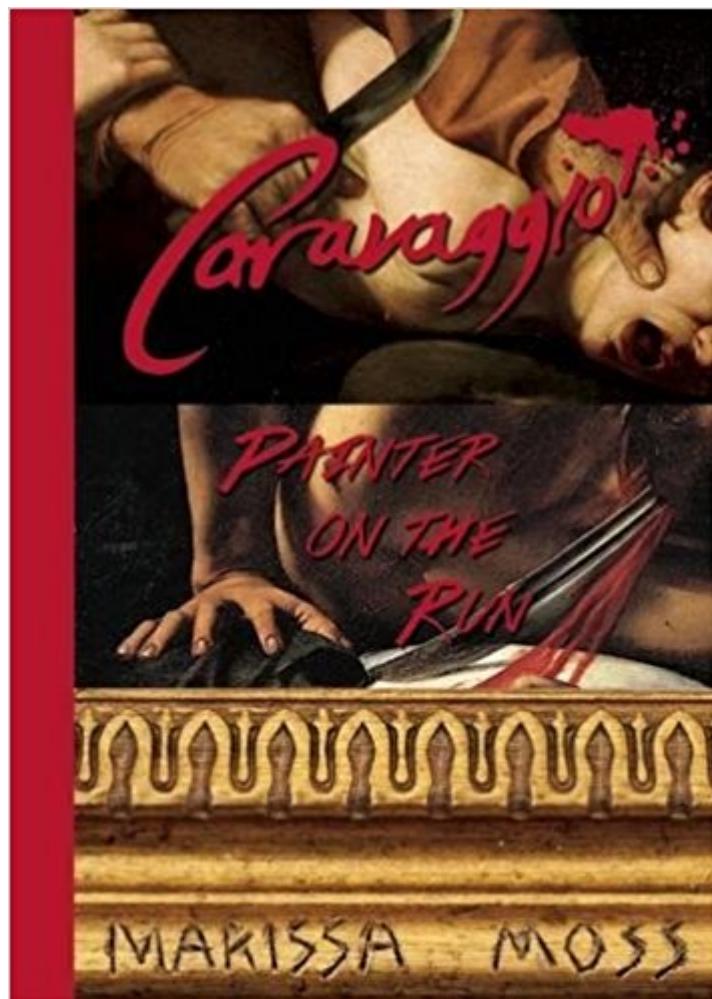


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# Caravaggio: Painter On The Run



## **Synopsis**

Caravaggio was on a defiant mission to change the art world. Before him, there were pastel-colored idealized visions, polite paintings for a polite society. After him, there were slews of imitators, trying to grasp his brilliant slashes of light and dark, his people who looked more like your neighbor than a model of perfection. Bold with his brush, the young rebel was equally brash in his life, picking fights and getting arrested for things as silly as throwing a plate of artichokes in a waiter's face. Until he faced the ultimate punishment, condemned for a murder he didn't commit – at least not intentionally.

## **Book Information**

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Average Customer Review: Be the first to review this item

Best Sellers Rank: #2,397,230 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #64 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Biographical > European #92 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Renaissance #134 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Renaissance

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 6 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

Gr 8 Up "This energetic, well-researched historical novel brings to life the temperamental, innovative Italian artist Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. In the late 1500s, the Roman Inquisition was underway, enforcing rigid Catholic standards that identified and punished heretics. Caravaggio was among the challengersâ "talented, brash, and determined to succeed on his own. He used real, ordinary people as models for religious figures and painted them against dramatic backdrops of light and shadows. Despite fame, wealth, influential supporters, and immense talent, Caravaggio was a hard-drinking, womanizing, renegade street fighter. The first-person narrative takes place within a

dynamic historical context based on real people and events, police records, court documents, and true accounts by his contemporaries. Intriguing descriptions of how the artist imagined, staged, and produced actual paintings reveal his originality and the competitive societal role of 17th-century artists. Caravaggio's outspoken genius, notorious anger management issues, and intense but brief romantic liaisons will fascinate teens. This compelling story humanizes Caravaggio, illuminates the political and social pressures on artists in a pivotal era, and will inspire readers to seek out the protagonist's striking artwork. Remarkably, many of Caravaggio's paintings still hang in their original church locations and can be accessed online. **VERDICT** For fans of historical fiction and art history.â "Gerry Larson, formerly at Durham School of the Arts, NC

