

104. George Washington. Jean-Antoine Houdon. 1788–1792 C.E. Marble.

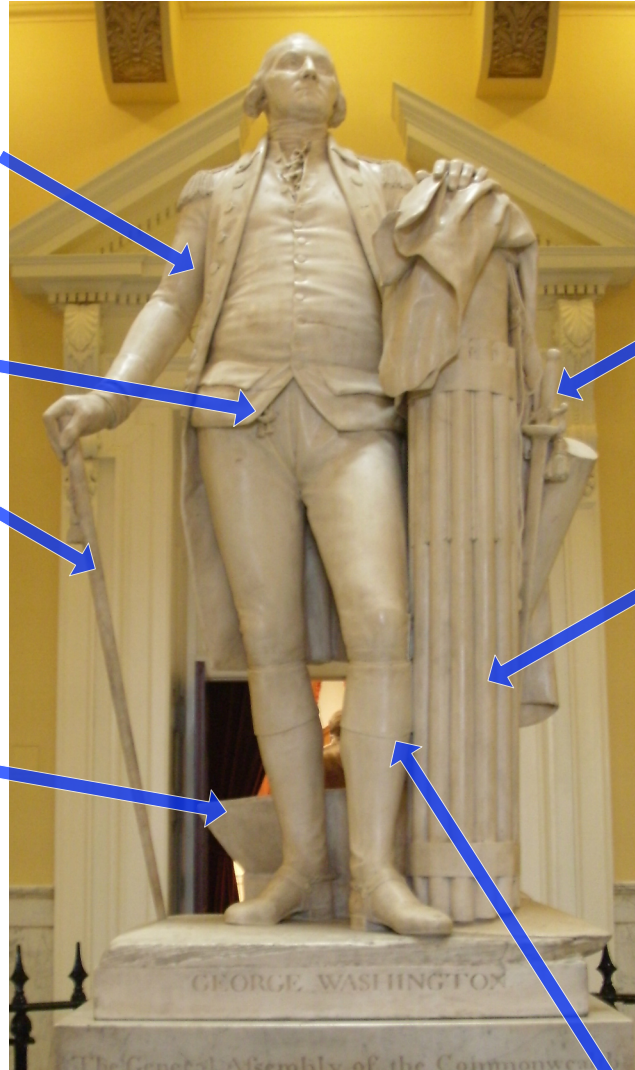
Form: **NEOCLASSICAL**
White marble
full of symbolism
classicizing elements

Function: **sculpture to honor George Washington in a way that he desired**

Compare with: **Doryphoros**
Augustus Prima Porta

Theme: **Balance between Classicism and Realism**

See Presentation for breakdown of this



military uniform

Badge of the Society of Cincinnatus for officers you went back to their peacetime jobs. Cincinnatus was a Roman who was elected dictator in a time of crisis, but willing left power after it was over and returned to his farm

cane = sign of a gentleman and private citizen

Plow behind him. Reminds us of Cincinnatus, who left power to return to farming

Sword hung not held, showing he has set aside war

Fasces with 13 rods. A fasces was a Roman symbol of power and unity. the 13 rods symbolize the 13 original colonies

classicizing Contrapposto stance

Context:

Commissioned by Thomas Jefferson to be displayed in the Virginia Capitol. Jefferson (a Francophile) got Houdon to do it. Houdon originally was going to sculpt it in France from a drawing of GW but decided to come to the US to see GW in person.

Original ideas were to depict GW in a Classical aesthetic (i.e. in a toga or portrayed as a Roman hero or god) or with an Equestrian statue. GW disliked the Classical aesthetic and insisted on being show with contemporary attire.

Houdon captured the duality of GW: Private citizen and public soldier.

