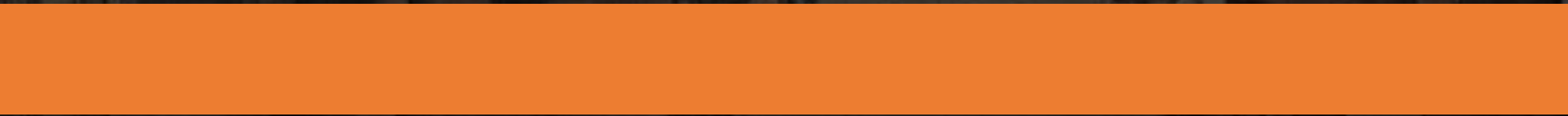
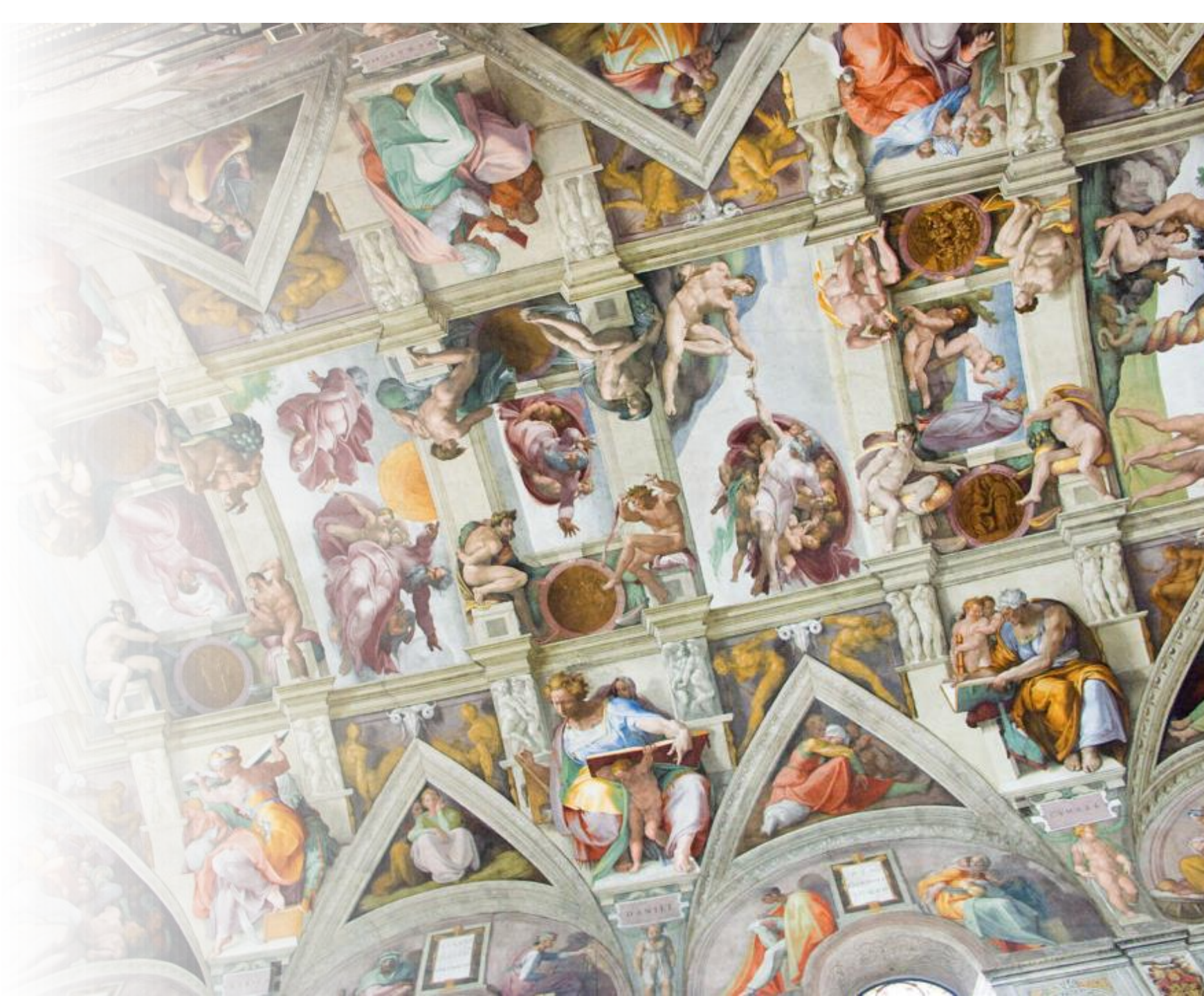


# THE CREATION OF ADAM



# MEANING

It illustrates the Biblical creation narrative from the Book of Genesis in which God gives life to Adam, the first man. The fresco is part of a complex iconographic scheme and is chronologically the fourth in the series of panels depicting episodes from Genesis.





# HISTORY

In 1505, Michelangelo was invited by Pope Julius back to Rome. He was commissioned to build the Pope's tomb.

His work experienced constant interruptions in order to accomplish other tasks. Although he worked on the tomb for 40 years, it was never finished.

This period Pope Julius commissioned to Michelangelo to paint the Sistine Chapel's ceiling that lasted 5 years. He was originally commissioned to paint the Twelve Apostles in the center of the ceiling. But Michelangelo asked Pope Julius to give him a free hand and proposed a different painting.

The composition stretches over 500 square metres of ceiling and contains over 300 figures. At the center are nine episodes from the Book of Genesis.



# SOURCES

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Michelangelo's main source of inspiration for this painting may have been a cameo showing a nude Augustus Caesar riding on a capricorn. The cameo used to belong to Dominico Grimani who lived in Rome while Michelangelo painted the ceiling.

Another theory supports that Michelangelo was inspired by Lorenzo Ghiberti's Adam. But this theory is disbelieved because evidence suggests that Michelangelo and Grimani were friends.



## DESCRIPTION

On the left hand side you see Adam reclining on his back with one arm on the ground and the other arm stretched out. On the right hand side of the fresco, God is surrounded by several figures and floats above the ground. God extends his hand towards Adam's and their fingers almost touch. Michelangelo painted this scene with vibrant colors and incredible detail.

# ADAM

Adam looks almost relaxed the way he lounges on the ground. Michelangelo may have painted Adam in this rather passive stance to show that God hasn't actually given him life yet.



# THE CREATOR

To the right of Adam, a much more complicated scene of God is shown. While Adam is shown young and naked, God is shown in the, now common, image of an old man with a grey beard and clothed in a flowing robe. God is flying through the sky carried by eleven young angels – their hair flowing as if being blown in the wind. Unlike Adam with his relaxed pose, the angels strain almost struggling to carry the weight of God and with him, the weight of the world.

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