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Karel van Mander & Paul Arblaster (Translator)

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Excerpts of the Lives of Italian Artists from the *Book of Painters*

Karel van Mander

**Translated by
Paul Arblaster**

First published in Dutch as *T'leven van Frederijck Zucchero; Het leven van Frederijck Barozio; Het leven van Jacob Palma; Van Ioseph van Arpino; T'leven van noch ander Italiaenische Schilders, die teghenwoordigh te Room zijn; Van eenige italiaensche Vrouwen, die de Teycken-const, en Schilderen constich hebben gheoeffent; Van verscheyden Italiaensche schilders die in mijnen tijd te Room waren, tusschen Ao 1573 en 1577* (Haarlem: Het Schilder-boeck, 1604).

Abstract

This excerpt from Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boeck*, originally published in Dutch in 1604, is a primary-source text on late sixteenth-century Italian artists. Van Mander provides the biographies of a range of Italian painters, including Federico Zuccaro, Federico Barocci, Jacopo Palma, Giuseppe of Arpino, and other contemporary Italian artists. The text includes two sections devoted to artists based in Rome, and another section focusing on female artists in Italy.

KEYWORDS: Karel van Mander, art criticism, Italian painting, Renaissance, Federico Zuccaro, Federico Barocci, Jacopo Palma, Giuseppe of Arpino, Properzia de Rossi, Plantilla Nelli, Lucrezia Quistelli della Mirandola, Sofonisba Anguissola

Introduction by *Paul Taylor* (Warburg Institute)

Karel van Mander's Schilder-boeck is a celebrated source for art history, but few people, even in the Low Countries, have read it from cover to cover. It is long (470,000 words) and diffuse, being split into six sections, which interest different readers to different degrees. The last third of the book consists of a mythographic analysis of Ovid's Metamorphoses, and a short treatise on symbols. The rest of the book is of more direct art historical relevance. At the beginning is a poem which teaches the reader the principles of art; it owes a considerable debt to Alberti and Rivius. This is followed by three sections of painters' biographies. The first concerns ancient artists, and is an abbreviated translation of (Du Pinet's French edition of) Pliny; the second concerns Italian artists, and is for the most part an abbreviated translation of Vasari; while the third concerns Netherlandish and German artists, and is based on Van Mander's own research.

The Netherlandish biographies have been translated into modern Dutch, French, German, English, Italian, Spanish, Russian and Chinese, have spawned five scholarly monographs, and have also been accorded two commentaries. The ancient and Italian biographies, however, have never been translated in their entirety into any language. Given that these biographies are potted translations of Pliny and Vasari, this is not surprising. Nevertheless, historians of Italian art have long been interested in the fact that, at the end of the Italian lives, there are biographies of late sixteenth-century artists who post-date Vasari. For these painters, Van Mander could not simply translate; he needed to do research. It is these later lives that are presented here in English for the first time.

Van Mander wrote these biographies twenty-five years after returning from a three-year stay in Italy. He had not left the Netherlands in the intervening period, so most of the painters he was writing about were unknown to him personally, and he knew their works only through examples in Dutch collections, or through prints. These limitations become clear in the lives of Barocci and Palma Giovane, which place tiny scraps of biography around descriptions of prints and paintings Van Mander had seen. For Palma Vecchio, Van Mander can give fuller descriptions of paintings in Venetian churches, but only because he had found the relevant passage in Vasari; and Vasari is also the source for the lives of women artists.

The two most revealing biographies are those for which Van Mander had informants. The Haarlem still-life painter Floris van Dijck was a friend of Cesare d'Arpino, and provided the detail for the splendid life translated here. For Zuccari, Van Mander probably had two informants, Hendrick Goltzius (who met Federigo in Rome) and Cornelis Ketel (who probably met Federigo in London). For the other artists it is not so easy to identify sources, but Van Mander knew a number of Dutch artists who had just come back from Italy, and who must have

provided information on the recent painters, including Carracci and Caravaggio.

The last chapter, on artists Van Mander knew in Italy in the 1570s, ought to be the most revealing. It contains some valuable judgments on the art of Girolamo Muziano and Raffaellino da Reggio, but it appears that Van Mander did not know either very well, so cannot give much biographical detail. For the other painters he is unable to remember a great deal. Writing from memory is rarely as efficient as writing from notes, and it appears that, in Rome, “the Flemish Vasari” was not yet collecting material for the book which would form his principal claim to posthumous fame.

Translator’s Note

In translating these extracts from the *Schilder-boeck* of Karel van Mander, the author’s habit of providing Dutch names (Frederijck, Joseph, Jacob) has not been replicated in English. Instead, the Italian names by which the artists will be familiar to English speakers have been used (Federico, Giuseppe, Jacopo). The same has been done with place names and the names of churches. Surnames by which an artist is now generally identified have been inserted between square brackets when omitted by Van Mander, for instance “Giovanni [Alberti] del Borgo.” Where words are implied but not stated in the original, they have also been supplied in square brackets. Words that Van Mander uses as terms of art—history, figure, landscape; canvas, panel, fresco; composition, coloring—have been translated consistently. The one exception has been *conterfeytsel*, translated either as “likeness” or as “portrait.” Otherwise no effort has been made to render one word with a single equivalent, so his many uses of *uitnemend* and *uitmuntend*, for example, have been translated variously as “excellent,” “outstanding” and “surpassing.”

Two evaluative words that Van Mander uses with some frequency are (in modern Dutch spelling) “*aardig*” and “*schoon*.” In today’s Dutch, these respectively mean “nice” and “clean,” but in the sixteenth century, their ranges of meaning were far wider. To come as close as possible to the flavor of Van Mander’s Dutch text, English words with the same sort of semantic broadness have been used. So “*aardig*,” which in Van Mander’s time could mean artistic, artful, pleasant, friendly, kind, distinctive or odd, has often been translated as “*curious*,” with the *Oxford English Dictionary* meanings of “exquisite, excellent, fine,” “surprising, strange, queer,” and “elaborately or carefully made.” The word “*schoon*,” more purely positive, ranged in meaning from beautiful through cleanly to neat and tidy, and has been translated with the English “fair.” In the translator’s opinion, modern English alternatives such as “lovely,” “beautiful” or “attractive” too easily give a gushing register to an authorial tone that is generally matter-of-fact even when

piling on words of praise. “Beautiful” has been used when Van Mander qualifies “*schoon*” with “*zeer*” (meaning “very”).

It is a sound maxim of the trade never to translate alone. Valuable assistance on particular points of phrasing or identification has been provided by Gisèle Alençon, Roel Daamen and Sheila Barker, while Christel Germonpré and Lee Preedy reviewed the whole translation and provided necessary corrections regarding both style and content. So too did Paul Taylor. The translator is very grateful for their assistance.

