

Tesi, Mauro Antonio

Montalbano/Modena 1730 – 1766 Bologna

Raccolta | Di Disegni Originali | Di Mauro Tesi | Estratti | Da Diverse Collezioni | Pubblicata Da Lodovico Inig | Calcografo In Bologna | Aggiuntavi La Vita Dell'Autore**Bologna, 'Nell' Istituto delle Scienze', 1787**FOLIO (410 × 275 mm), (8)ff. letterpress signed a–d² and paginated i–xv (xvi); plus 42 unnumbered, aquatint plates (various tints), by Valentino Baldi or Cesare Massimiliano Gini (circa 305 × 235 mm).

Text (folio a1 recto) *A sua Eccellenza il Signor Principe Youssouppoff* (Nicolaj Borisovich Yusupov, 1751–1831), (verso blank); (ff. a2–c2 verso) *Vita di Mauro Tesi* (ascribed to Jacopo Alessandro Calvi, 1740–1815); (f. d1 recto) *Catalogo de' rami incisi da Mauro Tesi*; (ff. d1 verso–d2 recto) *Opere di Mauro Tesi intagliate da altri* and *Indice delle stampe componenti la raccolta di disegni di Mauro Tesi pubblicata da Lodovico Inig* (pseudonym of Cesare Massimiliano Gini, 1737–1821); (f. d2 verso) imprimatur dated 4 May 1787 and undated colophon (with a tail-piece signed *P. Fabbri incise*).

Plate [I] aquatint frontispiece printed in sepia, featuring a medallion portrait of Tesi credited to Gaetano Gandolfi (1734–1802),¹ the print presumably designed and etched by Gini, whose initials 'Il C.C.M.G.' appear below; plate [II] a memorial dedicated to Tesi with an epigraph by Giacomo Biancani Tazzi (1729–1789), intended for the church of San Mamante, Bologna (according to the *Indice delle stampe*), designed by Carlo Bianconi and etched by Valentino Baldi (1744–1816); plates [III]–[XLII] reproductions of drawings by Tesi from various collections, eight signed by Gini (pls. VII, XXII, XXXI–XXXII, XXXVIII–XLI, according to the numeration of the *Indice delle stampe*), the other, unsigned prints are credited in the accompanying text to Baldi.² As often, the plates are not bound in the order given in the *Indice delle stampe*.

PROVENANCE unidentified ink inscription on pastedown, v4793 — [Emilio Terry (1890–1969)] — Prince Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne Lauraguais (1921–1999) — Sotheby's, 'From the Collection of the Prince and Princess Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne Lauraguais', London, 3 May 2012, lot 467

BINDING contemporary calf-backed brown paper boards.

¹ Alexandre Baudi di Vesme, *Le peintre-graveur italien: ouvrage faisant suite au Peintre-graveur de Bartsch* (Milan 1906), pp.515–516 no. 20. Gandolfi's drawing is Venice, Fondazione G. Cini, Inv. no. 31688.

² p.xiii: 'Questo è inciso dal Sig. Valentino Baldi pistoiese, di cui sono similmente lavoro tutti gli altri rami ai quali non è apposto il nome dell'incisore'.

ONLY EDITION of a work memorializing Mauro Tesi, a prolific decorative and architectural painter, working both in fresco and in oil, who executed *vedute* and ornamentation *all'antica* in and on churches and private and public buildings throughout Bologna, as well as in Pistoia, Florence, and Pisa.³ When Tesi died in 1766, at the age of only 36, he was so highly esteemed by his fellow artists, that they erected a monument to him in San Petronio, the cathedral of Bologna.

The present volume was published twenty years after Tesi's death by Conte Cesare Massimiliano Gini, under the pseudonym Lodovico Inig ('Inig' being his surname reversed; 'Lodovico' perhaps a member of the family).⁴ A painter and etcher himself, formerly a student at the Accademia Clementina, Gini collected drawings by Tesi, and sixteen of these are reproduced here together with others borrowed from local collectors.⁵ In order to render Tesi's drawings faithfully, Gini used a variety of the aquatint, a process very recently introduced into Italy. Eight of Tesi's drawings were etched by Gini himself; the remainder were etched by Valentino Baldi. 'Both men made conscious efforts to break new ground in the use of the [aquatint] process; different strengths and colours of ink were used, and the aquatint shading was carefully applied to represent the varying tones of wash in the

³ Most of Tesi's monumental painting has disappeared or been destroyed, with the notable exception of the frescoed chapel dedicated to the Santissimo Sacramento in San Martino Maggiore, Bologna. Tesi was an early proponent of the neo-classical style in Bologna; cf. Anna Maria Matteucci Armandi, *I decoratori di formazione bolognese tra Settecento e Ottocento da Mauro Tesi ad Antonio Basoli* (Milan 2002). Three drawings (plates XXXI–XXXIII) incorporate Egyptian motifs and must be close in time to Piranesi's pioneer efforts in that style.

