



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO
DISPAC

DOTTORATO DI RICERCA
IN
*METODI E METODOLOGIE DELLA RICERCA ARCHEOLOGICA,
STORICO ARTISTICA E DEI SISTEMI TERRITORIALI*

XIV CICLO

ABSTRACT

TESI DI DOTTORATO

La produzione scultorea di Matteo Bottigliero (1680-1757)
tra fonti e documenti inediti.

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Anno Accademico 2014/2015

Principal aim of the present study was to revise the action of the sculptor Matteo Bottigliero, who played a main role in the Neapolitan artistic scene of the eighteenth century, establishing relations with the most important protagonists of the Neapolitan scene, including Lorenzo Vaccaro, Francesco Solimena, Ferdinando Sanfelice and Domenico Antonio Vaccaro.

The review of sources together with a new analysis of documents made possible to integrate knowledge related to his artistic production and to expand the catalogue of his artworks along the period of activity between the first and the sixth decade of the eighteenth century.

Our objective was also to verify findings of previous studies conducted over the years, in order to catalogue the artist's works as completely as possible, and to describe the artist's career in a monographic key.

We aimed to reconsider the entire sculptural production of Bottigliero, in order to increase the knowledge of his artistic career. In this way, we could antedate the early stages of his career and increase the number of his known artworks, including also complex artworks made in collaboration with different skilled workforces.

We discovered therefore that the Neapolitan sculptor was deeply embedded in the cultural context of his time and had frequent and personal relationships with key coordinators and supervisors of scenary and architectural projects, such as Solimena and Sanfelice.

Firstly this work offered us the opportunity to draw the biography of the artist, who was born in Castiglione del Genovesi (SA), and to retrieve the parental relationship between the Bottigliero's and Vaccaro's families, together with the reasons for his admission in Neapolitan area and specifically in the workshop of Lorenzo Vaccaro.

This work was carried out through targeted research at the most important Campania's Archives (such as Salerno, Naples, Caserta, Benevento) and offered us the opportunity to enrich the documents about the artist's production, thanks to recovery of unpublished material, which has been placed also in relation to what has emerged from the previous studies.

It was possible also to consider how the artist had the opportunity to collaborate with leading Neapolitan marble workers (Raguzzino, Gentile, Picci, Bastelli), actively involved in the transformation of artistic style from late Baroque to Rococò, often increasing his artworks from the main cities to peripheral areas. This happened for example in Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria and Puglia.

Concerning the artworks not included in the documentary sources, they were catalogued in two different areas, one related to the artworks attributed to the sculptor from

the ancient “Guide di Napoli” and the second including those assigned to him by recent art critics. In the first section there are artworks such as the “*Addolorata di Capua*” or the sculptural group of “*Cristo e la Samaritana del Monastero di San Gregorio Armeno*”, which in subsequent critical studies have fully confirmed. In the second section, instead, new proposals of attribution or reconsidered but already known artworks are included on the basis of further stylistic comparisons.

The final section is reserved to interventions excluded from the artist's catalogue assigned to other contemporary artists, according to new emerged documents.

Finally, an update of bibliography was performed, with the aim of adding the copious number of marble and sculptural artworks made in Naples in the eighteenth century and it was able to witness the growing expansion of studies in the artistic panorama of the South of Italy.