

Carlo Buzzi

(Buti, Buzio, Butio, Albutio, Albuzio)

Italian painter and architect
(c.1605-1659)

His date of birth must be placed around 1608. With the qualification of architect his name appears in the Annals of the duomo in 1629 when, when Fabio Mangone died and the office of architect of the Fabbrica remained vacant, the deputies, "given the qualities and diligence" of Buzzi, decided to make use of him when work was needed as an engineer or architect; and after a few months they resolve to entrust Gian Battista Crespi, the Cerano, with the superintendence of the works, with the recommendation to make use of the work of Buzzi "young man who has already served in the time of the aforementioned Fabio Mangone ..."; Cerano was paid a salary of 1,200 imperial lire, half to Buzzi. But soon Cerano (June 5, 1631), and probably also Buzzi, was exonerated from his commitments, we find the engineer of the factory Francesco Maria Richini (July 21, 1631), to whom, among other things, the completion of the central portal will be due. But already before 1629 Buzzi had to be well known if, as it is known, he taught at the Ambrosiana Academy with F. Mangone. In 1632 (and in August 1658), Buzzi, qualifying himself as a "collegiate engineer", gave estimates and measurements for the works of the archiepiscopal seminary; having been fired abruptly on 29 July 1638, on 26 August of that year Buzzi was elected engineer of the Fabbrica del duomo, with a full salary of 1,200 lire, and held this position until death. He was admitted to the College of Surveyors, Engineers and Architects only in 1640-41.

Buzzi ranks among the architects who were most committed to solving the serious problem of the facade of the Milan cathedral for which Pellegrini had given difficult drawings.

In 1646 Buzzi presented a project of his own composition and offered the prints that the Council of the Fabbrica did not refuse to accept. A Report accompanied him (31 Jan. 1647) in which Buzzi explained the innovation introduced by him by superimposing a neo-Gothic wall on the pilgrim composition of the lower order, enumerating the difficulties that the elevation of an entirely "Roman" facade would have presented, while they would have been easily overcome in a construction "conforming to the rest of the temple". The project was submitted to the archbishop, Cardinal Monti, who suggested some changes, which were easily accepted. In the meantime, however, there was news of a new project: that of F. Castello, with an extraordinarily undulating cymatium, which anticipated the fading of the last Baroque and found supporters. The project at any rate did affect (1651), in large branches of F. Lamb is the project of Buzzi and that of the Castle. In the uncertainty, the two projects were sent to Rome and their judgment was sought from the main Baroque architects. In the end, however, the preferences of the Fabbrica were oriented towards Buzzi's project, to which he did not tire of making adjustments and variations, until 7 April. 1653 the Council resolved "that one should observe the design" of the architect of the Fabbrica (ie Buzzi) "as to the skeleton and the work of the pillars as corresponding to the rest of the Duomo".

In the same years Buzzi supervised the completion of the chapel of the Madonna dell'Albero and made proposals for the main internal door.

In the meantime, in place of Richini, Buzzi also continued the works of the Ospedale Maggiore (1644-58), while on behalf of the Municipality he carried out important works in the buildings that enclosed the Piazza dei Mercanti. In 1644, after the fire of the Banchieri building, where the Palatine schools were located, the reconstruction work was entrusted to Buzzi who for the front imitated the two orders of alexian architecture of the Palazzo dei Giureconsulti (the schools were transformed in the following century). The design was so popular that it was intended to be extended to the entire square, but the project was not followed up due to lack of funds. In 1654 the portal known as the Pescheria Vecchia was rebuilt on a design by Buzzi.

Also for the Municipality, in those years Buzzi was called to prepare spectacular provisional apparatuses: in 1649, for the passage of Maria Anna of Austria, wife of Philip IV, he designed three triumphal arches, two on the course of Porta Romana and one in piazza del Duomo; in 1658 he curated the show for the birth of Prince Filippo Prospero.

Among Buzzi's minor commitments in Milan are the semiprecious stone ciborium in the chapel of S. Tommaso in the church of S. Eustorgio (1643); the designs for a new and larger choir in the church of S. Maria del Carmine (Baroni, 1940, pp. 208-13), the renovation of the chapel of S. Matroniano, the drawing for the altarpiece of the altar of SS. Ippolito and Cassiano in S. Lorenzo (1654-55), as well as some destroyed works mentioned in the ancient guides.

The name of Buzzi also appears in the documents of the basilica of Monza, where, presumably after the death or retirement of E. Turati, he became the director of the works. From 1641 Buzzi worked on the sanctuary of the Madonna del Bosco in Imbersago and in the years from 1641 to 1661 on the expansion of the church of S. Ambrogio in Merate for which he rebuilt the facade and erected the bell tower.

In Valsolda Buzzi rebuilt the church of the sanctuary of the Caravina in Cressogno (1639), and gave the design for a remodeling of the church of S. Bartolomeo in Loggio (1647); in Como he worked on the northern apse of the cathedral (1653-69), in Saronno he completed the facade of the sanctuary with the crowning balustrade (put in place after his death).

Buzzi died in Milan on 23 September 1658. He married Giulia Mangoni from whom on May 14, 1649 his son Giulio was born who appears in the list of collegiate engineers in 1677 and is mentioned until 1691: the only work attributed to him, the chapel of the Assumption at the Sacro Monte di Varese.

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