

Niccolò Menghini

Niccolò Menghini (Rome, 1610 - Rome, 1665) was an Italian sculptor of the Baroque period. The Menghini was formed in Rome, where he was born, probably in the orbit of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, with whom he collaborated on various occasions. As early as 1632 it appears to be at the service of the Barberini family, under the protection of Cardinal Francesco, who will support him throughout his career. In particular, he worked for the Barberini activities related to the restoration and care of the collection of ancient sculptures and the era.

Since his early sculptural works, some peculiar characteristics of his style, such as the rendering of massive and rounded bodies, the use of a drapery with redundant folds and lines produced by the shadow in a drawing function, appear to be fully expressed. The originality of these conceptions contrasts sometimes with the inadequacy of the execution, with the result of a rather static sculpture, even clumsy in some passages related to the movement of the arms in Santa Martina lying in the church of Saints Luca and Martina. In 1636 he also worked in the Basilica of San Pietro in the Vatican under the direction of Bernini where he passes with great skill from the low relief to the realization of an Angel with the shroud, exploiting the color contrast between the white of the figures and the marble background of the niche in where the work is located. This work can be considered the masterpiece of Menghini, partly probably aided by the design conceived by Bernini.

In 1639 he dedicated himself to the restoration of some ancient statues found in Ostia.

He returned to work with Bernini in San Pietro also in 1647 - 1649 for the decoration of the pillars of the central nave, with the portraits of the popes placed in medallions supported by putti, and other stucco decorations.

In the following years he made several statues in various Roman churches. The important artistic activity in Rome, as well as the protection of the Barberini family, earned him the election of Prince of the prestigious National Academy of San Luca.

Works

- Saint Martina lying , 1635 , under the altar of the church of Saints Luca and Martina, Rome
- Bas-relief of the Angel with the Sudarium , 1636 , for one of the niches of the relics in the basilica of San Pietro, Rome
- Preparations for the Forty Hours Festival for the Church of the Gesù of 1640 and 1646
- Polychrome decorations, Chapel of the Madonna , in the San Rocco , Rome
- San Sebastiano , in the Church of San Sebastiano , Rome

Bibliography

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