

Cellini vs Michelangelo: A Comparison of the Use of Furia, Forza, Difficultà, Terribilità, and Fantasia

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Abstract:

Although a contemporary of the great Michelangelo, Benvenuto Cellini is not as well known to the general public today. Cellini, a master sculptor and goldsmith in his own right, made no secret of his admiration for Michelangelo's work, and wrote treatises on artistic principles. In fact, Cellini's artistic treatises can be argued to have exemplified the principles that Vasari and his contemporaries have attributed to Michelangelo. This paper provides an overview of the key Renaissance artistic principles of furia, forza, difficultà, terribilità, and fantasia, and uses them to examine and compare Cellini's famous Perseus and Medusa in the Loggia dei Lanzi to the work of Michelangelo, particularly his famous statue of David, displayed in the Galleria dell'Accademia. Using these principles, this analysis shows that Cellini not only knew of the artistic principles of Michelangelo, but that his work also displays a mastery of these principles equal to Michelangelo's masterpieces.

Keywords: Cellini, Michelangelo, Renaissance aesthetics, Renaissance Sculptors, Italian Renaissance

1.0 Introduction

Benvenuto Cellini was a Florentine master sculptor and goldsmith who was a contemporary of the great Michelangelo (Fenton, 2010). Cellini had been educated at the Accademia del Disegno where Michelangelo's artistic principles were being taught (Jack, 1976). Michelangelo was vocal in relation to his artistic principles, which many artists of the *cinquecento* period would have discussed at length, to understand and emulate Michelangelo by applying his principles to their own work. Presumably, Cellini would have been one such artist. Cellini was a man of exceptional skill and in his list of friends he had Popes, monarchs, and other heads of state, but despite this he also viewed Michelangelo as divine (Fenton, 2010). During the description of Cellini's meeting with Cosimo I de Medici, he is clear in his admiration of Michelangelo as he refers to him as the greatest man since the ancients (Cellini, 2010). It was during this particular conversation with the Duke, Cellini (2010) states that Donatello and Michelangelo had proven themselves to be great artists since the times of the ancients, and that he still had in him to produce work that rivalled both great artists. It can be safe to say that Cellini not only admired Michelangelo, but felt that he had to prove himself to the Duke and show that he was at the same elite level of the great master.

Patricia Reilly argues that treatises written by Cellini on anatomical drawings exemplify the principles of Michelangelo, and are related to the school of thought of the Accademia del Disegno in Florence (Rossi & Galluci, 2004). David Summers (1981) argues that Michelangelo did not have consistent ideas on artistic principles and did not write any treatises on them. The major writing on these principles was carried out by the likes of Giorgio Vasari, Ascanio Condivi, and Francesco de Hollanda; Summers (1981) suggests this was because Michelangelo lacked the confidence and eloquence to write his own treatise. He notes that Cellini revered Michelangelo, but that he also shared the language of craftsmanship with Michelangelo, which Cellini had included in his own writings. Thus, this article will examine some of the artistic principles which Michelangelo was renowned for in his paintings and sculptures, and ascertain if Cellini adhered to them or whether he worked by different artistic principles. The principles of '*furia*', '*forza*', '*difficultà*', '*terribilità*' and '*fantasia*', as defined by Summers (1981), will be discussed in relation to Cellini's *Perseus and Medusa* statue.

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In addition, this paper will consider Michelangelo's sculpture of *David* along with some of his other masterworks, as a point of comparison to *Perseus and Medusa*, in order to better examine Cellini's own artistic principles.

2.0 Background

During the Renaissance period the Piazza della Signoria was an important location as it was the gateway into Florence (McHam, 1998). It was also where the main palaces and council buildings were located. Accordingly, this area was deemed as an important area to place 'propaganda' sculptures, as this area was patronized by many officials and visiting dignitaries. It was also an important area for religious rituals (McHam, 1998). It was this importance that was the deciding factor in locations of high-profile sculptures like Michelangelo's *David* and Cellini's *Perseus and Medusa*. The idea of installing such statues was also to promote an idealized identity of the government and to stimulate patriotic feelings with its citizens (McHam, 1998).