Excerpts of the Lives of Italian Artists from the *Book of Painters*

Karel van Mander

The Life of Federico Zuccaro, Painter from Sant’Angelo in Vado

It is not every day that Nature distributes equal shares of her noble gifts to two brothers, but in the Duchy of Urbino, by the Apennines, at Sant’Angelo in Vado, just this came to pass to Taddeo and Federico Zuccaro, both of whom so excelled in the art of painting that many who are not lacking in good judgment are nevertheless little able to tell their works apart. In the year 1550, when still a small child, Federico Zuccaro and his mother were brought to Rome by his father Octaviano, to obtain the Jubilee [indulgence] and at the same time to visit his son Taddeo, who was then 20 years old and already well practiced and renowned in artistry. After Octaviano (who was burdened with a large family, having seven sons and a daughter) had spent some time with this son, he left Federico with him to go to school there and be trained up, and departed thence with his wife. When Federico had been to school some time, and could read and write tolerably well, Taddeo had him spend his time on learning to draw, with much more convenience than he himself had enjoyed, and found the lad not only well inclined, but very able to reach perfection. Then, when he had exercised himself in artistry for about six years, he began to be serviceable and helpful to his brother, and to do fresco work with him so that he worked up the courage to paint in his own hand a fresco of Mount Helicon with the Muses in the palace of a Roman nobleman below the Aracoeli Steps. Taddeo seeing that his brother had done so well on his own, working from his own design, managed to arrange for him to do a chapel in Santa Maria dell’Orto in the Ripa [district of Rome]. In this work, to please the men who had given him the commission, Taddeo painted a Nativity, Federico (despite still being very young) completing all the rest of the work in such a way

that it could be seen he would one day excel. Thereafter in some of the preparations for the exequies of Charles V, Federico was a great help to his brother, as he was also with the Histories of Alexander the Great for Lord Paolo Giordano [Orsini] of Bracciano, as well as in Orvieto, where he painted three Histories of St Paul in the church. The brothers falling sick here, Taddeo returned to Rome, and Federico arrived with a light fever in Sant'Angelo, also returning to Rome once he was cured. There, in preparation for Good Friday, they painted the whole History of the Passion, with Prophets and other things, in the church of the Florentines behind the banking district, that all who saw it were amazed that so much work could be done so excellently in such a short time. Federico, who liked nothing better than to be able to work independently, was delighted when his brother arranged for him to paint a fresco façade on the Dogano square, near Sant'Eustachio, for the majordomo of Cardinal Farnese. Here he painted the History of the same St Eustace, when he is baptized with wife and children: the coloring in this is very good work. The central section shows when the saint, while hunting, sees the crucifix. Taddeo, careful of his brother's honor, the work being in such a public place, not only came to view his progress, but also to improve or retouch the work, which Federico for a while bore with an ill grace, but finally, desiring to do all himself, overcome with anger, chipped off what his brother had done, and remained away from home for several days. They were reconciled by the mediation of friends: Taddeo would correct anything wanting in the cartoons, but not touch the work itself. The whole work being finished, Federico enjoyed great acclaim, renown and repute as a good painter. He went on to paint some Apostles in the hall of the grooms in the pope's palace; then, together with his brother, a fresco frieze in a hall of the palace at Aracoeli, and in the Belvedere, among other pleasing work in a frieze, a History of Moses and Pharaoh, which afterwards was most artfully engraved by Cornelis Cort. And although Federico's excellence was immediately apparent, his things were brought into contempt by those envious of him, as all too often happens with art, so that the young, as though struck on the head, become cool in spirit and slow in their studies, diffident to stand forth or undertake anything. After Federico had completed two large figures flanking the arms of Pius IV, he travelled to Venice by invitation, and for the patriarch [of Aquileia] produced various handsome works in fresco and stucco on the staircase [in the palace of Santa Maria Formosa]; and in a chapel of San Francesco della Vigna two Histories of Lazarus in fresco, and a Penitent Magdalene, as well as the Wise Men from the East in oils as the altarpiece. At great speed he produced twelve histories for a tragedy, and other things, that greatly increased his renown. When he was returning from Venice to Rome he found himself in Florence just when great preparations were being made for the reception of Queen Joanna of Austria, and at the Duke's behest he produced a great canvas that filled an entire platform at one end of a hall. This bore a very

decorative Hunt in glue or egg tempera, and other things in black and white for a triumphal arch, all of which were highly praised. When he returned to Rome, Taddeo had obtained a commission for him for a large façade or semi-dome in the Jesuit chapel near the obelisk of San Mauro, on which Federico soon set to work, but not before completing some other commissions both in Rome and outside the city. These included two frescoed chambers at Tivoli, for the Cardinal of Ferrara, in which two chambers, the one called Nobility and the other Honor, he painted many delightful ornaments. Then he completed the aforementioned Jesuit chapel, to great praise. This was a History of the Annunciation, with some Prophets, and a great Heaven. All of this was engraved by the artful Cornelis Cort, and is available in print, so I do not need to describe the composition; it was done in fresco and includes beautiful draperies and stately actions, and in sum it was full of spirit and perfection. Federico retouched and restored this same work with egg tempera not many years since, as is the manner in Italy, painting things wet, and after they dry glazing with lake the reds made from that which they call *terra rossa*, the green earth with azure green, and so forth. When Taddeo had died, Federico finished the chapel at San Marcello that Taddeo had begun. Here Federico made some Histories of St Paul, work that was unveiled to his great repute. He also completed the work begun in the Trinità, with an altarpiece in oils and other things in fresco. These include a Christ in the Father's lap, and some angels holding the instruments of the Passion. He also completed the work begun by his brother in the magnificent palace of the illustrious Cardinal Farnese at Caprarola, the histories of which, ancient and modern, pleasant inventions of poetic ornament, and other compositions, painted there very artfully, would require a book to themselves, and so will be passed over here. Federico also painted a great canvas in egg tempera, a Calumny, in just the same manner as the Calumny of Apelles, in order to make a point. Some thought or guessed that it was because of some difference arising between Farnese and him regarding payment, and that the cardinal had said: Raphael and the other good painters were no more. To which Federico was said to have replied: The good art lovers, popes and princes, were no more, so it was no loss. But when Cornelis Cort's engraving of this was issued in print, the explanation in Italian was added afterwards. Another beautifully fine piece by Federico can be seen at San Lorenzo in Damaso, showing St Lawrence being laid on the gridiron, with a Heaven, and at the bottom some beautiful figures kneeling in prayer, all very well done. His Histories of St Catherine (to wit, her being captive in a dungeon, and some saints being strangled, and she beheaded), containing some fine and pleasant horses, and other things, can also still be seen, in the Church of St Catherine. He also painted the altarpiece in the Goldsmiths' Chapel, a History of the Wise Men from the East, another very good work in handling and composition, available in print from an engraving by Jacob Matham. Also by Federico can

be seen, in a Church or Oratory of the Gonfalon, in the Strada Giulia, the Scourging, with Christ bound to a short pillar (as can be seen in one of the convents of Rome): it is a handsome and attractive piece. He afterwards travelled through France for the Cardinal of Lorraine, where he did some things, and thence came to the Netherlands, and to Antwerp, where the painters received him warmly, and did him great honor. Thence he journeyed into England, and to London, where he painted portraits of some of the nobility, and from there returned again to Rome. He also travelled into Spain, where he did some pieces for King Philip. After that he completed the Cupola in Florence, namely the Last Judgment, begun by Cavalier Giorgio Vasari and unfinished at his death. Federico painted very large nudes in it. His works are more [numerous] than I can relate. He currently resides in Rome, where he has built a fair palace with four towers on a hill by Ternita, from which he can look out over Rome, and lives there, married, at quite an age. And just as he possesses a high seat, so his name is elevated and made renowned by high report.

