

Antonio Grecolini

Italian painter
(1675-1736)

He was born on 16 January, 1675, probably in Rome, by Agostino and Giulia Savelli. Grecolini form of the surname has prevailed in the studies as a modern variant of Crecolini, attested by autograph signatures on documents and contemporary sources, and Crecolini, artist signed in S. Lorenzo baptizing a man at S. Lorenzo in Lucina (1716) and as he called it Pascoli. In the drawing of the Pio collection the name is "Cracolinus". The name of baptism is Antonio, as evidenced by the signatures and sources above, and not John Antonio as is often read.

In 1709 he was accepted into the Congregation of the Virtues of the Pantheon and in 1719 he was present at the congregations of the Academy of St. Luke, to which he gave, as a pièce de réception, a Sermon. In 1715 he married Maria Francesca Pratesi, from whom he had several sons (Filippo, Raffaele, Margherita, Vittoria, Catherine) recorded in the documents of the parish of residence.

The masters with whom he studied, G. B. Lenardi and B. Luti.

In the years in which Grecolini was with Lenardi, from whom he assimilated numerous elements of the late Baroque culture, he executed the drawings for the engravings, published in 1694, depicting the carriages of the Prince of Liechtenstein at the time of his arrival in Rome in 1691. They they reveal an adherence so close to the ways of the master that it makes us think that drawings by Grecolini are traceable among those of Lenardi. The year of the transition to the school of Luti is not known, but it could have happened before the death of Lenardi (1704). Pascoli recalls that after the death of A. Gherardi (1702) an unfinished painting was entrusted to Luti to complete it; but, since the economic demand was too high, the assignment passed to Grecolini. This news suggests that on that date Grecolini attended Luti's workshop as his collaborator. Grecolini would later complete a second work by Gherardi depicting "the caste Susanna" with "perspectives and countries". Both of these canvases are currently not traceable. The strong approach to Luti's ways is also witnessed by two beautiful drawings on the antiquarian market.

He repeatedly spoke to the Clementine contests of the Accademia di S. Luca; and drawings, which show a moderate approach to Marathesque taste, are almost all preserved in the Archives of the Academy.

In 1692 he took part in the third class winning the second prize. From 1694 onward he always appeared for the first class. That year won the third prize with the Giants' Fall, stolen. In 1696 he obtained the second prize with the Universal Diluvio; and executed the former tempura, which has been preserved, with Noah's blemish. In 1702 he had the second prize with the *Strage of the innocent*.

Casale (1980) published an Appearance of shepherds, today in Ponza, in the church of St. Trinity, but coming from the chapel of St. Anna in the ruined Roman church of the Venetian and Ansuino of the Camerinesi, and considered it Grecolini's youthful work ., made after the stucco execution date, paid in 1697.

S. Andrea in the presbytery of S. Andrea delle Fratte, attributed to Grecolini still with the pendant representing S. Andrea in adoration of the Cross. Only the first is quoted as a work by G. da O. Malatesta; and the style of the painting, still strongly linked to late-baroque patterns, makes for an early dating. The painter was perhaps called to work here as a disciple of Lenardi engaged in the decoration of the apse of the church.

Between 1707 and 1712 the intervention, with an unspecified payment, must be placed in the Chapel Albani in S. Sebastiano for which he received 20 scudi. The news is interesting because it means shaking relationships with the important papal family.

It was probably Luti to introduce Grecolini to the Cardinal P. Ottoboni, patron and collector.

For this reason, Grecolini executed a St. Judas Taddeo, today in the depots of the Vatican Pinacoteca, which was part of a well-known series of paintings depicting Jesus, the Madonna and the Apostles, featured by celebrated contemporary painters, exhibited in 1713 to one of the exhibitions organized by S. Salvatore in Lauro. Cardinal Ottoboni possessed at least one other picture of Grecolini, an unidentified "St. Chiara with the Sacrament in Hand".

