

*Prophet Jeremiah*, by Donatello (ca. 1386–1466)

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This life-size marble sculpture was originally intended for the campanile, the bell tower adjacent to the Duomo, the main cathedral in Florence. It was part of a series of works featuring 16 Old Testament prophets. Nine were sculpted in the medieval period. Donatello and Nanni di Banco completed the remaining seven as a commission for the Opera del Duomo. The prophets, placed in niches, needed

dramatic expressions that could be seen by observers at least 60 feet below. Jeremiah is depicted as middle aged and sorrowful. The psychological intensity of his life's trials—imprisonment, betrayal, persecution—are manifest in his misshapen head. Jeremiah looks downward, demanding the repentance commanded by his message. The original sculpture is preserved in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, and a copy is in the niche on the campanile.