

2 Architectural Beginnings

2.1 The First Architects

Pietro Ottoboni's great-uncle had appointed him cardinal barely a month after his election to the papacy in 1689.⁴¹ Coming from a family of distinguished Venetian chancellors, it seemed natural to the pope to make his nephew Vice-Chancellor of the Church as well, an appointment which earned him residency in Cardinal Riario's late Quattrocento palace of the Cancelleria (Figure 2.1).⁴² A fifty-year career as Vice-Chancellor put him in contact with the major architects in eighteenth century Rome (Table 2), and he maintained some of them as resident members of his court throughout his half-century as a patron of the arts.

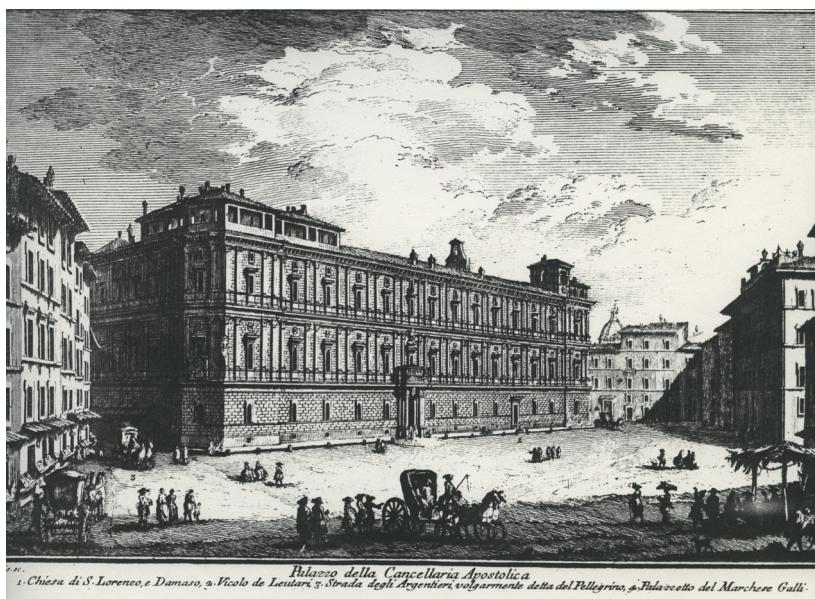


Figure 2.1: *Palazzo della Cancelleria*, engraving.

41 The pope's elevation of his nephew to cardinal was the only appointment made at his first consistory on November 7, 1689. See Cardella, vol. 8, p. 1; Moroni, "Ottoboni, Pietro Cardinale," 1851, vol. 50, p. 73; Ludwig von Pastor (1940), *History of the Popes* (vol. 32, pp. 542-543). For a survey of the literature on Cardinal Ottoboni, see Olszewski, 1986, 662, n. 18.

42 The palace was consecrated c. 1480. Its confines included the basilica of San Lorenzo in Damaso. See Schiavo, 1964.

Table 2: The Ottoboni Family Architects.**Carlo Fontana (1638-1714):***Fontana Paola*, 1690; Tomb niche for Pope Alexander VIII, basilica of St. Peter, 1699.**Matteo De' Rossi (1637-1695):***Catafalque* for funeral of Pope Alexander VIII, 1691.**Simone Felice del Lino (fl. 1680-1700):**Theater, Cancelleria, 1690; *machina*, 1689, 1695.**Carlo Enrico di San Martino (d. 1726):***Tomb of Pope Alexander VIII*, basilica of St. Peter, 1695-1706; *machina*, 1697.**Giovanni Francesco Pellegrini (d. 1732):**Puppet theater, Cancelleria, 1696; *machina*, 1698, 1700, 1702, 1706.**Nicola Michetti (1675-1758):***machina*, 1707-1710; scenography, 1729.**Filippo Juvarra (1678-1736):**

Ottoboni theater, Cancelleria, 1708-1712; scenography, 1708-1712.

Ludovico Rusconi Sassi (1678-1736):Carpentry, 1702; theater roof, Cancelleria, 1709-1710; tabernacle, via del Pellegrino, 1715; Holy Door, Santa Maria Maggiore, 1725; *machina*, 1725; Chapel of SS. Sacramento, San Lorenzo in Damaso, 1732-1736.**Domenico Gregorini (1690/95-1777):***Confessione*, San Lorenzo in Damaso, 1736-1737.**Alessandro Mauri (fl. 1720s):***machina*, 1727, 1728.**G.B. Oliverio (fl. 1725-1745):***machina*, 1734-1736.**Francesco Ferrari (fl. 1725-1744):***machina*, 1724, 1737, 1739.

