

Augustus from prima porta



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Augustus from Prima Porta Discovered in the year 1863, Augustus of Prima Porta is an important marble statue of Augustus Caesar which was located in Villa of Livia at Prima Porta, near Rome and it is one of the regal examples of Imperial Roman statuary. It is believed that the statue was commissioned by Tiberius, Augustus' adopted son, in 15 A. D. This marble statue, which is 2.04m high, is a copy of the original bronze statue which is noted for the return of the Roman standards by the Parthians in 53 BCE. In this statue, Augustus is portrayed as barefoot, which is a sign of divine status, and he holds a scepter in his left hand, while his right hand is extended as he addresses his armies. " The posture is that of a victorious general addressing his troops, and the emperor is shown in armor. His breastplate is sculpted with scenes of Roman military triumph and the mythological figures of gods and goddesses. The pose of the figure is clearly based on the Greek model of the Spear Carrier, and the face shown is that of a handsome man in the prime of life." (Lewis and Lewis, 230) Through an effective combination of Greek idealization and Roman realism, this marble statue creates a convincing portrait of a 'real man' and a successful image of the perfect leader. Augustus is represented in this statue as the 'pater patriae', who is looking down on his people with calm concern and complete self confidence. Therefore, it is essential to realize that Augustus of Prima Porta, which is now displayed in the Braccio Nuovo of the Vatican Museums, is a perfect example of the Imperial Roman statuary and Augustus, in this statue, consciously attempts to identify himself with the ultimate authority of Rome during the Golden Age of the Roman civilization.

In a reflective analysis of Augustus of Prima Porta, it becomes lucid that this statue of the emperor Augustus can rightly be considered one of the most

essential examples of the enigmatic works of art from the Augustan era. Significantly, the seven feet tall statue depicts Augustus in the prime of his life and every aspect of the structure contributes to the convincing portrayal of the great Roman hero. Thus, the heroic stature of Augustus covered in an intricately-carved cuirass illustrates the general style adopted in the design of the statue and it is based on the Doryphorus by Polykleitos portraying the ideal human proportions of an Athenian athlete. The statue depicts Augustus as a victorious general making a speech, and the scenes on the chest plate depict the Roman victory over the Parthian. In the Augustus statue, Augustus " is posed in the traditional contrapposto manner: his right leg is placed firmly forward while his left leg is bent and the heel slightly-raised. Augustus' right arm is stretched out in a noble and controlled Roman gesture and is counter-balanced by the slightly-bent left leg. Combined with these idealized features of strength and beauty, there are also personal features of Augustus: a broad cranium, deep-set eyes, sharp ridges in his brow, a well-formed mouth and a small chin." (Augustus of Prima Porta) Similarly, the statue depicts Augustus' face in the manner of Apollo, which associates Augustus' abilities with those of the powerful god. Therefore, it becomes obvious, in a careful exploration of the statue, that Augustus of Prima Porta portrays Augustus as a perfect leader with untarnished features, and the power and authority of this great Roman emperor become apparent.

Works Cited

" Augustus of Prima Porta." Museos Vaticanos. Mar 30. 2010. .

Lewis, Richard and Susan I. Lewis. The power of art. Cengage Learning. 2008. P 230.