The Life of Federico Barocci, Excellent Painter of Urbino

Just as one finds great variety and distinct qualities in Nature, even in a single thing, whether it be soil, stone, springs, streams, or anything else, even so one sees different parts in the artistic practitioners of our art of painting, accordingly as Nature reaches out a miserly or generous hand to them. One is of little order, rough, hard and unlovely in his coloring, another most perfect in composition, painting, and everything artistic, so that their works are beheld with great delight, praised and esteemed by painters and the common folk alike. Among those who are thus very graceful is to be reckoned especially and excellently worthy Federico Barocci who, as he was born in Urbino, seems to have imbibed the same air, character and spirit partaken of by his fellow citizen of Urbino, Raphael, or that all his grace passed to or was inherited by him. In so far as I have been able to ascertain, he seems in his youth to have been at Rome in the time of Pope Paul III, and there bore himself well in various works in fresco. Yet he almost always kept, as he still does, to his father-city Urbino. In his drawings and inventions he was always very decorative, judicious and lovely, catching and portraying well the passions and other parts of art, precise in arrangements, faces and nudes, of all ages and both sexes, giving them an exceptionally lovely appearance. He did many good portraits from life, as well as various panels with scenes and histories; he has also painted in oils some very charming images of Mary, mostly using the face of his wife, also mimicking life, the same sitting with her child in the prettiest, sweetest manner, often bringing about some very naturally smiling faces, whether of children, women,

or honorable comely old men, as it suits his composition, a thing which has especially adorned his work. In his painting he has always been very flowing, with his things advancing and receding so handsomely, that he even makes the hems of the draperies lying on the ground advance or recede to a certain distance away, not suffering that something should be cut off so sharply. In our country there is (to my knowledge) nothing of his to be seen except some things that have come out in prints, both by Cornelis Cort and by the Sadeliers, to wit, some very pleasant images of Mary, both outside in the field and sitting in a chamber, with other little histories; particularly a very handsome, well-composed Entombment, in which Christ, with an amiable dead face, is carried by Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea and John, who holding a linen cloth carries the feet, giving a good demonstration in the carrying of the force and power that is generally found in young people. In the same Barocci has also expressed with naturalness the heartfelt grief of Mary the Mother of Christ, overcome or swooning. The other Marys also show indications of extreme grief. He etched some prints with his own hand, small things in which one sees such great nature and beauty that it is wonderful and delightful, to wit, an image of Mary in the air, and a St Francis, kneeling in an unusual posture, looking upwards. These and suchlike works, which we do get to see here, bear witness to us in this country of what an exceptionally excellent illumination and adornment to our art resides and has his being in the Italian Apennine mountains. He has always been very flowing and skilled in his draperies, smooth and not injudicious or confused in folds and creases, everything drawn from life, observed carefully and intelligently. Now while I know nothing of his age, and nothing of his death has come to my notice, I offer glorious fame to his name alongside the best Italian painters, and worthy of his place [among them].

The Life of Jacopo Palma, Painter of Venice

Can Florence boast of being the breeding ground of painting in recent centuries, and of so many noble artistic spirits? Can Rome exult in being the great academy or school of all painters and those from throughout the world studious in the art of drawing or desirous of learning? Yet no city can praise itself above Venice in so continually having had so many outstanding masters of paint or of coloration among her painters, and still having such in, for example, her citizen Jacopo Palma, who was born in the year 1548. He too is exceptional in his coloration or his handling of color in a pleasantly flowing, glowing and cheerful manner. As my witness to this I take a large piece in Amsterdam, [belonging] to the art-loving Mr Hendrik van Os, being Venus, Juno and Pallas sitting together at table, envious Strife having cast the apple of discord among them and flying thence. There are in addition other figures, such

as a half-naked cup-bearer, infants, and other things. But particularly graceful is the Venus, who sits half backwards, turning very pleasantly towards her Cupid, who seems to say something secretly in her ear. Venus's face, thigh, knee and everything are a very fine and expertly executed piece of work. In sum, it is a much-praised piece, as it deserves to be. There is something else of his in Amsterdam that is not to be despised, but what else there is of his to see in Venice, and in other cities in Italy, in the way of panels, scenes, canvases or portraits, I do not know. There is also a print engraved by Goltzius after his design, a St Jerome who holds a fine pose. Also his, engraved by Gillis [Aegidius] Sadeler, is a St Sebastian, a fair image and of good posture. There was further the elder Jacopo Palma of Venice, who painted in oils a magnificent work in the chamber where those of the Scuola di San Marco assemble, a piece showing the dead body of St Mark being brought into Venice in a ship. This very curiously shows a horrible storm at sea, with other ships and vessels battered by the fierce winds, very well and closely observed, as also is a group of figures in the air, in various appearances of evil spirits, who blow like Winds to hinder the progress of the ship that is being powerfully rowed through the raging waves by oar. Here one sees the industry and skill of the mariners, the violence of the Winds, the lashing of the waves, and the lightning falling from the heavens, the water broken by the oars, and the bending of the oars from the strength of the rowers, a thing not to be bettered in approaching Nature; for in looking at it, the whole piece seems to move and heave, as though what were painted therein were alive and occurring naturally. He also painted in oils the high altarpiece for the monastery of Sant' Elena in Venice by the Castello, a Three Kings containing many figures and most excellently good faces, and fair drapery, laid with fine flourish or movement of the folds. Also, in the church of Santa Maria Formosa, there is a panel by him for the gunners or artillerymen, in which there is a St Barbara as large as life, with on one side St Anthony, and on the other St Sebastian; but the St Barbara is the best figure that this Palma ever painted. I recall having seen in Leiden, in the home of a certain Van der Muelen, above the doorway in the chamber, the head of a woman, with neck and breast naked, which at a casual glance was magnificent and admirably well done, yet on close inspection seemed to be painted with little labor and with not too great effort. In Venice there is a likeness of himself that he painted, that could always be seen in Venice on the Feast of the Ascension, which neither Michelangelo nor Leonardo da Vinci could have improved upon, so much is it held in admiration for its exceptional beauty, it is so well composed and painted. Thereafter, when further improvement was expected in his work, it fell backward; yet he had done enough already to be reckoned among the best painters, and to turn aside any detraction or even the rumor of it. He died at the age of 48. Turning to the younger Palma, he still today practices art in his native Venice, being a man 54 years old. It is not known to me what other

Italian painters at Venice, or in the towns of Lombardy, or elsewhere thereabouts, are exceptional, and readily worthy of my pen, or I had gladly set them with the others. But as such is beyond me, I will return to our exalted school, Rome, where at any one time there are always a good many ingenious and diligent followers of our art of painting gathered together, so I will not be put to setting my hand to insignificant towns to fill up and complete the history of the Italian painters, before coming to our Netherlanders, my compatriots and acquaintance.

