

Ancient Art

(Student's Name)

(Class Name)

Introduction

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, opened in 1936, is an arts museum in Virginia. The museum is an important property of the Commonwealth of Virginia but also allows funding from private sources which are used for the acquisition of more pieces of art and to protect the existing ones. The first pieces of art in the museum were in the year 1919 where 50 pieces were donated by judge John Barton Payne. Since then, the museum has received more pieces of art and is an important preserver of historic artifacts. The museum contains African Art, Ancient Art, Asian Art, American Art, Modern and Contemporary Art, Pre-Columbian Art, Decorative Art After 1890, and Native American Art.

The objectives of this presentation are:

to describe art from the VMFA

compare it with arts learnt in class and from the course book

Explain how the two could be part of the VMFA

List of Objects

1. Unknown Artist, *Bust of Serapis*, 2nd Century AD, Roman Culture,
<https://www.vmfa.museum/piction/6027262-208062894/>
2. Unknown Artist, *Statuette of Ka-her-iset-ef*, 1069 - 945 BC, Egyptian Culture
<https://www.vmfa.museum/piction/6027262-135564376//>
3. Unknown Artist, *Apulo-Corinthian Helmet*, 5th Century BC, Greek Culture
<https://www.vmfa.museum/piction/6027262-12964413/#>



Title: Burst of Serapis

Artist: Unknown

Date: 2nd Century BC

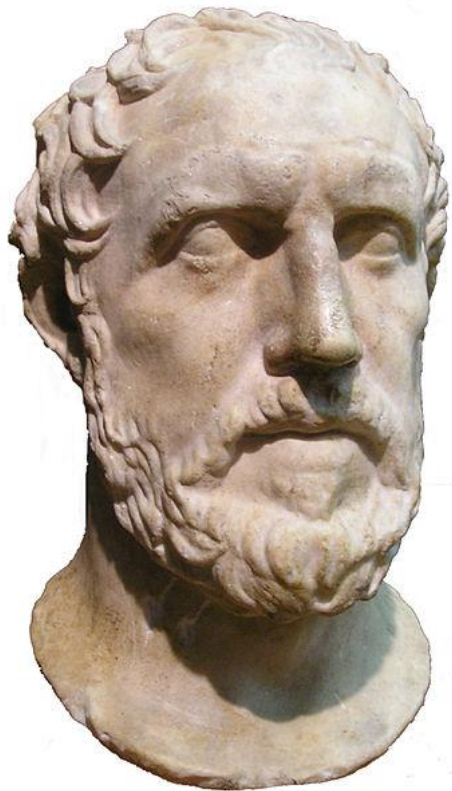
Location: Virginia

Culture: Roman

Medium: bronze

Image also available:
<https://www.vmfa.museum/piction/6027262-208062894/>

The Bust is a mid-sized object. The sculpture is presented either with or without a base for support and the two models give it different dimensions. The dimensions given are Overall (without base): $14 \frac{9}{16} \times 7 \frac{11}{16} \times 3 \frac{3}{4}$ in. ($36.99 \times 19.53 \times 9.53$ cm). Overall (with base): $18 \frac{3}{4} \times 7 \frac{11}{16} \times 4$ in. ($47.63 \times 19.53 \times 10.16$ cm). It is bronze ,with a hint of rustic red. It is a sculpture made of marble depicting the head and the chest of Serapis. On top of the head of Serapis is a modius (grain measure) which is said to describe The fertility of Egypt.The The sculpture is well maintained with no hints of damage. On top of the modius on Serapis head is another sculpture of an eagle. The eagle is also bronze and smooth and in other images can be detached from the modius. It also has a dark colour and distinctive lines which clearly define it is an eagle.



Title: Burst of Thucydides

Artist: Unknown

Date: 460 – c. 400 BC

Location:

Culture: Roman

Medium: Stone

While the bust of Serapis is made up of bronze, the bust of Thucydides is made up of stone. The Bust of Serapis has a more lustre appearance with a darker theme while the Bust of Thucydides has a pale colour probably because of its stone form. The Bust of Thucydides seems more fragile than that of Serapis especially considering that it is made up of stone and its lines especially on the beard are less distinctive compared to the lines on Serapis. also , the Bust of Thucydides has a brighter contrast than of Serapis.

Subject-wise Serapis was an Egyptian god while Thucydides was an Athenian historian (Nicholas 2017).

I think that the two art forms would fit in a similar category within the museum because have a similar style. They are both bust sculptures and are in the CE historic times. The themes may however be different as Serapis is a god and Thucydides a historian.



