

Pietro Paolo Naldini

Italian painter, sculptor
(1616-1691)

He was the third of the five sons of Giovan Battista, sculptor, and Virginia Mari, was born in Rome on June 10, 1616.

He was baptized on June 12 in St. Marcello al Corso, godfather Monsignor Paolo Alaleone, secret servant of Paul V and mayor of St. Peter, the godmother Olimpia Spinetti. The family for at least two generations was devoted to the art of sculpture in Rome. His paternal grandfather Andrea has been a sculptor since 1607.

He resided with his family first in S. Andrea delle Fratte and then in S. Nicola in Arcione; from 1634, without any qualification, in the home of the sculptor Baldassarre Mari, in via dei Borgognoni. Unlike his brother Alessandro who started sculpture and since 1634 he was active at Mari's side, in 1630, he was placed by his father at a shop at the painter Andrea Sacchi, at least until 1636, the year in which Carlo Maratti arrived, with whom he held lasting and fruitful friendship. The alunato near Sacchi and the knowledge of his famous pupil were a fundamental step in his artistic career, both because of the suggestion of both, in all likelihood, the decision to abandon painting in favor of sculpture, because of their magisterium, markedly classicist, he always remained faithful.

The initial formation as a painter that the change of profession took place at an age when he was no longer "young" had in the past led the historians to confuse his pictorial activity with that of Pietro Paolo Baldini, a Roman painter follower of Pietro da Cortona, who often worked in his own places. Tried that the frescoes of the dome of S. Maria Portae Paradisi to Naldini, belong to Ubaldini, the hand of this would be to be found within Sacchi's pictorial production of the fourth decade of the century, moving from the only graphic evidence attributed to him, that is to say, the naked design preserved at the Academy of St. Luke.

The first documented work by Naldini sculptor is the stucco decoration in the central nave of the Roman basilica of Ss. Silvestro and Martino ai Monti, for which he was paid between 1649 and 1652 and where he was still engaged in 1671. The twelve stucco statues of Saints and Martyrs, located niches along the central nave, overlapping cliques figured and the frieze molded in white and gold running along the nave's architrave were commissioned, perhaps for direct involvement of Sacchi and Maratti, from the first Carmelite John Antonio Filippini, promoter of the restoration of the church, which in 1667 performed the marble bust; around 1676 he even sculpted his successor Francesco Scannapieco, located as the first in the crypt.

The style of S. Martino's stuccos, in line with Alessandro Algardi's classicism, and the indication, contained in a manuscript of 1652-55 preserved in the same basilica about a Naldini's alumnus at the Bolognese sculptor hypothesized a passage, in the early forties, in his shop. However, it is more credible that after apprenticeship at Sacchi Naldini he has gone to Baldassarre's uncle's workshop, since 1645, both from Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Algardi, and could have access to him work materials of Algardi's workshop, then reworked in S. Martino.

Academician of St. Luke from 1652, institution in which he held various positions - sculptor estimator (1656, 1664, 1665), first rector (1667), custodian of the studio (1669, 1672) and Virtuosi al Pantheon. This year, a stucco Apollo came up for a fountain in Cardelli's palace, in Campo Marzio, sold it in 1655, when he received a deposit to make a stucco, according to Bernini's design, the figure of S. Prassede on the fourth right arc of the central nave of S. Maria del Popolo.

He was incarcerated for debts before August 1654, and was freed by the interest of oratoriano Virgilio Spada, secret beggar of Innocent X and Alexander VII, who had hired him to work in the chapel of the family in St. Jerome of Charity. Here Naldini, between 1654 and 1656, produced the refined stucco medallions depicting St. Francis and St. Bonaventure (at the sides of the fresco with the Madonna and the Child on the main altar) and Amadore I Spada conil brother Aleramo and Pietro di Cecco and Serrone di Pietro Spada over the funerary monuments of the side walls.

