

Kids: Steal these tips from a professional artist

Art Thief

Vol. 2, Heist 9

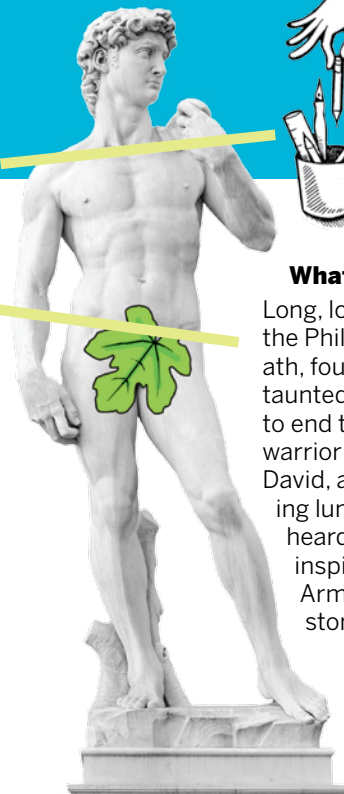
DRAW DAVID'S TORSO

And discover *contrapposto*

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DIFFICULTY METER

by AMY RAUDENBUSH • art@phillynews.com



What made David great

Long, long ago, Israel was at war with the Philistines. A giant named Goliath, fought on the Philistine side and taunted the Israelites, daring them to end the war by sending a single warrior to fight him one-on-one. David, a young shepherd delivering lunch to his warrior brothers, heard Goliath's challenge and was inspired to fight the giant himself. Armed with just a slingshot and stones, David fatally struck

Goliath in the forehead. David later became king of Israel.

What makes this "David" great

This sculpture was created by the Italian artist Michelangelo in 1501. It is large (17 feet) and powerfully beautiful, but its greatness has as much to do with what it is not as with what it is. It does not show a victorious David hoisting the head or sword of the vanquished giant aloft. Instead, we see a thoughtful David at the very cusp of both greatness

and manhood. An idea is forming in his mind. The distant glare, the confident stance, and the light fingering of the stone all add up to an "I can take this guy" attitude. This revolutionary sculpting of an *idea* rather than of an event, combined with Michelangelo's breathtaking command of the human form, earn this "David" a spot in the pantheon of the world's great art.

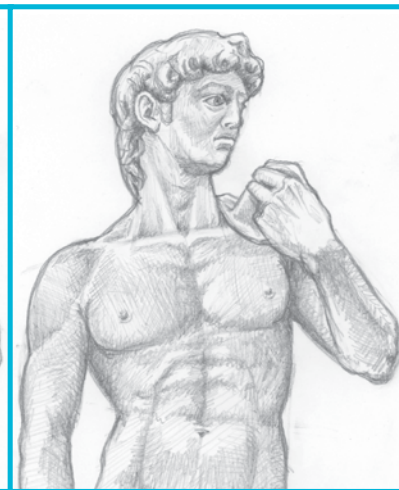
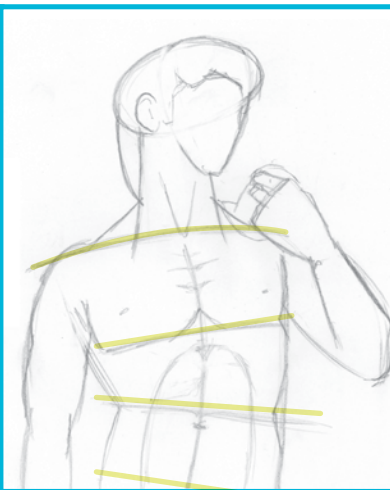
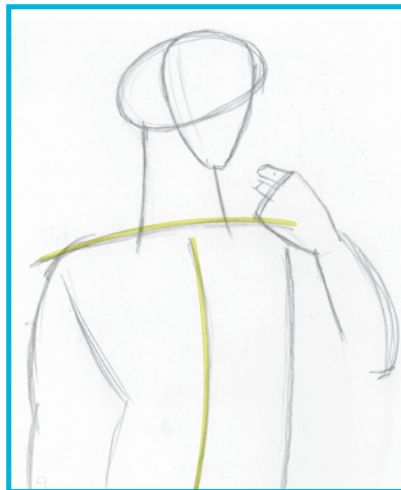
Why is David nude?

In the story, David refuses the armor that is offered to him before he fights

the giant, but it is unlikely that he had been nude. Had Jewish literature come directly to Europe from the Jews, we would probably see David in clothes befitting a 10th-century B.C. shepherd. Christianity, with its Jewish roots, was disseminated to a Europe under Roman rule and influence. The Romans saw themselves as the aesthetic heirs to the classical Greeks, who saw the unadorned human form as virtuous.

Contrapposto

Look above at Michelangelo's famous "David" sculpture. Notice how the shoulders tip UP and the hips tilt DOWN. *Contrapposto* occurs when one leg bears most of the weight, which causes the hips to slope toward the resting leg. This results in a counterpositioning of the shoulders and a natural-looking stance.



1 Carefully observe and draw the gold "T" shape. Next add the oval and egg shapes that will become the head. Keep the head a good distance above the shoulders. The neck seems too long now, but that's because we have not yet added the trapezius muscles. Add the lines that will become the torso and arms. These will be refined later, so just keep them basic. The placement of the hand is important. Put it directly in front of the shoulder on the right.

2 Notice how the gold lines fan out and begin to tilt downward at the waist and hips? Use these guidelines to place the pectoral (chest) muscles and the notch at the waist. The underside of the free arm is in front of the torso, but the raised arm is behind the torso. Add the neck muscles and slingshot.

Place the ear just above where the line for the neck ends. The hair will frame the ear. We will treat the hair as a solid form and try not to get too focused on individual curls.

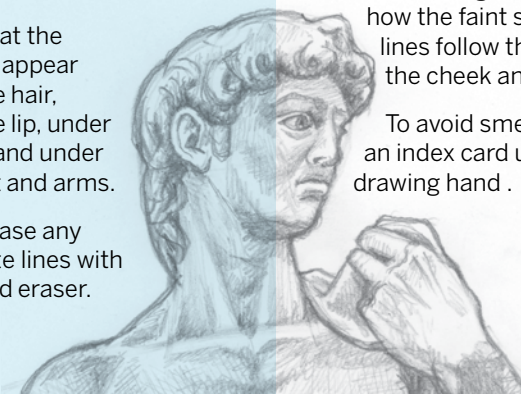
Gently erase the unneeded guidelines.

3 Now that everything is placed, you can refine the features and muscles with confidence. Because the head is nearly side-view, the features occur on the far right third of the head. Resist the urge to center them.

Notice that the shadows appear under the hair, under the lip, under the chin and under the chest and arms.

Gently erase any inaccurate lines with a kneaded eraser.

4 Layer upon layer of gray tones will give your drawing depth. Be sure to leave your lightest areas white. You can always touch them up with a kneaded eraser if they get gray. Allow your shading to follow the contours of the figure. Notice how the faint shading lines follow the curves of the cheek and hand. To avoid smears, place an index card under your drawing hand.



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Next week's heist: We make an African mask.