The *Perseus and Medusa* statue (Figure 1) is an allegory for the Grand Duke Cosimo I de Medici. It represented the liberation of Florence from Republicans and anti-Medici factions (Hirthe, 1987). The position for the sculpture was well planned by Cosimo I, as it was to be a visual triumph against his enemies. Placed alongside Donatello's *Judith and Holofernes*, which is thought to be pro-Republican, Perseus as the Slayer of Medusa was the antithesis of the Florentine proclamation of Republican against the Medici (Hirthe, 1987). Having defeated the Republicans at the Battle of Montermurlo in 1537, Cosimo I wanted a sculpture to demonstrate and further cement his power; the image of Perseus slaying Medusa echoed the real-life situation of the number of prisoners Cosimo I had beheaded (McHam, 1998). The statue thus served as a reminder to anyone thinking of attacking or betraying the Medici family in the future. Cellini was granted the commission in 1545 and finally displayed the finished work ten years after the commission date (Cellini, 2010). Perseus and his family are displayed in the niches below the sculpture, which not only serves to display the tale of the hero, but is also an allegory for the Medici achievements (Hirthe, 1987). Therefore, the statue was a visual, political, and personal triumph statement for the Medici. Cellini was charged to make this sculpture not only to represent the victory of Cosimo I but to ensure that Cosimo was perceived as being as virtuous as Perseus (Cole, 2002). Perseus' act of liberating Andromeda in the mythos was considered as a truly virtuous act, and the depiction of this related directly back to the narrative of Cosimo I freeing Florence.



Figure 1. Benvenuto Cellini, *Perseus and Medusa*, c.1545-54, bronze, H. 3.2 metres, Florence, Italy, Loggia dei Lanzi (Photo: author).

The statue of *David* by Michelangelo (Figure 2), caused some dispute once completed as to where it was going to be finally situated, the final location being in the Piazza della Signoria. The sculpture of *Judith and Holofernes* was moved to the Loggia dei Lanzi and *David* took its place. The sculpture was placed so that it faced south towards Rome, with clear intention that Rome was the dreaded Goliath of the story (McHam, 1998). Vasari writes that Michelangelo created David as a symbol of liberty for the palace, signifying just as David had protected his people and had governed them justly, whoever ruled Florence should protect and govern with justice (Vasari, 1970). Michelangelo was given the commission from the new Republican government and they procured him a block of marble which had initially been given to Rossellino who had unfortunately died soon afterwards (Olson, 1992). Unlike Donatello's youthful and effeminate *David*, Michelangelo broke from tradition and depicted David as a young virile man – not a youth as in the story. This was also going to be the first extremely large sculpture since antiquity (Olson, 1992). David had to embody the power that the biblical story had wherein a young boy faced with defeat by the dreaded and gigantic Goliath bravely stood his ground and slew the giant with little more than a rock and a sling. In Michelangelo's *David*, he was a symbol of Florence and its victory against Rome. David was to embody the ideology of the newly formed Republic. David's gaze is turned towards Rome, and he is fierce and stalwart and bears a menacing warning to anyone who might try to attack.



Figure 2. Michelangelo, *David*, c.1501-04, marble, H. 5.17 metres, Florence, Italy, Galleria dell'Accademia (Photo: author).

With the fall of the Republic and the return of the Medici, a similar situation occurred. The sculpture of *Perseus and Medusa* was specifically destined for the Loggia dei Lanzi as an antithesis to *Judith and Holofernes* (McHam, 1998). The Florentine elite frowned on a female hero slaying a man, as the sculpture of Judith and Holofernes portrayed. Perseus slaying Medusa was also an emblem of triumph over adversity. Similar to Michelangelo's *David*, Cellini broke from tradition when designing the bronze sculpture. Perseus was an allegory to the triumphant Cosimo I. The similarity to David also carries over to the power of the male nude, as Perseus stands triumphantly bare holding the head of the slain Medusa.

Below *Perseus and Medusa* is an ornate four-sided pedestal which has four niches, one on each side of the pedestal. Within the niche facing to the front of the loggia is a bronze low relief sculpture of Jupiter with his thunderbolts, on the right is Minerva, on the left is Danae with a baby Perseus, and at the back is Mercury. On the front below the niche with Jupiter, is a low relief of the heroic Perseus slaying the sea monster and liberating Andromeda, who was his intended bride (McHam, 1998). The four sculptures represent Perseus' family and his legendary heroic deeds. The liberating of Andromeda could be viewed as an allegory for Cosimo liberating Florence from the Republic and foreign forces. It is unclear why exactly Cellini chose to incorporate Perseus' family into the base. This could be an abstract interpretation which drew on political theory and a Christian sanitized reading of pagan mythology where Perseus is sent by God to free Andromeda, just like Cosimo had God's support in freeing Florence from the Republic (McHam, 1998).

