

David: the subject of sculptures by donatello and michelangelo



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Michelangelo's statue of David is probably the most familiar sculpture in the world. It had long been thought of as the ideal physique of a young male. Donatello's David is also a striking figure whose fame may not be as well known as Michelangelo's, but is certainly known by many. Both of these fine artists used the boy warrior for the theme of their statues instead of the powerful king who rule Israel for forty years and was a mighty soldier.

Donato di Niccolo di Betto Bardi was born almost one hundred years before Michelangelo and was part of the early Italian Renaissance. Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarrodi Simoni was part of the later Italian Renaissance. They both chose to sculpt David as at the edge of manhood. Donatello's is after the battle with Goliath while Michelangelo's is before the battle. Both sculptures are nude, which was on the border of being scandalous in Donatello's time.

The nudity represents the closeness that David had with his natural surroundings. David was a shepherd and would have had to be knowledgeable of his surroundings to survive. The beauty of the young sculpted bodies are shown through their natural curves and symbolize the beauty of the human body in general but especially that of the young adult. Neither statue shows fear which symbolized that he knew God to be with him. Donatello's statue of David is cast in bronze while Michelangelo's is carved from marble.

While Michelangelo's David is completely nude and confident, Donatello's David is clothed in boots, and hat with a somewhat feminine demeanor.

Michelangelo's David is by far the most masculine. The choice of material

also added to the force of masculinity of the statues. The heaviness of the marble adds to the strength of David by Michelangelo. While bronze is a heavy metal, it does not seem as dense as the heavy rock. This provides a sentiment of a lesser masculine version by Donatello.