Of Giuseppe of Arpino, Excellent Painter in Rome

That the path of virtue that ultimately leads to joy has a hard and narrow entry, as the letter of Pythagoras illustrates, is something not entirely unknown to the artful painter Giuseppe [Cesari] of Arpino, who was hastened to perfection by the goading need of his parents, so that in his early green years he already showed the laudably ripe fruit of his labor. His Roman mother, a lady called Giovanna, the daughter of a Spanish nobleman, was still in her youth orphan, wife and widow almost all at once. Having been orphaned, she was placed in the convent of St Anna in Rome. Becoming a woman, she married a certain Giuseppe, a tailor of Arpino in the Duchy of Sora, in the territory of the noble Jacopo Boncompagni, where within three years she became a widow and again wife of another there called Muzio di Polidoro, a poor painter, who had more studied arms in the French wars than he had practiced the art of painting or brushwork. From him came Giuseppino, to whom the mother gave the name Giuseppe because (so she said) of a dream or vision. He was born in the year 1570. In growing up the young Giuseppino habitually drew things with coals from the fireplace, which the mother seeing she greatly desired to return to Rome, convincing herself that the boy was to become something exceptional. This the father made mock of, saying: As a painter he shall be my equal. Finally coming to Rome, they fell into great poverty, little knowing how to earn their bread, and by this extreme want, the mother had to heat or warm one young child with soot from the chimney; but Giuseppe comforted her as well as he could, saying he would learn with all diligence, to help support the household when he could do something. And daily going out to draw, sometimes here and sometimes there, wherever there was something fine, with a farthing loaf, his zeal to learn was such that he would return home in the evening with half of it uneaten. The mother, suspecting that he might be spending his time playing with other boys, went to see what he was doing, and often spent a long time standing behind him without his being aware of it. The father spent a lot of time outside Rome, doing things for the peasants, and was accustomed to making *ex votos*. While he was away from home he was continually asked after by a man who, having fallen from a horse, wished to have

an *ex voto* made in haste so that Giuseppe undertook the same, and had done it in tempera by the next day, to the man's great satisfaction. Together with his father, he often accompanied other painters outside the city to various places, especially to Viterbo, to do some jobs, mostly gilding. Thereafter having returned to Rome, and returning as before to his usual drawing, it came about that work was to be done on the loggia or gallery of the palace in Rome of Pope Gregory XIII Boncompagni, for which were appointed as *capomaestri* or masters of works a certain Niccolò Pomarancio and a Father Ignazio [Danti], who provided employment to various young painters there. Giuseppe, seeing this, and driven by the neediness of his parents, was fired with desire to show in that company how far he had by steady application already advanced in the art of painting. But as he was too shy to ask the aforesaid masters for employment, he earnestly besought his father to do so on his behalf. But his father, instead of so doing, mocked the lad, so Giuseppe himself went to Niccolò Pomarancio, who put him off from day to day. Finally, by his persistence, Giuseppe was appointed to paint the dragons in the papal arms, as the papal device was at that time a dragon. Painting these dragons exactly the same day after day began to sadden him, while the stirrings of Nature drew him to higher purposes, so he besought Pomarancio to set him some other task, for these dragons were but work for some simple youth. This was allowed him for the following day. For this reason he arrived at work very early, where one of the painters bade him set to work to prepare his palette, taking him for one of the youths who customarily do this. Giuseppe replied that he had not come for such a purpose, but as the youth was not yet there he would gladly do so on this occasion. In the meantime the master of works Pomarancio arrived, and asked him if he had courage enough to attempt a mask in the grotesques or ornaments, to which Giuseppe was willing, and made this masked face, which was to be about the size of a hand, with such diligence, and so pleasantly, that all the other painters came to watch, and saw with amazement and admiration the unsuspected rare excellence in the art of painting that Giuseppe demonstrated. Among these painters, the one who had had him prepare the palettes asked his forbearance and forgiveness for having taken him for a simple apprentice, now that he saw what mastery he possessed, and that another time he would prepare his palettes and paints. Thereafter Giuseppe was put to work on small histories, in which he bore himself admirably, and his wage increased daily, eventually reaching eighteen giulii a day, a giulio being five stivers. Now when Niccolò Pomarancio had finished his part of the works, to wit, the half of the loggia, Father Ignazio also desired to have Giuseppe work on his part. And while working for the father he was always so diligent at his work that he stayed at the job when the others took their noon break, which earned him his companions' envy. His mother perceiving this, fearing he would meet some misfortune by reason of their envy, advised him to break off when the

others did, even if he would not go with them to the tavern, as the manner is. It once happened that he had again stayed behind alone at work, and was busy with some little history, when the pope suddenly came there, and he prostrated himself. The pope amazed at such work at such a green age, told him to sit down and carry on with his work. And as Father Ignazio was present, His Holiness enquired what sort of a youth this was. The priest told the pope all the circumstances, the great want of the parents, and the great promise that the youth displayed of becoming an outstandingly great master. Then the pope enquired about the parents, and finding them to be honest folk, he ordered that provision be made them of three portions of bread, wine, oil, meat, condiments, also lights and brooms, everything necessary to keep house for three persons, and ten gold crowns a month. From then onwards Giuseppe was most frequently employed in papal service, but being fully paid for all his work. When he went to fetch or receive his first month's pension, the *pagadore*, the papal receiver, wanted him to sign for it or give a quittance in his own hand. When he said he could not write, the *pagadore* replied, how could he, who was such a good painter, not be able to write, and that it was shameful. Then Giuseppe returned home without wanting to take his money, and woefully lamented that his parents had not let him go to school to learn. His mother spoke to him encouragingly, and that same evening taught him so much of writing that the next day he could sign his own quittance. At which the *pagadore*, being most amazed, said: This is strange indeed, that yesterday you could not write, and have learnt so much in one night. Among other works, numerous and artful, that Giuseppe produced, he was eventually employed at Monte Cavallo, at the villa of Cardinal d'Este, in the pope's summer palace, in the chapel, where he painted the History of Pope St Gregory. He wanted to give the pope's face a joyous aspect, but found it impossible, for however he exercised his artistry, it always looked mournful; so he several times chipped it out and had it replastered (as it was fresco). Finally setting to it once more, and again not succeeding, his brother brought him tidings that Pope Gregory XIII had died, by which it is to be wondered at what strange hidden effects may sometimes be descried in Nature. Hearing this sad news, Giuseppe dropped everything, leaving the sad face unfinished, as it still is. His ordinary provision came to an end, but he came into the service of Cardinal San Severino, as he still is now, and from whom he receives provision, also bread and wine. He has since worked for one person and another. In the meantime a misfortune has befallen his brother, named Bernardino, who is also a good painter, for as he kept too much company with a certain nobleman, Ser Antonio Griettano, head of the *banditi*, and had given him a fine musket, he was not only banished himself but a price of 500 crowns was set on his head. It happened that the Roman justices had resolved to raid and capture these *banditi*, knowing that they were not very far from Rome. Giuseppe, becoming aware of this, secretly left Rome by horse in