The Cancelleria had been left unconsigned by Pope Innocent XI Odescalchi after the death of the previous Vice-Chancellor, Cardinal Francesco Barberini, in 1679. Cesare Facchinetti was then nominated *pro-cancelliere*, and after his death in 1683, Innocent XI left the position vacant in an attempt to put an end to nepotism, but

Alexander proved this to be wishful.⁴³ When Ottoboni claimed the palace, he also complained that it had been vandalized by the Barberini family and required 12,000 *scudi* in repairs.⁴⁴ He devoted the early years of the 1690s to redecorating its interior, on one occasion spending months in Venice selecting 16,000 *scudi* of crystal and fabrics for the walls.⁴⁵ His preoccupation with the refurbishment of the palace and its expenditure of funds distracted the cardinal from turning attention to the Vatican tomb of his great-uncle (Figure 2.2) when the pope's reign ended in early 1691.⁴⁶



Figure 2.2: Carlo Enrico di San Martino, *Design for the Tomb of Pope Alexander VIII Ottoboni*, 1705, engraving.

⁴³ Schiavo, 1964, p. 100.

⁴⁴ BAV, Arch. Barb. II, 2282bis. On Ottoboni's death in 1740, his heirs were also accused of damaging the Cancelleria in their zeal to remove his possessions, requiring exactly 12,000 *scudi* of renovations. Valesio, VI, p. 421, December 11, 1740. A claim of 6,000 *scudi* in repayment for repairs was made as late as 1746 against the Ottoboni heirs; AS, R.C.A. 612, January 7, 1746, p. 9, and April 22, 1746, p. 300.

⁴⁵ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 30, no. 172; Campello, 1887, p. 57. Angelo Recalcati (c. 1635-Rome, April 3, 1709) is identified as in charge of projects in the Cancelleria in 1691. See Manfredi, T. Recalcati Angelo Onorato, in *In Urbe*, p. 431, and *Il Monte Cenci. Una famiglia romana e il suo insediamento urbano tra medioevo ed età barocca*, Rome: 1988.

⁴⁶ Work on the tomb officially began in September 1695; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 31, no. 82, September 24, 1695; vol. 33, August 31, 1695. For a history of the tomb, see Olszewski, 1986, 2004.

The renovation of the Cancelleria required a decorator more than an architect, but Cardinal Ottoboni was an enthusiastic follower of music and theater, and it was for the purpose of designing and overseeing construction of his new theater in the Cancelleria that Simone Felice del Lino (c. 1655 – February 1697) became a resident in Ottoboni's court. A pupil of Carlo Fontana, del Lino was the first in the cardinal's official family to be identified as an architect, his name already entered in the palace rolls in February of 1690.⁴⁷

Del Lino had designed a devotional *machina* for Ottoboni's basilica in honor of the feast of San Damaso in December of 1689, and every year from 1690 to 1695 for Forty Hours devotions. His work for Ottoboni in the Cancelleria included the library (Figure 2.3) and a meeting hall for Ottoboni's academicians which may also have accommodated a puppet theater. Del Lino designed a chamber of mirrors at the Palazzo Fiano for the elders in the Ottoboni family. Carried out at the cardinal's discretion, the project was under the supervision of Carlo Fontana, and occupied del Lino to September of 1696.⁴⁸



Figure 2.3: Library, Cancelleria, 1697, etching.

47 BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 13, “Rollo di Famiglia,” February 1690, fasc. 167. See Braham & Hager, pp. 10, 18, 68. See also Iacobini, S. Delino Simone Felice, in *In Urbe*, pp. 349-350; Pascoli, 1736, II, pp. 548-549.

48 BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 22, no. 345, 1691; vol. 30, no. 36, September 1694, and vol. 31, 1695, “Rollo di Famiglia, Diversi,” as “Simone Felice del Lino architetto,” but with no stipend listed. Rolls for 1696 and 1697 are lost, but by 1698 del Lino is replaced by Pellegini as “Architetto” under “Diversi” with a monthly stipend of eight scudi; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol 38, no. 6, “Rollo di Famiglia,” June 1698. In 1681, del Lino had made a model of the villa “Versaglia” near Formello for Cardinal Flavio Chigi from Fontana’s design. Del Lino had been entered in the family rolls of Queen Christina of Sweden in 1689 as a sculptor and architect. A religious *apparato effimero* commissioned for San Salvatore in Lauro in March of that year became a solicitation against the Queen’s illness. Del Lino also constructed the *machina* for her funeral in Santa Maria in Valicella the following month, and assembled the model for a funerary monument for Christina in the Pantheon. He entered the rolls of Ottoboni’s court on dispersal of the Queen’s official family. In 1698, del Lino was finishing his design for the extension of the choir and a new altar at Santa Maria della Steccata in Parma; Braham & Hager, p. 68.

