

Kant's Image

Immanuel Kant was 5 feet 1 inches (1.542 meters) tall, an average height for eighteenth-century German men. His fine-bone structure and nominal fat and muscles would have put his weight around 100 to 110 pounds (45-50 kilograms). His chest was flat, almost concave, and his right shoulder was raised and pushed out in back, causing the hair bag of his wig to fall to his left. Under that white-powdered wig was blonde hair until old age turned it whiter than his wig, and his cheeks had a healthy reddish glow that showcased his piercing sky-blue eyes. His head was outsized for the delicate body, with a brain case 20% larger than that of his neighbors, on average. Thus the man in a nutshell. [Sources: Jachmann 1804, 153; Borowski 1804, 109; Abegg 1976, 144; Bessel Hagen 1880, 16; Kupffer/Bessel Hagen 1881, 329]

We have sixteen images from life of Kant (or more than two dozen, if we include additional versions prepared by the same artist or model); most of these are quite small:

- six **three-quarter portraits**: Becker (A, B, C), Keyserling, "Dresden," Döbler (A, B), Vernet (A, B, ...), Stägemann.
- five **profiles**: Collin, Lowe, Senewaldt (A, B), Schnorr, Baltruschatis.
- two **full length profiles**: Puttrich, Hagemann.
- three **busts**: Mattersberger, Bardou, Hagemann (Königsberg, Hamburg, Schadow, Siemering).
- In addition, we know of five distinct **silhouettes**.

[<https://users.manchester.edu/facstaff/ssnaragon/kant/Helps/Life/IconIntroChron.html>]

Becker 1768 (age 44)

- Artist: Johann Gottlieb Becker (Königsberg)
- Becker(A): pastel (45 x 63 cm), extant (owned by Johann Kant and passed down in his family).
- Becker(B): oil on canvas (69 x 45 cm), extant (Perm Russian State Art Gallery). Engraving: Schleuen.
- Becker(C): oil on canvas (59 x 46 cm), extant (Schiller Nationalmuseum, Marbach).



Becker(A)



Becker(B)



Becker(C)

Keyserling 1775 (age 44)

- Artist: Countess Caroline Charlotte Amalie von Keyserling (1727-1791), Königsberg.
- Chalk drawing (34 x 24 cm), in a bound volume (39 x 31 cm) titled: *Les Loisirs de Caroline Amalia Comtesse de Keyserling, née Truchseß du St: Emp: Rom: Comtesse Waldburg*. Extant (privately owned).



Keyserling 1775



Collin 1782

Collin 1782 (age 58)

- Artist: Paul Heinrich Collin (1748-1789), Königsberg.
- Relief bust medallion (4.6 cm), various materials (gypsum, stoneware, wax) and extant copies.

Lowe 1784 (age 60)

- Johann Moses (Johann Michael) Siegfried Lowe (1756-1831).
- Miniature water color on ivory (9.8 x 8.0 cm). Extant (privately owned).
- Engravings: Townley, Liebe, Clar.

Silhouettes 1784, 1788

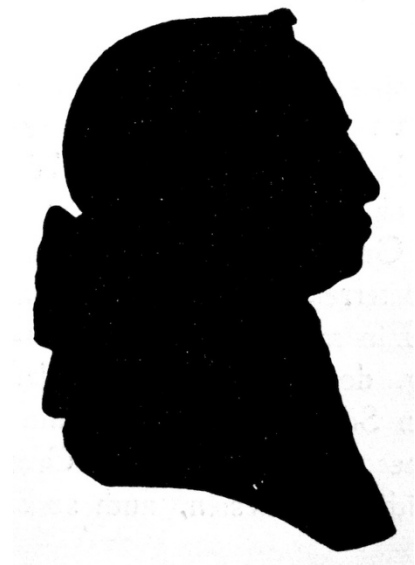
- Unknown artists. Some pasted in autograph albums (*Stammbücher*) with Latin sayings.



Lowe 1784



"Hippel" 1784



"Stein" 1788

Senewaldt 1786 (age 62)

- Artist: Friedrich Wilhelm Senewaldt (no life dates; Schlesia/Berlin miniaturist).
- Two versions: (A: 13.3 x 9.8 cm; B: 13 x 10 cm) both sepia or silverpoint, oval format profile. Privately owned and now lost.

Schnorr 1789 (age 65)

- Artist: Veit Hans Friedrich Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1764-1841).
- Graphite on vellum (11 x 8.7 cm; sheet: 14.3 x 11.0 cm). Extant: Dresden Kupferstich-Kabinett.
- Engravings by Bause, Benizy, Chapman, Rosmäsler, Landon, Zeelander, Bracquemond.



