

## The Strength of the Individual: A Comparison of an Emperor and a Common Man

Go to the West Pavilion, Lower Level, Gallery W101, and find these artworks.



Title: Bust of Emperor Caracalla  
Artist: Bartolomeo Cavaceppi (Italian)  
Date: About 1750–1770  
Medium: Marble



Title: Bust of a Man  
Artist: Francis Harwood (English)  
Date: 1758  
Medium: Black stone

If you had been a nobleman in the 18th century, you would have completed your education with a period of European travel called the Grand Tour. It could last from a few months to eight years, and thus only the very wealthy, with the time and means to travel, could participate. By undertaking the Tour, young men learned about the politics, culture, and art of neighboring lands. These two sculptures were created at about the same time in the 1700s for English collectors visiting Italy on the Grand Tour.

### Carefully examine the Bust of the Emperor Caracalla and the Bust of a Man

Each artist represents a powerful individual, although each bust is very different from the other. A sculptural bust is a representation of the head and upper part of the body, often mounted on a base or column. Busts may show only the head and neck or may include shoulders, arms, and sometimes hands. Cavaceppi, an Italian artist, portrayed Caracalla, a brutal ancient Roman emperor who murdered his own brother in his ascent to power and who was later himself assassinated. Harwood, a British artist living in Italy, portrayed an unknown sitter, although the scar on the sitter's face suggests the man was perhaps a specific person. The Harwood sculpture may be one of the earliest known European portrait busts of an individual person of color.

**Explore these two sculptures by considering how they are similar and different, based on the following criteria and questions:**

#### Facial Expression and Gaze

Describe their facial expressions. How are their expressions similar and different? What qualities does each artist convey and capture in their facial expressions?

#### Anatomical Detail

What has each artist done to make the person look real? Where do you notice the most detail in the sculptures?

**Material/Medium**

How would you describe the material each artist used? Each material reflects and absorbs light differently. What part(s) of the sculpture reflect the most light, creating areas of highlight? What areas of the sculpture are in shadow?

**Character/Personality**

Artists who make portraits work hard to reveal the character of their sitters (the people in the portraits). Based on your careful observations, what are three words to describe the personality of each sitter?

**Bust of Emperor Caracalla**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Bust of a Man**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

In a sculptural bust, only the upper part of the person's body is shown. Imagine you could complete the sculptures. Based on your observations, what would the rest of each figure look like? Draw a sketch below and/or share your ideas with your classmates.