2.2 Early Theaters

One of the cardinal's first priorities for the renovations in the Cancelleria was the installation of a theater which he seems to have attended to shortly after his appointment as Vice-Chancellor. The carpenter Bastiano Cartone was paid 57.45 *scudi* in April of 1690 for having made a model of the theater intended for the palace, presumably from Felice del Lino's designs.⁴⁹ Expenses for its construction are recorded weeks later.⁵⁰ This was apparently the theater referred to as displacing part of the palace stables, which would have placed it on the ground floor at the northwest corner of the palace.⁵¹

In his account of Ottoboni's Lenten preparations in early 1692, Gaetano Marescotti alluded in passing to Ottoboni's "very beautiful theater."⁵² However splendid, the new theater was soon threatened. When the Pignatelli pope, Innocent XII, assumed the papacy after Alexander VIII's death, the religious mood in Rome became more somber, and the pope forbade festivals and theatrical performances. It was hardly appropriate for the official court of the Vice-Chancery of the Church to maintain performance facilities after the papal ban. Consequently, the theater was ordered dismantled in 1692.⁵³ Ottoboni delayed closing it immediately, and weeks later Marescotti reported him entertaining the Prince of Denmark with a musical comedy "in his theater in the Cancelleria."⁵⁴

Ottoboni also seems to have moved forward with his plans to locate some of his entertainment activities at his uncle's palace next to San Lorenzo in Lucina.⁵⁵ The seriousness of the pope's intentions regarding performances was demonstrated by his later order for the destruction of the commercial theater of the Tor di Nona which had been rebuilt on a larger scale under the supervision of Carlo Fontana at a cost

⁴⁹ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 104, April 11, 1690, fasc. 60; to Bastiano Cartone, "p(er) le spese da lui fatte cioè, colla, tavola, chiodi, e giornate a'huomini in fare il Modello del Theatro fatto fare nel Palazzo della Cancelleria come dal suo conto... 57.45."

⁵⁰ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 15, no. 694, June 3, 1690.

⁵¹ Holmes, p. 92.

⁵² Marescotti, vol. 788, p. 308, January 19, 1692; "in Cancelleria dove fa lavorare in defessam.to un beliss,o teatro."

⁵³ BAV, Cod. Ottob. 3729, March 8, 1692, p. 221r; Il Card.e Ottoboni per farsi conoscere genero alli committori del Seminario Romano prepara di far recitare domani un bell'oratorio in ditto seminario, con tutto cio non potro piu volersi della loro commedia perche i Giesuiti hanno fatto già decreto che non si possa piu recitare nel collegio sud.e commedie in musica. Potevano già far di meno dell ditto Devreto perche il ditto Card.e Ottoboni già ha dato principio à far disfare il suo teatro nella Cancelleria, e non vuol piu che si faccia l'altro à San Lorenzo in Lucina benche già ne havetta fatto fare il disegno."

⁵⁴ Marescotti, vol. 788, p. 327, April 12, 1692.

⁵⁵ BAV, Comp. Ottob. 3279, March 1, 1692, 193v; "Il Card.e Ottoboni e incapricciato di far vicino a San Lorenzo in Lucina un teatro per farvi recitare le commedie in tempo di Carnevale."

of 100,000 *scudi*.⁵⁶ The Tor di Nona is not unrelated to Cardinal Ottoboni, for he is recorded as purchasing seasonal subscriptions to loges there, and is mentioned in a letter as pursuing the prospect of investing in the Tor di Nona as a purely commercial venture.⁵⁷

The Frenchman, Jacques (Giacomo) d'Alibert, had first opened the Tor di Nona in 1671 in partnership with Queen Christina of Sweden. It was closed in 1674, presumably in anticipation of the Jubilee Year of 1675, but remained shut throughout the sober papacy of Innocent XI. The ascent to the papal throne of the spirited Venetian, Alexander VIII, was accompanied by a relaxation of the previous pope's severity. As a result, d'Alibert reopened the Tor di Nona for the carnival season of 1690. As Queen Christina had died in 1689, his new associate in the theater venture was Pietro Ottoboni.

