suggests that Michelangelo realized this, and portrayed Christian themed sculptures in ‘renewed Greco-Roman terms’, setting his Pietà apart from anything that had come before, as Michelangelo ‘classicized and idealized the otherwise tragic and emotive scene’. However, links can still be made between the Roman Pietà, and Medieval depictions of the subject. Hartt is adamant that the sculpture is more ‘Medievalistic’ than commonly thought, as Michelangelo has portrayed the figures of Mary and Christ as ‘soft and slender anatomical forms’, alluding to gothic proportions, rather then the Greco-Roman model. Consequently, It can be argued that a Classical influence is more apparent in the later Florentine Pietà, where Wasserman suggests that Michelangelo’s desire to create a multi-figure statue from a single marble block, was a result of his enthusiasm for Classical examples such as the Laocoön (Rome, 40-30 BC) and Farnese Bull (Naples, 222-235 AD). At the time of their excavation, writings by Pliny the Elder indicated the sculptures were carved from a single block, however it was soon realized that these works were actually carved from multiple blocks, but this did not deter Michelangelo from his goal.

In her article, ‘Michelangelo and Medieval Pietà: The Sculpture of Devotion or the Art of Sculpture?’, Ziegler looks at Michelangelo’s Roman Pietà in relation to Northern Medieval models of the same subject matter. She recognizes the overall sense of calmness felt when looking at the Roman Pietà, in comparison to the ‘extreme emotionalism’ of Medieval models. Medieval depiction’s of the Pietà, such as the Flemish Pietà at Tongeren (fig.2), are graphic and

10 Squire, The Art of the Body, 10
11 Ziegler, ‘Michelangelo and Medieval Pietà’, 33
12 Hartt, Michelangelo, 84
13 Hartt, Michelangelo, 84
14 Hartt, Michelangelo, 84
17 Ziegler, ‘Michelangelo and Medieval Pietà’, 33
(Figure 7) Giambologna *Samson and the Philistine*, 1560-1562, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
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