Ancient Rome
The Rise of Rome
Supposedly, Aeneas left Troy and established a settlement in Italy (at Alba Longa). He is often credited as the founder of Rome. He is also supposedly the son of Venus.
Rome is 15 miles up the Tiber river from the sea. It has good access to the sea and is also in a good position to be defended from naval attack.
The City of the Early Kings
Model of the village of Romulus on the Palatine Hill (model is in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome)
Rape of the Sabine Women, by Poussin, 1633 – 34 CE
Rape of Lucretia, Titian, 1568 – 71 CE

Tarquin the Proud (The last king of Rome)’s son Sextus raped Lucretia. This led to a revolt and Tarquin’s exile from Rome.
"Oath of the Horatii," Jacques-Louis David, 1784 CE. 
Three Roman brothers fight three brothers from Alba-Longa to settle dispute in place of all out war.
Rome's Lex XII Tabularum

The Twelve Tables

When some of the new American states demanded a "Bill of Rights" as a condition for ratification of the 1789 Constitution, the Congress proposed Twelve amendments loosely based on the Roman Twelve Tables. Of the twelve proposed amendments, ten (numbers three to twelve) were passed quickly. The first proposal, on the timing of Congressional pay raises, passed 200 years later as the 27th amendment. The last of the twelve, which would have defined the number people in a congressional district, has never passed.

A not-too-fanciful depiction of Romans "accessing" the Twelve Tables in the Forum
Gauls 390 BCE
Pyrrhus
Hannibal Crosses the Alps
Julius Caesar
Augustus (Octavian)
ROME DID NOT CREATE A GREAT EMPIRE BY HAVING MEETINGS. THEY DID IT BY KILLING THOSE WHO OPPOSED THEM.
TO AVOID BEING PART OF SOMEONE ELSE'S EMPIRE, YOU HAVE TO BUILD ONE OF YOUR OWN!
The Roman Forum
Reconstruction of the Roman Forum as seen from the Palatine Hill
The Roman Forum at Brandeis
All Roads Lead to Rome
All Roads Lead To Rome
Millarium Aurem (Golden Milestone)
Millarium Aureum
Portrait Busts

• Popular during the Republican period (509 – 27 BC) and beyond
• Good enough for someone’s official portrait
• Used to commemorate loved ones (based on wax death masks), important to Roman PATRICIANS
• Have VERISTIC qualities and express GRAVITAS
• Kept at home and brought out during funeral processions
Head of an old man, from Osimo, mid-first century BCE. Marble, life-size.
Palazzo del Municipio, Osimo.
Head of an old man, from Osimo, mid-first century BCE
Portrait bust of a Flavian woman, from Rome, Italy, ca. 90 CE. Marble, 2’ 1” high. Museo Capitolino, Rome.
Portrait
Bust of a Flavian woman, from Rome, Italy, ca. 90 CE
Portrait Bust of a Flavian woman, from Rome, Italy, ca. 90 CE
Portrait of Vespasian, ca. 75–79 CE. Marble, 1’ 4” high. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.
Roman Funerary Mask of an Old Woman
Head of a Roman patrician, from Otricoli, ca. 75 – 50 BCE, Marble
Patrician holding busts of his ancestors
Pompey the Great
Portrait bust of Livia, from Arsinoe, Egypt, early first century CE. Marble, 1’ 1 1/2” high. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.
Portrait of a Roman general, from the Sanctuary of Hercules, Tivoli, Italy, ca. 75-50 BCE. Marble, 6’ 2” high. Museo Nazionale Romano-Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome.

While his face may be truthful, the portrayal of the body was still idealized.
Art for Former Slaves

- Freed slaves aspired to assimilate into Roman society
- Commissioned funerary work that reflected the elevation of their social status as freed slaves
- Unlike works commissioned by aristocrats, the work for former slaves did not strictly adhere to the classical rules of illustration established by Greek art
Funerary relief with portraits of the Gessii, from Rome(?), Italy, ca. 30 BCE. Marble, approx. 2’ 1 1/2” high. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Gessia Fausta, left; Gessius Primus, right were freed slaves of Publius Gessius, center. As slaves they were property. When they were freed they became people. Stern frontal portraits proclaim their new status as legal members of Roman society. By including Publius Gessius they are showing their gratitude. Slaves bore name of their patron. Paid for by Primus and directed by Fausta, who was the only surviving member of the three.
Relief with funerary procession, from Amiternum, Italy, second half of first century BCE. Limestone, 2’ 2” high. Museo Nazionale d’Abruzzo, L’Aquila.

Rare for a freed slave to commission a tomb relief with narrative. Shows deceased looking around at own funeral with paid mourners. Floating ground planes were meant to be interpreted as being behind the figures on lower ground planes. A pre-classical aversion to overlapping figures. This style had been out of fashion for a long time. Then, as now, social status often dictates artistic taste.