Carnival that year officially extended from January 6 to February 8 (Ash Wednesday).⁵⁸ The opera performed at the Tor di Nona on January 5, the eve of Epiphany when Ottoboni's Arcadians held their major annual academy, was *La Statira*, with music composed by Alessandro Scarlatti and the libretto written by Ottoboni.⁵⁹ Accounts of Ottoboni's venture are reported in a series of letters written by the Abbate Giovanni Battista Mancini and preserved in the state archives in Florence and Modena.⁶⁰ The letters indicate that d'Alibert had sustained a financial loss from the performances, and so was allowed to continue them into Lent. Mancini had written just before Easter that Ottoboni's investment also suffered as he had lost "thousands of *scudi*": "Il detto Cardinale Ottoboni ha già fatto un quantità di migliaia di scudi di debito spesi...."⁶¹ Performances during Lent were moved to the more private theater in Ottoboni's Cancelleria, with the last three staged after Easter (which was March 26 that year).⁶² Mancini reported that *La Statira* was presented April 9 in the Cancelleria, but it was called an oratorio.⁶³ The opera had a cast of seven singers. There were eleven scene changes and two ballets.

Ottoboni's association with d'Alibert continued with the performance of *Il Columbo* in December 1690 and January 1691, but the cardinal was also planning to strike out as

⁵⁶ Cametti, I, pp. 22, 93-101.

⁵⁷ Holmes, p. 92.

⁵⁸ Weil has noted that the carnival period usually extended over nine days; Weil, 243. Alexander VII had limited the carnival period to the ten days preceding Ash Wednesday; Magnuson, II, p. 151.

⁵⁹ Ottoboni's autograph libretto is preserved in the Vatican library: BAV, Ottob. Lat. 2360, f. 1, 1689. Printed copies of the libretto are known. The opera has been studied by Holmes, p. 79.

⁶⁰ AS-F, Mediceo 3956 and 3408; AS-M, Busta 67 {66}, "Avvisi di Roma," Cavalleria Ducale-Estero Ambasciatori, Agenti e correspondenti Estensi, Italia, Roma, vol. 259, Carteggi dell'Abbate Ponziroli. Excerpts of some of the letters are reproduced by Holmes.

⁶¹ AS-M, Busta 67 {66}, "Avvisi di Roma," March 22, 1690.

⁶² Holmes, pp. 79-92.

⁶³ AS-F, Mediceo 3956 & 3408, April 11, 1690: "Domenico sera il Sig. Card. Ottoboni fece rappresentare nella Cancelleria sotto titolo d'oratorio la commedia della Statira...." For more on *La Statira*, see Cametti, I, p. 74, II, p. 342-345.

an independent entrepreneur. In letters of April 29, Mancini reported that Ottoboni had torn down the stables at the Cancelleria to build “a superb theater,” presumably del Lino’s, for the following carnival season as a substitute to the Tor di Nona, and to engage “performers of the first rank.”⁶⁴ Clearly, this was more than just a puppet theater.

Puppet theaters were popular at the time.⁶⁵ These had shallow stages both for string marionettes (*pupazzai*) and for silhouette puppets manipulated by sticks (*burrattini*). By 1696, Ottoboni had installed such a theater in his palace, where he entertained the Imperial Ambassador in February, with other puppet performances held the rest of the week.⁶⁶ Highly popular in Roman society, the performances were both dramatic and musical in nature. More will be said of this theater shortly.

Other renovations in the Vice-Chancellor’s palace included suites for the more prominent members of his court, although it is not possible to locate rooms for all of the residents in Ottoboni’s palace.⁶⁷ Early references are made to the quarters for his violinist-composer, Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), and the suite of his court painter, Francesco Trevisani (1656-1746).⁶⁸ Accounts of the delivery of materials to Trevisani’s rooms for use in the decoration of Corelli’s suite give us information of their presence in the palace. The cardinal’s sculptor, Angelo de’ Rossi (1671-1714), also had a studio in the Cancelleria on the top floor toward the silversmiths’ via del Pellegrino. It remained untouched for ten years after his death.⁶⁹

64 AS-F, Mediceo 3956 & 3408, April 29, 1690: “Il Sig. Card. Ottoboni ha levete le stalle del suo palazzo della Cancelleria e vi fa un teatro da comidie molto superpo...”. AS-M, Busta 67 [66], “Avvisi di Roma,”; [Ottoboni] ha già fatto dar principio alla fabrica d’un teatro dentro il Palazzo della Cancelleria per farvi recitare le commedie nel carnevale futuro, et intende che questo succeda in luogo di Tordinona, e che in quello recitino Istrioni di prima riga...”. Holmes has stated (p. 92) that it would be many years before a permanent theater would be in use at the palace, unaware that del Lino’s theater had been completed and, like the Tor di Nona, was dismantled by order of Innocent XII.