⁴ Almost simultaneously, Gini published under the same pseudonym two other series of prints. One series reproduces drawings by Parmigianino in his own and in local collections; see *Parmigianino tradotto: la fortuna di Francesco Mazzola nelle stampe di riproduzione fra il Cinquecento e l'Ottocento*, edited by Massimo Mussini and Grazia Maria De Rubeis, Milan 2003, p.173; and Monica Preti Hamard, 'Celleberrimi Francisi Mazzola Parmensis graphides: les collections de dessins du Parmesan à Venise et à Bologne; collectionneurs, marché, édition' in *Jean-Baptiste Wicar et son temps, 1762–1834*, edited by Maria Teresa Caracciolo (Villeneuve d'Ascq 2007), pp.311–335 (esp. pp.316–335: 'Cesare Massimiliano Gini et le marché des estampes à Bologne'). The other work reproduces drawings in the collection of Gini's close friend and collaborator, Carlo Bianconi: *Saggio di disegni della rinomata raccolta presso il Signor Carlo Bianconi, segretario perpetuo della Reale Accademia di Brera, dato in luce da Lodovico Inig e Comp. in Bologna*.

⁵ The *Indice delle stampe* records the owners as ■ Bianconi, Carlo, Abate (plates XXXVI, XLII) ■ Costa, Giuseppe, of Ravenna (v, XXVI–XXVII, XXXIV) ■ Dotti, Salvatore (XII–XIII) ■ Fattorini, Dr. (II–IV) ■ Fratta, Vincenzo (VI) ■ Gini, Cesare Massimiliano, Conte (VII–VIII, XI, XVI, XVIII–XXI, XXIII–XXV, XXIX–XXXI, XXXV, XXXVIII) ■ Grazioli, Tommaso (XLI) ■ Palmieri, Francesco (XV, XVII) ■ Panfilii, Pio (XXVIII) ■ Parasisi, Giuseppe (IX) ■ Tazzi Biancani [Bianchini], Giacomo (XXII, XXXIX, XL) ■ Zambeccari, [Mario] Giacomo, Marchese (X) ■ Zanoni, Giovanni Pietro (XIV) ■ Anonymous owners (I, XXXII–XXXIII, XXXVII).

originals'.⁶ Some associated drawings have been identified in collections in Berlin,⁷ New York,⁸ and Stuttgart.⁹

The plates are preceded by an account of Tesi's life and career, and by catalogues of Tesi's own (very few) prints, of prints documenting his works, and a detailed list of the images published here. Among the projects recorded by these prints are ornaments for the façade of San Mamante, Bologna (pls. II–IV); ephemeral decorations for Holy Week in Santa Maria del Baracano (pl. XII); a catafalque for Jacopo Bartolommeo Beccari, 1766 (pl. XV); a catafalque for the Emperor Francis I, 1765 (pl. XVII); an altar for Bologna cathedral (pls. XIX–XXI); a monument to Francesco Algarotti erected in the Campo Santo in Pisa, 1764 (pls. XXIII–XXV); a 'Prospettiva dipinta nel Cortile de Sig.r Marchesi Banzi' (pls. XXVI–XXVII); and decorations for the interior of the Chiesa of the Congregazione dei Preti dello Spirito Santo at Pistoia (pls. XXIX–XXX).

Copies known to the writer include

- Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Prentenkabinet, RP–P–2011–73¹⁰ • Berlin, Kunstbibliothek, 2644¹¹ • Bologna, Biblioteca comunale dell'Archiginnasio, 18. A. III. 14;¹² 17. Y. I. 17; 16. b. I. 24¹³ •

⁶ British Architectural Library, *op. cit.*, pp.2083–2084.

⁷ Drawings associated with plates VIII, XVII–XIX, XXII–XXV, XXIX–XXX, are in the Kunstbibliothek, Berlin; see *Italienische Zeichnungen der Kunstbibliothek Berlin: Architektur und Dekoration 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert*, compiled by Sabine Jacob (Berlin 1975), pp.192–194 nos. 979–982, 983–986, 989–991, 993.

⁸ A drawing associated with plate XII is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art; see Mary L. Myers, *Architectural and ornament drawings: Juvarra, Vanvitelli, the Bibiena family, & other Italian draughtsmen*, catalogue of an exhibition, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York 1975), p.42 no. 57. A drawing associated with plate XV is in the Cooper-Hewitt Museum; see *Crosscurrents: French and Italian neoclassical drawings and prints from the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design* (Washington, DC 1978), p.117 no. 102.

⁹ Drawings associated with plates II, XV, XIX, XXI, are in Stiftung Schloss Fachsenfeld and in the Graphische Sammlung of the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart; see Christel Thiem, *Disegni di artisti bolognesi dal Seicento all'Ottocento*, catalogue of an exhibition, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, (Stuttgart 1983), pp.176–177 no. 106, p.182 no. 109, pp.183–185 no. 110, pp.186–187 no. 111.

