

# DESMET

FINE ART



## Bust of the Roman Emperor Nerva

Rome, *c* 1800

White marble

Model said to be by Alessandro Algardi (1598 – 1654)

Cf. Albani Collection Inv. No. A 43: Sala degli Imperatori, Palazzo Nuovo, Musei Capitolini (Inv. 437) - Roma

Height: 59 cm

Width: 25 cm

Depth: 29 cm

H 23 1/4 x W 9 7/8 x D 11 2/5 inch

This exquisite bust only exists in very few versions. The one best known is the bust in the Capitoline museum. It is the only non-Roman bust in the emperor's room and it has been attributed to the great Baroque sculptor Alessandro Algardi. This bust was sculpted within a neoclassical spirit, but captures magnificently the dignitas and auctoritas of the Roman Emperor Nerva. One of the few emperors who died of natural cause and who was deified by his adoptive son, the emperor Trajan. Nerva was considered a wise and moderate emperor by ancient historians. Nerva's greatest success was his ability to ensure a peaceful transition of power after his death by selecting Trajan as his heir, thus founding the Nerva-Antonine dynasty.

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