65 Signorelli, pp. 550-559.

66 BAV, Ottob. Lat., 3361, p. 10v, February 4, 1696; “Il S.re Card. Ottoboni ha fatto preparare la recita della second commedia in musica nel suo teatro de pupazzi.” The Venetian ambassador, Morosini, had comedies performed in his court in 1705 with puppets which he had borrowed from Ottoboni; Valesio, III, p. 312, February 12, 1705. This was probably Scarlatti’s *La Pastorella*, a *pasticcio* opera based on Ottoboni’s libretto which was also later performed at Ottoboni’s “teatrino da musici senza habito teatrale;” Speaight, 1958, 9; Valesio, III, p. 553, February 10, 1706; p. 12v, February 11, 1696; p. 15v, February 18, 1696.

67 For a review of the major residents in Ottoboni’s court, see Schiavo, 1979, 552-560.

68 A bill of March 19, 1694, for 251.26 scudi was payment to the painter Domenico Paradisi for decorating three windows in Corelli’s apartment in the Cancelleria; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 30, no. 61. A *conto* or bill of 1698 refers to the “studio del Sig. Francesco Trevisani nella Cancelleria,” BAV, Comp. Ottob. Vol. 38, February 1698.

69 Its location is reported by Schiavo from a *conto* for repairs to the roof of the palace; Schiavo, 1972, p. 345. Payments to laborers in 1723 make reference to marble for two statues of the personifications for the tomb of Pope Alexander VIII still in Rossi’s studio. BAV, Comp. Ottob. Vol. 83, nos. 20 and 35 (cancelled), July 10, 1724.

In his guidebook to Rome, Rossini referred to the famous library of Queen Christina of Sweden which had been purchased by Pope Alexander VIII as occupying a suite of five rooms on the *piano nobile* (see Figure 2.3), while Ottoboni's important tapestries decorated the suite of five rooms above.⁷⁰ The library alone attracted foreign visitors, and had been moved with other goods from the Palazzo di San Marco where Ottoboni's great-uncle resided as cardinal-protector of the Venetian nation. Also among the apartments was Ottoboni's gallery of paintings which occupied several rooms overlooking the piazza of San Lorenzo toward the southeast (Figure 2.4).⁷¹ In Ottoboni's apartment on the *piano nobile* could be found pictures by Bassano, Guido Reni, Titian, Veronese, Lanfranco, and Guercino, among others. One hall in the palace was devoted entirely to landscape paintings, and another room was described as decorated exclusively with forest tapestries. Ottoboni owned more than 100 landscape paintings, almost all by Gaspard Dughet. There was also a large art gallery emphasized by Rossini, which contained many of the cardinal's major paintings. These eventually included the series of *Seven Sacraments* by G.M. Crespi, Luca Giordano's *Last Supper* and *Marriage at Cana*, Sebastiano Ricci's *Raising of Lazarus*, as well as pictures by his resident painters, Francesco Trevisani, and later Sebastiano Conca. Another studio housed the collection of coins and medals assembled by Ottoboni's great-uncle.

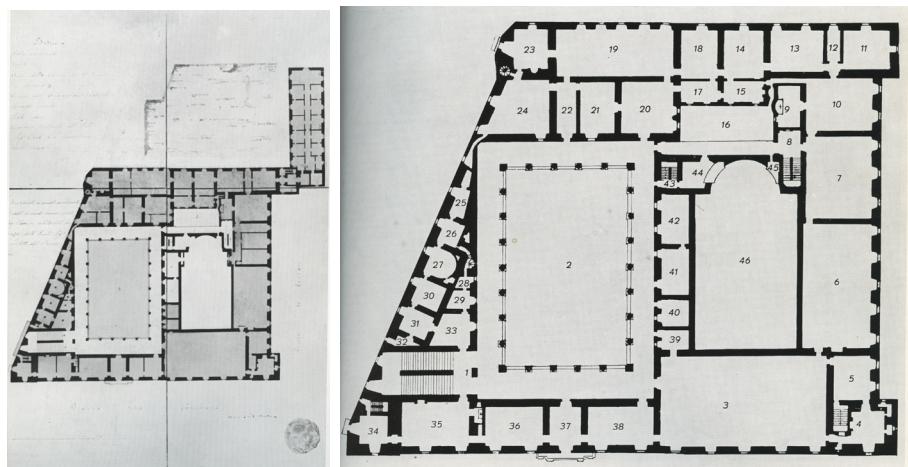


Figure 2.4: Cancelleria, Rome, plan of *piano nobile*.