Title: Statuette of Ka-her-iset-ef

Artist: Unknown

Date: 1069 - 945 BC

Location: Egyptian Gallery

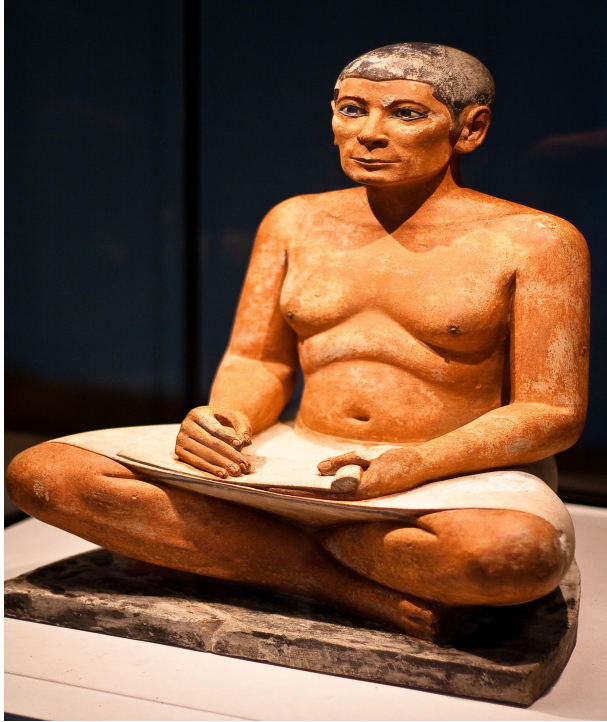
Culture: Egyptian

Medium: limestone, paint

Image also available:

<https://www.vmfa.museum/piction/6027262-135564376//>

The Statuette of Ka-her-iset-ef is a small limestone three dimension sculpture. The dimensions of the sculpture are; Overall: $14 \frac{1}{2} \times 4 \frac{3}{8} \times 7 \frac{3}{4}$ in. ($36.83 \times 11.113 \times 19.685$ cm). The Statuettes tone is of a man in a standing position who has rested his back on a wall. The Statuette has simple lines defining the features of the face and toes on the base. There is no clear margin which differentiates the back of the Statuette and the wall which he has leaned on as they are fused. The sculpture is painted with partly-vibrant colors. Some sections of the sculpture have faded off the original color especially on the chest and face. The painter has not used dark and light colors to bring out contextual differences on the sculpt. The surface seems smooth excet on the base when the Statuette has its feet on as there are some carved out writings which are probably in ancient Egyptian language.



Title: The Seated Scribe

Artist: Unknown

Date: 2620-2500 BCE

Culture: Egyptian

Medium: limestone, paint

The Seated Scribe from the textbook is painted limestone. It has bold colours that clearly define how the person looks like, it is more colorful than the Statuette of Ka-her-iset-ef. The statue of the Seated Scribe has sharper lines which give it a better impression especially in the facial features compared to the Statuette of Ka-her-iset-ef. It is also smooth as the Statuette of Ka-her-iset-ef which could be from its limestone nature. Compared to the Ka-her-iset-ef, the Seated Scribe has a deeper saturation of color and has fewer faded parts. The statue is comparatively mid sized with dimensions of 53.7 cm (21.1 in) × 44 cm (17 in) × 35 cm (14 in). This one also portrays a man of higher status- he was the chief minister of Pharaoh Psamtik I (Mangiardi 2019).

I think that the origin of the two arts, being Egyptian, makes them share similar characteristics and would be easily put together in the museum. They are also both made up of painted limestone and have a few years separating them.



Title: Apulo-Corinthian Helmet

Artist: Unknown

Date: 5th Century BC

Location: Greek, Roman & Hellenistic Galleries Egyptian Gallery

Culture: Greek

Medium: Bronze

Image also available:

<https://www.vmfa.museum/piction/6027262-12964413/#>

The Apulo-Corinthian helmet is a bronze helmet with a slight red rust. It has a rounded shape with a hollow on the underside for one to fill in the head. The helmet is a mid-size piece of art with dimensions of Overall: $10 \frac{1}{2} \times 8 \frac{1}{4} \times 11 \frac{7}{8}$ in. ($26.67 \times 20.96 \times 30.16$ cm). The helmet has nicely flowing margins with a cap-like extension at the back and horn-like projections at the top. The bronze color is slightly dull. The Helmet is described to cover the whole head of its wearer and has penings for the eyes and the nose. The surface of the helmet is smooth and slightly shiny.



Title: Bronze helmet of Illyrian type

Artist: Unknown

Date: 5th Century BC

Culture: Greece

Medium: Bronze

The Bronze helmet of Illyrian type is mid-sized artifact (the size of the human head). The Dimensions of the mask are as H. 10 1/2 in. (26.7 cm) Width: 7 3/4 in. (19.7 cm) Depth: 9 1/2 in. (24.1 cm). It has a greyish color with points of red rust. The helmet has a smooth surface with a subtle contrast with a rounded shape. Different from the Apulo-Corinthian helmet, this helmet exposes the whole face and does not have the imposing horn-like features (Gavranovi & Ajla 2018). The helmet is an earlier version of the Apulo-Corinthian helmet.

The fact that the two helmets are a continuous series of helmet production makes them similar features. They can therefore be grouped in the same category as helmets of Greek origin, made of bronze and made in the 5th Century BC

Conclusion

The artifacts selected from the Museum have similarities with those in the book. They are ancient pieces of art from the Greek, Egypt and Rome cultures. The selected pieces from the Museum were matched with those that I saw had similarities in terms of their origin and culture, the type of art (For example sculpture) and the year the piece of art was made in.

Works Cited

Gavranović, Mario, and Ajla Sejfuli. "Early Iron Age in Central Bosnia--an overview and research perspectives." *Godisnjak/Yearbook* 47 (2018).

Mangiardi, Jesse A. "Return of Art & Artifacts: A Cultural 'Statute of Limitations'." *Conn. L. Rev. CONNtemplations* 52 (2019): 1.

Nichols, Mary P. "Leaders and leadership in Thucydides' history." *The Oxford Handbook of Thucydides* (2017): 459.