

The Pietà Rondanini by Michelangelo

Since 1952, Milan has been the home of the last sculpture by Michelangelo Buonarroti, born in Caprese, (Arezzo), in 1475 and died in Rome in 1564.

The sculpture remained unfinished due to the death of the artist, who worked on this marble block for over a decade.

It depicts the Madonna standing and supporting the dead body of her son, Jesus, after the Crucifixion. The two figures are very elongated, almost filiform and very different from the physically strong bodies that are typical of Michelangelo's work. The marble block bears the signs of an earlier version that suggested more anatomically robust figures. The dramatic intensity of the relationship between mother and son, almost fused together as one body, should be considered in the light of Michelangelo's profound faith. The artist often dealt with the theme of the *Pietà* (meaning "pity"), using a variety of techniques and solutions: starting with the group located in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, sculpted when Michelangelo was twenty-five years old and was pursuing a completely different idea of beauty, of the idealised body of Christ lying on a young Mary's lap. Then, at over eighty years of age, he reduced everything down to the essential, reviving an iconographic model from medieval times.

Sforzesco Castle

20121 Milan
Information tel. 02.88463700
Ticket office tel. 02.88463703
www.milanocastello.it

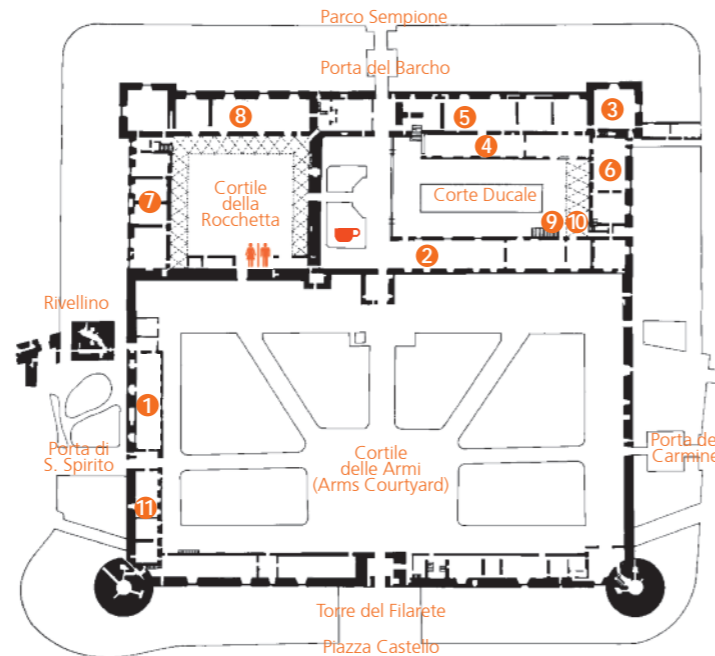
Public transport
M1 Cairoli - M2 Cadorna/Lanza
Trams 1-2-4-7-12-14-27
Buses 50-57-58-61-94

Opening hours: 9:00 - 17:30
Tuesday to Sunday
(closed on Mondays)

The museums are closed on the following public holidays:
25 December, 1 January,
1 May, Easter Monday

