they were. They were drawing exercises really—in line, perspective, shapes, shading, pressure variation (varying the pressure of a pencil to get light and dark tones in a line), and composition.

### Did you find these exercises boring?

They can get boring, but I'd find ways to make them more interesting. Mostly I found them thrilling. It made drawing easier and I had to do less erasing. For example, learning perspective helped me to situate things better. Pressure variation helped me to emphasize the important parts in a drawing—to take your eye in and out, to give movement to the drawing.

### How did you happen to do the studies of this model (see drawing, on the right)?

He's a friend of mine, but I wasn't really trying to get the feeling of him as a person. I just wanted the feeling of muscles. He's a dancer and a track star, and very muscular.

### How much did you plan out in these studies? How did you begin?

When he sat down, I noticed his back muscles first and made them my center focus (for the left figure). I worked out from the back, leaving the other areas sketchy. I personally find it easier to work from the inside out. On the other figure I emphasized the chest and torso.

### Did you plan to put the two figures on the page this way?

No, the drawing on the right is pasted down. It's fun to take different drawings and put them together. One part of a drawing might echo the shapes or lines in another.

### And how about all the smudges and splatters?

That's all planned. All that stuff adds rhythm. You can see it in Michelangelo's drawings. Most people probably think they're mistakes or from age, but I'm convinced he actually rubbed it here, splattered it there.

### What do you find most difficult about drawing from a human model?

It's hard knowing how to actually draw the body. You have to work with foreshortening



(making an arm or leg, for example, look like it is extended behind or in front of the body) and giving a feeling of the anatomy. Somehow you have to suggest what's underneath the skin—the structure, the bones, and the muscles. I guess that's why Michelangelo and Leonardo dissected bodies—to find out what's underneath.

### Is drawing ever hard for you?

Sure. You go through lot of bad



things—some real clinkers. But I'm sneaky. I throw away all my bad drawings so nobody sees them. I hate a lot of my stuff.

**How do you react when a drawing isn't going right?**

Occasionally I will fly into a fit of rage and tear it into pieces. But probably I'll just start over, because it isn't just a line that's wrong, it's a certain look or feeling that's missing. Drawing isn't something you do well all the

time. It's something you do at the oddest moments. I've done some of my greatest little drawings in algebra class or at one o'clock in the morning. Some go quickly. Some you labor on and make very precise.

**Do you ever draw from photos?**

No. Why draw from photos when you can draw from the real thing? A photo is a flat surface. You're only working from two dimensions. I get more kicks

drawing from something right in front of me.

**You seem to spend a lot of time on art.**

Yeah, that's the thing about art, you can really lose yourself in it. You forget about the outside world. I've converted our basement into a mini-studio, and I'll stay up really late if I'm engrossed in something.