The *Perseus and Medusa* sculpture is located diagonally across the piazza from Michelangelo's *David*. This was a point that was not lost on Cellini as he saw himself at the same level of Michelangelo as both a sculptor and artist (Cole, 1999). The similarity in concept was that both Michelangelo and Cellini had total compositional decision on how the sculptures were to look as opposed to their patrons (Even, 1991). Comparing the concepts of Michelangelo's *David* to Cellini's *Perseus*, certain similarities appear. Both sculptures are very similar in the posture; this can be seen in the left leg as both figures bear their weight on the left leg. The right knee is bent and the left arm has similar posture. *David*'s posture is a typical *contrapposto* with a tree limb supporting the figure from behind his left leg. For *Perseus*, although he is in a classical *contrapposto* pose, he is supporting himself without the aid of something behind him. *Perseus* is perfectly balanced on the deceased body of *Medusa*. The statue of *David* was made from marble, so the tree limb behind him serves as a support and counter weight to prevent the sculpture from toppling forward. *Perseus*, being a bronze cast sculpture, requires no such support as the bodies of *Medusa* and *Perseus* are one solid piece and *Medusa* is the base which supports the sculpture upright. *David* is placed on top of a plain marble base, whereas *Perseus* is placed above a base with decorated niches which display the life of *Perseus* and his family. The reasoning for this is that *David* was originally meant to be high up on one of the buttresses of the *Duomo*, whereas *Perseus* was intended for the *Loggia* and had been conceptualized to be viewed at eye level. Both figures hold a weapon; *David* a sling and stone, and *Perseus* his sword that he used to behead *Medusa*. Both figures are nude, innately masculine, and powerful. Their bodies are strong, with well-defined musculature, and are Greco-Roman in style which was the typical canon for that period (Olson, 1992). Per Giorgio Vasari, Michelangelo's sculpture *David* outshone all others including the ancient Greek or Roman (Beal, 2016). *Perseus* was shown as a virile strong man to undermine Donatello's *Judith and Holofernes* sculpture, where a female hero was about to slay a male adversary (Even, 1991).

3.0 Aesthetic concepts as described by Summers (1981)

3.1 Furia and forza

Summers (1981) describes '*furia*' as a spontaneous quality, a sense of movement and the posture and situation of the figures in paintings or sculptures. Movement was described as being in two parts; natural and artificial. Natural movement is shown through what was happening in the image, or the nature of the figures in the sculpture or painting. Artificial movement is shown through the perception of what should be occurring and is unseen or yet to occur (Summers, 1981). *Furia* translated from Italian means fury or intensity of emotions. *Furia* can also be associated with the passion of the artist and can be found within his concept. *Forza*, literally translates to force, but *forza* in art translates to the intensity either of the conceptual design, or the intense *furia* or passion of the artist. These terms are often used alongside each other as their meanings have similar connotations. Summers (1981) writes that Cellini wrote of Michelangelo, stating that a strong painter (such as Michelangelo) could finish a nude as large as life with the fruits of study and virtues that are possible, in a week's time. Cellini believed such activity to be the result of furores that overtook men with virtue such as Michelangelo. In his autobiography Cellini compares Michelangelo to Raphael, and states that under Michelangelo the science of the human form, and the manner in which he depicts all possibilities of his subjects, surpassed all other artists. Cellini believed that Michelangelo portrayed the passion and a feeling of the inner soul of his subjects. In this manner, he states, Michelangelo captured the mind of the viewer, forcing them to think, while in contrast Raphael captured the heart of the viewer with magical delight (Cellini, 2010).

Furia and *forza* are also often linked with *terribilità* and *difficoltà*, as difficulty in creating a piece often showed the passion and knowledge of the artist (Summers, 1981). *Furia* was considered as nearest to grace and at its highest level was a hallmark of a genius. In the context of *David*, *furia* can be seen within his physical movement; his pose is in a state of readiness for striking (Beal, 2016).

