

# Giovanni Battista Brughi

[called the Abbot Brughi]  
Italian painter and mosaicist  
(1660-1730),

Born in Genoa around 1660, he lived and worked in Rome between the end of the century. XVII and the beginning of the XVIII. Student and help of Giovan Battista Gaulli, he learned the art of drawing; then detached from the master, he went to the practice of the mosaic, with which he acquired great esteem and also obtained the title of knight. Of him there remain some rather mediocre paintings in the churches of Rome: in S. Angelo in Pescheria *The Trinity* and the *martyrdom of the ss. Ciro and Lorenzo*, in the side chapel near the entrance; a *S. Saba*, in the Specchia chapel in S. Barbara alla Regola or Librai. S. Rocco he modified a painting by Baldassarre Peruzzi, placed in the chapel of the SS. Nativity and ruined by time. Brughi paintings were also in the basilica of S. Giovanni. However, the best known achievement was made by him as a mosaicist, when, around the second decade of the century, he participated in the decoration of the Baptism chapel in St. Peter's.

Together with G. Ottaviani and L. Fattori, he executed some panels for the dome with scenes allusive to the *Sacrament of Baptism* and personifications of the *parts of the world*, taken from original Trevisani; alone he signed (1731) the box with *S. Pietro baptizing the saints Process and Martiniano*, from a cartoon by Giuseppe Passeri. Of other mosaic works, of less importance, which certainly had to be carried out judging by the esteem that was bought in this field, there is no news.

Already Soprani remembers "some of his drawings to the prints of non-despicable taste, engraved by different carvers"; Heineken cites the *Passion of Christ*, engraved on 34 plates of copper and derived from originals of M. Limpach; a portrait of *Pope Benedict XIII*, engraved with a burin by P. Pilaja; a *St. Francis kneeling before the Child Jesus* (A. Fritz); *The Capuchin brother Bernardo* (half figure), recorded by JB Sintes; *St. Peter Gambeurta before the Blessed Virgin* (N. Oddi); *S. Venantius and martyrs* (H. Vincent) and finally the *hospitality of s. Galligano* (N. Billy) and a cartoon with a *Slave*.

The sources praise Brughi for his ability in drawing and in the practice of mosaic art, but they define it as a painter mediocre and not very gifted. In fact he was versatile and eclectic, but lacked in creative and imaginative quality and almost always maintained himself on a plan of craftsmanship of models of bigger masters.

by Anna Maria Damigella - Biographical Dictionary of Italians - Volume 14 (1972)

Translated from:

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