In 1715 he was working in the church of S. Clemente, restored by the will of Clement XI, with the Martyrdom of the saint. The genesis of the work is attested by various preparatory drawings and the final model preserved in Rome, at the National Art Gallery of Palazzo Barberini.

Grecolini worked in the same period at S. Maria in Monticelli, restored by Clement XI's wish, frescoing on the left side of the church a lost S. Mamiliano church. The pictorial decoration is already mentioned in September 1715 by G. Laderchi, but did not indicate the subjects specified by O. Pisces Piselli.

In 1716 his paintings were mentioned in the church of the Nativity of Agonizers. He certainly frescoed a Nativity on the façade of the building; Pius attributed, inter alia, the Transit of Joseph and the vault decoration with the Nativity. Still in that year signed as Antonio Crecolini the painting depicting S. Lorenzo baptizing a man in the chapel of the baptistery in S. Lorenzo in Lucina, St. Peter's baptism baptized a woman.

From 1718 he was involved in the important decoration of Villa Patrizi in Porta Pia; but the building is destroyed and the paintings are not documented by visual testimonies.

In that year he frescoed the vault of Mercury's room and in 1719 that of a second room (each fresco was paid 70 scudi). I then spoke in the gallery of the foreground with the role of figurative next to G.P. Panini, frescoed in five compartments the elements and divinities to them allusive, for a fee of 175 scudi, welded in 1720.

Quoted by Titi in 1721 and in an inventory of church property of the following year is the Miracle of the Church. Vincenzo Ferreri in the church of S. Rocco. Instead, Grecolini's intervention in the decoration of the church of S. Francesco di Paola is more precise.

The emergence of preparatory drawings for the altarpiece allowed, which indicated the presence of Grecolini paintings in the third chapel on the right devoted to St. Francis of Sales

(among them, the altarpiece with St. Francis of Paola gives the cord to St. Francis of Sales). In 1721-22 he also painted in the third chapel on the left, dedicated to S. Michele Arcangelo: he frescoed his vault with the saint, reinterprets the painting of the altar of S. Perugini depicting S. Michele and made one of the laterals, S. Michele gives the cord to s. Francesco di Paola, as he established Legrand on the basis of the preparatory drawings.

The church of the Ss. Cosma and Damiano dei Barbieri was restored by 1724, the date indicated by an inscription inside the building, now called Jesus Nazareno. This year, therefore, the decoration of the vault made by Grecolini with the Ss. Cosma and Damiano in glory and two panels with pairs of putti should be traced back to this year. In 1725 he was paid for restorations of paintings by Marquis G. Capponi.

Some news testify of the good appreciation that Grecolini enjoyed outside of Rome as well.

As is apparent from documents of 1722-23, Grecolini was paid for four paintings sent to the court of Turin, not tracked. Nineteenth-century sources attributed to Grecolini the completion of the decoration of the vault of the Eucharist chapel in the cathedral of Assisi, left interrupted by G. Giorgetti (died in 1679). The frescoes represent the Fall of the Manna and The Bronze Snake (of the second there is also the sketch in the Lemme collection). Attribution appears indisputable on the basis of stylistic data; while it is more difficult to define the chronology, however close to the second decade of the eighteenth century, for comparison with the works of these years.

Rare are the famous quotes of paintings in private collections of the eighteenth century. In addition to those already mentioned, there is a S. Giovanni Battista property of the Colonna family, a Martian Apollo sculptor in the Patrizi collection, figures in D. De Marchis the Tempestino in the Marucelli collection. A sketch with Venus in the Vulcan Forge is in Düsseldorf; a picture depicting the resurrected Christ appears to the Madonna is in the collection Lemme.

From 1717 onwards Grecolini performed numerous portraits of artists to accompany the lives written by Pius, now kept at the National Museum of Stockholm. He also made four drawings for G. Rossi's engravings inserted as finalists in the text of M. Guarnacci, *Vitae et Res. Gestae pontificum Romanorum, Romae 1751*, but certainly from an earlier publication.

Grecolini died in Rome, in his home in Via della Croce, on May 24, 1725.

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