

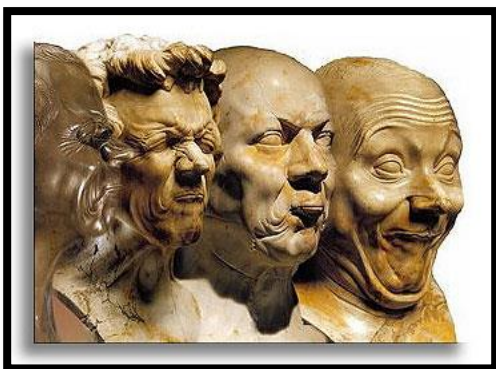
Emoji

April 3, 2022
Millarville, Alberta

These little characters 🕶️ have become part of our “language”, they show up everywhere. Emojis are a great way of conveying a message 🥰, or expressing an emotion 😍, without using words. 🥳 I’m excited for you. 😂 That’s hilarious! 🌀 How weird is that? Or 🤔 I just farted in public.

I enjoy receiving emojis. For example, if you leave one of these 👍, 😄 in the Comments section after this post, I will assume you enjoyed it. If you drop a 🤔, or a 😬, I know I need to work harder. With any luck, you will never see the need to insert the dreaded 🍌.

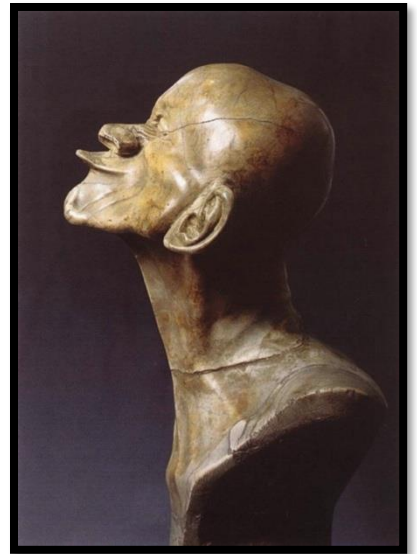
Emojis have only been around since about 2010, when Apple introduced them on their mobile operating systems, but using images to display a range of human emotion was in practice long, long before the happy face.



In the mid-1700s, Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, a German-Austrian artist sculpted a series of Kopfstücke (Head Pieces, or Character Heads).

Messerschmidt suffered from self-described “confusion in the head”. He claimed that he was in communion with "*the Spirit of Proportion*". The spirit visited him regularly at night and forced Messerschmidt to endure humiliating tortures.

Messerschmidt identified 64 "canonical grimaces" of the human face and set about sculpting each one, using himself as a template. The artist deployed the very unusual method of administering a series of pinches to his lower right rib and observing his resulting facial expressions in a mirror. Messerschmidt then set about recording them in marble and bronze.



One of Messerschmidt's most famous heads (The Beaked) 1770.



The Yawner (above), Strong Smell (middle), Laughter Kept Back (right).

In 1939, two of Messerschmidt's "heads" were stolen from a private collection by Nazi soldiers. The artworks turned up in 2005 and were sold to a museum in Vienna, for \$4.8 million and \$2.5 million!



Messerschmidt's reaction to the value of his heads is depicted in this ...

... **Emoji**