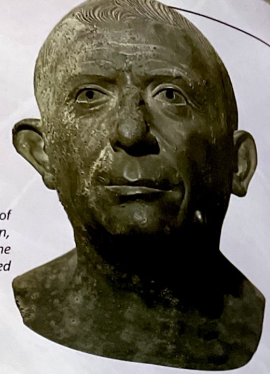


PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

The Romans loved to decorate their buildings with dramatic paintings and sculpture. Even quite humble homes had striking wall paintings, and Roman towns and cities were filled with larger-than-life statues of emperors, generals and gods.

ART EDUCATION

The Romans learned their love of art from the Greeks (see page 216-217). When they started to conquer Greece, they were amazed by the treasures they found, and seized thousands of Greek carvings and statues to send back to Rome. Soon, it was fashionable to collect Greek art, and many Greek sculptors set up studios in Rome, to copy earlier masterpieces and produce new works for Roman tastes.



A bronze sculpture of a middle-aged Roman, showing him as he really looked

CHANGING FACES

By the time of the late Republic, sculptors had started to create realistic portraits in bronze, stone or marble. These statues were partly based on the death-masks of the Etruscans - likenesses made by taking a cast from the face of a dead person. They showed people as they really were - double chins, wrinkles, warts and all.

Around the beginning of the 1st century AD, the Emperor Augustus introduced a new, idealized style for portraits of leaders, and for the next 300 years emperors and generals were shown as handsome, calm and commanding.

However, ordinary people continued to be portrayed in a realistic way.

In this marble statue, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius appears noble and dignified.

