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"Contemplating the Philosopher's Stone" -

A Philosophical Tribute to the Art
of Michael Angelo Buonarroti

by: Iron Thunderhorse

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It is said that in warfare Rome conquered Greece. Yet, ultimately the arts and philosophy of Greece tamed their Roman conquerers.

Michael Angelo Buonarroti amidst his monumental works of art includes scores of drawings he created as 'studies'. One of them is a pen and ink sketch that bears the caption, "The Philosopher" now in the British Museum, London England.

I can contemplate this Italian master as he endeavors to answer the ancient riddle of 'The Philosopher's Stone' so often attributed to Alchemy - the art of transmutation - turning base elements into pure GOLD.

Taken in a purely literal sense - this riddle has led many philosophers to the path of madness.

Yet, when construed metaphorically, a truly adept philosopher appreciates the metaphysical, even mystical connotations i.e. the art of transforming negative feelings, emotions, fears and worries into positive and productive works of art, beauty and joy.

Art thus becomes a therapeutic tool of healing wherein the Inner Philosopher in us all answers the ultimate question: WHO AM I?

Beauty, as well as philosophical enlightenment, are but flickering patterns of LIGHT against SHADOWS chiaroscuro - as good and evil, joy and sorrow, pain or pleasure, sickness or health - adorn the canvas of life of the philosopher's palate.