

Giovanni Ceccarini

Italian sculptor

1790-1861

Born, presumed to be Rome, around 1790. From the Register of the Ancients awarded from 1745 to 1848 in the competitions of the nude school of the Academy of St. Luke of Rome (kept in the archives of the Academy), it is learned that "John Ceccarini Romano "achieved the second sculpture award in the tests carried out in September 1808 and March 1809 and the first prize at the September 1809 contest under the direction of A. Canova, V. Pacetti and G. Landi respectively. It therefore seems plausible that the good results obtained at the nursery school would signal him to the attention of Canova and that he would call him to work in his own studio.

In 1814 Ceccarini assisted architect Clemente Falchi in the decoration of the Triumphal Arc erected in Piazza Venezia for the return to Rome of Pius VII (May 24). This great work, commissioned by a farmer's company, remains a testimony in a Pinelli press. Two years later he carved at the expense of Canova the marble bust of Donatello for the Protomoteca capitolina. From 1818 to 1824, the two marble groups (Neptune and Dea Rome between the Tiber and Aniene) were engaged in the fountains at the center of the two emicicles of the Piazza del Popolo and the Sphinxes that adorn the terminal pilasters of the emicicles themselves: the first two probably followed Valadier's designs.

The grandeur of the sculpted groups by Ceccarini demonstrates his uncommon artistic talents, which allowed him to reproduce, without altering the details, the projects of Valadier. In June 1824 Neptune had already been hoisted above the fountain at the Tiber: a letter from GG Belli al Moraglia dated 4 June confirms it, which describes with acrimony the square and statue of Ceccarini.

At the same time, Ceccarini designed the marble decoration of a fountain to be erected in Piazza Colonna, as shown in a pencil drawing dated 1820, and ended the colossal portrait of Canova (Frascati, Municipio).

The giant statue was very admired by contemporaries when Ceccarini exposed it in his study of the way of Divine Love. Sculpture, if it reveals the undeniable expertise of the author, also proves the lack of originality in the iconography and in the surrender of the movement is in a somewhat coarse manner to Washington of Canova (destroyed, plaster to Possagno, Musovano Canoviano) At the expense of Count Marconi, no doubt the work witnessed the gratitude that the pupil had for the master which he owed, in addition to the profession, to the lucrative government commissions-for example, those of the Piazza del Popolo sculptures that he had through his protection.

In 1829 Ceccarini became acquainted with the University and marble company of Rome, of which he became general governor on the 1st. 1830. Reconfirmed in charge of "acclamation" on July 10, 1831 and June 1, 1832, he held the post until February 1834 when, following him, Tommaso della Moda, assumed the duties of secretary until 2 Aug. 1835.

Ceccarini died in Rome on 10 February. 1861.

Of his business back to 1824, there is no safe news, although many busts and statues were commissioned, one of which, depicting Raffaello, was reproduced in lithography in 1833 and dedicated by the same author to the citizens of Urbino. Profound knowledge of the techniques and materials of his craft, the artist published in 1828 a pamphlet, Letter from G. Ceccarini sculptor to Mr. C. Vannelli di Carrara, on the merits of the granite of the island of Lily. It also seems to have invented a means of transporting the heaviest marbles.

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