

Bartolozzi, Francesco

Florence, c. 1730- Lisbon, 1815

Since he was a child, Francesco Elígio Bartolozzi¹ was in love with the Fine Arts. Later, he worked with his father who became his engraving teacher.

When he enters to the Academy, in Florence, he studies drawing and studies with Inácio Hugford and de Ferretti. After 1745 Bartolozzi is in Venice and works in the atelier of the engraver José Wagner. His next steps were Milan and England, where he is hired by Richard Dalton, engraver and librarian for the Prince of Wales, in 1794. In London he makes every kind of engraving: chisel, etching and stippling, a method that he was an “expert and systematizer”².

In 1802, Bartolozzi comes to Portugal to be director of the Academia Nacional de Lisboa. He was also in charge of the reform of the old Imprensa Régia and the project to illustrate the new edition of “Os Lusíadas”, from Vieira Portuense. Unfortunately, this last project was not finished.

Francisco de Queiroz assisted Bartolozzi in his classes. Between his students were: Oliveira Monteiro, Priaz, Eloy d’Almeida, Teodoro de Lima and Domingos José da Silva.

About Bartolozzi’s work in Portugal, Ernesto Soares considers it with lack of consistency and even artistic vision, although he was still superior to his Portuguese peers³. However, Benezit stands that Bartolozzi kept his talents until his very last day, and that his prints are still appreciated by the connoisseurs⁴.

Bartolozzi also practiced pastel drawings,

oil painting and miniature, which is precious for its rarity, according to L. de Mauri⁵. His notorious engraver left a vast collection of works, having even worked for Napoleon the I.

1 VALENTE, Vasco – Bartolozzi, “Gravador das Graças”. Separata do Boletim da Academia Nacional de Belas Artes. Lisboa, nº12, 1943, p. 4.

2 VALENTE, op. cit., nota 12, p. 6.

3 SOARES, Ernesto – História da gravura artística em Portugal: os artistas e as suas obras. Paris: [s.n.], nota 2, vol. I, p. 102.

4 BÉNÉZIT, E. – Dictionnaire Critique et Documentaire des Peintres Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs & Graveurs de tous les temps et de tous les pays. Paris: [s.n.], 1924, nota 1, p. 396.

5 PAMPLONA, Fernando de – Dicionário de Pintores e Escultores Portugueses. 4ª edição. Lisboa: Livraria Civilização Editora, 1954-1959, vol. I, p. 188.