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Plato's Demiurge in Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura

In one of Plato's dialogues, the *Timaeus*, we find a creation story: 'The world was made by an intelligent designer, the Demiurge, who took guidance from a mathematical pattern.' Plato says that if an artist takes guidance from a 'visible model' what emerges will not be truly fair or good. Even if you copy from the visible models in Nature, you will just be copying the works of another artist, namely the Demiurge. A Platonic artist should copy not the visible products the Demiurge has created, but the method He used. That is, an artist should take guidance from the 'intelligible model' that is described in Plato's *Timaeus*. I will argue that this is exactly what Raphael did: and that this is why there are, for instance, 56 (7 times 8) figures in the *School of Athens*, 28 in *Parnassus*, 63 in the *Disputa*, and so on.



Monday 18 June 6.30 pm
Room 148 Elisabeth Murdoch Building
All Welcome