Plaster cast - David

Object: Plaster cast

Place of origin: Florence (original, sculpted)
Florence (cast)

Date: 1501-1504 (sculpted)
ca. 1856 (cast)

Artist/Maker: Michelangelo, born 1475 - died 1564 (sculptor)
Papi, Clemente (cast-maker)

Materials and Techniques: Plaster cast, painted plaster.

Museum number: REPRO.1857-161

Gallery location: Cast Courts, Room 46b, The Weston Cast Court , case FS, shelf S

Public access description

This plaster cast of the celebrated marble sculpture of Michaelangelo's David (now in the Accademia in Florence) was acquired by the South Kensington Museum (now the V&A) in 1857. It was presented as a gift to Queen Victoria by the grand duke of Tuscany, after he had prevented the export of an Italian renaissance painting by Ghirlandaio, which the National Gallery had hoped to acquire. The queen immediately presented the cast to the Museum, where it was initially displayed in the Art Museum. When the Architectural Courts (today known as the Cast Courts) were opened in 1873 it was shown there, along with other plasters after Michelangelo, and some of the other great sculptures of the Italian renaissance. This is where it can be seen today, an imposing and arresting copy of one of the most famous sculptures in the history of European sculpture.

Descriptive line


Dimensions

Height: 541.5 cm, Width: 213.5 cm

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Object history note

Given by Leopold II, Grand Duke of Tuscany to Queen Victoria in 1857.

Historical context note

Michelangelo carved the David from a block which had already been started by AGOSTINO DI DUCCIO (1418-before 1498). The David was installed in place of Donatello's Judith and Holofernes, outside the Palazzo Vecchio, in 1504. It was removed to the Accademia di Belle Arti in 1873, and replaced by a copy. The cast belonging to the Victoria and Albert Museum was presented to Queen Victoria by Grand Duke Ferdinand III of Tuscany, in 1856.

URL

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O39861/david-plaster-cast-michelangelo/