⁷⁰ Chracas places the library on the *piano nobile* and locates the galleries above, confirming Pietro Rossini's descriptions of thirty-five years before; Chracas, vol. 45, no. 1627, January 10, 1728, pp. 8-12; Rossini, p. 70.

⁷¹ Rossini, p. 69; Schiavo, 1964, pp. 196-197. For the inventory of Ottoboni's paintings, see Olszewski, 2004.

2.3 Ottoboni Holdings

In 1710, Ottoboni had purchased a vineyard and casino in Trastevere from the Barberini family for 21,000 *scudi*.⁷² The casino was near the Palazzo Corsini and Villa Farnesina in the parish of San Cosimato.⁷³ The vineyard grounds included the present location of the American Academy (Figure 2.5). Ottoboni had paid a down payment for the property of 6,500 *scudi*, but on his death in 1740, the Barberini were among his creditors, claiming the remaining 14,500 *scudi*.⁷⁴ The Roman diarist, Francesco Valesio, reported that the Marchese Riario had given Ottoboni free use of his casino on the Lungara,⁷⁵ implying that this was for an indefinite period. This was the same Casino Riario where Queen Christina first stayed on her entry to Rome in 1655, and which was also reserved for the King of Denmark's visit to Rome in 1709 which never materialized.⁷⁶

Ottoboni rented half of the Palazzo de Cupis Ornani on Piazza Navona (Figure 2.6) in his capacity as cardinal-protector of the French Crown, a position made available to Ottoboni when Francesco Maria de' Medici resigned as cardinal in 1709 to marry and continue the family line.⁷⁷ As Vice-Chancellor of the Church, the cardinal was not allowed to display the French standard at his palace which was the Seat of the Holy See. Thus, he rented suites from his *maestro di camera*, the Marchese De Cupis Ornani.⁷⁸ The building is identified in Piazza Navona by G.B.

⁷² This was located as a “Villa & Vigna su le mura di Roma a S. Cosimato a Porto S. Pancrazio.” Ottoboni paid only 6,500 *scudi* of the 21,000 *scudi* sale price for which his heirs were later sued by the Barberini family. AS, N.A.C. 1849, February 23, 1710, p. 166; ASV, Arch. Ottob., vol. 84, September 23, 1710, “Instrumento di Compra d.a / Vigna e Villa Barberini / a S. Cosimato / fatto dal Card. Pietro Ottoboni.” For Ottoboni’s purchase of a casino in Trastevere for 15,000 *scudi*, see AS, A.C. 1830, October 21, 1710, p. 1900v.

⁷³ S. Cosimato in Trastevere is identified with SS. Cosma e Damiano in Mica Aurea: Armellini, M. (1942). *Le chiese di Roma dal secolo IV al XIX* (II, pp. 815-820). 2 vols., Rome: Nicola Ruffolo.

⁷⁴ They also claimed an additional 14,000 *scudi* which represented 4% interest. A judgment of 2.75% was put on the interest request. At one point, the Barberini even suggested that their agents might have better luck pursuing the matter in the Venetian courts: BAV, Arch. Barb. IV, fasc. 637, 1740.

⁷⁵ Valesio, II, May 5, 1703, p. 587. This is to be distinguished from the so-called “casino Riario” in Ottoboni’s garden of the Cancelleria; Valesio, III, July 11, 1706, p. 634.

⁷⁶ Valesio, IV, March 12, 1709, p. 246; March 21, 1709, p. 250; furnishings had been provided by the Barberini and by Livio Odescalchi acquired from the estate of Queen Christina of Sweden. An engraving of the casino is reproduced in Magnuson, II, p. 161. See also, *Correspondance*, vol. 3, no. 1336, March 23, 1709, p. 269.

⁷⁷ After the death of the Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1587, an earlier Medici cardinal had resigned his cardinalate so he might marry to continue the family line; Coffin, p. 232. In 1671, Camillo Pamphili surrendered his position to marry Donna Olympia Aldobrandini, and Cardinal Altieri took a similar course later in the century; Magnuson, II, pp. 6-7; Haskell, p. 147.

