

Ann C. Huppert, *Becoming an Architect in Renaissance Italy. Art, Science and the Career of Baldassarre Peruzzi*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2015, ISBN: 9780300203950, 224 pp., 35 colour + 140 b/w illus., £50

Baldassarre Peruzzi (1481-1536) is the least well known of the talented group of architects – which included Donato Bramante, Raphael, Giulio Romano and Antonio da Sangallo the Younger – that flourished in Rome during the early decades of the sixteenth century. In part, as Ann Huppert argues, his relative neglect is a result of the fact that only a few of his projects were built and that his legacy is largely to be traced through a remarkable surviving group of architectural drawings, many of them now preserved in the Uffizi. As a Siennese, Peruzzi also suffered from the well-known bias that structured Giorgio Vasari's *Vite*; written around the time of Duke Cosimo de' Medici's take-over of Siena (1555), artists from that city fared especially badly in the account, and Peruzzi's life is memorable for the image of the architect fleeing Rome after the Sack, having lost everything and escaping with little more than the shirt on his back.

Huppert's is the first English-language monograph to be dedicated to Peruzzi since William Winthrop Kent's biography of 1925. Her account in part adopts a biographical narrative, with a first chapter dedicated to his Siennese training and career, and the final chapter that considers his legacy through a discussion of the afterlife of his drawings; two chapters in between span his career as a whole, with chapter two considering his drawings after antiquity, and the next providing a series of case studies of major projects. While Huppert draws on extensive recent scholarship to propose a neat overview of the painter-architect's career, the main focus of the book is Peruzzi's graphic output. It thus helpfully sets out to fill the gap left by Heinrich Wurm, whose 1984 publication of a complete illustrated catalogue of Peruzzi's architectural drawings was never followed by the accompanying volume of text. Rather than simply offer a *catalogue raisonné*, Huppert sets out to make sense of the almost four hundred sheets of Peruzzi's architectural drawings, identifying those from where his hand overlaps with that of his first master in Siena, Francesco di Giorgio Martini, to those where Sallustio continued to work on projects and surveys initiated by his father. Nonetheless, a tension runs through the volume between the author's wish to provide a biography and her reliance on the drawings as a primary source material; while Peruzzi's activity as a draftsman is central to his life and work, this needed to be set more consistently into a wider socio-cultural or patronage context.

Peruzzi's identity was strongly associated with his hometown, also recorded in the eloquent epitaph that marks his tomb – next to Raphael's – in the Pantheon in Rome. The first chapter does a good deal to bring together numerous recent studies of Siena, to illuminate the context within which the young artist emerged, was talent-spotted by the immensely wealthy banker Agostino Chigi and brought to Rome to design his suburban villa in Trastevere (now known as the Villa Farnesina), Peruzzi's undisputed early masterpiece. The author makes much of Peruzzi's initial training in practical mathematics – a field closely related to architectural practice, as Nicholas Adams showed thirty years ago – although it would have been helpful to provide more precise details of his workings, and indeed show how these skills prepared him for the military surveys which were to form a major activity of his later career as city architect and engineer in Siena. Likewise, while Huppert shows in the opening chapter how his success in Rome was tightly bound into the

network of Sienese patrons and their associates, discussion of these connections rather falls away in the chapters that follow.

Instead, the book turns decisively to deal with a series of groups of drawings, with a particular attention to Peruzzi's studies of Roman monuments. Following the work of a number of scholars, Huppert shows how Peruzzi's minutely observed studies of antique buildings set him apart from his contemporaries – notably Antonio da Sangallo the Younger – in attributing equal or indeed greater authority to standing buildings and ruins than to the written precepts of the Roman architectural theorist, Vitruvius. Her discussion of the Vitruvian debate is most lively when dealing with lesser-known antique monuments; a section covering Peruzzi's surveys of the ancient ruins of Terracina, and especially the spectacular remains of the Temple of Jupiter Anxur, stands out for the close reading of the graphic evidence and how it differs from comparable surveys by Antonio da Sangallo. It is perhaps a pity that chapter two does not engage more in such detailed analysis, but instead provides a synthesis of how architects took up Raphael's call for a full survey of the ruins of ancient Rome.

Likewise, in chapter three, Huppert is at her best in the discussion of groups of drawings. In this instance these are associated with largely unexecuted projects – three religious buildings in particular, St Peter's (Rome), San Petronio (Bologna) and San Domenico (Siena) – in which Peruzzi showed great inventiveness in developing innovative graphic strategies to visualize possible design solutions. Convincing connections are drawn between the remarkable combined plan-perspective section of St Peter's (fig. 108; Uffizi, A2r) and the much less well-known cut-away perspectival section of San Petronio (fig. 114; Museo di San Petronio, inv. 50). The chapter is framed by a discussion of built projects (Villa Farnesina and Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne) for which few drawings survive; somewhat brief accounts (barely a page for Palazzo Massimo) do little justice to Peruzzi's built works, and add little to the book. While a case could have been made for the lasting influence of Peruzzi's built projects, Huppert's final chapter understandably focuses on the significant legacy of the graphic works which are, after all, the real focus of the monograph. As Vasari acknowledged, Peruzzi had a number of followers, and his drawings (a number of which Vasari also owned) were to leave an important mark on subsequent generations of architects, especially thanks to Sebastiano Serlio, who almost certainly used a number of them for his richly illustrated treatise on architecture, published from 1537.

Fabrizio Nevola (University of Exeter)