all haste, and went to warn this company. The *banditi* straightaway took flight into the mountains, where they skirmished with the justices, who had followed them very closely, and mocked them for being unable to achieve anything with them. Giuseppe travelled on to Arpino, and arranged for his brother to go to Naples, to the convent of the Carthusians. Giuseppe being at Arpino, where he remained out of fear, painted two figures against one wall of the main church, called Sant'Angelo, to leave a memory of himself, namely Marius, who was seven times Roman consul, and the learned Cicero, both of whom had been born there. All this happened in the time of Pope Sixtus V, after whose death the case of the aforesaid Ser Antonio was mediated and settled, in such a way that Giuseppe's brother Bernardino was also a free man. Giuseppe was also summoned to Rome as not being in trouble. It was then that he painted, in San Lorenzo in Damaso, the History of St Lawrence being taken prisoner, as well as other things. This Capture shows a spirited manner of composition, most expressive postures, and graceful action of the figures, as well as a most curious fine horse, which he had first molded in clay, which is very well done, as also is the one who rides upon it, with good flying drapery. In sum, this work was and is such that it earned Giuseppe great renown and brought him high regard. Having completed this work, he went to Naples to the convent of the Carthusians, to which his brother had repaired. When Giuseppe was working on something in that convent, he was summoned to Rome because his father had fallen ill, and died soon after. Thereafter Giuseppe began a work in San Luigi, the French church, which for some reason was never finished. After several other works, he painted a chapel in the cloister of Santa Prassede, in which he very artfully did the Four Church Fathers, and the Sibyls. After this he accepted the work on the Campidoglio from the Roman Senate, yet at the persistent suit of the prior of the aforesaid convent in Naples, he first travelled thither and painted a most outstanding work in the sacristy, before returning to Rome to advance the work on the Campidoglio, where he was to paint various Histories of the Ancient Romans, and he was given in advance a hundred gold crowns in a red silk purse. First he painted the History of Romulus and Remus being nursed by a wolf. Then he began a History of a battle in the same project on the Campidoglio, but at the request of Pope Clement VIII he had to paint a St John drinking poison in the chapel of St John the Evangelist by the *Fonte Constantini* at St John Lateran, and another History, of him having himself placed alive in the grave, and the next day not being found there. These are large canvasses in oils. At the frequent urging of the Duchess of Graz, the mother of the present Queen of Spain, in letters to Cardinal San Severino, he painted another canvas in oils, with the Presentation in the Temple of the young Mary, also done very well. The pope's nephew, Cardinal Aldobrandini, also took Giuseppe into his service and gave him provision. Before this he painted in oils on canvas a dead Christ, supported by angels. After

this it happened that the pope went to Ferrara, when that duchy devolved to him. Giuseppe was then asked to travel along. Being in Ferrara he painted three pieces in oils, I think on copper plates. It was at that time that the Archduke Albert also came to Ferrara, with the Queen of Spain, and the marriages took place there. The pope gave one of these pieces, which showed a St George fighting the dragon, to the Archduke Albert; and the second he gave to the Queen's mother; the third to the Queen. After he had returned to Rome, the Queen's mother sent the pope certain rosaries made of red coral mixed with gold symbols, and one of these the pope gave to Giuseppe, saying: That is from the duchess who has your painting. Giuseppe is also very familiar with the current pope, the aforesaid Clement VIII, as can be seen from [a story about] the beer from Holland that the pope is sent by a certain merchant each year. On one occasion, Giuseppe came to the pope who, having finished his midday meal, had a good glass of this beer poured and brought to Giuseppe. It being served to Giuseppe, he drank half of it down before he had realized what it was. The pope, watching him, said: I think you do not like it, give it to me, I will finish it. Which he did. Thereafter the pope had the church of St John Lateran decorated and painted for the Jubilee Year in 1600, making Giuseppe head of works, for which he gave him 1,000 crowns in hand, and every week Giuseppe was given 200 crowns to pay the workmen, and due to the shortness of time it had to be done in haste. One day when Giuseppe was engaged in this work, he was summoned to go to the pope's nephew Aldobrandini, on a matter of import, he was told, but was then sent to the pope. Giuseppe arriving there, the pope granted him a knighthood or *cavalierato*, making him a knight of St Peter's, saying he would also give him a knightly insignia. A few days later he gave him a golden chain that went round six times, with hanging from it a medal with on the one side the pope's likeness, and on the other a cross, with a palm branch next to the cross on one side, and a laurel branch on the other. With this gift Giuseppe continued the work on St John Lateran all the more cheerfully. There he painted a large fresco compartment at the high altar. This is the History of the Ascension of Our Lord, with Apostles and two angels, all larger than life-size. While painting this work Giuseppe fell ill, which much saddened the pope, who daily sent his own doctor to him, and an oil called *Olio del granduca*, worth many gold crowns the ounce; he was rubbed down with this, as also was a Dutch painter named Floris van Dyck, who was his very familiar close friend and companion. Among other tokens of affection that Giuseppe received from the pope were also 100 gold crowns with which to pass the time. Being cured, he completed the aforesaid History, earning great praise. At this time, his brother Bernardino also painted a history in the same church, also esteemed as good work. Among other works, Giuseppe painted a loggia fresco for a Roman nobleman, which Federico Zuccaro had been commissioned to undertake with his own hand, but coming by

unannounced and seeing a youth applying something of small import, the nobleman was upset, had everything chiseled off, paid off Federico, and no matter what was said would have it done by Giuseppe. Among other things, this loggia contained Cupid subduing a Satyr, showing that Love overcomes Nature, as has come out in a print cut by Jacob Matham. Giuseppe also advanced the work on the Campidoglio, and when he had painted on canvas a little battle, with very curious little horses and little soldiers, with ornamental weapons, helmets, and other things, which was to serve him as a sketch or composition, he was offered 500 crowns for the work. In the year 1600, Giuseppe accompanied Cardinal Aldobrandini to Paris in France, when the marriage took place between King Henry IV and the niece of the current Duke of Florence. I do not know what he painted in France, only that when he returned to Rome, he proceeded steadily in his art, and is richly rewarded and honored by the pope and other lords, as he has earned and is worthy of by virtue of his art.

The Lives of some other Italian Painters Currently in Rome

It sometimes happens that practitioners of our arts seem to become sleepy, being satisfied, in the things they most often have to do from day to day, with a common way of working that may serve to maintain them and serve their needs, without much troubling their spirit or senses, or occupying them in much study, or delving for the perfections of art, especially if princes, lords, and the powerful have turned their attention to things other than building, painting, and suchlike. Especially in Rome, when the pope is not an art lover, not commissioning buildings or paintings but inclining to other things, the cardinals and other lords follow his example, so that the Italian painters have little provision. The Netherlanders, however, who are not well able to further themselves, and like wine-loving children of Bacchus are not too well turned out or properly dressed, are entrusted with little in the way of special work in fresco, or other things, and commonly sit steady at their little copper plates like a weaver at the loom, with which they learn as little as they would by doing such handiwork, for there are just a few types of images of Mary or of other saints, always to be produced in the same way or manner, the face having such a cast of nose and mouth, the sleeve so many folds, and always exactly the same, with pounced cartoons for the purpose, as the types are made by the dozen. Then, if the Spanish fleet from the Indies comes to some mishap, such as by English pirates, and the Spanish purse in Rome is not well larded, the Netherlanders have it very hard, for the Spaniards are their best customers. Yet the Italians I mentioned, when the pope and the princes are inclined to our art, and take delight in decorating palaces, churches, and other things, and

