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Donatello: What is the most interesting?

Word counts: 1,008

Turn back to the time where people still afraid to start doing something different from the previous time and think out of the box. In order to be different from those who are afraid, you have to be brave enough to take a step especially when you are in the place where it is the turning point. This is because people always have a fear whenever something new occurs. In the Middle Age, there were a lot of thing going on and it is also the transformation of Europe.

Turning a picture on the church into a statue is also one of the big steps back then. One of the people that brave enough to create something new like that is Donatello. He is the greatest sculptor of the early Renaissance and also be the very first one who started to create a nude statue which no one ever did before.

Donato di Niccolo di Betto Bardi or known as Donatello¹ was one of the artist in the early Renaissance period. He was born in Florence, in 1386 and died there in 1466. He is not only a sculptor but also an innovator for the next generation. Donatello lived in the Middle Age² where most of the things were ruled by the

¹ Wikipedia contributors. "Donatello." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 7 Feb. 2013. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donatello>>

² Wikipedia contributors. "Middle Age." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 7 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages>

Catholic Church. This is because during the early Middle Age there were a lot of bad things happened to the people which make them not feel safe anymore so the only thing they could do is to find a place where they can feel safe. And that place turns out to be a church. Later on Catholic Church became the center in Late Middle Age where people can pray. In the Catholic Church used the Gothic art to demonstrate their works. Gothic³ style of art is flat and lacking of the proportion. Renaissance style of art is the rebirth art from Greek and Roman. This style of art is more natural, classic, and luxuriously.

Donatello's early years, Donatello learned all the basics from the stonemason. He preferred to do that than learning from the craft. Mostly Donatello's influenced came from the sculptures that he had seen. One of his works during his early years is "David". Donatello's David⁴ is the first David in this world although it is not as famous as Michelangelo's David. Both of these David are very different from each other. From the Donatello's David was characterized by Gothic art. This statue was made out of the bronze. This is also the first nude statue over a thousand years that was not represented about the moral contexts at all. As you can see the Donatello's David wears only shepherd's hat and boots which shows that David might be a musician or poet. It is not even close to biblical. Moreover David statue was the first-free standing sculpture of the world. This is the first time that the sculpture has nothing touch any cathedral or church. There is a reason why Donatello crated David this way. This is because he wanted to imply to innocent and virtuous life.

³ Wikipedia contributors. "Gothic." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 9 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture>

⁴ Sir John Wyndham Pope-Hennessy. "Donatello's David." *Italianrenaissance*. 9 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.italianrenaissance.org/donatellos-david/>>

Donatello's middle years, His style of art became much more emotional and dramatic than before. He drew heavily on reality to represent joy, suffering, love, and many other of human's feeling. One of Donatello's famous works is St. George and the Dragon⁵. From his work, you would definitely see that St. George statue has a lot of space on its statue for the example you can see that St. George's hand has a hole like he was holding something or you can see that between his body and his arm there is a gap. All of these can imply that he may have had a helmet or sword before. If you take a look at his statue, you definitely can tell that St. George was ready to fight but if you grants closely, you would see his fear in the eyes. This is the example of Donatello's work which the character was created from his emotional realism.

Donatello's advanced years, He spent most of his time on reliefs for the church. Unfortunately Donatello became a bedridden after all but good things is that he still got his students to complete his unfinished works to keep his style of art. One of his works during his advanced years is St. John the Baptist⁶. St. John the Baptist statue was made from the wood. Later Donatello's work is impending mannerist movement which is it expressed more intensively emotional facial.

During Donatello's life time he had done a lot of his works. The few works that it was mentioned earlier are just some of the example of his works. Donatello's works were also count to be one of the inspirations for the other artist. He is the first one who started to create a nude statue that is free from the wall. Do not you think that this is so incredible how he came up with such a brilliant idea of this free standing

⁵ Unknown."St.George-Donatello." *Florence in War and Flood*. 10Feb.2013.<
<http://florenceinwarandflood.wordpress.com/works-in-exhibition/st-george-donatello/>>

⁶ Unknown."Donatello." *Web Gallery of Art*. 10 Feb.2013.<
http://www.wga.hu/html_m/d/donatell/3_late/various/2john_1.html>

David. Moreover the free standing of Donatello's statue, David, became the beginning of the next generation artists to think out of the boxes and start doing something different. For the example, Because of Donatello's David so it caused Michelangelo's David occurred. If there is no Donatello's David, Michelangelo might not have the inspiration to create another David. If there is no Donatello, nowadays we might not have a statue or sculpture that is separated from the building.

If you wonder about what the most interesting about Donatello, this essay would definitely show you that Donatello is very brave to create something new like nude statue that over a thousand years no one had ever done this without related to the moral contexts before. Over that he is also very talented to find a new ways to express the emotional or the thought through his woks like a free standing statue. Without him the art and civilization would may not come to this far.