⁷⁸ For the rental of the Palazzo de Cupis, see BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 64, March 18, 1712; vol. 67, fasc. 116, December 10, 1714; vol. 79, fasc. 84, February 13, 1721; vol. 87, January 28, 1725, and Valesio, IV, August 6, 1709, p. 311; October 4, 1725, p. 590. For more on the palace, see *Guide rionali*, VI, Parte 1, 1973, pp. 32-34; Pietrangeli, pp. 247-255.



Figure 2.5: Nolli Map of Rome (Trastevere with Ottoboni *vigna* and *Bosco Parrasio*), 1748.



Figure 2.6: Palazzo de Cupis Ornani, Piazza Navona, Rome.

Nolli as no. 604 in his map of Rome of 1748 (Figure 2.7), but its principal façade was not on the Piazza Navona but behind on the Via del Anima.⁷⁹ Twelve window bays in a three story elevation define the palace block. The third floor is topped with an attic story identified by small rectangular windows. The fenestration of the *piano nobile* retains its sixteenth-century cornices, although the palace proper dates from the second half of the fifteenth century. Already in 1551, the Bufalini map of Rome showed the structure bifurcated in plan with two courtyards. G.B. De Rossi, the famous eighteenth-century engraver, had his shop on the ground floor.⁸⁰ The French minister, Cardinal Polignac, resided for a time in the other half of the palace.⁸¹

Ottoboni's great-uncle had also awarded him many rich benefices, but his favorite was the abbey palace of the Hieronymites in Albano where he spent many leisure hours.⁸² The ruined monastery of San Paolo had been turned into a splendid summer residence by the Venetian Cardinal Lodovico Trevisan in the sixteenth century.⁸³ Ottoboni visited the abbey every third Sunday in October, his presence usually accompanied by celebrations and lavish gifts to the church and to its priests and parishioners. Roman nobility and foreign luminaries were often invited to participate. For example, there were forty-four guests at his dinner in the abbey in 1720.⁸⁴ For his October festivities in 1722, Ottoboni celebrated with an exposition of the Sacred Host accompanied by an impressive devotional construction, or *machina*, in the abbey church.⁸⁵

Ottoboni also sought refuge in Albano on weekends and to escape the heat of the Roman summers. The retreat offered him the opportunity for withdrawal from the pressures of the court in the venerable tradition of *otium*, or restorative leisure, an ancient concept that had been revived by Petrarch.⁸⁶

⁷⁹ Viale Ferrero has mistakenly concluded on the basis of inscriptions on two drawings by Juvarra that Ottoboni owned the house; p. 71. The drawings are folio 50v in the Victoria & Albert Museum, and Ris. 59, 4a Carta 100 (3) in the Biblioteca Nazionale in Turin, which depicts Juvarra's drawings for festival illuminations of the palace façade. For the Palazzo de Cupis and explicit reference to its rental, see Valesio, IV, July 12, 1709, p. 299; August 6, 1709, p. 311; Pietrangeli, p. 255.

⁸⁰ Pietrangeli, p. 253; *Guide rionali*, VI, Parte I, 1973, p. 34.

⁸¹ *Correspondance*, vol. 8, no. 3283, December 1, 1729, pp. 69-77; Pietrangeli, p. 251.

⁸² For more on Ottoboni at Albano, see *Correspondance*, vol. 3, no. 1386, November 2, 1709, p. 337; "Son Eminence M. le Cardinal Ottobon est toujours à Albano...;" no. 1387, November 9, 1709, p. 340; no. 1388, November 16, 1709, p. 341; no. 1460, October 18, 1710, p. 240; Chracas, vol. 18, no. 604, May 28, 1721, p. 5.

⁸³ Coffin, pp. 25, 267.

⁸⁴ Chracas, vol. 16, no. 513, pp. 5-6, October 26, 1720.

⁸⁵ Chracas, vol. 24, no. 816, October 24, 1722, p. 2.

⁸⁶ Coffin, p. 267.

