

Peter Miller notes the publication of a major catalogue by a former curatorial assistant at York Art Gallery of an artist of whose work we have an outstanding example in the Gallery



Annunciation by G.C. Procaccini. Oil on panel 62.8 by 49.5 cm. York City Art Gallery.
Photo credit: York Museums Trust

Book Notice

GIULIO CESARE PROCACCINI: LIFE AND WORK, BY HUGH BRIGSTOCKE AND ODETTE D'ALBO (UMBERTO ALLEMANDI SRL, TURIN 2020, €200)

Giulio Cesare Procaccini (1574-1625) was a Lombard painter who enjoyed a high reputation in his time. This reputation persisted into the eighteenth century, but since then he remained largely forgotten until the second half of the twentieth century. This Catalogue Raisonné of some 200 identified works is the first full study of his work. It has appeared as a result of the lifelong interest in the painter of the art historian Hugh

Brigstocke, an expert on Poussin and formerly a curator at the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh, who now lives in York.

Brigstocke's first job was as assistant at York Art Gallery to the Curator, Hans Hess, from 1965 to 1968. He became aware of Procaccini through the exquisite small *Annunciation* from the Lycett Green Collection in York Art Gallery. David Rogers, his predecessor at York, also showed him the large and powerful *Crowning with Thorns* at the Graves Art Gallery that was presented to the City of Sheffield by the National Union of Mineworkers in 1931. And then, when Brigstocke moved on to the National Gallery of Scotland in 1968, he found another major work of the *Raising of the Cross* that had just been bought with astonishing foresight by that gallery: www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/5295/raising-cross. When Brigstocke was becoming interested in Procaccini in the 1960s, the artist was completely out of fashion, and Brigstocke soon found that he had the field more or less to himself, despite some early pioneering research by the young Nikolaus Pevsner forty years earlier.

Brigstocke's interest in Procaccini persisted, with an exhibition in New York in 2002, but in order to bring his work to a conclusion he needed a collaborator in Italy to work on documents, and a sympathetic financial backer. Marco Voena, a Milanese art dealer with galleries also in London and St Moritz, underwrote the project and engaged Allemandi, prestigious publishers at Turin, to edit and produce the high quality volume. Weighing in at over three kilograms, with over 500 pages, it

contains 212 plates, including more than eighty in colour. Brigstocke has contributed two essays on the artist's life and his distinctive working methods; and his Italian collaborator, Odette D'Albo, has also contributed two essays on the artist's patrons and collectors and his subsequent artistic reputation, as well as conducting essential archival work in Italy.

This Catalogue Raisonné would make a substantial addition to any art historical library, but at €200 it would certainly not be a casual purchase. All enquiries should be directed to Umberto Allemandi Publishing Company, Turin.

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