

Francesco da Città di Castello

called Tifernate

(16th cent)

Italian painter

He was born in Città di Castello, in the Upper Tiber Valley, probably around 1485-1487, from the commission document of *Pala Magalotti*, according to which in 1505 he was still a minor. His father, Battista "Floridi", practiced goldsmiths and covered several public offices; in 1511, for example, was a priori representing the ward of Porta San Florido, where the family was apparently resident.

Little is known about Francesco's artistic training. His stylistic figure, which can be inferred from the few works of his hand, which we have come up to, would leave a profession in the Perugine field, if not a true presence of Francesco in the workshop of P. Vannucci. This formation is the necessary prerequisite for the approach to the novelties introduced by Raffaello, of which Francesco, alone in those days in the Upper Tiber Valley, will consider very early.

Francesco was in fact in contact with Raffaello, who perhaps had come to know during his stay in Città di Castello, especially since Francesco's father was in the 1500's in the deed of the lost *Pala di s. Nicola da Tolentino* (known by a copy), as bondsman of Raffaello and his collaborator Evangelista by Pian di Meleto.

The relationship with the painting of Perugino and Raffaello and, some compositional and stylistic features such as landscape, hand deformation and roundness of cheeks, would seem to be attributable to the hand of Francesco the *Gonfalone della Misericordia*. The work, assigned by R. Longhi to young Raphael and considered by Mancini to be the work of an anonymous local artist, on the one hand, the *Crucifixion*, according to a typology derived from Perugino, and on the other the Madonna of Mercy. The Gonfalone could be one of Francesco's first trials, possibly made in collaboration with another artist, dating back to the early sixteenth century. This work should follow, around 1503-1504, the palace of the parish church of Selci depicting the Madonna on the throne with the Child between ss. Girolamo and Florido. The boulder presents remarkable iconographic and stylistic analogies with paintings by Perugino, for example, for the architectural system, comparable to that of the so-called Pala de Decemviri,

today at the Vatican Pinacoteca for the figure of the virgin assiso in throne with the Child on the knees, Perugine in gestures and features.

On the date of 1504-1505, however, the altarpiece comes from the church of Ognissanti, today in the Civic Art Gallery of Città di Castello: if in the lunette, with the Annunciation of Mary, motives taken by Perugino and Pinturicchio prevail in architecture and in the landscape, in the rest of the shovel, where the Madonna with Child and saints are represented, the more evident the influence of Raffaello is young; in particular in the compositional system, derived from the Palain Column of the Turin (New York, Metropolitan Museum), and in the figure of s. Catherine of Alexandria, exemplified on the Virgin of the Brera Accolade in Milan. In the use of the colors and in the draperies emerge Signorellian reminiscences. The presence, in Francesco's works, of precise compositional schemes derived from Raffaello, from this slope, would suggest that he, in addition to copying the paintings of the master, used, like other painters of the circle, some designs of the turbine.

The only point in the chronology of Francesco's work is the Annunciation of the Civic Art Gallery of Città di Castello, signed "Franciscus Thifer". The bail is dated to 1506, since the commission act - to which his father took part, guaranteeing his son, evidently a minor - was drawn up the previous year. The work was made for the altar of the Magalotti family in the church of S. Domenico in Città di Castello; the buyers requested that it be inspired, for magnificence and for the amount of gold to use, to the so-called Raffaello's Pala Mond (London, National Gallery), present in the same church. The contract also included a predella with the s image. Catherine and some other scene related to Virgin's life. The painter also undertook to paint in the chapel an image of the lord Ludovica Magalotti genuflessa, all for the figure of 31 ducats.

The Magalotti altarpiece is generally considered to be the stylistic and qualitative summit of Francesco's short artistic parable (Mancini, 1987). The most prominent figures of Rafael, evident in the figures of the Padre-Eve and the Angels, inspired by those of the lunette of the above-mentioned Pala Colonna, are stemperated by the adherence to cultural sources more appropriately altotherms and gentlemen, especially in the compositional scheme, taken from that of the 'Annunciation by Luca (Volterra, Municipal Picture Gallery). Significant, however, is the fact that the buyers, eager for the contract, to have a painting conforming to Raffaello's ways, choose

them as their own artist Francesco, evidently the only follower of the master at that date in the region.

After 1506, it seemed to be another Annunciation, today at the Castle Museum Museum and, probably, in the Uberti chapel of the same cathedral, where it saw the Titus in the 17th century. The work presents some similarities with a box of the predella of Raffaello Oddi altarpiece, now at the Vatican Gallery. Compared to the lunette of the table of Ognissanti, depicting the same subject according to modules still in the fifteenth century, here Francesco updates to a more loose sixteenth-century taste, while in the lunette crowned the painting depicts the Padre diary according to the typology raffaellesca he already used .

For stylistic analogies to Francesco, it is probably also assigned a fragment of a larger table, probably a Trinity, although the bad state of conservation and fragmentation of make a definitive evaluation impossible. However, this work seems to be in relation to the Trinity of Raffaello in S. Severus in Perugia, and then datable after 1507-1508. Another his work, a table depicting S. Donnino and s. Job at S. Maria Nuova in Città di Castello, was destroyed during the earthquake of 1789.

The year of death is unknown.

by Paolo Di Paola - Biographical Dictionary of Italians - Volume 49 (1997)

Translated from:

[http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-da-citta-di-castello_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-da-citta-di-castello_(Dizionario-Biografico))