Michelangiolo

DIRECTION
Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti
TEXT
Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti
MUSIC
Giuseppe De Luca
PHOTOGRAPHY
Carlo Ventimiglia
YEAR
1964
PRODUCTION
Alberto Mortara for Romor Film, Milano
NOTES
Production manager Ugo de Lucia; research assistant Cesare Molinari; technical design and montage Paolo Donati; cameraman Leopoldo Piccinelli; assistants Enrico Umetelli and Giovanni Di Perna.
FORMAT
35 mm, 16 mm
LANGUAGE
Italian, English, French, German and Spanish
DURATION
78'
FILM
Colour

DESCRIPTION
"This film represents a reading and a critical analysis of Michelangelo's artistic language made through the visual language of cinema". With this premise begins the last and most complex of the critofilm, by which, thanks also to the breadth of technical means, Ragghianti could more fully accomplish his project of critical reading of a work through the cinematographic means. Cesare Molinari, who collaborated in the realization of this film, thus said: "Before and during the making of this film, Ragghianti spent many hours going around the statues and the paintings by Buonarroti, dissecting them and searching for all the points of view, in order to understand the validity of each one. Thus those "impossible" angles (but quite true for the artist during his work) were born, which deepen and complete the knowledge of the work. Then the analysis drove to cover with a beam of light a statue or an architecture in order to grasp any significant transformations. The film that is, originated first from the "coexistence" with the works of art. However, at a later time also from the lonely meditation and reflective summery from which the extraordinary adherence to the image of a text derives that does not motivate it (since the filmic discourse has its motivation in itself: in fact, the comment was written after the work was completed, like all the comments of the critofilm). Nevertheless, sometimes it enriches it with information and juxtapositions" (Un critofilm d'arte su Michelangiolo, in Critica d'arte, n. 65-66, 1964 p. 53-68).

Ragghianti, especially in this film, manages to make the process of analysing the work of art coincide with that of the cinematographic vision. Regarding this, after having identified five parts corresponding to as many artistic periods by Michelangiolo, Molinari attributes to the different types of shots and rhythms an essential function for understanding the various artistic phases of the artist. "[...] it is the architecture of the cinematographic discourse to prove the necessity and the idealism of such order. From the rapid and almost nervous passing of the first works to the wide and explained discourse on the Sistine Chapel ceiling, to the slow unfolding of the underground drama of the Medici tombs up to the chorus of returning paths of the

Judgement, which calms down in the dramatic final synthesis. The rhythm of the film which also has its own linguistic value, becomes itself history and critical exegesis" (Ibidem). The contribution of the director of photography Carlo Ventimiglia, former collaborator of Ragghianti from Coin art in the Late Empire, was decisive for the success of the film. About the used technical innovations, Molinari says, "For the sculptures often integrated with the architectures, the filming shows sensitive issues. The author had some electrically controlled camera built, in order to add other curved or diagonal movements at different distances to the translational movements of the trolley. He thus obtains an extreme flexibility of the camera, assimilated as much as possible to the critical eye that searches, finds and follows in the space the rhythms and the compositions of the art forms" (Ibidem).

*available at the video library of the Fondazione Ragghianti