



COVERAGE REPORT

Title: XXX XXX XXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX Author: XXXXXXX XXXXXXX
Genre: Historical Drama Analyst: JC
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LOGLINE: A young Michelangelo has a torrid love affair with (The) David against a society that frowns upon sodomites.

STORY EVALUATION:

Young artist Michelangelo is a shame to his father, Lodovico, presumably because Michelangelo is gay. Michelangelo and his friend Francesco are accepted to the Academy of Domenico Ghirlandaio over his father's objections. Michelangelo is well thought of except by the arrogant Pietro, another student. Michelangelo has a sketch of Davide, a man he saw in passing and whose memory he lusts over. Michelangelo meets Friar Savonarola, a friend of the family and a reformer bent on cleansing Florence of sodomites. Lorenzo (who comes out of nowhere with no seeming introduction) meets Michelangelo and invites him to live on the premises. Lodovico objects violently but relents when Lorenzo intervenes and offers Lodovico a position as a podesta.

The palazzo Medici is a hedonistic place and Michelangelo flourishes. Lorenzo finds Michelangelo's nudes of Davide and claims that he knows him. He invites Davide to a burlesque show and introduces him to Michelangelo. The chemistry between them is evident and Davide invites him to a tour of a winery the following night. The next night, Michelangelo attends his father's party and gets stuck having to give a rich maiden a tour of the property. He arrives too late to meet up with Davide. It's no matter, though, as Davide and Michelangelo arrange to have dinner and fall instantly in love. Michelangelo decides to take Davide to his father's party under the guise of friendship and Davide is inadvertently interrogated by the Officers of the Night.

Davide moves into the palazzo Medici and love blooms. Pietro becomes jealous of Davide and Michelangelo and whispers their affair to the Officer's of the Night. Lodovico gets wind of it and confronts Michelangelo. Davide flees the city for his family's villa. Michelangelo and Davide write love letters. Michelangelo shrinks under the influence of the church even as he visits



Davide and makes love. His last ardent supporter, Lorenzo, dies and Michelangelo decides to flee the city. He forsakes Davide for the church and presumably lives a chaste life.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

The writing is excellent, an easy read, engrossing. The period is vividly laid out without being self-conscious. The characters are rich and clearly defined. The dialogue is very good. There are a few scenes that stick in the reader's mind: when Francesco tries to cheer up Michelangelo in the chicken coop (pg. 28) or when Michelangelo dumps Sophia in the wheelbarrow (pg. 53). There's a lot of work evident here.

The weak part of the story is the third act. It's not clear why Michelangelo forsakes his lover, Davide. It ends as abruptly as Bertoldo and Lorenzo die. There's not a strong enough sense of Michelangelo's terrible struggle between loving openly and being accepted by society and the church. It feels like the story has lost its focus and message. It ends with a whimper instead of a climax. In fact, thematically, the entire story needs to be tightened to remain on message.

DEVELOPMENT IDEAS:

The author might consider taking another look at the structure, in terms of Michelangelo's character arc. Ask the important questions: What is Michelangelo's personal problem that will be the one thing he has to overcome to solve the story problem? Perhaps, Michelangelo is more open about his homosexuality at the expense of his father's reputation. He's making waves and needs to be brought under control if he's going to be embraced by society and the church. Maybe we could see a scene where he's caught during his early experimentation. What is Michelangelo's inciting incident, that sends his life in a new direction (usually around pg. 15)? Perhaps, this is where Michelangelo first sees Davide. What are the antagonistic forces that make up the story's problem that Michelangelo is doomed to face in the story's climax (end act one, usually around pg. 30)? Perhaps, Michelangelo falls helplessly in love with Davide.

How does Michelangelo turn from passive to active in his journey to solve his story problem (mid-point, usually around pg. 60)? Maybe Michelangelo decides to go a bit public with Davide and live openly. How does Michelangelo's attempt to solve his problem have dire consequences (end



act 2, usually around pg. 90)? Perhaps, this is where Davide is driven from the city. How does Michelangelo ultimately overcome his personal problem to solve the story's problem at the climax? Perhaps, Michelangelo decides to let his lover go to save him further humiliation and disgrace. Maybe the point is that one can't always live freely without hurting others and a choice has to be made – right or wrong. Whatever the decision, there needs to be a scene where Michelangelo lashes out at the church or his father in some way that leaves the audience emotionally satisfied. In his way, he's finally stood up and spoken his mind before making the compromise.

These are just suggestions to help get the juices flowing. This is not mere Hollywood formula; this is how humans have been telling stories since before Plato. Screenplays are a more rigid art in terms of structure but that's just bone. The author's job is to supply the meat, blood and gut – something this author has done well at.

Use sex scenes to further character or don't use them. There are a few of them here between the same two people. If it's not taken to a new level, it just looks like a sporting event. What is the dynamic in the bedroom and what does it reveal about these two flesh and blood beings?

Think of scenes as forums to debate theme. A lot of that is going on already but it needs to be honed some. Let the reader into Michelangelo's subjective feelings more as he struggles between his desires and the church. This is painful stuff. Let us in on that pain in his private, wordless moments – when he's at work, perhaps, inducting God's will through his hand. Maybe his art is so tied up with God that the real fear is losing it. Maybe God is the voice in the stone telling him how it should be cut. If he forsakes God, he'll lose that power of expression that gives his life meaning. Now the stakes are raised higher: art or the love of a man? In the end, Michelangelo chooses art! Have a scene where Davide interrupts Michelangelo's flow. Show how the two things come in contact. Perhaps, when Davide is around, the stone doesn't speak.

ANALYST ADVICE:

Want further inspiration? Read "Story" by Robert McKee and, particularly, "The Writer's Journey" by Christopher Vogler for inspiration. This draft is great but the story argument could use clarification. These books will help.



It wouldn't be a bad idea to address some of the notes herein but this script is really good and ready for entry to contests and submission to agencies. You're in luck; we're going to help!

TRAFFIC LIGHT: GREEN