It can also be clearly seen in his intense mental alertness shown through his concentrated gaze. In relation to sculpture in the round, Vasari (1960) writes that it must convey at first glance the intended expression of the main subject in the wider context of the full piece; an image of the Virgin Mary for example, would have a serene or demure expression and not an aggressive one. It must be of balanced proportions; an ideal sculpture would not have a thick head and long legs. Vasari (1960) also states that a sculpture of an old man must have the body of an old man and not that of a young man and that any pose must be both harmonious and graceful. Both *David* and *Perseus and Medusa* are excellent examples of these principles. However, in contrast to *David*, within *Perseus and Medusa*, *furia* is shown through the deeper intensity of Perseus' gaze. His gaze displays a distaste which could be attributed to the beheading of the monstrous gorgon Medusa. The emotion on Perseus face is raw and violent and his posture is a snapshot of the time of the action of the beheading. His left arm has come to rest as he holds up the head. The action in the beheading can be also allotted to *furia* the action is violent and has an intensity of power.

Furia and *forza* are clear in the brutal slaughter of Medusa; *forza* is the force behind the violent force of the act. The gushing blood from the torso and the severed head of Medusa displays the physical force of the decapitation. These principles can be further seen in the tautness of Perseus's sinewy muscles. Michelangelo's *David* has a quieter force, and although the figure seems more relaxed than Perseus, Michelangelo uses these two principles in the expression and posture to demonstrate a quieter power behind his hero. This *forza* can also be attributed to *figurasforzata*, which is the shape of the figure's posture. *Sforzata* or *sforzare* means 'to force something' and although Michelangelo may have never used the term specifically, it is evident in his paintings and sculptures (Cole, 2002). In Michelangelo's paintings within the Sistine Chapel, some of the figures are depicted in bent and somewhat unnaturally forced poses. Examples of these can be seen in the depiction of the flood, where the figures exiting the water can be seen twisted and bent into strong serpentine shapes. In the depiction of the *Last Judgement* by Michelangelo, the figures of the souls being thrown down into hell are another example of bodies twisting into unnatural poses. What *figurasforzata* succeeds in accomplishing is displaying a passion and physicality to the figures. Vasari (1991) describes Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* as a work that surpassed all others, including others by Michelangelo himself, particularly in the depiction of the imagined terror of facing divine judgment. He states that Michelangelo revealed thought and emotion, and through this demonstrated a fusion of grace, divinity, and knowledge. Vasari (1991) states that the sinners in the *Last Judgement* were easily recognisable from their sins and from the eternal damnation, as their poses different from the blessed people who were graceful and harmonious.

Cellini did use the principle of *figurasforzata*, and by his account this principle was the demonstration of the method of skeletal and musculature movement. Michael Cole (2002) argues that *figurasforzata* is the reduction of the human body into a learnable structure. It is the reduction of the body to the skeletal frame that extracts the beauty of form and applies it to physical actions. For Cellini, in *figurasforzata* an extended arm is not only the flexed bicep, but the muscles which control the extension within the back (Cole, 2002). In analysing *Perseus* for this principle, it is evident in Perseus' raised right arm. It is visible in the tension of the muscles from the arm to the shoulder, and the musculature of the back which supports the raised arm. That visible tension is carried down the left side of the body, and this is apparent in the muscles of the left leg. The muscles appear flexed as they support the hips and torso. Relating this principle to Michelangelo's *David*, like Perseus the tension can be viewed in the triceps of the raised arm holding the sling, and the sinewy tautness of the trapezoids across the top of the back which hold the arm up. To a lesser extent, this is also evident in the tension of the left hand and fingers; the hand is bent in a forced exaggerated angle. The tension of the muscles on the left arm flows up to the shoulder which is supporting it. Biographer de Hollanda wrote of Michelangelo's absolute concern for the human anatomy and movement of the human body, which is evident in his sculptures and paintings (Summers, 1981). Michelangelo's concern for human movement echoes Cellini's perspective on the skeletal frame and musculature.

3.2 Difficultà

The literal translation for *difficultà* is simply difficulty, but in artistic terms *difficultà* takes on different meanings. Artistic *difficultà* conveys emotions of decorum, and forms of grace within the realisation of the Divine and artistic invention or fantasy (Summers, 1981). During the Renaissance period *difficultà* was one of the principles that was most spoken and written about, and it was related directly from conception of the idea to viewing the final painting or sculpture. The concept of foreshortening of the human figure was considered as one of the most difficult to be executed in a manner that was pleasing to the viewer (Summers, 1981). To underscore the *difficultà* of the subject, *facilità* (easiness or simplicity) was depicted alongside. The idea of difficulty was as much about aesthetics as it was ethical.