**What makes you want to keep going in art?**

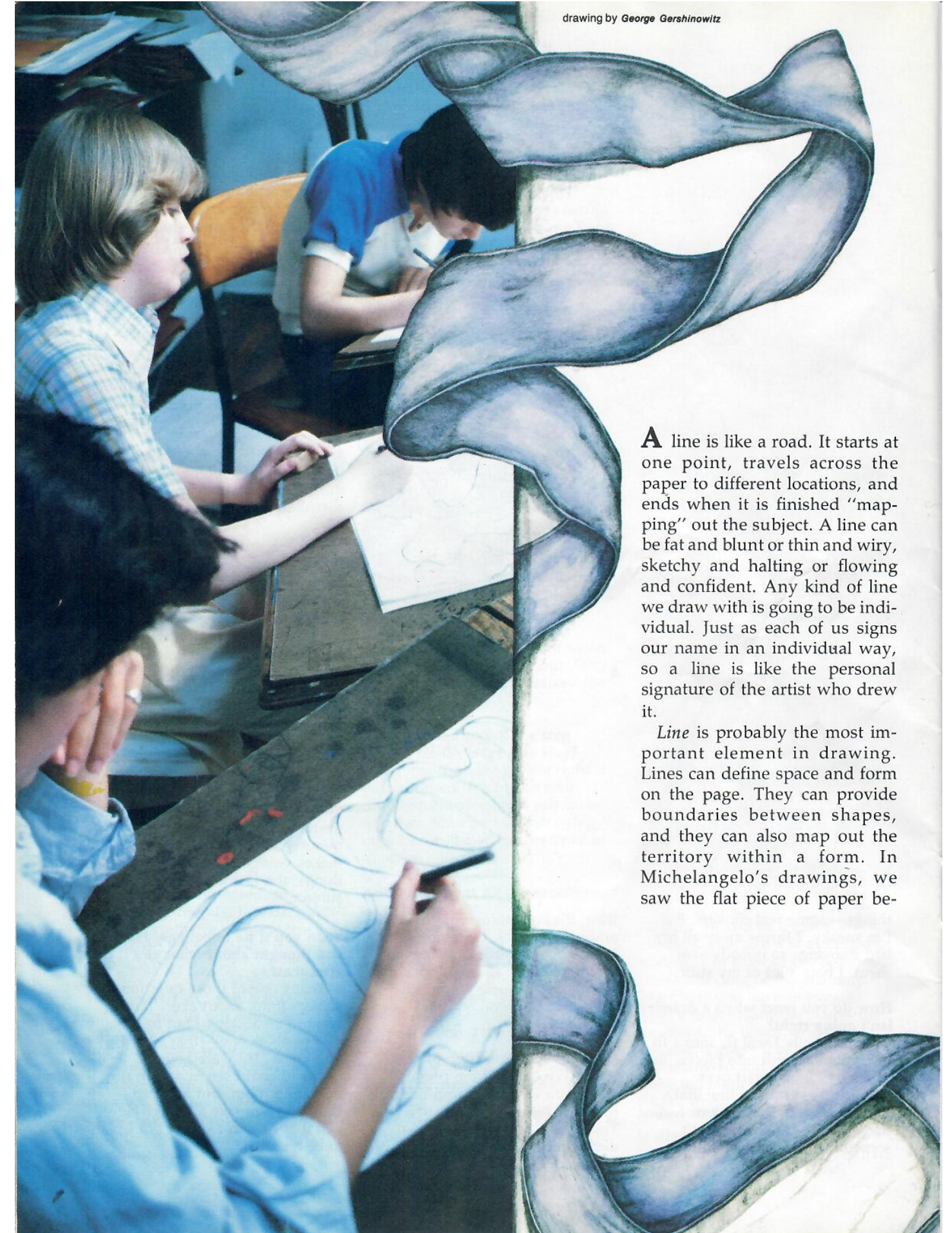
When I do something that's good—in my opinion or when someone else tells me so. Another thing is you're learning new things every day and this keeps you involved. Or you go to a museum and you see drawings by somebody like Michelangelo, and that's an impetus for new stuff. But the main thing is you get compliments and it makes you feel good.

**Is there any advice you could give to anyone who wants to start drawing?**

Let's see. When you first start out, try to get things exactly the way they look. To be a really fine artist I think you have to be able to do all that first. Being more expressive comes later. Draw things exactly but don't try to draw every little detail. That's a mistake. Pick out the major characteristics and get a center of interest and move in on it. Sometimes it's good to do a quick gesture drawing (less than a minute) before you get started. It makes you go for the important things, the major feeling of the subject.

**Soon you'll be in college. Have you thought about what you'll do after that?**

That's one of those questions seniors think about every day. I want to be an artist, but to actually see myself as one—that's hard, you know. If I were going to be a doctor, I could see myself in the operating room. But an artist—how do you make a living? How will it be? I don't know, but I plan to be an artist.



drawing by George Gershinowitz

**A** line is like a road. It starts at one point, travels across the paper to different locations, and ends when it is finished "mapping" out the subject. A line can be fat and blunt or thin and wiry, sketchy and halting or flowing and confident. Any kind of line we draw with is going to be individual. Just as each of us signs our name in an individual way, so a line is like the personal signature of the artist who drew it.

*Line* is probably the most important element in drawing. Lines can define space and form on the page. They can provide boundaries between shapes, and they can also map out the territory within a form. In Michelangelo's drawings, we saw the flat piece of paper be-

## Art & Man Workshop

# CREATING WITH LINE

For Michelangelo, *drawing* was a way of expressing himself in visual terms. Here's a simple project that may allow you to use line in ways you never thought you could.

come transformed by his use of line. Out of the two-dimensional paper, a three-dimensional figure seems to appear and then may fade away, all depending on the kinds of lines he uses. When he wants to emphasize a part of his drawing, he will darken the line. Or he will go over the same line several times to bring a form into sharper focus. In other areas, his lines will fade and soften, leaving only an *impression* of the form. Michelangelo's drawings show how a line's course can guide your eye in and out, stopping at intersections that contain important details.

