

**L3-4day4**

## **Competition Panels of the Florence Baptistery**

**Art Discussed:**

**Ghiberti, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1401**

**Brunelleschi, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1401**

**Ghiberti, *The Gates of Paradise*, 1425**

**VOCAB:**

**Quattrocento**

**HW:**

**Activity Sheet**

### **Ghiberti, *Sacrifice of Isaac***

- Designed for the second set of Florence Cathedral Baptistery
- Competition used the same number of figures, same scene and quotation from the Bible
- Gothic, Sienese in design: curve to the body of Abraham, fluttering of Abraham's drapery behind arm
- Idealized forms (vs. Brunelleschi's expressiveness)
- Polished effect
- Decorative lines
- No particular focus
- Classical figure of Isaac inspired by Roman art
- Abraham's face taken from Roman model of Jupiter
- Graceful poses
- Made in two pieces, thus less expensive

### **Brunelleschi, *Sacrifice of Isaac***

- Commission given to Ghiberti after the success of the second set of doors
- Doors use a more neutral and modern rectangular shape instead of more Gothic quatrefoil
- Expansive and harmonious use of space
- Elegant bodies
- Creation of a precise spatial depth
- One dense group of forms
- Composition divided into two main tiers: upper and lower
- Weighty figures
- Great variety of poses
- More dramatic, tense, sense of urgency
- Youthful Isaac
- Figures overlap boundaries of quatrefoil pattern
- Figures inspired by Roman models
- Made in eight pieces, much heavier than Ghiberti's

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## Activity 3:4 Ghiberti, Brunelleschi

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**Read this selection from Genesis 22, in the King James Version of the Bible. Study the two panels by Ghiberti and Brunelleschi, and decide what aspect of the story each artist wanted to highlight. Answer on the back of this sheet.**

[1] And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, "Abraham," and he said, "Behold, here I am." [2] And he said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." [3] And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. [4] Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. [5] And Abraham said unto his young men, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." [6] And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. [7] And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, "My father," and he said, "Here am I, my son." And he said, "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" [8] And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering," so they went both of them together. [9] And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. [10] And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. [11] And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, "Abraham, Abraham," and he said, "Here am I." [12] And he said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." [13] And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. [14] And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." [15] And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, [16] And said, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: [17] That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies."