

# Giacomo Colombo

Italian sculptor  
1663-1730

He was born in Este (Padua) in 1663 by Giovanbattista. He was a sculptor in marble, polychrome wood and stucco; painter, designer of sacred silverware and engravings reproducing his works. His artistic training took place in Naples and his multifaceted activity took place in the context of the environment (where the artists experimented simultaneously with various expressions), starting from the baroque polychrome wood tradition to evolve within the first decade of the eighteenth century a very personal taste Arcadian-Rococo.

It is not known why Colombo came to Naples (in 1678): probably following the sculptor Pietro Barberis, who in 1688 used to marble marble aquariums in the church of the Cross of Lucca; Here he also made the first big work in the stuccos overhanging the arches and in the monumental organ with sculptures and wooden ornaments (destroyed after the war). In 1689 he established and dated the Crucifix for the church of S. Pietro di Cava dei Tirreni, where the love for the antique tempera was the counter-reformed pietist.

1689 is the year of the entrance to the corporation of painters (with an admitted Academy of Nudes), a partnership which was only allowed after having presented important works. There is no trace of Colombo's painter's work, but he must have been judged by the fact that in 1701 he was elected a prefect of the corporation. In 1691 he signed and dated the Crucifix in polychrome wood for the church of S. Stefano in Capri, a work that in announcing the neomanieristic elegance denied the Berninian and fanzaghian statements then in vogue.

The Crucifix rests on a canvas depicting La Maddalena, the Madonna and St. John the Evangelist at the foot of the cross: since, as has been said, Colombo was part of the corporation of painters, this could be a testimony to his business, but we have no documentary evidence yet.

The great event of the emergence of the Neapolitan cellar cage found in Colombo an artist who was not limited to the tradition of the sculptors who had preceded it (P. Ceraso, the brothers Perrone, the brothers Patalano and D. Di Nardo) and much less from that of contemporaries (N. Fumo, G. Buonavita, F. Picano, and others), but an interpreter who created a series of new characters portrayed among those he observed on a daily basis. So for Colombo, as well as for the similar experiences of Neapolitan sculptors, the variety between religious images (imposed by the codified case) and crib figures looks remarkable; even though the latter are sifted through the stylistic confrontation with their sacred sculptures, signed and dated, or documented, are carved with incisive and personalized technique in realistic forms without matching to the current taste, placing themselves as archetypes of the future presepius typology in chromatic vision.

They are to be placed in two distinct periods: the first one, characterized by a lively realism, belong to the "singer, spin, knight, widow, foretanella" and others, and are to be considered as "model" (from cm 30 to 60 cm) required for the wooden presbyteries of S. Maria in Portico di Napoli (1695 circa) and S. Maria in Aracoeli of Rome (1696 circa), both of which are composed of figures of full size but of which only some elements . In the second period - from 1714 at the end of the activity - the figures are to be assigned (almost all signed and preserved in Naples in coll. Priv.), Depicting the "cook, the young ladies, the old" and others, The icasticity is tempered in the light of the experimentalism of Arcadico-Rococo taste, which translates into the refined and fluid volumes (commented by a precious chromium) the raw expressions of the first period.

As time was set, Colombo implemented a perfect organization. craftsmanship, which allowed him to realize much of that activity that he came to all the provinces of Viceroy: *S. Antonio di Padova*, 1691, Lecce; *S. Teresa*, 1697, Sulmona; *S. Giuliano*, Benevento; *S. Gaetano*, Chieti; *Group of Visitation*, Capracotta; *S. Candida*, Castel di Sangro; *S. Francesco and S. Agostino*, Troy; *Assumption and St. Joseph*, 1702, Celenza Val Fortore; *S. Vito*, 1706, Salerno; *S. Andrea*, signed and dated 1706, Gricignano di Aversa, parish of S. Andrea; *S. Giuseppe*, 1712, Lucera; *Crucifix Madeleine*, Marcianise. Colombo also sent works in Spain: they know in Madrid a *Christ of the column* in the oratory of Christ in the church of S. Ginés dated 1698 and signed "Giacomo Colombo" assigned to Colombo da A. Ponz and a *St. Teresa* in the church of the Trinitarians, signed by Colombo and dated 1726. The baroque stamp of Colombo marble carvings appears temperate by the classicist vein, as in the opulent *Maddalena* of 1695. In order to arrive in 1701, complex tombs Ludovisi (Naples, Ospedaletto church) those arcadico-rococo instances of which he will assertor together with painter Paolo De Matteis and sculptors N. Fumo, F. Picano and others.

The news of De Dominici (1742) that F. Solimena made as a godfather to Colombo and who not only directed it to art, but was the prodigal of advice, drawings and sketches, and this particularly for the Ludovisi tombs, does not find reflected in the autonomy of his art or in the documents. It is true, however, that Colombo collaborated with sculptures of angelons and putti to the realization of the complex "wooden models" of the altars for the charter of S. Martino and the chapel of the Treasury of S. Gennaro (1700, 1707); whose general inscriptions were entrusted to Solimena. This did not affect Colombo's cultural formation, which in fact is substantially different from that of Solimena, but may have, at the same time, determined the novel of a Colombo dependent on Solimena.

Between 1724 and 1726 Colombo realized the vast marble decoration for the chaplain of S. Vincenzo in the church of S. Caterina in Formiello (Naples), where sculptures, despite their eighteenth century sensibilities, denounce fatigue and the obvious wide workshop attendance. Tiredness that does not reveal itself in co-existent polychrome wood sculptures in which Colombo extrinseca the preluding research of the results of eighteenth-century plastic. Thus, from S. Caterina, dated 1718, of the church of S. Chiara del Borgo in Santa Lucia di Serino, to the *Assumption*, signed and dated 1724, by Carano di Sessa Aurunca reveals rocaille anxiety in the swaying parmets made in extreme subtleties in the sense of silky cloth worn by the wind - is all an incessant commitment to the search for the intimidation of the plastic expressive medium and the

chromatic levity: a point of arrival notably ahead of the coeval European wood sculpture.

Colombo died in Naples in 1730.

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