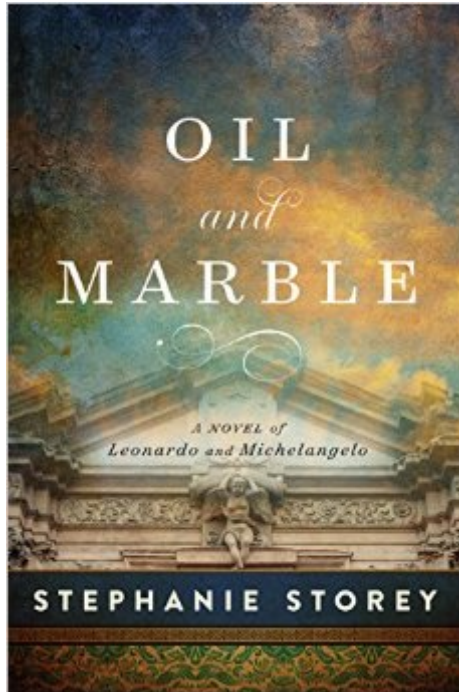


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Oil And Marble: A Novel Of Leonardo And Michelangelo



Synopsis

From 1501—1505, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo Buonarroti both lived and worked in Florence. Leonardo was a charming, handsome fifty year-old at the peak of his career.

Michelangelo was a temperamental sculptor in his mid-twenties, desperate to make a name for himself. Michelangelo is a virtual unknown when he returns to Florence and wins the commission to carve what will become one of the most famous sculptures of all time: David. Even though his impoverished family shuns him for being an artist, he is desperate to support them. Living at the foot of his misshapen block of marble, Michelangelo struggles until the stone finally begins to speak. Working against an impossible deadline, he begins his feverish carving. Meanwhile, Leonardo's life is falling apart: he loses the hoped-for David commission; he can't seem to finish any project; he is obsessed with his ungainly flying machine; he almost dies in war; his engineering designs disastrously fail; and he is haunted by a woman he has seen in the market—a merchant's wife, whom he is finally commissioned to paint. Her name is Lisa, and she becomes his muse. Leonardo despises Michelangelo for his youth and lack of sophistication. Michelangelo both loathes and worships Leonardo's genius. Oil and Marble is the story of their nearly forgotten rivalry. Storey brings early 16th-century Florence alive, and has entered with extraordinary empathy into the minds and souls of two Renaissance masters. The book is an art history thriller. Skyhorse Publishing, as well as our Arcade, Yucca, and Good Books imprints, are proud to publish a broad range of books for readers interested in fiction—novels, novellas, political and medical thrillers, comedy, satire, historical fiction, romance, erotic and love stories, mystery, classic literature, folklore and mythology, literary classics including Shakespeare, Dumas, Wilde, Cather, and much more. While not every title we publish becomes a New York Times bestseller or a national bestseller, we are committed to books on subjects that are sometimes overlooked and to authors whose work might not otherwise find a home.

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Customer Reviews

I met Stephanie Storey at a lecture she gave in Winston-Salem, NC. The focus of her talk was research for historical fiction, but she also spoke about other aspects of her writing. When she was done I was impressed enough to buy *Oil and Marble*. And now that I've read the novel, I'm even more impressed. This is a story about Michaelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, set when they were both living and working in Florence. It is, in Storey's own words, "unapologetically a work of fiction." But in my opinion, historical fiction is more accurate than straight history. Both require accuracy concerning known facts, but a good work of fiction goes a step further by capturing human emotion. And *Oil and Marble* isn't just good. It's wonderful. This was the time when Leonardo painted the Mona Lisa and Michaelangelo chiseled his David. Leonardo was a master, older than Michaelangelo, so his reputation was established, while Michaelangelo had completed the Pieta and was trying to build on the reputation that work had brought him. Despite the fact that they were at different points in their careers, they were rivals and both experienced the crazy mix of admiration and jealousy that comes when one artist studies the work of another. As I expected the novel was about the love of art, but there were many themes running through it. Leonardo was concerned with various aspects of his career. He was an engineer as well as an artist, so he worked on other projects. Most of those related to military threats, particularly from the neighboring city of Pisa. And he also had an interesting relationship with Lisa del Giocondo, the model for the Mona Lisa. Meanwhile, Michaelangelo was concerned about his family.

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