A term which was commonly used during the Renaissance writers and critics was '*sprezzatura*' which means appreciation (Summers, 1981). In the use of *difficultà*, *sprezzatura* was often used to convey an affection or appreciation of the difficulty of the work. According to Summers (1981), Vasari in his writings, found that Michelangelo was a perfect example for *sprezzatura* as his work had a solid foundation, grace, and absolute perfection in the difficulty of execution. Ultimately, during the Renaissance period *difficultà* was understood as artistic conceptual problems like relief in the use of *chiaroscuro* (light and dark, use of relief against negative space), anatomy, drapery of clothes, contours and the most important - the movement of the human figure. In his book on technique, Vasari dedicates many chapters to the technique of painting, the importance of knowledge to the human figure, and the study of human anatomy and movement of figures (Vasari, 1960). He further expresses the importance of use of colour and shadow, stressing the difficulty of the execution of a good design which requires both skill and knowledge.

In examining Cellini's sculpture of Perseus, the *difficultà* is situated in the material he used. Cellini unlike Michelangelo decided to make the sculpture from bronze which had to be cast. He also faced a bigger difficulty to make this sculpture as one large piece. During Cellini's meeting with Cosimo I the duke showed concern that Cellini would not be able to create the sculpture in one solid pour (Cellini, 2010). This was a break in traditional sculptures of stone or marble. Once Cellini had finalized his concept, he made a *maquette* which he presented to Cosimo I. Cellini then had to create a final sized model in *gesso* of the maquette which would be used at the foundry to cast the bronze (Cellini, 2010). Cellini's design would have been difficult to achieve, particularly getting the balance of the sculpture correct. The *difficultà* arises because unlike a stone sculpture where the stone is strong enough to bear the weight of extended limbs, and could be counterbalanced with a pillar to stop the sculpture from toppling over or breaking, bronze is softer and required precise calculations to create a stable self-standing sculpture. This difficulty is exemplified in the extended arm holding the severed head of Medusa, as additional stress would be placed on the extended arm that holds the head. In addition to the weight of the head at the end of the arm, there is the added weight of the gushing blood from the neck (Cole, 1999). Difficulty is also seen in the *serpentinata* (serpentine shaping of a human figure) body of Perseus. Perseus' torso is twisted away from the direction of his legs and head. His head is tilted slightly downwards towards the body under his feet. This classical pose was considered as a very difficult to achieve well by the Renaissance artists. Placing Perseus standing on the body of the beheaded Medusa shows a great challenge and a high degree of difficulty in execution (Cole, 1999). Cellini faced a catastrophe when he was pouring the sculpture assuring the pour his workshop caught fire due to the furnaces was burning too hot (Cellini, 2015). The furnace then started to cool from the rain, and during this period Cellini had been very ill, to the extent that he thought he was going to die but felt he had to persevere to finish the pour. When Cellini inspected the furnace, he noticed that the metal had curdled (Cellini, 2015). He ordered his workers to fire up the furnace with everything they could find to remelt the metal. He also ordered a few of his workers back up onto the roof to fight the fire that had taken hold again. Cellini had a lump of pewter of about 60 pounds thrown into the furnace onto the caked metal and the super-heated furnace started to melt the metal, which caused an explosion which cracked the furnace cracked and the molten metal started to pour out (Cellini, 2015). Cellini and his workers had to quickly plug the holes, but Cellini noticed that the mould was filling up, and called for all his pewter plates, goblets and such, to be brought and thrown into the furnace. These difficulties showed the passion and fiery determination by Cellini to complete his piece. Cellini was vocal in his having created his sculpture as one solid piece, and when asked he conveniently left out the not so insignificant fact that the wings on Perseus' ankles and helmet were separate castings, in addition to the blood flowing from the severed head (Cole, 1999). In comparison, Michelangelo's *David* showed *difficultà* through his classical pose. Unlike Cellini, Michelangelo faced a challenge in the design of *David* as this sculpture had to be extremely large and had to be visible from the top of the Duomo. His challenge lay in the difficulty of seeing the sculpture in the round, and that it had to be clear what the figure was about to do. The other issue Michelangelo had to face was that the block of marble was not a new piece but one that had seen work done on it.

