

Michelangelo Lives Again Thanks to Artificial Intelligence

More than 500 years after his birth (6 March 1475), Michelangelo “lives again”, and is ready to answer your questions!



The screenshot shows the website of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence. On the left is a navigation menu with options: MENU, TICKET, TIMETABLES, EVENTS, and SELECT LANGUAGE. The main content area features a large image of the Florence Cathedral facade with the text "Piazza del Duomo A unique repository of faith, history and art". Overlaid on this is a chat interface titled "Michelangelo AI". The chat window displays a message from Michelangelo: "I am Michelangelo, one of the most famous Renaissance artists, speaking to you through Artificial Intelligence. Here is my self-portrait in a 'Pietà' that I carved in my old age, today in the Museum of the Cathedral of Florence." Below this is a text input field with the placeholder "Type a message here..." and a "V" button. At the bottom of the chat window are buttons for "GET INVOLVED" and "ASK MICHELANGELO", along with a "Privacy Policy" link. A date stamp "03/12/2020" is visible. A brown banner at the bottom of the page states: "In compliance with government regulations, the Monumental complex of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore will remain closed to the public. The Cathedral remains open for all worship activities and personal prayer."

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The Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore commissioned Michelangelo two of his most celebrated masterpieces the DAVID and ST. MATTHEW and preserves one of his three PIETÀS in its Museum.

More than **500** years after his birth (6 March 1475), Michelangelo “lives again”, and is ready to answer your questions! This is not fake news, but a joint project of the **Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore** (Florence Cathedral Foundation), and **Querlo, Customized Artificial Intelligence Solutions** based in New York, who for the first time ever have realized a virtual Michelangelo, using Artificial Intelligence technology.

MICHELANGELO AI is an educational tool available to all who want to know something about the art, life, and thought of the greatest Renaissance artist. Anyone can ask him questions (his language is now English) at the sites: <https://duomo.firenze.it/it/home> and clicking on the button MICHELANGELO AI or <https://www.querlo.com/michelangelo>.

<https://www.querlo.com/michelangelo>. In turn, MICHELANGELO AI will learn from these conversations, continually increasing his range of knowledge. The contents of MICHELANGELO AI were assembled by a team of art historians at the Florence Cathedral Museum (Museo dell’Opera del Duomo), under the guidance of the Museum’s Director, Timothy Verdon.

The roots of this project are in the seven-century long history of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, the institution that in the early 16th century commissioned Michelangelo's early masterpieces, **David** and **St. Matthew**, and whose museum conserves **Michelangelo's Bandini Pietà**, one of his three versions of that subject. MICHELANGELO AI is also designed to familiarize visitors with the monuments for which the Cathedral Foundation is responsible involving the public in the Foundation's restoration projects, among which, in the near future, cleaning and reconsolidation of the thousand meters of 13th-century mosaics in the Baptistery.

The Michelangelo created by the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore and Querlo is deeply Florentine: now in heaven, he looks back on his earthly life and underlines the importance of his art, his thought, his spirituality, of the experience of his formative years in Florence. He often mentions Donatello, the early Renaissance artist he most admired, and Ghiberti and Luca della Robbia, and recalls that his first public commissions were for the Cathedral, for which they too had done fundamental works.

The idea of MICHELANGELO AI was born in the COVID-19 period. "The global travel restrictions have had a devastating impact", said **Timothy Verdon, Director of the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo**, "making it impossible for people to visit special cities like Michelangelo's Florence. Bringing the famous artist back to life reduces the distance, allowing virtual visitors to draw near to one of the great spirits of our civilization - to dialogue with him on art and life, and through him discover a different equilibrium, one that is 'ancient' and, for 21st-century women and men, also 'new'."

For **Francesco Rulli, CEO of Querlo LLC**: "This is a dream come true. Exploiting the potential of personalized Artificial Intelligence we have been able to capture Michelangelo's 'spirit', offering everyone the chance to interact personally with this master artist of the Renaissance and to know and contribute to the Florence Cathedral Foundation's work in restoring and preserving its heritage.

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Information

The Florence Cathedral Foundation or 'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore'

The Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore is an institution founded by the Florentine Republic in 1296 to oversee the construction of the cathedral and its bell tower. From 1436, the year in which the cathedral was completed with the construction of Filippo Brunelleschi's dome, the Opera's chief task has been that of preserving these monumental buildings, to which the 11th-century Baptistery of St. John was added in 1777 and the new Cathedral Museum in 1891. Since 1998 the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore is legally recognized as a non-profit organization with its own statute, which defines its institutional objectives as "the preservation, promotion, and communication of its artistic heritage".

<https://duomo.firenze.it/>

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The Cathedral Museum (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo)

The Florence Cathedral Museum, completely renewed and enlarged in 2015, has one of the world's major collections of Medieval and Renaissance Florentine sculpture, which it exhibits in a spectacular contemporary installation. 750 works including statues and reliefs in marble, bronze, and silver, among which masterpieces by the greatest artists of their time: Michelangelo, Donatello, Arnolfo di Cambio, Lorenzo Ghiberti, Andrea Pisano, Antonio del Pollaiuolo, Luca della Robbia Andrea del Verrocchio, and many others.

<https://duomo.firenze.it/>



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