

# Annibale Lippi

by Maria Grazia Ercolino - Biographical Dictionary of Italians - Volume 65 (2005))

Neither the place nor the date of birth of this architect, active in Rome in the second half of the sixteenth century, is known. He was the son of Giovanni, a Florentine architect known as Nanni di Baccio Bigio. According to Vasari his artistic apprenticeship took place in the wake of the painter F. De Rossi, called Salviati; however he followed in his father's footsteps, specializing above all in the architectural field.

The news concerning the life and artistic activity of Lippi are fragmentary; the historiographical question concerning his involvement in the numerous paternal construction sites is also debated.

Lippi, like Nanni, fully adhered to the themes derived from the production of Antonio Cordini da Sangallo the Younger, and this complicated the attributive problem related to several of his works. It seems likely that he collaborated with his father in the extension of the Ricci palace in Via Giulia (Henneberg, p. 254). A series of payments dating back to 1568 documents his participation in the building renovation of the hospital complex of S. Spirito in Sassia and the construction of the Palazzo del Commendatore, of which, perhaps, he became solely responsible after his father's death (Colonna, p. 70 ). It cannot be excluded that, in the same year, he participated in another paternal enterprise, that of S. Martino degli Svizzeri in the Vatican, mainly because of the presence, in that building, of some stylistic elements that are found in his subsequent works (Marcucci - Torresi, p. 75).

During 1569, Lippi received compensation for some works conducted on behalf of Cardinal G. Ricci in the refectory of S. Maria in Domnica at the Navicella ( *La villa Médicis ...* , p. 241). Thanks to the probable interest of Salviati he obtained from the fathers served the task of designing the new choir of the church of S. Marcello al Corso in Rome. The construction site for the construction of the Roman church of S. Maria della Pietà in Piazza Colonna (Marcucci - Torresi) dates back to that period.

A payment note dated June 1573 stated: "Annibale architect is paid for his work in the church building n.ra". The architect's own name appears in only two documents, but his presence is constantly shown in the construction site meetings. Several compositional elements, detectable in the sixteenth century prospectus of the church, made it possible to identify Lippi in that "Hannibal". The initial draft of the project should date back to the middle of 1569, while the building, which ended quite quickly, started the following year. In 1573, the second phase of the works is to be referred to, that of completion, always carried out according to the initial project of Lippi (ibid., Pp. 70 s.).

The conclusion of the first phase of the construction of S. Maria della Pietà, in 1572, coincided with the start of a new venture, inherent in the project and construction of the church of the Madonna di Loreto in Spoleto, commissioned by the bishop of the city, Fulvio Orsini . The first works relating to the foundation of the Spoleto church date back to September; while the document that attributes the paternity of the construction to Lippi was drawn up in December of 1573 (Sordini).

In that same year, after the death of I. Barozzi, known as Vignola, those who according to Ronchini (1876) - which however does not specify otherwise - had been somehow protectors of their father, A. Contugi and P. Bandini, recommended the L to cardinal Alessandro Farnese, describing him as "above all others careful and diligent".

The tradition that attributed to Lippi the role of designer of the villa, then the Medici, to the Pincio, lapsed, however, the possibility remains that he may have in any case participated in the construction; currently the most debated issue is to establish the possibility that he took over the construction site of the villa after his purchase by Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici in January 1576 (Henneberg, p. 255).

The project and construction of the church of S. Chiara at Monte Cavallo in Rome, later destroyed at the end of the 19th century, dates to 1575. For a long time the authorship of this work was attributed to Giacomo Della Porta; but the name of Lippi, indicated as architect of the church, has been traced in some papers preserved in the archive of the Confraternity of the Holy Cross of St. Marcello, responsible for the construction. This task, which came from a confraternity that included influential men and sophisticated artistic taste among its members, sheds new light on the reputation which Lippi had to enjoy on that date.

In 1577 he was charged with the management of the building of the Palazzo dei Conservatori in Campidoglio, in order to check the irregularities in the accounts' estimates and to settle the existing disputes between the two architects responsible, Della Porta and M. Longhi il Vecchio (Benedetti - Zander, p. 410). In 1578 he directed the works for the expansion of the complex of S. Chiara, destined to accommodate a greater number of nuns (Henneberg, pp. 250 s.). During the same year, in September, he participated, with other architects, in a competition to redesign the Roman staircase; however the chosen project was that proposed by Della Porta (Benedetti - Zander, p. 309).

Confirming his qualities, he remembers that, still in 1578, his name appeared among the members of the Congregation of the Virtuosi at the Pantheon, which had included among the affiliates, starting from his formation, also his father (Henneberg, p. 254). In 1580 he verified, on behalf of Cardinal G. Sirleto, the site of S. Maria ai Monti, whose construction was then commissioned to Della Porta.

The date of death of Lippi is not known, that the 18 nov. 1581, already ill, he wrote his own will, in which he designated his brother Claudio as his legitimate heir and arranged to be buried in the family tomb inside the church of Trinità dei Monti in Rome (Bertolotti).

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