In this first workshop, we will explore the way a line's flow and pressure can define form and space on a page. You'll find, after completing this workshop, that

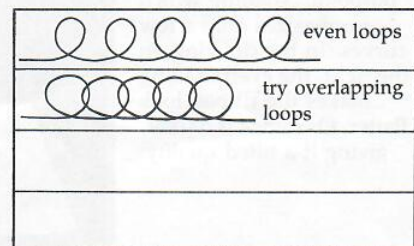
you'll be able to draw from life in a bolder and more fluid way.

The only materials you'll need for this workshop are a *soft* ebony pencil and some large drawing paper. We'll start with some warming-up exercises, as an athlete might warm up before a race. To write, we use very small, tight lines. For drawing, you need to get used to using your hand in a very different way. You may find that using the entire arm, instead of the wrist, will enable you to become looser and more assured in your drawings. For this exercise, keep two words in mind: FLUIDITY and CONTROL. You want to control your line's course around the page without halting its fluid movement.



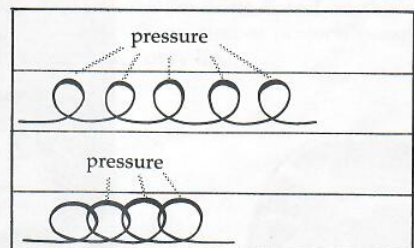
### EXERCISE 1

1. Divide the paper into four strips by making three lines.
2. Starting on one side, make even loops with a continuous, flowing line, using *even* pressure.



### EXERCISE 2

1. Divide the paper as above, but this time exert pressure at *one* point in each loop to achieve a spatial "tunnel-like" effect.

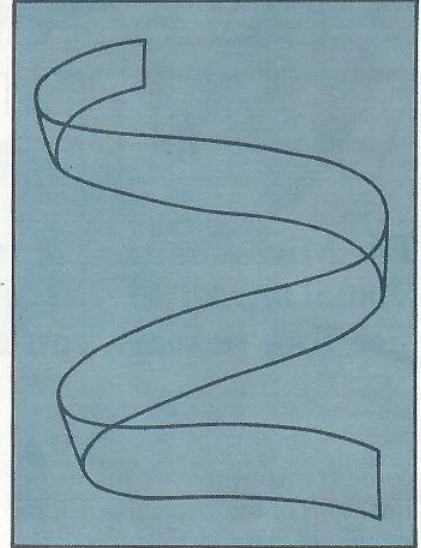
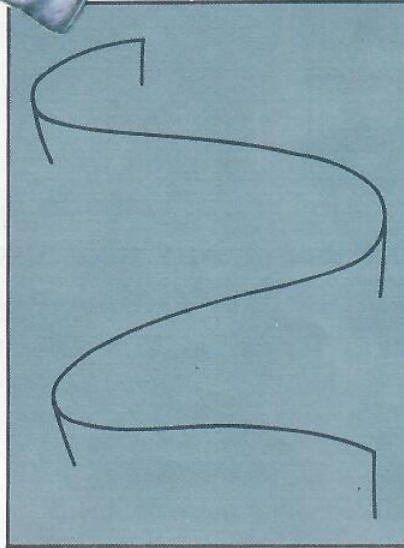
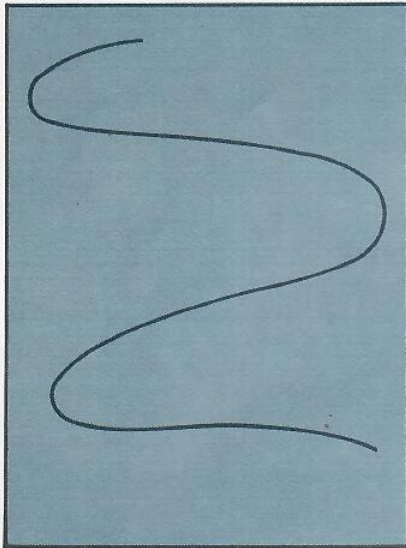


Photos by Richard Hutchings.

