

Felice della Greca

Italian Architect (1625-1677)

Son of Vincenzo, an architect originally from Palermo who moved to the papal capital, and of the Roman Doralice Ridolfi, born in Rome in 1625, Felice della Greca is mentioned for the first time for a criminal episode: the killing in 1649, for women's reasons, of a certain Teodoro Leonelli who, before dying, accused him of having hit him with a shot from an arquebus.

Tried and sentenced in absentia to seven years on triremes in addition to a fine, in 1656 the governor of Rome Francesco Baranzoni, with the consent of Pope Alexander VII, gave orders to keep quiet about what had happened, forcing the thirty-one year old from Greca to pay a deposit and to undertake not to offend the relatives of the murdered man.

Just one year later, in 1657, his name already appears in the documents of the papal administration for the creation of wooden and stucco models of the new buildings and, with that of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, for the execution of surveys and appraisals.

As further proof of the consideration he achieved, the Chigi family, before proceeding with the purchase, gave him the task of carrying out the survey of Palazzo Aldobrandini in Piazza Colonna (better known today as Palazzo Chigi, seat of the Government) and evaluating its restoration. The Chigis, satisfied with the work completed by Felice, subsequently entrusted him with the task of proposing solutions and projects for the execution of the works. In this period, having become the family's trusted architect, he also took care of other Roman buildings of interest to Alexander VII and the Chigis, such as the Vatican, Monte Cavallo (today's Quirinale) and the Palazzo Chigi-Odescalchi in Piazza Santi Apostoli.

Even after the death of Alexander VII (22 May 1667), albeit with some financial disputes, della Greca continued to work for the pontiff's family, sometimes in collaboration with Bernini, and as the family's "auditor and measurer".

The only religious building entirely attributable to him is the church of the Santi Angeli Custodi, built in 1673 and no longer existing: it was demolished in 1927 to widen Via del Tritone.

In 1676 he was accepted into the Accademia di San Luca, an important association of artists still active today. The following year, at the beginning of August, he made his will and expressed his wish to be buried in the church of Santi Domenico e Sisto near his home. A few days later, on 18 August 1677, he died at about fifty-two years of age in his hometown.

Translated from:
[Italian Wikipedia](#)