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**“EUROINTEGRATION IN ART, SCIENCE AND EDUCATION:  
EXPERIENCE, DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES”**

**II МІЖНАРОДНА НАУКОВО-ПРАКТИЧНА КОНФЕРЕНЦІЯ**

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ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ РОЗВИТКУ”**

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## Foreword

The Second International Conference *EUROINTEGRATION IN THE ARTS, SCIENCE AND EDUCATION: PERSPECTIVES, PERSPECTIVES OF IMPLEMENTATION* is an event that demonstrates the support of Ukrainian scientists by Lithuanian colleagues and is dedicated to the topical issues of fine arts, culture and pedagogy.

For the second year in a row, researchers with many years of experience, as well as undergraduate and graduate students, meet in the scientific space of the conference, which is in line with the principle of equality and aims to combine traditions and alternative approaches.

The conference proceedings reflect the main goal of the event - to bring together European and Ukrainian researchers, to highlight non-standard opinions and to establish ways of interaction in the field of interdisciplinary research. Our tasks are to find answers to the questions of how intergenerational knowledge and diverse perspectives can improve the sustainable development of education and science, how to integrate theoretical achievements into life, and how to combine science and art in the context of new demands and requirements of society.

The publication of the proceedings in an online format is a deliberate move by the conference organisers, in consistence with one of the priorities of the European Green Deal - the rational use of natural resources and the development of an ecological consciousness in the global scientific community.

Compilers

## Передмова

Друга Міжнародна конференція «ЄВРОІНТЕГРАЦІЯ В МИСТЕЦТВІ, НАУЦІ ТА ОСВІТІ: ДОСВІД, ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ РОЗВИТКУ» – захід, що демонструє підтримку українських вчених литовськими колегами, присвячений актуальним проблемам образотворчого мистецтва, культури і педагогіки.

Другий рік поспіль в науковому просторі конференції зустрічаються дослідники з багаторічним досвідом та студенти і аспіранти, що відповідає принципу рівності та спрямовано на поєднання традицій і альтернативних підходів.

Матеріали конференції віддзеркалюють головну мету заходу – об'єднання європейських і українських дослідників, висвітлення нестандартних думок та налагодження шляхів взаємодії у царині міждисциплінарних досліджень. Наші завдання – це пошук відповідей на запитання, як знання різних поколінь та різноманітні точки зору можуть покращити сталий розвиток освіти і науки, як інтегрувати теоретичні здобутки в життя та поєднати науку і мистецтво в контексті нових запитів та вимог суспільства.

Публікація матеріалів в онлайн-форматі – усвідомлений крок організаторів конференції, який відповідає одному з пріоритетних напрямів у реалізації європейського «зеленого курсу» – раціональному використанню природних ресурсів та формуванню еко-свідомості у світовій спільноті вчених.

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## PAINTINGS OF THE SISTINE CHAPEL: ICONOGRAPHIC AND STYLISTIC FEATURES

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**Annotation.** This study is dedicated to the ceiling paintings of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. The ceiling is a cycle of frescoes by Michelangelo, created between 1508 and 1512. The overall theme of the Sistine Chapel paintings encompasses religion, particularly the relationship between God and humanity, as depicted through biblical narratives. It illustrates the history of salvation, from the creation of the world through the earthly life of Christ, culminating in the Last Judgment. This work is considered one of the recognized masterpieces of High Renaissance art.

**Keywords:** Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel, sculpture, painting, anatomy, plasticity, iconography, stylistics.

**Introduction.** Visual art reflects themes that are most significant to humanity. One of these has always been the history of humankind, from the creation of the world to the flood. Michelangelo's paintings in the Sistine Chapel became another brilliant work on this subject. For five centuries, Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475 – 1564) has remained one of the greatest representatives of Renaissance art. Even during his lifetime, he earned the nickname “The Divine”, signifying his contemporaries' recognition of his genius. Michelangelo considered himself primarily a sculptor, although his contribution to all plastic arts, including painting, was immense. One of the master's outstanding works in monumental painting is the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel.

The Sistine Chapel is a former private chapel in the Vatican, built between 1473 and 1481 by order of Pope Sixtus IV. The ceiling paintings of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican comprise a cycle of frescoes by Michelangelo, created between 1508 and 1512 (Fig. 1). These frescoes became Michelangelo's central and most completed work, which secured his reputation for centuries not only as a sculptor, but also as a master painter. Michelangelo created large-scale paintings using the fresco technique, applying his experience in reproducing volumetric forms from sculpture. The artist's unique vision manifested in the complex; dynamic structure of compositions shaped by the architectural framework of the Sistine Chapel ceiling. His approach to plastic form significantly differs from the paintings of other High Renaissance masters whose works share the chapel's space with Michelangelo's creations.