Special thanks to the Packer Collegiate Institute, Brooklyn, NY.



# MAKING A



**1** Make a flowing line that loops freely around the page. (Do you want it to go off the page and back on?)

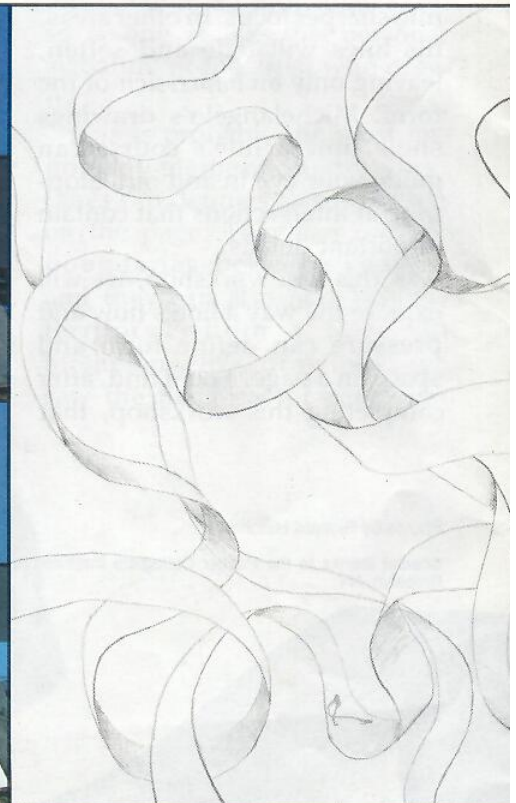
**2** At the furthest point of each loop, drop a "connecting" line. This will become the edge of the ribbon when it turns.

**3** Make a line which goes parallel to your first line. Be careful that it turns to exactly meet each edge.

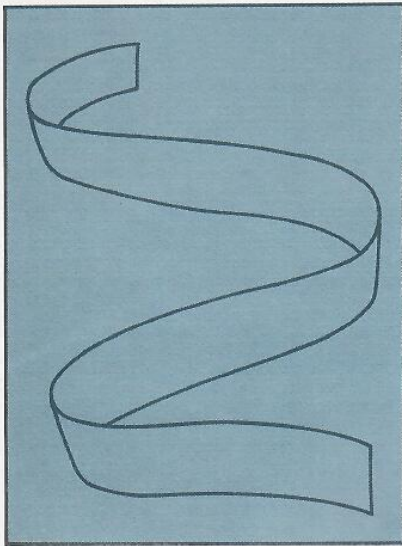
Notice the simple, smooth flow of the drawing on the left (in this photo), the even contour lines on the edges, and the "pinpoint" shading which emphasizes only a few curves. In the drawing on the right, the even shading makes the ribbon look flatter. One edge is darker, giving it a tilted quality.



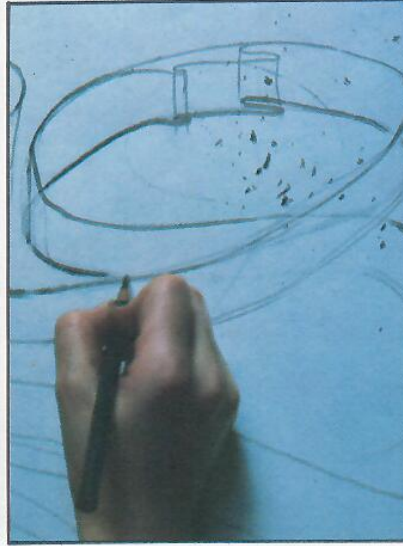
In the drawing on the left, in this photo, *negative* space has been emphasized, while flat, abstract pattern is stressed in the drawing on the right.



