

# Comparing the three davids essay

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



## David the hero

### Introduction

The three varying representations of David by the different artists who lived in different ages are all based on the biblical character of the Old Testament. The sculptures represent three crucial phases of Italian Renaissance during which the artists created them. All artists represented different moments in David's heroic role of killing Goliath with a sling and rock. Donatello and Michelangelo presented their sculptures completely nude vividly enhancing their mastery in body contours and proportion. All sculptures are found in Italy where the ancient artists lived. This study seeks to explore the various emotions and attitude on David depicted by the different artists.

### Donato di Niccolò di Betto Bardi statue of David

Donatello began working on his sculptor in the beginning of the 15th Century creating a 5 feet sculpture of a nude David save from the feet-wear. This statue became a masterpiece as the first free-standing bronze statue but caused controversy because it was completely nude. He focuses on realistic features of the human body as was the norm in early Renaissance and presents David as a young boy. His presents a triumphant David with Goliath's head at his feet and his huge sword in his right hand and a stone in the left. David poses to look at Goliath's head after cutting it off. He seems relaxed and not anticipating or doing any activity. Donatello succeeds in softening the static balance and the firm stance of a natural male figure. An long animal feather on Goliath's helmet rises onto Davids right leg erotically. He looks down at the fallen giant as if in shock and disbelief at his

actions. This iconic sculpture of a heroic David is easily identifiable as the Biblical character and is, therefore, very famous.

## **Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni's statue of David**

Michelangelo's statue of David is the most famous statue on earth and a major tourist attraction in Italy. The massive 18 feet sculpture carved from marble is the most heroic representation of David of the three sculptures and is completely nude. Michelangelo presents David as a youthful man tensed just before the major historic battle with Goliath.

David is relaxed but also a little tensed and very composed. He is seen as a humble Hero rather than a boastful one like in Donatello's sculpture. He has muscles and tendons in a few parts of the body (especially hand and feet) that interprets as a clear representation of having strong will but not too much to indicate a form of selflessness. One hand rests on his side grasping stones and the other over his shoulder in a relaxed upright stance.

In this sculpture, David seems to ignore the criticism and mocking from his brothers and soldiers. He is calm yet focused on his oncoming task.

## **Gian Lorenzo Bernini's statue of David**

Bernini created his statue of David from marble in the early 17th Century completing it in only seven months. The 6 feet (human size) half-dressed statue has features fitting its time of creation which is the High Renaissance. The innovative sculpture captures a mature David in action against Goliath before he slays him. David is focused on an unseen object confronting him. Unlike Donatello, he concentrated in baroque style with keen interest in attentiveness and action. For instance, Bernini focused more on David's

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facial expressions to achieve David's emotion than Donatello. The face shows concentration and complete focus on the battle with Goliath.

In this sculpture, David is in action. With a rock in his sling ready to release it towards Goliath. The contours depict that his muscles are contracted, strained and tense. His positioned in a tilting posture that is appropriate for combat. The garments are loosely flowing as an evidence of movement and activity. He stands on his toes and strains the muscle in his hind leg proving the fact that he is in action.