Michelangelo also sculpted his *David* with *serpentinata*, which is where the torso is twisting away from the direction of the head and the lower half is twisted in the direction of the head, forming a sort of 's' shape. The difficulty of the pose is further enhanced within the quiet movement and intensity of his gaze. Michelangelo captures that moment just before *David* slays the Goliath; this can be seen in the curl of the hand over the stone, the other hand holding the end of the sling, and the direction of the head which is slightly tilted down casting a shadow over his eyes. The term *sprezzatura* can be applied to both sculptures as both have solid foundations, have a natural grace, and display great degree of *difficultà*.

3.3 Terribilità

Terribilità is often linked to *difficoltà*, because the connotations of the words are frequently associated with the character of the artist as well the art being produced. The literal translation of the word means terrible. It can be used to describe a situation, a character or object. In artistic terms, the word transforms into describing something that is so fantastic or sublime. In relation to Michelangelo, it is used to describe his master craftsmanship in all his work (Summers, 1981). It becomes a term of high praise instead of depreciation. Summers (1981) connects the word to the Greek translation of the word *deinotes* which means fearfulness or awfulness. He further indicates three principle meanings, loftiness or grandeur, force of expression, and artifice or skill. When examining any of Michelangelo's works, all these principles are clearly visible, and the same can be argued for Cellini. Assessing *Perseus and Medusa* for these three principle values, the sculpture demonstrates a grandeur which reflects its loftiness and power of Cosimo I. It also demonstrates the grandeur of Perseus, a youth that managed to kill the gorgon Medusa. Perseus' expression on his face shows an utter lack of compassion for the dead Medusa. This can be further seen in the skill and craftsmanship in creating the sculpture from bronze. *Terribilità* is found in the action of the decapitation; it is violent and terrible, especially with the blood pouring out of the head. The body of Medusa is lying contorted underfoot; the visual image echoes this principle. *Terribilità* is further demonstrated in skill in the concept of the entire sculpture. In comparison Michelangelo's *David*, *terribilità* is established in the sheer size of the sculpture. Michelangelo's skill as a sculptor is exhibited in the anatomical perfection of the figure. His attention to detail in the tautness of the muscles and the veins on his hands, the intensity in David's eyes, and the subtle movement of the *serpentinata* body all amplify *terribilità*. It is further demonstrated within Michelangelo's own character to create from one block of marble, in the sheer grandeur of David, and the concept to show him as a young man instead of a youth.

3.4 Fantasia

Fantasia can be said to be fantasy, but by Renaissance terms it relates directly to invention. Michelangelo characterized much of his designs in this method. Vasari, in his book places *fantasia* in the creation of architecture and sculpture as a point of inventions, whereas, by contrast, De Hollanda places *fantasia* at the time of the conception of the idea (Summers, 1981). Therefore, the concept of *fantasia* is directly related to the creative imagination and translating that creative imagination into paintings and sculptures. Summers (1981) claims that Michelangelo's use of the word *fantasia*, was consistent with the Renaissance faculty of psychology. This sentiment is echoed by the Stoics who identified fantasy with illusion, and wisdom as the controlling measure of illusion by the use of reason. Similarly, for Dante Alighieri, fantasy or creative imagination came as an influence from the Divine, and the use of reason or intellect enables one to envision the image (Summers, 1981). Michelangelo was acquainted with Dante's *Inferno* and this can be seen in Michelangelo's *Last Judgement*. Dante's demons and other characters are clearly depicted in the *Last Judgement* (Hall, 2010). The *fantasia*, finds itself in the poetry and the translation of that poetry into a visual medium.

Cellini's use of *fantasia* can be related to his understanding of Greco-Roman mythology when he designed Perseus. Cellini's decision to incorporate Perseus' family in his *concetto* was using *fantasia* to echo the Medici family. His creative imagination extended to the concept of the sculpture. Perseus in the mythological story slays Medusa with the aid of the other gods that had given him special gifts to protect him from the gorgon. Cellini breaking from tradition places the hero on top of the beheaded gorgon. He is holding the head up as the blood drains down from the neck. The body of the dead Medusa is twisted and contoured and blood is gushing from the section of the neck that is left. His fantasy was to create a violent and brutal sculpture that would serve as a reminder to the traitors of Florence and foster fear and reverence for Cosimo I.