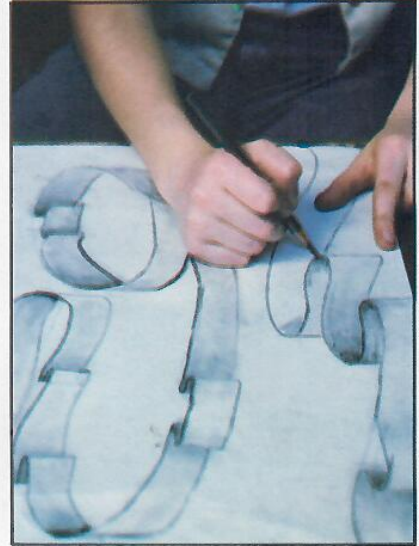
# “RIBBON” DRAWING



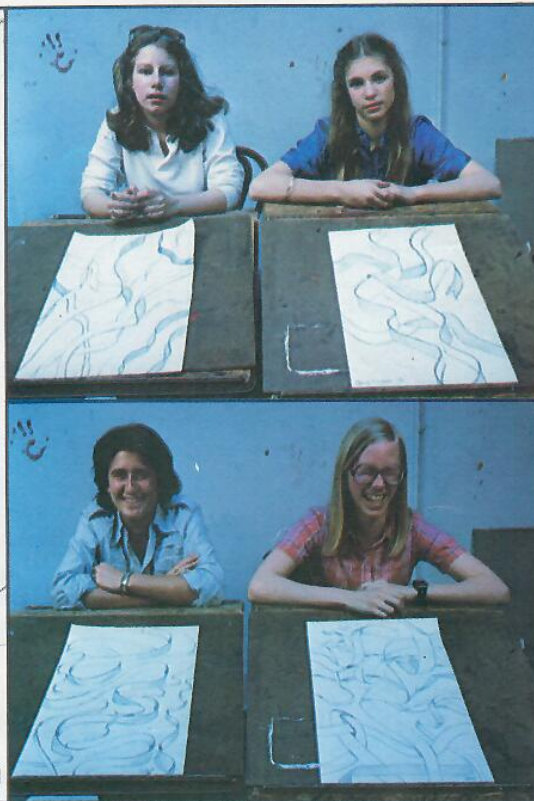
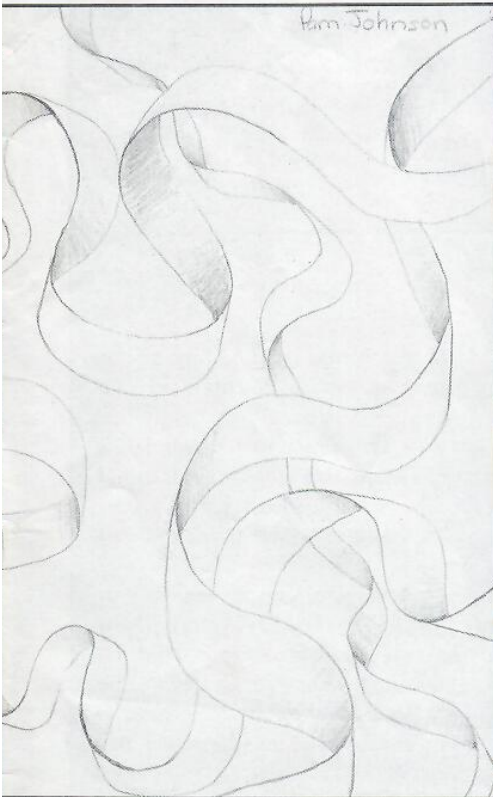
**4** Erase one part of the line to determine its curve. Which way do you want the ribbon to look like it's going—in or out?



**5** Now you can emphasize important lines...



**6** ...and develop your drawing with light and dark. Do you want to bring out negative spaces?

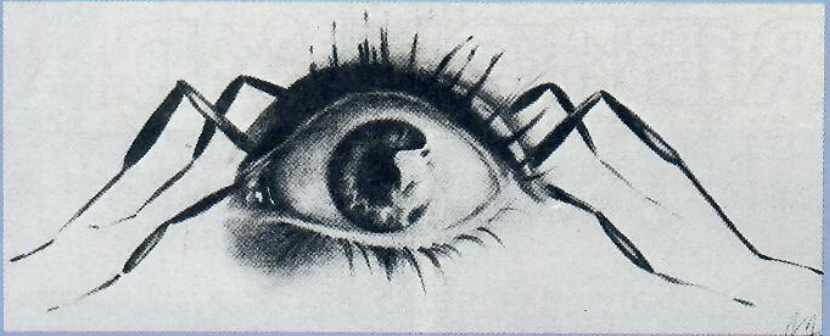


Both drawings are made up of complex folds which loop and twist back and forth, over and under.

