

Pietro Locatelli

Italian Baroque painter
c.1637-1710

Son of a "merciarolo" bergamasco was born in Rome in the parish of St. Mark around 1637.

For the date of birth reference is made to the states of the souls of the parish of St. Mark, in which he was appointed for the first time, at the age of one year, in 1638. This year is more reliable than 1634, date obtained by the act of the death of 1710, in which Locatelli is considered seventy-six years.

There is no reliable news about his training, but it is very likely that he has been in the workshop of Pietro Berrettini from Cortona with his participation in the great decorative cycles realized in Rome.

Locatelli is likely to work, together with other artists of Cortona education, to decorate the gallery of the Quirinal Palace, although his name has never been mentioned in the documents relating to this or other worksites. Perhaps Locatelli's activity was mainly based on drawing practice, an important aspect of his artistic production even during his maturity.

In the circle of Pietro da Cortona, Locatelli also had the opportunity to know C. Ferri and to start with him a long and profitable collaboration, which sometimes saw him busy preparing some carvings for engraving, . Locatelli's first known work is a preparatory drawing for an engraving, dating from 1657 to 1667, made by J. Baron and dedicated by J. de Balchis to Flavio Chigi. The idea is taken up by a painting by A. Sacchi, the *Vision of S. Romualdo*, altarpiece of the homonymous Roman church, today at the Vatican Pinacoteca.

The first documentary evidence on Locatelli's pictorial activity, however, refers to two paintings, now lost, made in 1666 for the refectory of the convent of S. Marcello: *Angels appearing on Abraham* and the *Fall of Manna*. In 1668, Locatelli painted a *St. Francis of Sales* for the chapel of the same name in the cathedral of Nardò, in Salento, another work no longer traceable to him commissioned by G.F. Cristaldi, a character tied to the Chigi family.

In 1669, after marrying Ludovica Rossetti, Locatelli went to live in the house of his wife in the alley S. Romualdo, in the parish of the Apostles.

Between 1663 and 1679, an important collective enterprise can be found: the realization of tapestry cartons for the series on the life of Urban VIII, commissioned by Cardinal Francesco Barberini. This time, Locatelli's intervention is documented by some payments dating from 1675 to 1679, referring to three of the cartons, probably made on the idea of Ferri. Collaboration between the two painters is also evidenced by the

realization, in the year 1676 by the will of Prince Agostino Chigi, of an *Assumption of the Virgin* for the Church of the Annunciation in the Spedale of S. Maria della Scala in Siena, paid in advance to Locatelli, who signed and dated, but welded to Ferri.

The Savior's S. Gregorio Armeno, painted around 1680 for the cathedral of Nardò, though, drawing on a drawing by Ferri, seems to also take into consideration the example of P.F. Mola. Influenced by Sacchi's paintings, instead, the two canvases appear in the Sacrament chapel of the cathedral of Tivoli, representing *S. Lorenzo led to martyrdom and the transport of his body*. Lorenzo, realized for Cardinal Galeazzo Marescotti between 1681 and 1688. Always in the Eighties, Locatelli painted S. Monica and S. Augustine for the church of S. Maria delle Vergini (today S. Rita) in Rome and again commissioned by Chigi, two works for the church of S. Girolamo in Campansi in Siena: a *Martyrdom of S. John Evangelist*, signed and dated in 1682, for which some preparatory drawings were found, and a *Vision of S. Francesco*, a work influenced by C. Maratta and dated between 1681 and 1685. Less secure is the attribution to Locatelli of two other paintings made in the same period for the church of S. Francesco, always in Siena: the *Martyrdom of S. Andrea* and the *Death of S. Galgano*.

A new collaboration with Ferri, documented in a payment, concerns the realization of two paintings commissioned in 1685 by C. Pamphili for the collegiate church of S. Maria Assunta in Valmontone; Locatelli painted *SS Nicola, Bernardo, Benedetto, Ilario* and intervened, at least in part, even in the *Annunciation*, left unfinished by Ferri. In 1686 he was involved in the decoration of the chapel of S. Rita da Cascia in S. Agostino in Rome, where he painted the paintings with *S. Rita surrounded by bees*, *The death of S. Rita* and a *View of the Holy Fresco in the Basin*.

From that same year, Locatelli devoted himself with increasing commitment to the production of images for engravings; and this is confirmed by numerous works created in collaboration with artists such as A. van Westerhout, R. van Audenaerde, B. Thiboust, B. Fariat.

In the painting with the *Immaculate Conception*, *SS. Giacomo Apostolo, Pietro Martire, Benedetto and Blessed Salomea*, in 1689, already in the church of the Apostles, the painter re-elaborated a previous sketch of Ferri. A few months after Ferri's death, on April 30, 1690, Locatelli was elected Academician of St. Luke. However, the increase in commitments in the various activities of the institute did not correspond to the actual intensification of commissions; and Locatelli was therefore forced to work more and more in the province.

Between 1693 and 1695, commissioned by Cardinal Marco Antonio Barbarigo, he painted some canvases for the church of S. Bartolomeo in Montefiascone: the *Martyrdom of S. Bartholomew*, signed and dated, and the *Glory of the Saint*, for the Great altar, a *Virgin with the Child* and the *SS. Carlo Borromeo and Filippo Neri*, and a *Guardian Angel* for the side altars. On the turn of the century, perhaps through Barbarigo himself, he was commissioned to paint a *Madonna of the Rosary* for the church of St. John the Evangelist in Valentano.

In 1702, Locatelli renewed his contacts with the city of Nardò, painting for the church of S. Chiara his last famous work, *Jesus Child, which appears to be S. Antonio da Padova*, a

signed and dated work that resumes in a simplified form a piece of iron for the church of S. Gregorio and Antonino in Monte Porzio Catone.

In addition to the aforementioned, other works recalled only by the sources or largely lost: the frescoes and the painting *Maria Vergine with Bambino* and saints of the chapel of the Fuccioli College in Rome; a *coming of the Magi* part of the Colonna collection; a *Crucified Christ with the Maddalena*, exposed to S. Salvatore in Lauro (Rome) in 1713; the decoration of a ceiling and some squares with *Stories of Diana* for the Graziano casino at Villa Borghese (Rome).

Locatelli, now a widower, died in Rome on 20 ag. 1710. The will, dated June 18, 1709, designates the heirs of the heritage and lists a long and detailed list of jewels left to Anna Maria, which at that date is still unmarried.

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