Michelangelo's depiction of the *Last Judgement* exemplifies the use of *fantasia*, as Michelangelo broke from all traditional depictions by painting his figures in the nude and in poses that were not seen before. The *Last Judgement* displayed a high level of understanding of the biblical text, but also a complex creative imagination to design and incorporate all the figures so that each are clear and the biblical stories are easily readable. Michelangelo's creativity and imagination in the depiction of Christ is clearly evident, as with this figure he stepped away from traditional canon and painted Christ as a muscular man with fair hair, and the figure exuded a fierce force. Traditionally Christ figures were painted as solemn sombre figures which echoed the trinity. Christ had not previously been depicted as a furious man smiting down the sinners; see for example See for example: *The Last Judgement* on the ceiling of the baptistry in Florence (artist unknown), *Triumph of the Church* by Andrea Bonaiuti in S. Maria della Novella in Florence, and *Disputation over the Sacrament* by Raphael in the Vatican.

Christ's intent is echoed in his intense expression in his face, added to that his arm lifted about to bring down his wrath, adds to his *fantasia* and *terribilità*. Michelangelo, in his sculpture of *David*, allowed his own creativity to create a David that was different from the others created by Donatello and other Renaissance sculptors and painters. Michelangelo designed him as a young virile man, whereas in the biblical story, David was a boy – a mere youth. When the frightened army of King Saul would not face the giant Goliath, David stood alone and faced the Goliath and he went on to slay the giant with his sling (1 Sam. 17: 33-50 [NIV]). Understanding why Michelangelo's vision of David was totally nude could lay in his understanding of *fantasia*, that it was a force from the Divine but also as a display of his understanding of the human form. Additionally, creating and displaying David nude, has makes for a suggestion that David's faith in God was all he required to defeat the giant Goliath. Furthermore, this can be applied to the sculpture of David standing in the Piazza della Signoria facing Rome that Florence stood with its undaunted faith in defiance of Rome.

4.0 Conclusion

Cellini was undoubtedly a master goldsmith and this was evident from his famous Salt Cellar of 1543, but the creation and the casting of Perseus in bronze cemented his status as a sculptor and would be one of his greatest achievements. The *Perseus and Medusa* statue created for the triumphant Grand Duke Cosimo I displayed not only his knowledge in the story of the Ovid, but successfully incorporated the thinly veiled allegory to represent his patron. Cellini had been educated at the Accademia del Disegno which epitomised the concepts and principles of art and sculpture, and was fully conversant with these principles. The treatises written by Cellini on anatomical drawings exemplify the principles of Michelangelo and are related to his education at the Accademia del Disegno in Florence. It would have been impossible for Cellini to ignore the influence of Michelangelo artistic practice. Cellini saw himself at the same level as sculptor to Michelangelo, and his sculpture of *Perseus and Medusa* reflects many similarities to Michelangelo's *David*. These similarities are clear in the posture; both sculptures have a similar stance. This is also extended in the similarities to the facial features. Importantly both *David* and Perseus echo the Greco- Roman style of sculptures. Cellini like Michelangelo had been commissioned to create a sculpture which would echo the sentiments of Cosimo for Florence. The artistic principles of *furia*, *forza*, *terribilità*, *difficoltà*, and *fantasia*, which were all related directly to Michelangelo, are evident in Cellini's sculpture of Perseus and Medusa. Although Cellini uses and writes about artistic term *figurasforzata*, a term that Michelangelo never used, it is evident in the sculpture of *Perseus and Medusa* and can also be viewed in Michelangelo's painting of the *Last Judgement* and even in the statue of *David*. Cellini like his counterpart deviated from the traditional canon of their respective commissions and portrayed their heroes as virile virtuous men.

Unlike Cellini's Perseus where Perseus was an allegorically representation of the Grand Duke, Michelangelo's *David* represented the Republic and like in the biblical story where the youth had defeated the giant, so had the Republic defeated the powerful ruling giants - the Medici and Rome. Both sculptures could be argued as sculptures of propaganda for the victors and their positions within the Piazza della Signoria resonate with this sentiment. *David* and Perseus were also an antithesis to the *Judith and Holofernes* sculpture of Donatello. The masculinity of the two heroes undermined the act of a female hero Judith slaying the Holofernes. The moving of the *Judith and Holofernes* sculpture from the prime position where *David* stands, to within the Loggia dei Lanzi further reiterates the concern of the Florentine elite that it was wrong for a woman to slay a man. Having *Perseus and Medusa* placed next to *Judith and Holofernes* further amplified this sentiment. Ultimately it is clear that not only did Cellini know the artistic principles of Michelangelo, but that he utilized them in his own drawings and sculptures, and his treatises personified these principles.

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