Both artists have changed the width and size of their ribbons, applying extra pressure at the corners to emphasize depth. All of these different approaches were done based on this very simple project, using only *line*.



# ARTS ALIVE



18-year-old Jon Ashby of Lawrence, Kansas, stresses light, color, and three-dimensional form in this pastel self-portrait, below.



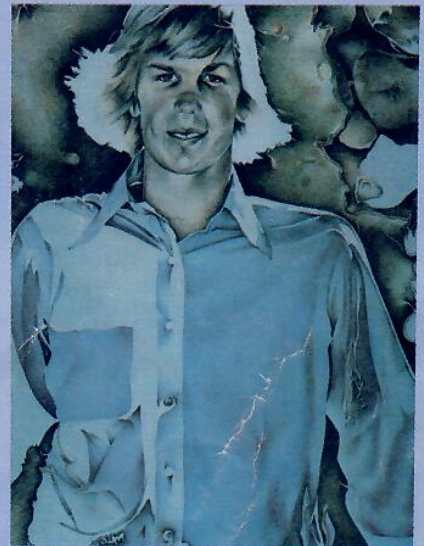
James Pollman, Jr., 17, of Charlotte, North Carolina, has used line and tone to create the imaginative charcoal drawing above.

## AWARD-WINNING DRAWINGS

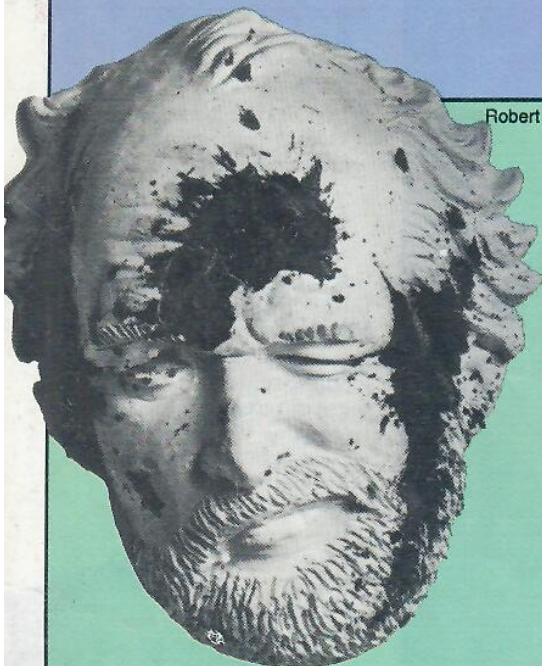
If you can't get to a museum to see other people's art, maybe other people can look at *your* work.

Now is the time to start thinking about entering the annual Scholastic Art Awards. These three students did and they not only won various awards, but they had their work exhibited and seen by hundreds of people in New York City this past summer.

The works shown here are all drawings, but you can enter in many other categories — painting, watercolor, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, textile design and photography. For deadlines and rules, write to: Scholastic Art Awards, Scholastic Magazines, Inc., 50 W. 44th Street, New York, NY 10036.



Flat shapes are emphasized in this colored-pencil drawing, above, done by Phyllis Harrill, 17, of Colorado Springs, Colorado.



Robert Arneson, b. 1930. *Five Splat*, 1976.

## WHAT IS "FIVE SPLAT"?

Have you ever done a project in clay? Maybe you've tried pottery or clay figures, but have you considered making paper bags, clouds, or a life-sized sofa, all in clay?

Clay has always been around, but artists today are using it in new, surprising and sometimes funny ways. Robert Arneson, a sculptor in California, is one of the most famous of the new ceramic artists. The face at the left is part of a work called "Five Splat." In it, Arneson shows five ceramic faces reacting to being "hit" by blobs of clay.

You can see this work, and 400 others, in the first major show to feature "clay art." "A Century of Ceramics in the United States" has been in Syracuse, New York, all summer and will begin a two-year nationwide tour, starting November 9 and running to January 7, 1980, at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Look on the *Arts Alive* page in next month's issue of *Art & Man* for a complete list of cities where you may soon be able to see this exciting exhibition.