¹⁰ Acquired by the Rijksmuseum in March 2011; see <http://www.rijksmuseum.nl/collectie/RP–P–2011–73/album-met-etsen-in-aquatint-naar-architectuurtekeningen-van>.

¹¹ *Katalog der Ornamentstichsammlung der Staatlichen Kunstbibliothek, Berlin* (Berlin 1939), no. 2644.

¹² Enzo Colombo, 'Catalogo delle edizioni di Lelio e Petronio Dalla Volpe possedute dalla Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio' in *L'Archiginnasio: bollettino della Biblioteca comunale di Bologna* 75 (1980), p.263 no. 1311.

Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, 725.87.828 • Coburg, Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg, Inv. Nr. XII, 334¹⁴ • London, British Architectural Library¹⁵ • Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, NC257 .T4 1787 • Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España¹⁶ • New York, Columbia University, Avery Library, AA/605/T22¹⁷ • Montreal, Canadian Center for Architecture (incomplete)¹⁸ • Paris, Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Bibliothèque, Fol Res 104 • Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Estampes et photographie, BD– 11 –PET FOL • Reggio Emilia, Biblioteca Panizzi, Gabinetto delle stampe A. Davoli, Inventario 60313 (incomplete)¹⁹ • Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Gabinetto delle stampe, Cicognara IX.863²⁰ • Rome, Biblioteca di Archeologia e storia dell'arte, Rari 559.A; Rari 638²¹ • Rome, Biblioteca Hertziana, Ca–TES 60–3870 gr raro • Vienna, Albertina, Bibliothek, K.S.D–64 • Zurich, ETH–Bibliothek, Rar 9862 GF

REFERENCES Rudolph Weigel, *Die Werke der Maler in ihren Handzeichnungen. Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der in Kupfer gestochenen, lithographierten und photographierten Facsimiles von Originalzeichnungen grosser Meister* (Leipzig 1865), pp.59–60 no. 65 and pp.700–702; Claudia-Alexandra Schwaighofer, *Von der Kenntnis zur Wissenschaft: Reproduktionsgraphische Mappenwerke nach Zeichnungen in Europa 1726–1857* (Berlin 2009), pp.192–193 no. 50. A facsimile was published in 1970 (Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers).

¹³ *L'arte del Settecento emiliano: architettura, scenografia, pittura di paesaggio*, catalogue of an exhibition, Museo civico, Bologna, 8 September–25 November 1979, by Anna Maria Matteucci (Bologna 1980), pp.31–32 nos. 34–36; *Francesco Fontanesi 1751–1795, Scenografia e decorazione nella seconda metà del Settecento*, edited by Marinella Pigozzi (Reggio Emilia 1988), pp.106–107 nos. 133.1–4 (plates IX, XXVIII, XXXII–XXXIII exhibited and reproduced).

¹⁴ *Aquatinta, oder, 'Die Kunst mit dem Pinsel in Kupfer zu stechen': das druckgraphische Verfahren von seinen Anfängen bis zu Goya*, catalogue of an exhibition, Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg, Coburg, 27 July–4 October 2007, by Christiane Wiebel (Coburg & Berlin 2007), pp.295–300.

¹⁵ *Early printed books 1478–1840: catalogue of the British Architectural Library, Early Imprints Collection* (London & Munich 1994–2003), pp.2082–2084 no. 3289.

¹⁶ Angel M. de Barcia, *Catalogo de la colección de dibujos originales de la Biblioteca Nacional* (Madrid 1906), p.936: 'Noticia de los facsímiles y reproducciones de dibujos originales que actualmente existen en la sección de bellas artes de la Biblioteca Nacional'.

¹⁷ *The Avery Library, selected acquisitions, 1960–80: an exhibition in honor of Adolf K. Placzek*, catalogue of an exhibition in the Low Memorial Library, Columbia University, 19 June–14 July 1980 (New York 1980), pp.38–39 no. 68 ('an unusual type of publication for the eighteenth century').

¹⁸ Local OPAC: 'Library copy incomplete: wanting plate 8'.

¹⁹ Zeno Davoli, *La raccolta di stampe 'Angelo Davoli': catalogo generale*, 1 (Reggio Emilia 1995), pp.146–148 nos. 1627–1648. Local OPAC: 'Nella racc. A. Davoli solo 25 tavv. rilegate in album, con la stampa del Gandolfi, 22 del Baldi e 2 del conte C. M. Gini (V e VI tavv.), più 4 fogli sciolti del Gini.'

²⁰ Leopoldo Cicognara, *Catalogo ragionato dei libri d'arte e d'antichità posseduti dal Conte Cicognara* (Pisa 1821), p.159 no. 863 (Carlo Bianconi's copy, interleaved with proof and counterproof impressions).

²¹ *Accademie e biblioteche d'Italia* 9 (1935), p.407 no. 121.