

High Copy
MICHELANGELO
Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni
(Florence 1475 – 1564 Rome)

BUST OF DAVID

c 1503 – 1504



Height 46" | Width 33" | Depth 29"
Medium: Cast Marble
Numbered Edition 1/100 to 100/100,
plus 12 foundry proofs



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Michelangelo was well aware of the Republican symbolism of the David. He knew that the intent of the statue was not only to elicit pride from Florentines, but also to bring a sense of Republican obligation to fight for the Italian city-state. The David has a long symbolic heritage derived not only from Biblical history but also from the antique in its echoes of Hercules triumphing through strength over the labors inflicted upon him by tyranny. Michelangelo had made a new statement of an old theme, given a new monumentality. This posthumous David Bust is a precise 1:1 casting that is faithful to Michelangelo's original.



One aspect of the David that would have stood out to the Renaissance contemporaries of Michelangelo is the scowl of the young hero. In the Bible David was the 'Lion of Judah,' and the ancient symbol for Florence was the Lion. In the scowl on David's face, Michelangelo was using this link to create not just a beautiful piece of art, but also a theological statement about Florence. In an article by David Summers he states that: "a cloudy brow signifies self-will as in the Lion" This was a well-known fact among Renaissance artists and Michelangelo exploited this artistic attribute. Summers goes on to say that: "the clouded-brow, as seen on the David, is the vice of those who little consider the difficulty of some great act, [such as killing Goliath], and presuming too much of their own powers, believe they will easily attain their end."



As a study in the human form and the Classical nude Michelangelo created in the David the perfect man. Michelangelo has captured the energy of the moment in the marble while using the anatomy of the young hero to express the emotion in this tense moment.

According to Michelangelo's friend Condivi, The commission for the statue the Florentines called the Giant would come about in this way:

"The operai of Santa Maria del Fiore owned a block of marble nine braccia high, which had been bought from Carrara a hundred years earlier by an artist who, from what one could see, was not as experienced as he should have been... he had roughed it out in the quarry but in such a way that neither he or anyone else ever had the courage to lay a hand to it to carve a statue."

Michelangelo's original David marble sculpture is located at the Accademia Gallery Florence, Italy.



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