Admission
for all museums in the Castle
€ 5.00 full price
€ 3.00 concession

Guided visit
Ad Artem
tel. 02.6596937 - 02.6597728
Opera d'Arte
tel. 02.45487400

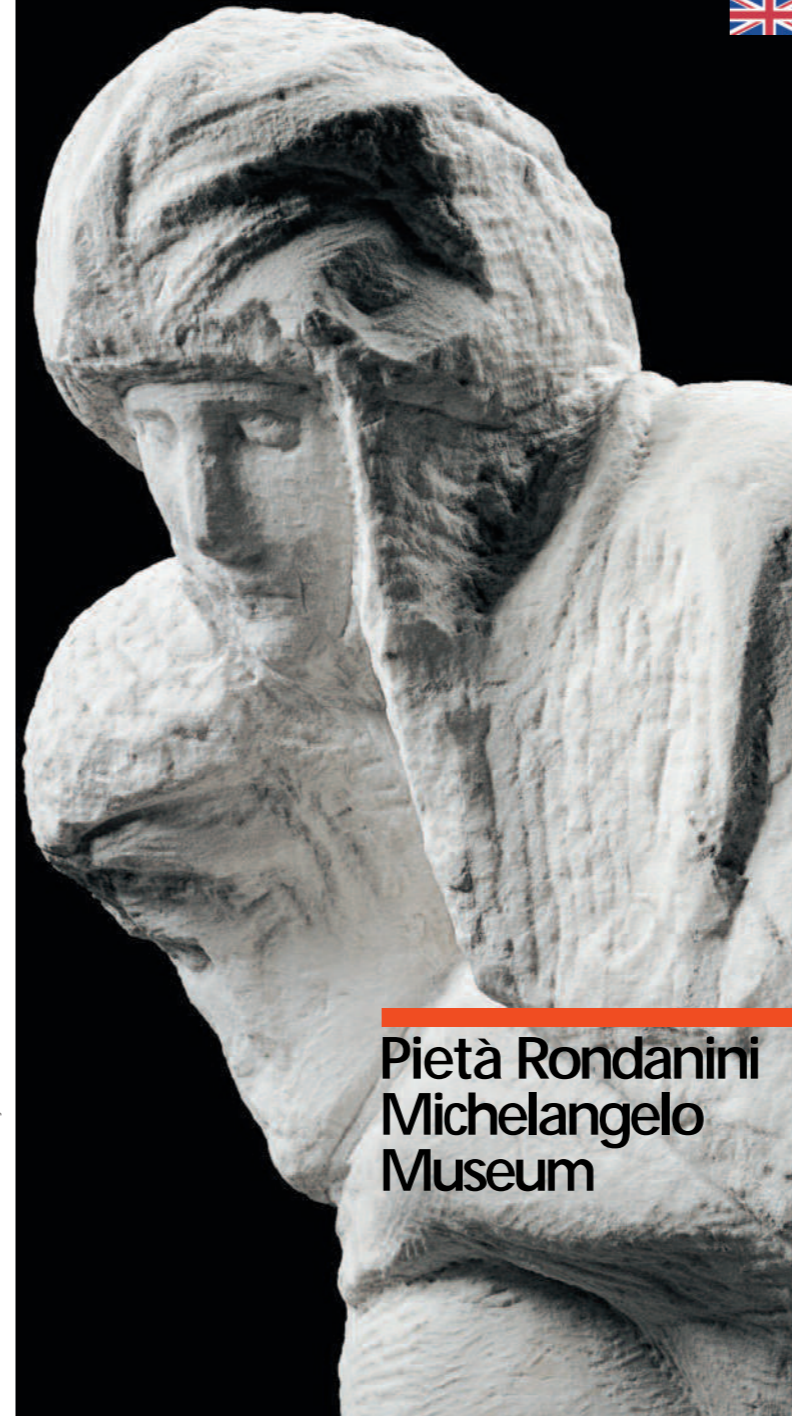


- 1 Pietà Rondanini - Michelangelo Museum
- 2 Museum of Ancient Art
- 3 Sala delle Asse decorated by Leonardo da Vinci
- 4 Armoury
- 5 Museum of Furniture and Wooden Sculpture
- 6 Picture Gallery
- 7 Museum of Applied Arts
Ceramics, Sumptuary Arts and Trivulzio Tapestries
- 8 Museum of Musical Instruments
- 9 Museum of Archaeology, Prehistory and Protohistory Section
- 10 Museum of Archaeology, Egypt Section
- 11 Spanish Hospital Section
Temporary exhibition

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Pietà Rondanini
Michelangelo
Museum



The story of the Milanese *Pietà* is still shrouded in mystery to a large extent: the sculpture was found in Michelangelo's Rome studio upon his death on 18th February 1564. It then vanished and only reappeared definitively in 1807 in the mansion of the Marchesi Rondinini (or, using its incorrect form, Rondanini) on Via del Corso. The work thus became known as: *Pietà Rondanini*. After several transfers of ownership following its departure from the Roman mansion, the sculpture was acquired with public funding by the City of Milan in 1952. In the meantime, the style of the piece, which had long been overlooked and considered unimportant to Michelangelo's body of work, became the subject of discussion among critics and contemporary artists and the *Pietà Rondanini*, unique in the context of sixteenth century sculpture, acquired a privileged position in the history of art.

Decoration on the ceiling of the old Spanish Hospital room where Michelangelo's *Pietà Rondanini* is displayed



Since 1956, Michelangelo's *Pietà* had been displayed in a celebrated exhibition space designed by the Milanese architects BBPR in the Sala degli Scarlioni at Sforzesco Castle: a vast space filled with Lombard sculptures from the Renaissance (notably those of Bambaia) that had been extensively renovated over the years and was not easily accessible to the disabled. The City Council therefore decided to dedicate a separate space to the sculpture by Michelangelo. This will be the old hospital in the Castle's Cortile delle Armi (Arms Courtyard), which housed infirmed soldiers during the Spanish rule. In this space, where so much suffering occurred and so many prayers were offered, Michelangelo's *Pietà* will be exhibited in a display designed by Michele De Lucchi as of May 2015.