"I really enjoyed the descriptive scenes in which the main character is painting. I felt as if I were in Rome admiring Caravaggioâ ™s art myself. I also liked the journal entries and police reports between chapters, some pulled from actual Roman archives. They give interesting insight into how other characters and communities view Caravaggio. Initially, the book felt difficult to read, but as I continued, I was very sucked into the world created before me. Anybody with an interest in art and/or history would likely enjoy this book. Any teenager who likes to read would find this book a nice change of topic and scenery from most books marketed toward us."â "Pierce S.V., 18, Teens Review, School Library Journal (S.V. Pierce Teens Review, School Library Journal)"Caravaggio is brilliant!!!! I was transported to another place and time... and learned a lot too!"--Marla Conn, Readability"Life is turbulent in this Rome of the 16th Century. The inquisition threatens any new thinking guided by the political manipulation and greed of the Catholic Church. In this fictionalized account of Caravaggioâ ™s life this revolutionary painter stomps across the pages brilliant, tormented, and wild. His friends and lovers, his models, his patrons and his many enemies come alive. We experience his triumphs and disappointments. We taste and smell the dankness of the prison cell and view the horrors of public execution. But central to all are the paintings. Although we never see them their power and magnificence jump off the page at us. After reading this book Caravaggio is a name we will look out for online, in paintings and ultimately we hope in a visit to Rome."--Rhian Piprell, Librarian, The International School of Yangon, MyanmarJunior Library Guild SelectionA fictionalized account of the Italian painter's tumultuous life hews to the historical timeline. The painter Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, better known today simply as Caravaggio, was the most famous painter in Rome when he lived there in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. His distinctive painting style&#151;unique at that time&#151;gave his mostly religious themes a gritty, accessible feel, even as his use of common people as models (including prostitutes for the

Virgin Mary) appalled many. Moss' story contains factual historical references—all the people, places, police reports, and depositions it contains actually existed—but is told through Caravaggio's (necessarily imagined) eyes in this first-person, present-tense narration. When Caravaggio's first apprenticeship ends due to his temper (a temper that will get him into trouble on a regular basis), Cardinal Francesco Maria Del Monte takes him under his patronage, where Caravaggio thrives. It's a very human story, as Caravaggio relays his creative inspirations, petty rivalries, brawls, and drinking activities and mentions his many assignations with courtesans and prostitutes. There are no Caravaggio paintings illustrated, which would have been a plus, but they are easy enough to access on the internet. . .Overall, Moss tells an absorbing, informative story set in a fascinating time replete with political intrigue, bustle, and corruption. (author's note, timeline, bibliography)"--Kirkus"Review: Anyone who is interested, fascinated by, Caravaggio will love this fictionalized biography. Caravaggio was an unlikely artist who pushed against all the boundaries in 16th century Italy. The Renaissance is in full bloom. Patrons make and break artists every day. The rules of the Church are fully observed. Caravaggio's style, realistic portraits, true lighting, as it comes in from the window, the poor, the blood, the pain, he and his work reflected the real world. Some saw genius and some saw heretic. Caravaggio's personal life was messy, his bad temper, his impatience, got him into trouble all the time. Moss does a terrific job "painting" a picture of Caravaggio's life and life's work. Her careful research and storytelling skills make this story a gem. Summary: Highly Recommending"--Margaret Neville, King's English Bookshop"A detailed, well-researched story. . .[Caravaggio's] biography makes art history quite thrilling: he was regularly arrested for fighting, most of the women he interacts with are prostitutes, and he even killed a man. Teens already interested in art history are probably the best audience here, though interesting comparisons could be made to novels about characters fighting oppressive regimes, as well."--Booklist"I have to admit I was not familiar with [Caravaggio's] work, but I researched his life after reading this book. . . An amazing light shines through his paintings as if from above, but the anger he dealt with caused many problems throughout his life. This is a great read!"--staff review, Waucoma BookstoreMarissa Moss of Berkeley, best known for her Amelia's Notebook series, makes a perfectly executed turn into young adult historical fiction with Caravaggio: Painter on the Run. A Junior Library Guild selection, the book tells the tale of one of the fathers of modern painting from the late 1500s to early 1600s. Caravaggio's dark work greatly differed from the pastel-colored, mannered paintings of the times. His life echoed the darkness of his art, whether he was throwing an artichoke in a waiter's face or committing an unintended murder. Kids will love the drama of the 16th century, the Inquisition, and Caravaggio's rip-roaring story—and learning