Resident between 1656 and 1658 in via Margutta, in the parish of S. Maria del Popolo, with the widow of his brother Alessandro, Apollonia, and the grandchildren between 1659 and 1660 is not recorded in parochial records, perhaps because it is active in the building site of Cardinal Marzio Ginetti's palace at Velletri. Here he painted some stucco caryatids for the slaughter of the palace but testified by some photographs. Along with Velletri, according to Pascoli, he would perform other stuccos, perhaps identifiable with those in the church of S. Apollonia, protected by Cardinal Ginetti from 1648, destroyed during World War II.

In 1661 he was the owner of a marble quarry at Tivoli and the death of his friend and master Sacchi (June 21, 1661) performed a funeral monument in the sacristy corridor of St. John's Basilica in Lateran.

Sacchi had been to express in the testament the desire to be buried in St. John Lateran at the tomb of Cavalier d'Arpino and to devote a considerable figure to his funeral monument, indicating that it had to be drawn by Bernini and executed by Naldini. The tomb, with Giovan Pietro Bellori's commemorative inscription, came in small form. The simple oval niche in which the bust is inserted and the great inscription are, most likely, also in Naldini's design, as suggested by comparison with other funeral monuments.

The monument to Sacchi was handed down only after 1671, perhaps shortly before the commissioning of the busts of Raffaello and Annibale Carracci (now in the Protomoteca capitolina) in 1674, to the Pantheon, destined for a monument in honor of the two painters commissioned by Maratti, at the suggestion of Bellori, probably in 1664 when Maratti was Prince of the Academy of St. Luke). Of the terracotta models of the two busts, which remained the property of Maratti until his death in 1712, remains only that of Carracci (St. Petersburg, Ermitage).

In November 1663 he received the payment balance for the relief in Stucco with St. William of Aquitaine, placed in the first span of the central nave of the church of S. Nicola da Tolentino; by the same year he worked at the Chapel of Sylva in S. Isidoro at Capo le Case, which perhaps belong to the marble figures of *Peace* and *Justice* of the right wall, the most algardian of the whole. From 1664 he took part in the shipyard for the Church of the Assumption of Ariccia on the project of Bernini, where he put up twelve Putti and four Angels in the dome.

Bernini - to whom Naldini "would have longed to rest" and "for which he hoped to advance" - Naldini considered only to Antonio Raggi as a stucco modeler. Perhaps that is why he took part in many of the Berninian companies in the Vatican. He participated in the decoration of Scala Regia, where Ercole Ferrata and Lazzaro Morelli carried out most of the stuccos (harps, tenants, putti); at the Chair, where he worked in 1665 to replace Pietro Sassi, making part of the Gloria Stucco Angels and the colonnade for which he made two statues, perhaps S. Tecla and S. Agnese. Participation in this company suggested that he hand in his hand a bronze depicting S. Agnese (Rome, Doria Pamphilj Gallery) and a terracotta depicting S. Giusto (Berlin, Staatliche Museen), considered a model for the statue on the colonnade, made by cousin Giovanni Antonio Mari.

Around 1668 he made the marble bust of Duke Filippo Caetani in the Caetani Chapel in S. Pudenziana. Between 1669 and 1671 he was part of the team of sculptors who performed the ten Marble Angels with the instruments of the Passion placed on the new bridge of St. Angelo bridge designed by Bernini. Naldini was the only one to sculpt two, the one with the robe and the dice, and the one with the crown of thorns, the second copy of the autograph of Bernini in S. Andrea delle Fratte, of which there is a terracotta attributed to Naldini at Hermitage.

Recognized as a sophisticated connoisseur of antiquity, as derived from a letter sent by Ottavio Falconieri to Leopoldo de' Medici, in 1657 restored ancient marbles for the columns, in 1671 for the Medici and Barberini. In 1668 he estimated what Melchiorre Caffà had done for S. Agnese in Agone and between 1668 and 1671 he had the task of estimating the marbles present in the collections Pamphilj, Baldinotti and Baccelli. In 1670, under the direction of Carlo Rainaldi, he produced two figures representing the Famaper the arc forming part of the ephemeral apparatus erected by the people of Rome during the election of Clement X.