Senewaldt(A) 1786



Senewaldt(B) 1786



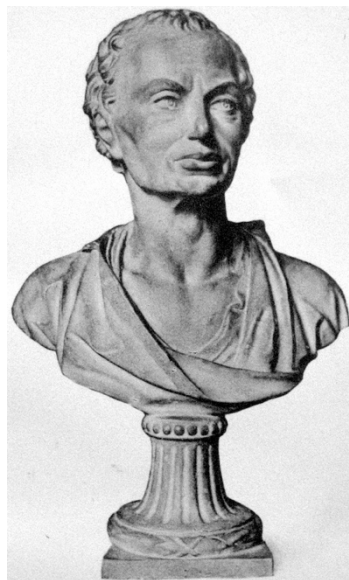
Schnorr 1789

Mattersberger 1794 (age 70)

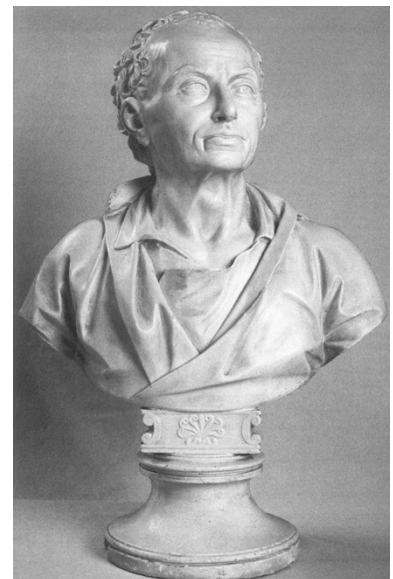
- Artist: Joseph Mattersberger (1754-1825).
- Two versions: "Rosenkranz" and "Tieftrunk".

"Rosenkranz" (63 cm tall). No copies extant. Photographs in Clasen [1924].

"Tieftrunk" (61 cm tall). Several plaster copies made in 1880 are still available, four bronze castings from one of these plaster copies were made in 2004.



"Rosenkranz"



"Tieftrunk"

Dresden 1790 (age 66) & Stägemann 1796 (age 72)

- Artist: Unknown; possibly Elisabeth von Stägemann *née* Fischer (1761-1835), the artist behind Haas 1799.
- At Johann Friedrich Reichardt's request Stägemann completed a painting or drawing that she sent to Berlin (December 1796) as a model for an engraving, which might be Haas (1799), but Stägemann's original is lost. There is some speculation that she also painted the otherwise anonymous Dresden portrait.



"Dresden" 1790



Haas 1799

Döbler 1791 (age 67)

- Artist: Gottlieb Döbler (c.1762-1810), Berlin.
- Döbler(A): oil on canvas (33.0 x 28.5 cm). Missing/destroyed.
- Döbler(B): "Kiesewetter"; oil on canvas (36.8 x 31.0 cm). Extant: Lüneburg (Ostpreußisches Landesmuseum).
- Engravings by Barth, Raab, Preisel & Geyer.



Döbler(A) 1791



Döbler(B) "Kiesewetter" 1791

Vernet 1792, 1795 (age 68, 71)

- Artist: Carl Friedrich Vernet (c.1760-1825)
- Description: Various miniatures, oval format with oil, gouache, pastel, or watercolor on paper, pergament, or ivory (8 x 6 cm; 8.5 x 7.3 cm; 10.5 x 8 cm; 10.6 x 8.2 cm; 11.3 x 9 cm; 11.5 x 9.0 cm; 12.5 x 9 cm; 13 x 10 cm).
- Location: Perhaps two from life, multiple copies by Vernet and other contemporary artists. Several privately owned, otherwise at Berlin, Heidelberg, Göttingen, Torun (Poland).
- Engravings by Lips, Poll, Pfenning, Bolt, Schindelmayer, Bollinger, Hopwood, Lehmann, Mayer, Claasens, Pauli, Westermayr.



Vernet 1792



Vernet 1795

Puttrich (1793) (age 69)

- Artist: Johann Theodor Puttrich (matriculated at Königsberg in 1793).
- Two versions, both full length silhouettes.
- A: Ink brush, opaque and brown watercolor, heightened with white, on paper (21.6 x 14.1 cm). Extant (Schiller Nationalmuseum, Marbach).
- B: Wash drawing in black ink (18.0 x 10.5 cm; sheet: 21 x 14 cm). Lost, but the Berger engraving (1798) stems from this.

