

Vincenzo Morani

Italian Painter
(1809-1970)

He was born in Polistena, a Reggio Calabria, the son of Fortunato Morano, who belonged to a family of decorators originally from San Pietro di Caridà. He had his first training in Polistena in the paternal workshop called the Morani along with his brothers Giovanni[, Francesco and Domenico.

Having shown a good predisposition for art, around the age of eighteen he was sent to study in Naples with a modest contribution from the Municipality. Obtained, thanks to the good offices of General Vito Nunziante, a subsidy of nine ducats a month], in 1827 he was able to register for the Royal Academy of Design in Naples, where he had as masters Costanzo Angelini, Joseph-Boniface Franque and Camillo Guerra.

In 1830 he participated in the Bourbon Biennale with a tempera, the View of a temple. In the same year the Benedictines commissioned him to paint a fresco in the refectory of the abbey of the Holy Trinity of Cava de' Tirreni and in 1832, while concluding the work, he met Sir Walter Scott, the English writer, who admired the miniatures of the manuscripts kept in the abbey and made the portrait of them. Following this fortuitous encounter, he was presented in the aristocratic environment of the English residing in Naples who commissioned him some portraits.

In 1834 he won the scholarship for the pensioner in the papal capital where he moved and where, while continuing to participate in the Bourbon Biennials and maintain profitable relations with the Neapolitan nobility, he attended Tommaso Minardi and the circle of purists, refining his art and becoming a professor of fine arts.

In 1840 he completed a painting of biblical subject for Prince Vincenzo Ruffo Duke of Antimus and, following the appreciation of the critics for his work, he was called by Duke Marino Torlonia to fresco the chapel of the palace of Piazza Venezia, and then by Count Alexander, Marino's brother, for another painting in the same residence of the Torlonia.

In 1847 he executed a canvas commissioned by Ferdinand II for the church of the Poggioreale cemetery depicting La Crocifissione.

In 1852 he took on a new assignment for the abbey church of Cava de' Tirreni. Before 1856 he sent three canvases from Rome and from 1857 and until 1863 he worked on the cycle of frescoes on the walls and vaults of the church. His masterpiece, in this context, is the canvas of the Deposition, which is located on the altar of the transept on the left.

In the same years his paintings of religious subjects were placed in various churches, including the cathedral of Capua, the church of San Francesco a Gaeta, the Basilica of St.

Paul Outside the Walls in Rome and even the new church of the Assumption in Constantinople.

This production successfully joined portraiture, genre paintings [and works of historical and literary subject. In 1862 he sent, for the Universal Exposition of London, the painting of an episode taken from the third cantie of the Divine Comedy together with a Scene with Roman costumes.

In 1870 he presented two paintings at the exhibition of Christian Art in Rome and on June 15 died at the age of sixty-one.

Works:

- 1830 And a view of a temple.
- 1830-1832 *Urban II on his way to the Abbey accompanied by Ruggero Prince of Salerno*;
- 1832 Portrait of *Sir Walter Scott*
- 1833 *The father of the prodigal son*;
- 1834 *The death of Archimedes* (Naples, Accademia Gallery);
- 1837 *Copy of the Creation of Adam* from Michelangelo's fresco Michelangeloin the Sistine Chapel;
- 1837 *David returns victorious* (Naples, Museum of Capodimonte);
- 1838 Copy of the *Temptation of Adam and Eve* from Michelangelo's fresco in the Sistine Chapel;
- 1839 *Venus bringing weapons to Aeneas*;
- 1839 *St. John the Baptist, Herod and Herodias* (Naples, Museum of Capodimonte);
- 1840 *The Coronation of Esther* (Rome, National Gallery of Modern Art)
- 1844 *Apollo who receives gifts and homages from the muses* (Rome, Palazzo Torlonia);
- 1845 *Psyche kidnapped by Zefiro*
- 1845 Holy Family (Naples, Royal Palace)
- 1847 *Crocifissione* (Naples, Poggioreale cemetery church);
- 1851 *Visit of Pietro Bembo to Raffaello Sanzio in the villa Farnesina* ;
- 185? *Rate at the court of Ferrara by Duke Alfonso II* (Naples, National Library);
- 1852-1856 *Deposition from the Cross; St. Placido in Act of St. Benedict to behold; Martyrdom of Saint Felicita and his sons* (Badia di Cava);
- 1856-1863 cycle of frescoes at Badia di Cava: *The Death of St. Benedict; Ascension of Christ; The twenty-four evens of the Apocalypse before the throne of God; The Vision of St. Alferio; Main teachings of the rule and the four doctors of the Order; St. Peter and St. Paul with angels; Moses, David and angels with the symbols of the Passion; St. Romuald and St. Le Quattro badesse dell'Ordine*
- 1856-1858 ten canvases with holy bishops capuani ;
- 1858 *Lunch in the countryside* (Museum of Rome in Trastevere);
- 1859 *Paul and Silas martyrs in the city of Philippi*
- 1861 *St. Gregory the Illuminator, St. Leo the Great sends his legates to preside over the Council of Chalcedon* (Constantinople, church of the Assumption);
- 1862 *Dante and Beatrice meet Piccarda and Queen Constance*.
- 1870 *The Miraculous Boat in Marseilles; Rest in Egypt*.

Honours, awards and recognitions

- Silver medal in 1833 at the Bourbon Biennale;
- Scholarship in 1834 for the pensioner in Rome;
- Honorary Professor of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Naples;
- Gold medal in 1870 at the Exhibition of Christian Art in Rome. . .

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