Despite numerous theoretical studies dedicated to Michelangelo's fresco cycle, interest in the iconographic and stylistic features of these paintings persists to this day, as evidenced by recent scholarly works. This underscores the relevance of this study, whose findings may complement existing research.

**The aim of the study** is to identify the iconographic and stylistic features of the Sistine Chapel paintings created by Michelangelo Buonarroti.

**The main methods of this study** include comparative analysis, the historical method, and artistic-stylistic analysis.

## Theoretical Part

Various interpretations of these paintings proposed by scholars are of interest. For example, Creighton explains the iconography of the chapel ceiling as an interpretation of the Bible, representing the main phases of humanity's spiritual development, viewed through highly dramatic relationships between humans and God (Creighton, 2024). In the study "Michelangelo, the Last Judgment Fresco, Saint Bartholomew, and the Golden Ratio" researchers present a concept in which Michelangelo Buonarroti's paintings are examined in the context of pagan symbols related to anatomy (Campos and oth., 2015).

Michelangelo Buonarroti painted the Sistine Chapel ceiling frescoes over four years. During this time, 600 square meters were covered with paintings, despite the complexity and labor-intensive nature of the technique (since frescoes are difficult to redo, they must be executed perfectly from the start) (How Did Michelangelo Paint the Sistine Chapel Ceiling, 2023).



**Figure 1.** Interior of the Sistine Chapel. 1477 – 1483. Vatican.

**Stylistics and Iconography.** The stylistics of the Renaissance era emphasize harmony, proportions, and the human body as the highest form of creation. This period was marked by extensive scientific and cultural advancements.

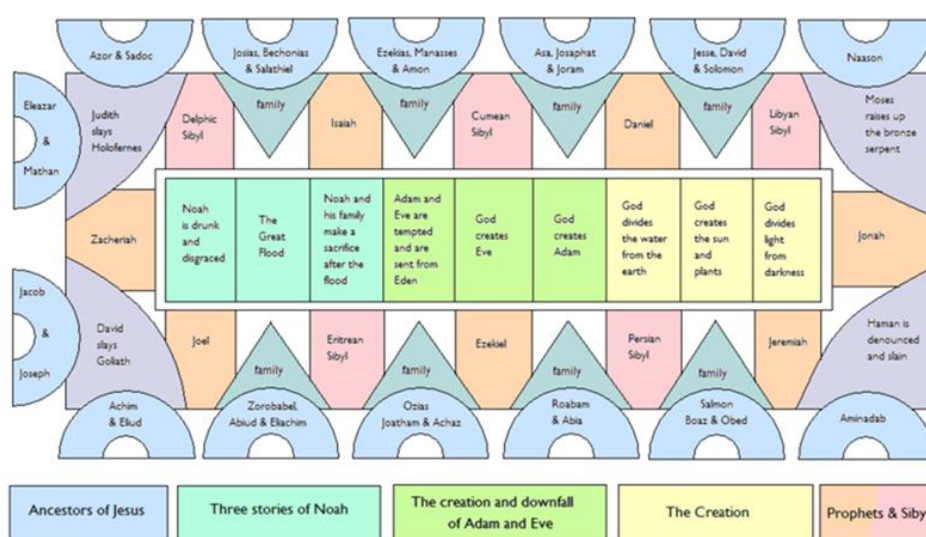
Anatomical studies, which had not been conducted for over half a century due to religious beliefs, were revived during the Renaissance. The renewed interest in human value contributed to the study of human anatomy, which manifested in visual arts through the flourishing of portraiture and figurative narrative painting. Artists studied anatomy and the physical beauty of the human form, striving to capture them in realistic depictions.

Michelangelo was one of the Renaissance geniuses with profound knowledge of anatomy, which allowed him to masterfully convey the human figure. He depicted the human body by choosing poses in which it appears "close to the observer" and gains a sense of "life" (Santos and oth., 2013). Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel frescoes serve as a vivid example of this approach (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2.** Michelangelo Buonarroti. Fresco cycle of the Sistine Chapel. 1508 – 1512. Vatican.

The paintings form a multi-part, complex composition (shaped by the architectural structure of the chapel ceiling), consisting of separate biblical-themed scenes (Fig. 3).



**Figure 3.** The scheme of the ceiling murals created by Michelangelo Buonarroti. 1508 – 1512. Sistine chapel. Vatican.

The stylistics of these works align with the artistic norms and aesthetic principles of the Renaissance: the use of linear perspective, a departure from flat representation, and volumetric modeling of form within deep space. The complex foreshortening, sculptural rendering of volume, and unity of color and tonal diversity were within the reach of only a genius like Michelangelo. This grand composition includes more than 300 meticulously detailed figures (Lim, 2023).

