

Andrea Baratta

Italian sculptor
(active 1657-1700)

Of probable Carrarese origin, little is known about him and his activity as a sculptor. In a document in the Doria archive an Andrea Baratta is said to be the author of the two angels on the "window" of S. Niccolò da Tolentino, in Rome, for which he was paid on December 22nd. 1663. Giovanni Maria and Francesco Baratta also worked in this church and it can therefore be argued that Baratta was their relative. Wittkower quotes a document from 1667 from which Baratta is the author of some statues on the colonnade of S. Pietro. It is very likely that he is to be identified with the Andrea Baratta who worked in Carrara and Modena about twenty years later.

In a letter dated 1st October 1685, from Carrara, Baratta refers to a bust of Cardinal *Rinaldo d'Este* (later Duke of Modena), which is probably the weak and somewhat ridiculous marble relief now in the Estense Gallery. In the same collection there are four other works by the same hand: an imaginative bust of *Francesco II d'Este* with fluttering drapes in slack emulation with the famous Berninian bust of Francesco I; a simpler bust and a relief of another member of the Este family and a graceful statuette of *Francis II* on a soaring horse. In 1690 Baratta sculpted, as an ornament for a fountain in the courtyard of the Ducal Palace of Modena, a group with *Neptune who kidnaps Amphitrite with a dolphin*, probably to be identified with the group of the same subject now on the staircase of the Palazzo Este in Sassuolo. This work is of a higher quality than the two gigantic marble figures of *Abundance* and *Prudence* in the niches of the staircase of the Ducal Palace of Modena rightly attributed to Baratta. Campori cites a letter in which Baratta refers to other works he performed for the Este court: two statues, one of which represented *Generosity* and was intended for the balustrade of the ducal palace, and four marble tables. Also in Modena Baratta made two statues for an altar in the church of the Vow, assisted by Andrea Vannucci who sculpted the quadrature.

Baratta is documented as the author of the staircase of the pulpit of the cathedral of Pietrasanta, dated 1696. The pulpit in the church of S. Stefano in Vallecchia near Pietrasanta is also attributed to him, with a relief with the *Martyrdom of S. Stephen*.

His last work is a statue of *S. Domenico*, dated 1700, in the cloister of S. Marco in Florence.

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