

# Fresco Paintings

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Fresco paintings are very particular.

The lime plaster is made and then spread onto a tile. Originally, the plaster was allowed to dry before painting was done, but now, the painting is typically done while the plaster is still moist. This is called *buono fresco*, which means fresh in Italian. The plaster is made by mixing



calcium oxide and water to form a calcium hydroxide paste. As the plaster dries, it combines with the carbon dioxide in the air to form calcium carbonate, or limestone. If it is painted on before the plaster completely dries, then the colors are essentially trapped inside the limestone, which is why these types of paintings can last so long, if protected from the elements.

Fresco paintings have been around for quite a while, thousands of years. The most famous fresco has to be Michelangelo's work in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. The ceiling is a representation of the Book of Genesis, and the most famous portion is the Creation of Adam. Michelangelo did a *buono fresco*, so fresh plaster had to be applied as he painted, and had to be worked on at exactly the right time.

The fresco painting I found to be very interesting. Mostly because of the reaction the lime plaster goes through simply by being exposed to air, and how this traps the colors in stone. It made me appreciate Michelangelo's work so much more.