Before Michelangelo, many artists depicted religious and mythological heroes statically, in simplified poses, without using complex foreshortening. Buonarroti transformed biblical stories into images in which he reinterpreted sacred texts, introducing innovation into the iconography of canonical subjects. Each panel of the ceiling is the result of a carefully focused selection of a single visual moment or point within the narrative continuum (Crider, 2019). According to Crider S., Michelangelo's frescoes explore three themes: the human body, God as the creator of man, and the relationship between God as the creator of natural bodies and Michelangelo as the creator of artistic ones. Michelangelo reads the Book of Genesis as an artist whose primary interest – and indeed, his obsession – is the human body (Crider, 2019). The artist's innovation lay in his idealization of human anatomy. He created images that were both realistic and sublime. His biblical – themed works, such as The Creation of Adam and



The Last Judgment, are filled with drama and emotional depth. Michelangelo used anatomical precision to convey movement and vitality in his figures, giving them incredible expressiveness. The application of mathematical proportions, including the “golden ratio”, allowed him to achieve harmony and balance in composition (Campos and oth., 2015).

Thus, Michelangelo not only changed the approach to depicting the human body, but also deepened the interpretation of spiritual imagery, making his works iconic for the Renaissance period and significantly influencing the subsequent development of art.

The thematic basis of Michelangelo Buonarroti’s Sistine Chapel frescoes consists of nine scenes described in the first book of the Bible – Genesis. All compositions are divided into three narrative lines, each containing three frescoes:

- The Creation of the World by God;
- The Creation of the progenitors of humanity – Adam and Eve;
- The life of Noah and the trials of humanity.

Each scene consists of three parts, corresponding to the composition of a medieval triptych: the main event in the center, with additional scenes on the side panels.

In The Creation of the Heavens and the Earth Michelangelo depicted the first three days of the world’s creation, as described in the Bible: the creation of light and the separation of light from darkness, the separation of land from water, and the creation of the Earth with vegetation and celestial bodies. Subsequently Michelangelo’s depiction of God with long flowing gray hair became the iconic representation of the Almighty worldwide (Crider, 2019).

The Creation of Adam is one of the most famous images in art. At the center of the composition is the creation of Eve from Adam’s rib, while the third fresco depicts The Fall of Man and the Expulsion from Paradise. This composition particularly highlights Michelangelo’s sculptural talent in its strong sense of plasticity and form (Fig. 4).

The Story of Noah combines three scenes: the Deluge, the Sacrifice of Noah’s family after their salvation, and the Drunkenness of Noah.



**Figure 4.** Michelangelo. The Creation of the World. 1508 – 1512.  
Sistine Chapel. Vatican.

The vaults and ends of the chapel are adorned with twelve figures: seven prophets and five sibyls, who symbolize the future Salvation of humanity. The former represents Christianity, while the latter represent paganism (Lim, 2023). Buonarroti created a unique work that did not conform to the conventional ideas of drawing and composition rules of the time (Thimann, 2011). Michelangelo worked on the plastic form, elevating the “principle of relief” to an absolute, remaining a sculptor even in painting (Fig. 5).



**Figure 5.** Michelangelo Buonarroti. The Prophet Ezekil and the Sivilla Kumskaya. 1508 – 1512. Sistine Chapel. Vatican.

In 1535, Pope Paul III commissioned the artist to paint the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel. The theme became the Second Coming of Christ and the Last Judgment (Fig. 6). The fresco occupies the entire wall, rhythmically uniting many figures into separate groups. The space within the composition has the ability to infinitely expand in all directions, creating an effect of grandeur and monumentality in the image.



**Figure 6.** Michelangelo Buonarroti. The Last Judgment. 1537 – 1541. Sistine Chapel. Vatican.

Many of the characters are individualized. In the image of Bartholomew, one can recognize the famous writer and pamphleteer of the time, Pietro Aretino, with whom Michelangelo had a complicated relationship. The skin held by Bartholomew is a tragic self-portrait of the master himself. Among the sinners, there are portraits resembling Popes Nicholas III, Paul III, and Clement VII.

Michelangelo's relationship with the Catholic Church was tense, he saw himself as a simple man and despised the luxury and corruption of the Church (Barham, 2024). Pope Paul IV interpreted Michelangelo's painting The Last Judgment as defamatory to the Church, as it suggested that Jesus and those around him communicated directly with God, without the mediation of the Church, and without the necessity of formal rituals.

**Conclusions.** As a result of the study, the following conclusions were made:

The artistic conflict between the bodily ideal of antiquity and the spiritual pathos of the new Christian art of the High Renaissance is fully expressed in the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel, painted by Michelangelo Buonarroti. The frescoes, in a multi-part composition, depict the history of humanity from the Creation of the World to the Flood.

While maintaining the stylistic characteristics typical of Renaissance art, Michelangelo Buonarroti renews the methods and techniques of religious painting expressiveness, focusing on the sculptural modeling of plastic form. This approach aligns with the images he created, which possess physical superhuman strength and manifested corporeality – traits that were not typically emphasized in religious themes.

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