lavish rich rewards and gifts on some exceptional practitioner of our arts, and help him prosper to honest estate, then spirits begin to stir, and eyes, opening, to look further, and all diligently rise to perfection. Then there erupts a rivalry delightful to behold, and a race between them; a burning zeal ignites; gaunt envy begins unseen to bestir her black pinions; and each will do his best to carry off the prize displayed. So it has gone in Rome, in art, for when Giuseppino [d'Arpino] was recognized by the great for the quality of his art, and advanced in prosperity and honor, many sought to follow, match or surpass him. By this means some have wonderfully advanced and increased in artistry. Among them is one called Carracci, in the house of the illustrious Cardinal Farnese, where he made various fine works that are most excellent, in particular a fair gallery, so excellently painted in fresco that it is said that the manner surpasses that of all other masters, and that the beauty is inexpressible. There is also a Michelangelo da Caravaggio in Rome who is doing amazing things, having climbed out of poverty by diligence, like the aforesaid Giuseppe, stoutly and boldly undertaking anything, as some do who would not be kept down by diffidence or pusillanimity, but confidently and undauntedly put themselves forward, and boldly seek their advantage wherever they can, which is not to be scorned if it is done honestly, decently and politely, for good fortune is often loath to offer itself unsought; it must sometimes be attempted by us, aroused and sought out. The works of this Michelangelo have already obtained him great report, honor and renown. He has painted a History at San Lorenzo in Damaso, next to that of Giuseppino, as recounted in his life; here he painted a dwarf, or miniature giant, looking towards Giuseppe's History and sticking out his tongue, as though he would thus mock Giuseppe's work, for he is one as bears little love to any master's work, or at least will not openly praise any. He says of anything not painted from life, no matter what it is or who it is by, that it is nothing but a *bagatelle*, children's work or a triviality, and that nothing can be as good, or better, than to follow Nature. So much so that he will not do a single stroke without sitting directly before the life and copying it and painting it. This is no bad way to come to a good end: for painting from drawings (even if they come from life) is not so certain as to have the life before you, and to follow Nature with all her variety of hues; yet one must first have come so far in understanding as to discern and pick out the fairest life from among the fair. Now besides such corn, there is this chaff, that he does not apply himself steadily, but having worked for fourteen days, he will spend two, or a month, walking the streets, a rapier at his side, a serving man behind him, from one tennis court to another, being much given to fighting and quarrelling, so that he is seldom to be dealt with. These are things quite at odds with our art, for Mars and Minerva were never the best of friends, but insofar as his handling is concerned, it is such as to be most delightful, and a wonderfully fine manner for young painters to imitate. Also within

Rome there is one named Paolo Guidotti, surpassingly excellent, and similarly distinct and different in nature from other masters, having rare inventions and compositions in his head; and albeit that some consider him to be half touched in the head, or half mad, there are others of good judgment who hold him to be one of the most knowledgeable masters to be found, being learned in mathematics, and knowing the art of the planets, and other natural things. He artfully produced two pieces in fresco at San Pietro in Montorio, alongside the piece by Raphael on the high altar, without having been commissioned or having been offered payment from anybody. And he did something else, to the great admiration of all those with understanding of art, to wit, out of a fairly large piece of marble he made a group of five or six figures grouped together, all most artful and of great excellence, and as some say hewn at one go from the rough stone and done without any model or preliminary work in clay or wax; the same earned him great renown, and spread his name abroad in praise. There is also another outstanding painter, named Giovanni Baglione, who has an excellent manner in drawing and painting. Just this year two more painters came to Rome, one from Siena and one from Florence, and a woman [Lavinia Fontana] who is also said to paint. Apparently (or so it is said) these three are each to make an oil painting for St Peter's. What will become of it, time will tell. This is all that I can find out about the Italian painters currently in Rome who are excellent and worthy to be named in the art.

Of Certain Italian Women who have Artfully Practiced the Arts of Drawing and Painting

Were one to take the time, one would find, and be able to relate, the names of many women who in ancient times performed and brought about various wonderful, magnificent, and praiseworthy works, arts and ingenuities, in warfare, singing, poetry, astronomy, eloquence, useful inventions, wonderful predictions, and suchlike. It might, therefore, easily be demonstrated that women, if they apply themselves to any virtuous arts and sciences, ultimately achieve perfection and laudable results. To confirm this, leaving ancient histories, I can firstly bring forward a new example in [the person of] Properzia [de' Rossi] of Bologna, who was not only shapely of body, and excelled at singing and playing, and at other arts and sciences, but also began, being ingenious of spirit, to cut wonderfully clear and sharp things on peach-stones: among other things exceedingly rare, the whole Passion, not only with a multitude of figures, but also revealing character, and an intelligent manner of grouping and composition, on such a small surface as a peach-stone. Growing in boldness, she turned her hand to hard marble, and did various things in this, such as the likeness of a count that delighted all who saw it, and certain important civic works, by which she earned great

praise and renown. Thereafter, becoming too much enamored of a fine-looking youth, while she (though still young) was married to another, she carved (as though she would therein punish herself, while the youth paid her no heed) in bas-relief in a marble panel, Potiphar's wife pulling Joseph towards her bed by his cloak, amazingly admirable in both the composition and the execution. She also made two large angels, also used in public works in Bologna, done well, and of good stature and proportion. She drew curiously with the pen, and also engraved in copper for printing, which brought her great praise for she succeeded in everything, except in her Italian lovelornness, which she was unable to conquer or find a cure for. She was already dead and buried when Pope Clement VII, being at Bologna to crown the emperor, earnestly enquired after her, and desired to meet her, but too late, for she had died the week before. His Holiness, and other fellow citizens of hers still more, mourned her death, for while she lived they held her to be the greatest wonder of Nature of this age.

There was recently at Florence another, the superior of a Convent, and she was called Sister Plautilla [Nelli], who beginning with drawing freehand, and coloring, copies of the works or paintings of excellent masters, did and treated certain things in such a manner as to be greatly admired by the artists. There are two altarpieces of hers in her convent of Santa Caterina, but what is most praised is an Adoration of the Three Kings. Also in the convent of Santa Lucia is a large panel of hers, showing Mary with the infant on her arm, surrounded by many male and female saints. This and many other things of hers, such as very fine panels and scenes, both large and small, can be seen in churches and in the houses of the nobility in Florence. Her first exercise was copying and illuminating, many examples of which are still to be seen in various places there. But in her later works in oils, the best things she did were women's faces, for she could make the same very virtuous, fair and pleasant. In her works she often portrayed the face of Miss Costanza de Doni, who at that time was an exemplar of incredibly surpassing beauty and virtue. There was furthermore also Lady Lucrezia Quistelli della Mirandola, wife of Count Clemente Pietra, who having been taught by a painter named Alessandro Allori, a pupil of Bronzino, produced many likenesses in oils, worthy of general applause. Yet there is one, named Sofonisba of Cremona, daughter of Amilcaro Anguissola, who more than any other Italian woman of our time dedicated herself with effort and diligence to the practice of painting. This she did with greater perfection and beauty, for she could draw, color and portray not only from life, or make excellent copies of the works of the masters, but also designed and painted wonderfully fine things of her own invention. So that Philip, King of Spain, having been informed of her skill and worth by the Duke of Alva, summoned her (worthy as she was) to Spain, and received her most honorably, where with good provision she was attached to the queen's entourage, to the admiration of the court, who

were all amazed at this Sofonisba's excellence. A very curious drawing in her hand was sent to the Duke of Florence, showing a girl laughing at a crying child, for the girl had set a basket of lobsters before the child, and one had nipped the child's finger, which was done so naturally that it could have been done from life. Regarding our art, this is as much as is known to me of ingenious Italian women. So when I have recounted what I knew of the best Italian painters during my own time in Rome, I am inclined to shorten this voyage, and steer the ship towards the coasts of the Netherlands, which affords a broad sea of new things in which to sail.