Bardou 1798 (age 74)

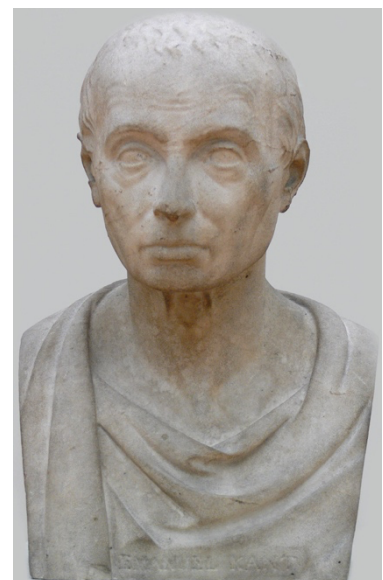
- Artist: Emanuel Bardou (1744-1818), Berlin.
- Marble bust (45.5 x 29.5 x 24 cm). Extant (Bode Museum, Berlin).



Puttrich(A) 1793



Puttrich(B) 1793



Bardou 1798

Hagemann 1801 (age 76)

- Artist: Friedrich Hagemann (1773-1806), Berlin. Also: Johann Gottfried Schadow (1764-1850) and Rudolph Leopold Siemering (1835-1905).
- Sketch on paper (8 cm; sheet: 16 x 9 cm). Destroyed, or at least lost, in 1944. Photograph in Clasen [1924]. Two copies of the original are also widely available.
- Clay model bust completed in Königsberg (January 1801), now lost, from which five marble busts were prepared in Berlin.

Schadow? 1801 (Königsberg bust). Lost since 1948. Plaster copies available.

Hagemann 1801 (Hamburg bust). Extant (Hamburger Kunsthalle).

Schadow 1808 (Walhalla bust). Extant (Walhalla Memorial, near Regensburg).

Siemering 1879 (Kant's chapel). Lost in 1944; plaster copies from 1924 are available.

Siemering 1892 (Friedrichskollegium). Lost in 1944.



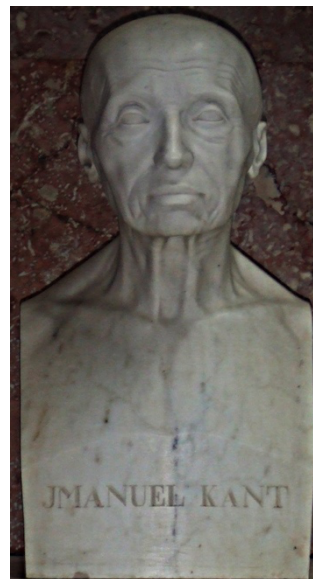
Hagemann 1801



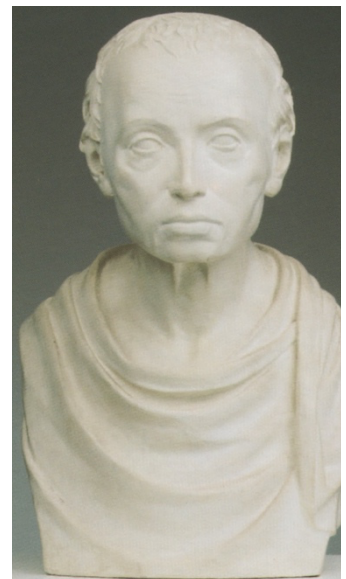
Schadow? 1801



Hagemann 1801



Schadow 1808



Siemering 1892

Baltruschatis 1802 (age 78)

- Carl Heinrich Baltruschatis (matriculated at Königsberg in 1798).
- Pencil and ink drawing (9.5 x 7.5 cm) glued into an autograph album opposite a page with Kant's entry: "Ad poenitendum properat, cito qui indicat. I. Kant. d. 16 Ianuarii 1802." (A favorite Latin saying that Kant often wrote in *Stammbücher*: "Hasty judgment is soon regretted.") Extant (Mainz University Library).

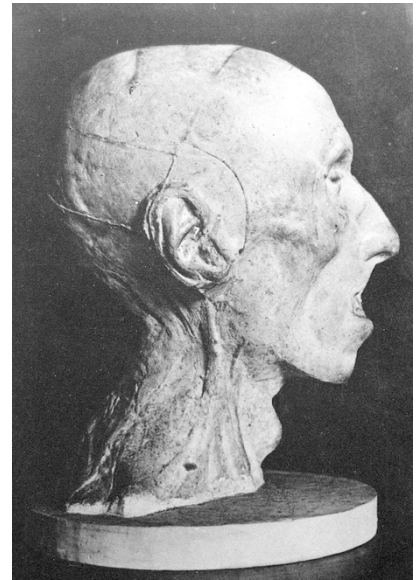


Baltruschatis 1802

Post Mortem Images

Knorre 1804 (age 79)

- Artist: Andreas Knorre (1763-1841), Königsberg.
- Plaster death masks (29 x 19 x 23 cm). At least three masks were made at the time of Kant's death and were later owned by the (A) State Archive (Königsberg), (B) *Altertumsgesellschaft Prussia* (Königsberg), (C) Berlin Anatomical Museum. A fourth mask (D) Tartu Anatomy Department, was either also made by Knorre, or was a copy of one of the other three. Only (C) and (D) survived World War II, and a copy of (D) was prepared by Giwi Ruchadze (1986) and is now on permanent loan to the Ostpreußisches Landesmuseum (Lüneburg).



