

Giovannino de'Dolci

Italian architect and cabinetmaker
(c. 1435 - c. 1485)

He was born in Florence. Nothing is known of his training in Florence; probably as a young man he moved to Rome where he initially worked as a carpenter. In 1458 he supplied, for the first time, a chest to the papal court.

Since 1460, his name frequently recurs as a supplier not only for carpentry works and as an entrepreneur for masonry works, but also as a manager in various construction companies related to the papal court such as the palace of San Marco, the tribune and the portico of the basilica. of the Holy Apostles and others.

His role in these construction sites remains rather confused, even if generally scholars attribute to him that of director of works on projects of others, and in particular of Baccio Pontelli, without for this excluding that he had, in certain circumstances, his own design autonomy.

In particular, the documents prove Dolci participated in the construction of the Sistine chapel as superintendent of the workshop of the apostolic palace. Some scholars also identify him as a designer architect, while others hypothesize that he executed a drawing by Baccio Pontelli, taking care of the technical aspects. As proof of the collaboration between the two, the identification of the two architects with the figures placed to the right of Perugino's Delivery of the Keys has been proposed: one of the two bystanders holds the compass (Pontelli) and the other the square (Dolci).

A similar situation could be realized for the construction of the Rocca di Civitavecchia where Dolci was sent by the pope in 1481 with wide decision-making powers, but with the supervision of Pontelli starting from 1483.

Probably an autonomous work of Dolci was the castle of Ronciglione on which he worked from 1476.

It should be noted that, despite his frequent absence from Rome, even as an inspector for pontifical works, his cabinet-making shop, where his brother and son worked, still functioned and supplied refined artifacts to the papal

court. His death occurred between 1484 and 1486, the date on which his son collected the remaining credits.

Translated from:

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