Of several Italian Painters who Were at Rome during my Time there, between the Years 1573 and 1577

Among those in Rome who had already reached a reasonable age and were renowned for their artistic work there was a Girolamo Muziano, born at Brescia in Lombardy. He was the excellent landscape painter I wrote of elsewhere in the *Foundations of Painting*, who (to bear witness to the truth) was outstanding in landscapes, having a powerful, firm and magnificent manner, differing from that of the Netherlanders, and which was seldom to be found among Italians. He was especially excellent at making fitting and delightful grounds and foregrounds, which are a magnificent adornment to landscapes. He was also quite outstanding at trees, which he treated in a very distinctive way, and in a beautiful manner, making roots and trunks in a very ornamental way, and dressing them with ivy and other things. He also had a very fine turn for leaves, but all in the manner of being chestnut trees. He said as much, that no trees suited him better or were better to draw than chestnut trees, in which the leaf could so well be imitated. A small landscape of his can be seen in Rome in the Belvedere at the end of the gallery after the ancient Cleopatra, which is a fountain. Several of his landscapes in fresco, very distinctive and good works, can be seen at Tivoli outside Rome, in the court of the Cardinal of Ferrara [Ippolito II d' Este], upstairs in the palace. There were more in the same place, that were most excellent, but it is to be lamented that by the changing preferences of the owners of the place, the chambers in which they were painted on the walls have been broken down, and such excellent art destroyed and brought to naught. Just as he painted fair landscapes, and dealt excellently with paint, he also surpassed at drawing with pen or chalk. This manner and treatment was imitated most excellently and characteristically by our Cornelis Cort of Hoorn with his skilled burin, as can be seen from some prints cut by the same after Muziano, to wit, two landscapes with St Francis, and another twelve upright, featuring some hermits or saints who retired to the desert. Yet these are little known except among painters. They contain fair foregrounds and trees, with

little views into the distance. Goltzius, when he was at Rome, made the portrait of this Muziano, who also showed Goltzius a great many landscape views drawn from life, at Tivoli and elsewhere, as well as inventions, which he wished to entrust to Goltzius, to engrave them, who, having many other things in prospect, politely declined the same. Girolamo, either because he thought that figures are the noblest part of our art, or seeing more advantage in them, devoted himself fully and completely to figures, producing great canvases and panels painted in oils, some of which I have seen; yet his figures are far behind his landscapes in virtue and worth. So it goes, when one would take hold of something other than Nature willingly extends, even though his figures are not to be despised. He had a way of making very devout St Francis, sometimes just the face of the same saint casting up his eyes with devotion and zeal, which was excellent and much copied. There often resorted to him, or consorted with him, a certain Cesare [Nebbia] from Orvieto, a relative by marriage or some other connection, some of whose works are at Rome. Among others made for the church of St Peter's, he made in my time a History of St Peter healing the crippled. In this one sees a pleasantness of composition, and a precision in women's clothes, and it is in other respects entirely praiseworthy and delightful. In the same time there was at Rome, and painter to Pope Gregory XIII, a compatriot of his from Bologna, Lorenzo, who was called Lorenzino. Although he wrought little himself, putting many young painters to work in the pope's palace, he was a very good painter, as is witnessed by two frescoes in the Cappella Paolina, next to the Sala Regia, to wit, when St Stephen is stoned, and when Paul is baptized. He kept himself in a stately manner, riding about on a horse caparisoned with a *gualdrappa*, and as has been said, kept many painters in work, among them one he loved greatly, the excellent young man Raphael da Reggio, whom he would not pay by the day, like others, but gave him a percentage, with a good bonus when deserved. This Raphael, wonderfully gifted by nature, was born (I think) in a village outside Reggio, and being commanded by his father to herd a flock of geese, he out of rage, or otherwise, broke some of their bones by throwing staves, and with his father pursuing him to beat him he fled to the town and fell in with some painters; beginning to work in company, he ended up with Federico Zuccaro, with whom he came to such artistry in one year that many of his works looked as lovely as his master's. Being at Rome, he painted a *facciata*, or fresco façade, not far from the Campo Marzio, in which much that is curious can be seen, in histories and figures, and in colors, shadings and mixtures of paint. He also came to work for Lorenzino, painter to the pope. Among the work of his that can be seen in the palace there are, over a staircase, the arms of Pope Gregory, flanked by *Justitia* and *Prudentia*, very finely treated, especially *Prudentia*, with fair lap drapery, and well done; furthermore in a hall, before one comes to the Sala Regia, there is a Hercules defeating Cacus

that he painted on the ceiling, and in the frieze some Muses, very well done. Furthermore, in St Peter's Church, over the doors, there are two histories of his, one in which Peter and John heal the cripple before the Temple. Here he had to follow the composition of Raphael of Urbino, to be found in the papal tapestries, but he did justice to this composition, painting everything in fresco very finely. Here one sees fair drapery and faces, and everything done very artfully and skillfully. The other history is where Andrew brings his brother Peter to Jesus, leaving John the Baptist, with fair flat drapery and a handsome distance, with the Preaching of John, with fair greenery, all painted in a magnificent and skilful manner. His too are an Angel or Victory in the Sala Regia, very well painted in fresco, and various works in the papal loggias and chambers. He had a manner, when it came in useful, of deepening his things in a rather hard way, even going as far as [to use] black, yet which at a distance hangs together well, and gave his works great power. He eventually obtained some commissions for himself, and he was more than worthy of them. Thus in the Oratory of the Gonfalonni where the Passion was painted by various masters, he did and composed Pilate washing his hands excellently well, as well as (as I think) other things such as a Chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore. In fine, his works were a magnet to the eyes of all young painters, drawing them to imitate him. He was a tall, good-looking youth. He was said, after my departure from Rome, to have died of love for some woman, in the spring-time of his life, to the great sorrow and loss of the art of painting, which had firm hope by this second Raphael to come to its uttermost elevated adornment. There was another, named Paris, who worked together with him in the palace, who also had a very fair manner, but which lost much of its luster when his works were placed alongside or near the excellent aforesaid Raphael's. There was (I seem to recall) another companion of this Raphael, who worked together with him in the palace, called Giovanni [Alberti] del Borgo, from Bologna, an artistic fellow worker, who afterwards also worked in the new building of Pope Clement VIII, in company with his brother Cherubino [Alberti] del Borgo, who had killed a man, and was released by Giovanni's art. Among other works by Giovanni, a great hall or state room can be seen, with in the middle of the ceiling, an opening decorated as though one sees the open sky: looking up from below there are above certain very finely foreshortened figures of certain virtues on a gallery, the rail resting on shortened balusters; from this rail appears to hang the pope's arms, flanked or supported by flying infants, a delight to see: these figures are by the aforesaid Cherubino. Below this gallery, Giovanni also painted, foreshortened in very fair perspective, fine, great columns, which appear to bear the upper work so that one would naturally think to be looking at a very high storey, or upwards expanse. This Giovanni having died, he thereby left a noble remembrance in the art of painting. Also at Rome in my time there was a Guidonio, who was amazingly firm and able in fresco

