

# Settimia Maffei Marini

In the chapel in honor of San Michele Arcangelo in the church of the Ari Coeli there is a funeral monument whose work was entrusted by Marquis Luigi Marini to the art of Francesco Labourneur and his son Alessandro Massimiliano. It was 1822, when only one month apart, the second-born Peter of only twelve years died, and his wife Settimia Maffei married Marini in 1804. Settimia's bust surmounted the sarcophagus and an epigraphic remembers his short life, was born in 1778, his terrible pain and his skill in mosaic art:

SEPTIMIAE FRANCISCI F. MAFFEI / VXORI PRIMAE ALOISII MARINI MARCH. / OB  
MVSIVARIAE ARTIS PERITIAM / ADLECTAE IN COLLEGIUM SODALIUM LUCANORUM /  
PIA VIXIT ANN. XLV OBIIT XVII KAL. DEC. A. MDCCCXXII / MENSE ALTERO POST  
PETRUM FILIVM / QUI RAPTVS ANNO XII ADOLESCENTIS AETATIS / MATRI SUAE  
PROXIMVS ADQVIESCIT

Settimia Maffei Marini, Honorary Member of the Accademia di San Luca and a member of the Pantheon Virtuoso Academy, was a refined and appreciated mosaicist and one of the very few women of her time dedicated to the art of micromosaico. The Political, Statistical and Commercial Yearbook of the Department of Rome for the year 1813, after pointing out the perfection achieved by the filament mosaic under the Napoleonic government ("It is reduced to such subtlety and to such elegance ... that the miniature of the brush you lose"), there is a pleasing praise:

"He is the honor of his sex, and of the same art Mrs. Settimia Marini, consort of Mr Cavaliere Marini Counselor of Prefecture [...]. It has so much effort and profit to learn the art of such a surprising labor that it would be able to direct a Studio, as its productions bear witness to it" (p. 298).

Even Giuseppe Tambroni (consul in Rome between 1811 and 1814) in his *Cenno* around the state of Fine Arts in Rome in 1814 defines it as a "dilettante egregia" and reminds him of his squares of animals and its landscapes that can be considered between the most beautiful works of the genre. There are two more demanding works of Settimia's production: a view of the Antiquities of Paestum and a table with depicted Jupiter surrounded by twelve zodiac signs. Camillo Ravioli in his biography of Luigi Marini's life and works, published in 1858, also remembers a "copy of the Lionardo Da Vinci Dinner at a Great Scale" (p.5). Here is a link where you can view four of his works belonging to a private collection with classical micromosaic subjects of the first decades of the nineteenth century, such as *The Dog That Assists the Cat* and *The Tivoli Waterfall*.

## Bibliography:

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Translated from:

<http://mosaicofilato.altervista.org/settimia-maffei-marini-2/>