In January 1671, in his home of Via Ursina "Prope Corso", he made a testament perhaps in anticipation of a journey, not wanting to leave Rome.

Still celibate, helicopter chosen by his sister-in-law Apollonia and, in the event of his death, his nephew Filippo, who left the "credencing" of drawings and workshop equipment to be shared with his young Giovan Pietro Mauri. Required to be buried in St. Martin at the Monti and at the outset of this church left to tie the models of the statues of St. Peter and St. Paul. He then declared that he had received 40 shields from Maratti for a "bust of Andrea Sacchi," which he ordered, possibly ended by Mauri. The legacies of a few shields to the Pantheon chapel of Virtuosity patronage, to some churches, and to the otherwise notorious Amelia Tranquillo Venturelli suggest that he did not have large economic resources, even though the absence of the inventory of the goods attached to the will leads to caution.

In Viterbo and Orvieto he worked stucco and travertine work for some noble families whose name is not known, while in Perugia he was active for Count Orazio Ferretti. None of the works recalled by Pascoli has been identified while it is documented that between 1673 and 1675, commissioned by S. Marcello al Corso in Rome, worked, directed by Mattia De 'Rossi, for the church of S. Maria delle Grazie (now S. Filippo Benizi) in Todi, belonging to the same Order, performing a statue of S. Filippo Benizi (the Great altar) and, with help, a Madonna in glory (lost). The collaboration with De Rossi and the relations with the servants had to be started before the work in Todi, as in 1673 the stone-carver Carlo Torriani was completed in S. Marcello al Corso the pulpit supported by a Golden Stucco Angel designed by De Rossi is modeled by Naldini, as shown by the terracotta model of his hand (Rome, Palazzo Venezia Museum), characterized by greater plastic vigor than the final work.

His work at Todi was the participation in the decoration of the Ceva chapel in the oratory of S. Venanzio, at the lateran baptistery, started after 1673 by Carlo Rainaldi. This is where Natalia Putti of the funerary monuments, the work of Cosimo Fancelli, of Cardinal Francesco Adriano Ceva and of the later canonical canonico belong to Naldini. In 1674 he was paid for having made four stucco spouts in St. Andrea at the Quirinale, a Berninian yard whose stuccos had been entrusted to Raggi. Directed by Rages, he also worked on the stuccoes of Jesus' vault (1672-79), designed by Giovan Battista Gaulli.

At the decade between 1670 and 1680, perhaps, the bronze bust of Bartolomeo Ruspoli (Los Angeles County Museum of Art) and the terracotta (depicting a gentleman) on the antique market, which has affinity with the aforementioned busts of the Pantheon. Next to 1674 is the marble bust of Gaspare Marcaccioni in the church of S. Maria del Suffragio and after 1677 it was given the English of James Alban Gibbes, professor of rhetoric at Sapienza, a doctor in medicine and a poet in Latin, who died in that year, located in the first chapel on the right of the Pantheon's entrance, and executed by Gibbes's express wish, based on an engraving drawn from a drawing by Pietro da Cortona. By 1675 he dismissed the four "angels", lost, supporting the painting with the Madonna on the altar of S. Anna dei Funari (demolished in 1887) and before 1679, completed the putti in stucco over the doors of the Vivaldi chapel in S. Maria in Montesanto and the frames that delimit the frescoes. In 1686 he also finished the two stucco angels supporting the earth globe placed on the tympanum of the main altar of the church of Jesus and Mary at the Course, conceived by Rainaldi, transformation of the building.

On May 20, 1681, he married Barbara of Bartolomeo Tavarini, a Roman widow, with whom he first lived in Ursina Street and in 1687 in via del Corso. In the last years of his life, ill, "unable to handle the mullet" returned to the ancient painting profession. There is no trace of this last production.

He died in Rome on February 7, 1691; was buried the next day at S. Maria del Popolo.

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