work, whether in figures, grotesques, or compartments of ceilings, and other things. Yet I know of no work to point out as a particular testimony to his art, except that in the papal chapel, above the door by which one enters, there is a history by a Sicilian, Matteo da Lecce, in which the Archangel Michael and the Devil contend for the body of Moses, where the nudes of the devils are of various hues, by Matteo's hand, but the angel, done in a more able manner, is the work of Guidonio: there, judging the lion by its paw, one can see what he might have achieved in our art, but he too died young. Among other works done by the aforesaid Matteo da Lecce in Rome is a history of an *Ecce Homo*, in the Oratory of the Gonfalonni in the Strada Giulia. But for whatever reason, whether he was not paid, or not given the money he would have liked, or that he had taken a dislike to the work, which had to stand beside that of Zuccaro, Raphael of Arezzo, and other fine masters, early one morning those of the company found that he had marred his work, and struck holes in it with a hammer or some other instrument, as I have myself seen, albeit that neither the painting nor the composition was bad. Along a staircase he had ordered certain figures as though of copper, and there was little wanting to complete the work. Having run away from Rome, he came to Malta, where he painted in a church for the Grand Master, who had sent to Rome for painters; and after I had already given my word and promised to go thither with a Frenchman of Paris, Etienne du Pérac, who had a wife and family, and expected more security, we heard that he had fetched up there per adventure, and been hired. He was able at fresco work, and amazingly ornamental in grotesques and other adornments: also in making antique vases, or vats, some of which I have seen above Frascati, or Mondragone, in a cardinal's pleasure house, decorated with gold, silver and copper, very ably and entertainingly done, in the manner of a booty of arms, or trophy. Also there was in my time a Ricardo, who worked in the palace in company with Raphael d'Arezzo, who was also a reasonable artist, and courageous enough: he painted an *Ecce Homo* in the church of the Florentines in Rome, and having asked Raphael d'Arezzo, which face he thought the best in this piece, and Raphael seeing and knowing Ricardo's conceitedness, indicated a figure standing right behind another, with no face to be seen, and said: that figure, if it could be seen, might have a good face, but none of the others are to my liking. As this was said in the presence of a group of young painters, it got a laugh, and was often repeated with laughter. By which poor painters should learn to love themselves moderately, without boasting much of their work in the presence of those outstanding in our art, who can give such pleasant strokes to lance such puffed-up-ness. I have already mentioned a Frenchman, Stephen or Etienne du Pérac, from Paris, who was architect to Cardinal Sermoneta, and could draw pleasantly. He drew an *Ecce Homo* for a print seller, Antonio Lafréry, his compatriot, which was engraved by Cort, and is taken for a drawing by Taddeo Zuccaro. He

was also fine at etching on copper plates. He made maps of ancient Rome, as if it were drawn from a certain old stone, as a ground plan, and of modern Rome, both fairly large; also the papal chapel, with the pope at mass with the cardinals, and giving the benediction over St Peter's Square, and other things beside; also the Ruins of Rome, treated well and with good understanding: for as he was a good architect, and could well understand how and what those decayed things had been, for appearance's sake he drew certain of them, which were too ruinous, as more whole. From Rome he returned with his family to Paris, where I take him to have died. I add this Frenchman to the Italians because I have made no book or volume to write of the French, as I know of few of them to have been excellent; I also regard his best work as having been done in Rome, and his wife was Italian. Now at that time there was also in Rome a Pasqualino della Marca, who was of the company that painted frescoes for the aforesaid Guidonio, and in about a year so improved in our art that it was much to be admired, and he would not be the only one who, seeing others work in fresco, quickly pick up the knack of imitation, and so gained experience. He did certain canvasses in oils in which there were also landscapes, done so well that it was admirable: these stood in the church of the Baths of Diocletian. I also knew another Cesare [Arbasia], from Saluzzo in Piedmont, who often sought out or consorted with Hans Soens from Antwerp, excellent in landscapes, whose manner Cesare imitated closely, and became a good landscape painter, quite surpassing other Italians. He did various fresco landscapes in the hall next to the Sala Regia; also, not far from the Piazza del Pasquino in Rome, in the palace of a Spanish bishop, a hall full of fresco landscapes, done very pleasingly and well. He had a Spanish companion, named Paolo [Céspedes], and together they painted a chapel at the Trinità, with the Annunciation in the middle as altar-piece, in which Cesare did some very curiously descending clouds, and on the one side God cursing the Serpent, and on the other (I think) a Nativity, all of which can be said to have been well painted. Furthermore, they painted a *facciata* or frontage in the Strada del Popolo, which included the History or Fable of Pluto abducting Proserpina, as well as other things. These two were not bad at figures, although Cesare most excelled in landscape, which Paulo was dismissive of, saying it was nothing but putting one mountain behind another: yet when he tried it out himself, he found it not so easy as he had thought to put one mountain behind another in a well-made composition. There was also at Rome, and often my brotherly companion, a Piedmontese, Daniele Argentieri of Turin, who had been trained by the painter to the Duke of Savoy, Giacomo de' Grotteschi. This Giacomo in his youth had sought out all the grotesques in Rome, in the kingdom of Naples and elsewhere, and copied them, becoming quite excellent in this kind of work. Daniel himself did not have a bad manner in this line. On the contrary, he was artful and capable in it. Another of my companions was Girolamo

Lupocci da Montepulciano, who was well practiced in grotesques and figures. Of others I know nothing in particular to write. Some I knew whose names I have forgotten, although I worked in their company, in particular an Italian who had a very curious manner in grotesques and figures. There are many very fine grotesque figures by his hand in the antechambers before one comes to the Sala Regia. Then there was also a farmer, or one living at some castle out in the country, who was excellent in grotesques, making in the fields, where fitting, all sorts of curious sea-goddesses and men together, with little monsters and a thousand curiosities, which just seemed to fall from his brush; similarly he did these things first with the pen, so entertainingly interweaving them in play, in wrestling, and in fighting, that it was much to be admired; yet he did not apply himself steadily to art, I was given to understand, but was often busy about his fields, vineyards, and suchlike, and made a decent living. Also in Rome in my time, who I should perhaps have mentioned first, was a certain Girolamo Siciolante of Sermoneta, who was already reasonably old, and had done much work, too much to relate, having a relatively settled manner. He was a good master, though. After my time, and perhaps still at Rome, there was a Florentine, a disciple of Jan van der Straet, or Stradanus, called Antonio Tempesta, who is much praised, having drawn and etched many things such as Hunts and Battles of Amazons, and also, in the year 1593, as a ground plan and in large size, the city of Rome. There is also one (I think a Florentine) called Battista Fontana, who invented and etched a Crucifix, and the Life of Romulus, among other things, which are very pleasant to look upon. There is furthermore in Siena a certain Ventura Salimbeni of Siena, who has had some very curious things etched that were the product of his hand and invention, in the years 1590 and 1594. Another Sienese [Francesco Vanni] still in Siena has had the history of St Catherine of Siena published, very ornamentally designed, and cut by Pieter de Jode of Antwerp. These two aforesaid Sienese are also very good painters. There was also a certain Marco [Pino] da Siena, an outstanding painter already in the time of Michelangelo, who was regarded even more highly, or as highly as Raphael of Urbino. He taught Aert Mijtens, so he must have lived a long time. There is also a Florentine, Andrea Boscoli, who has published a Passion, cut by de Jode; this Boscoli is also a good and able painter. These are those that I can still name today. Here I will leave the renowned Italian painters, and commend their report to remain in worth and honor, and allow Italy to retain the highest fame above all other countries of the modern age, adorned with such great numbers of illustrious noble spirits and practitioners of our art. It would require too much time to present them all and describe their works in full, yet I think that I have neglected none of the most outstanding men and their deeds, but left out only what is redundant. So now I return to our common Netherlands, known as Flanders, and to High Germany, to help in so far as it lies within my

power to release from the dark grave of forgetfulness the names of such as were highly gifted by Nature in our silent poetry, or voiceless versifying, and who thereby made our countries partakers in noble renown, and made it known to all peoples that our nation is not rough, unpolished, or barbaric, but of good spirit, ingenious and able to bring the most excellent of arts to the uttermost perfection.

End of the lives of the illustrious Italian painters.