

**Q:** Is the history of Roman Republican art less documented than that of the Roman Empire?

**A:** A large number of the well-known Roman masterpieces are from the Roman Empire period. Rather than Republican art being less well documented however, the explanation more likely resides in the fact that the empire used art as a means to consolidate the empire and to glorify its values and leaders, and therefore produced more artworks, including publicly displayed artworks.

Tags: [Imperial Rome](#), [Republican Rome](#)

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**A:** Yes, plebeians did commission art. Many freed slaves, for example, commissioned funerary art. The funerary art commissioned by freedmen often depicts of their own working lives, or documents other aspects of contemporary life. The classical Greek tradition of proportion and representation of space is less important in art commissioned by commoners than it is in art commissioned by the ruling class.

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