about the painterâ™s rebellious art. (Diablo Magazine)n Caravaggio: Painter on the Run, Marissa Moss captures the essence of this sixteenth century artistic genius for teen and adult readers. The story begins with Caravaggio in prison, one of many stints behind bars. He recalls coming to Rome as a teenager seeking apprenticeship with a wealthier and more prestigious painter and meeting lifelong friend Mario Minitti in the process. Right away he clashes with the master Cesare dâ™Arpino because young Caravaggio wants to use models from real life rather than sacred images. Furthermore, his models are prostitutes and drunks, the people he meets in his nightly forays to the cityâ™s taverns. When people notice the young painterâ™s talent, it only encourages him to want more. Moss captures artistic ambitions and the corrosive effects of envy. Young Caravaggio, whose first name is Michelangelo, wants to be the Michelangelo, supplanting a painter and sculptor who has already achieved international renown. He is destined to fail, but his increasingly provocative efforts push artistic achievement as well as the Church-imposed moral standards of the time. As Caravaggio plays Church rivals to get his own commission to St. Peterâ™s in the Vatican, the stakes increase. Mossâ™s novel based on real life is a page-turner with heft, as readers follow Caravaggioâ™s growth as an artist and the choices he makes. Many of those are self-destructive as his personal life and weaknesses intrude on his professional aspirations and he becomes dependent on others to constantly bail him out. One may think this novel, published by award winning small press Creston Books, is a tale of life long ago, but it is also an important story for our time. A time line and extensive authorâ™s note clarify the events that are true, the scenes and characters that are invented, and what we yet do not know. Famous for his hot temper and controversial painting style, young Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio took Italy by storm during the political and religious upheaval of the Renaissance, and Marissa Moss exposes all the drama and passion of one of historyâ™s most captivating artists, in Caravaggio: Painter on the Run. In 1592, twenty-year-old Michel began swaggering through the pilazzos of Rome with talent, pride, and a burning need to prove himself to the art world by gaining a commission at St. Peterâ™s Basilica, the most exalted church in the Vatican, but his refusal to conform to the expectations of a corrupt papacy and unyielding personality land him in hot water on more than one occasion, eventually more than he can swim through on his own. Described by a cardinal as having âœan extravagant imaginationâ• and being âœmoody and dark, and brilliant,â• Caravaggio tells his own story of his larger-than-life personality and magnetism being at war with his self-destructive tendencies. The narrative is spiced with police depositions, notes, and pages of personal journals from friends, patrons, courtesans, and others drawn to his genius, all of which allow other perspectives to shine through. No saint, Caravaggio nonetheless captures the divine, and Painter

on the Run explores several of his masterpieces as well as delving into his much debated use of live models, particularly commoners and prostitutes, to depict holy scenes from Catholic scripture. His realistic renderings and masterful use of light and darkness are easy to visualize as Mossâ™s words seamlessly build beautiful, darkâ• and beautifully darkâ• images, canvas after canvas. A must read for students, art lovers, or anyone driven to succeed, Caravaggio: Painter on the Run is historical fiction at its finest. - Foreword Reviews "Moss presents realistic depictions of the time's religious atmosphere and the competitive world of art, which was strongly governed by political and societal expectations. Throwing a spotlight on the skill and style of Caravaggio, Moss presents a complete look at this gifted, yet terribly stubborn painter. . . Moss fills her book with art history, wonderfully rich scenes, and people known throughout the art world of the day, thereby giving the reader a glance into history." (VOYA YOYA reviews)

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