Rauch 1864

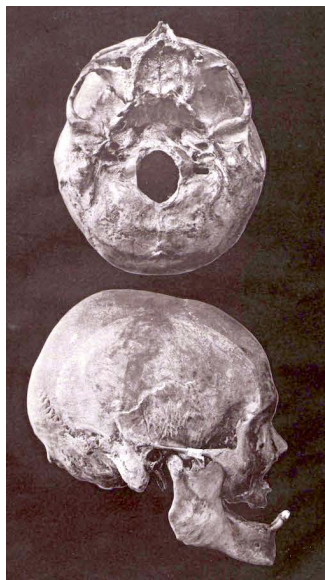
- Artist: Christian Daniel Rauch (1777-1857), Berlin. Like Hagemann, a student of Schadow.
- Bronze statue of Kant (9 feet high) resting on a granite pedestal of equal height; a scaled-up and modified copy of the Kant statue included in Rauch's equestrian monument to Frederick the Great (completed 1851) in Berlin. Kant's monument was completed in 1857; unveiled near Kant's old house on 18 October 1864; moved to the southwest corner of the *Paradeplatz* in 1885 (as shown here); hidden, then lost, during World War II; replaced with a replica by Harald Haacke and installed on the same granite pediment on 27 June 1992.
- Rauch modeled this on the Hagemann bust and Puttrich silhouette. The 21-year-old Rauch had also met the 74-year-old Kant while Rauch was in Königsberg as part of Queen Luise's retinue (1798).

Kant's Skull 1880

- Photographer: Rosenow. These constitute our only photographs of Kant, taken during the exhumation of his remains (July 1880). A plaster cast of the skull was also made (Tartu University Museum, Historical Medical Collection).



Rauch 1864



Skull 1880



Skull 1880

Relative Sizes of the Artwork

(8.5% actual size)



Arthur Schopenhauer on Kant's Image

In a letter of 25 Sep 1837, Schopenhauer offered advice to Karl Rosenkranz as to which Kant image should be featured in the soon-to-be-published Schubert/Rosenkranz edition of Kant's collected writings (1838-42). In the end, they opted for an engraving based on Döbler's 1791 portrait of Kant.

"Concerning the portrait: twelve years ago I knew a painter named Lowe, at that time already very old, formerly 'Löwe' and a Jew, who also gave me an autograph of Kant's. Kant sat for a painting for him, which Kant himself mentions in a letter, printed in a collection of letters of Jacobi, Herder, Kant, and others, around 1826.¹ Who can be more competent about physiognomy than this old painter? Now there are always and everywhere in my room four copperplate engravings of Kant, engraved by Bause, Thilo, Lips, and Meno Haas. Lowe looked at them closely and said: "Only the one by Lips is a good resemblance, but that one very much." You can also see it, it is characteristic – the melancholy features, as if he had said: "That's how people are!" – next to him is Hume, but even this great man looks clumsy and common next to that fine, witty face. The two heads are in medallions, very nicely engraved, my print is *avant la lettre*, the whole sheet 8 inches. I therefore advise you to have your engraving made from *this* sheet, which certainly hangs in old friends' houses in Königsberg, and must also still be available through art dealers. It is important to bring his true face to posterity, the most distant posterity."

[Schopenhauer, *Gesammelte Briefe* 1987, 169]



Bause 1791 (based on Schnorr)



Thilo 1799 (based on Mattersberger)



Haas 1796 (based on Stägemann)



Lips 1794 (based on Vernet)



Barth 1838 (based on Stobbe/Döbler)

¹ Ernst Reinhold, ed. (1825). *Karl Leonhard Reinhold's Leben und litterarisches Wirken, nebst einer Auswahl von Briefen Kant's, Fichte's, Jacobi's, und andrer philosophirender Zeitgenossen an ihn* (Jena: Friedrich Frommann).

Doerstling's Two Studies of Kant's Roundtable (1892)

The individuals: [1] Kant's servant Martin **Lampe** (far left), [2] Johann Conrad **Jacobi** (1717-1774), [3] **Kant**, [4] Robert **Motherby** (1736-1801), [5] (standing) Christian Jacob **Kraus** (1753-1807), [6] (leaning forward) Johann Georg **Hamann** (1730-1788), [7] (foreground, grasping the back of the chair) Theodor Gottlieb von **Hippel** (1741-1796), [8] Johann Georg **Scheffner** (1736-1820), [9] (foreground, leaning forward) Ludwig Ernst von **Borowski** (1740-1831), [10] (at far-right end of the table) Karl Gottfried **Hagen** (1749-1829).



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