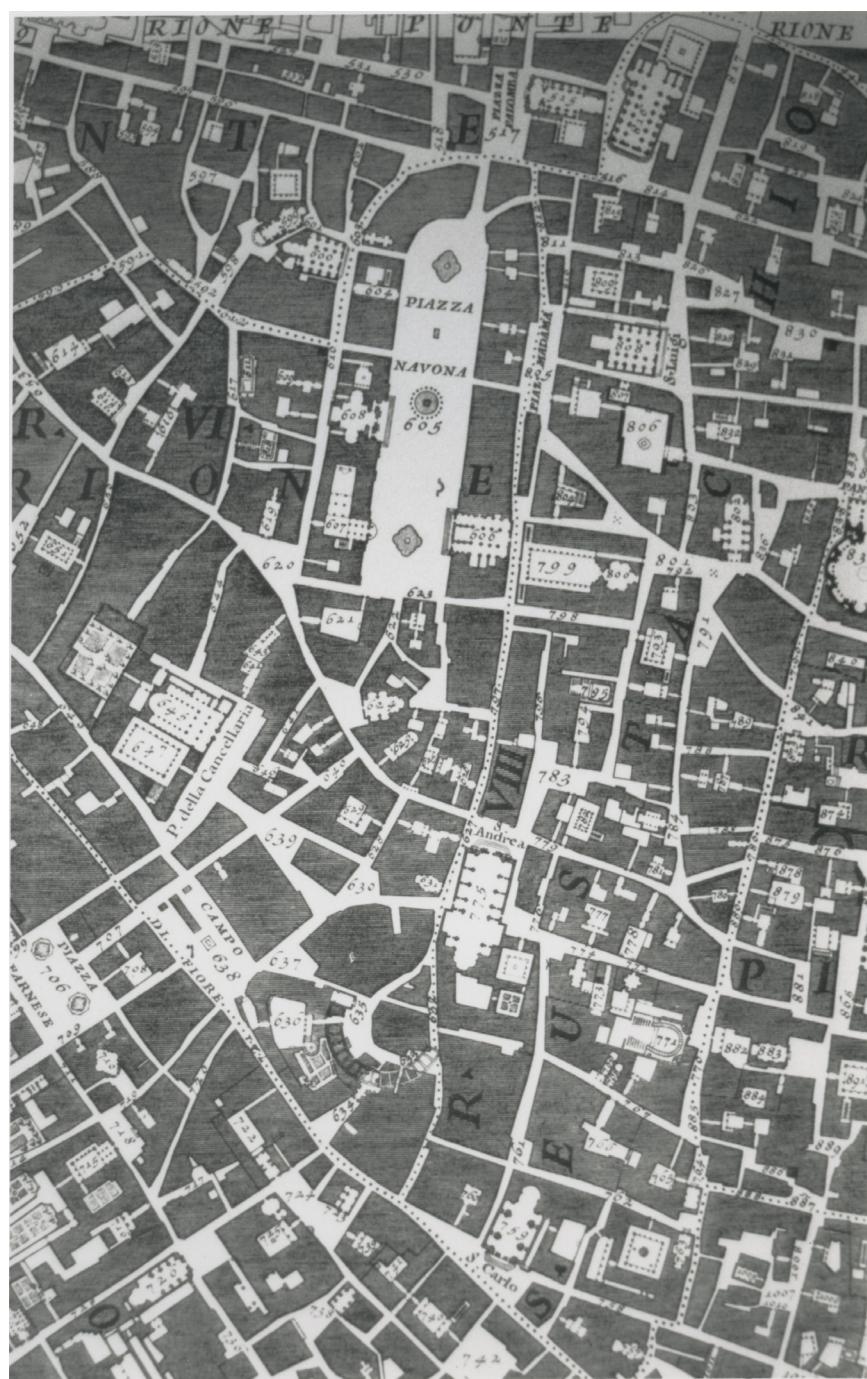


Figure 2.7: *Nolli Map of Rome* (Piazza Navona, detail), 1748.

In 1694, the versatile Carlo Enrico di San Martino entered the palace ranks as the designer of Ottoboni's tomb for Pope Alexander VIII in the Vatican basilica (see Figure 2.2).⁸⁷ San Martino's designs for the tomb were approved by the architect of St. Peter, Carlo Fontana, in 1699 (Figure 2.8).⁸⁸ His diagrams of the niche structure are preserved in Windsor Castle. San Martino had left the court by 1701 on completion of the tomb niche near the crossing of the basilica.⁸⁹ The tomb sculpture remained to be installed, and at this point the project entered the care of the sculptor, Angelo de' Rossi.⁹⁰

Alexander VIII's tomb was to have been in place for its dedication during the Holy Year of 1700. Almost a decade had passed since the pope's demise, but the renovation of the Cancelleria distracted Ottoboni's attention and emptied his treasury. Although architectural work on the tomb's niche had been completed when the Holy Year arrived, Ottoboni could only display a small model in wood and painted canvas with stucco figures. Full size figures were *in situ* by 1706 when the pope's body was interred in the crypt, but these, too, were stucco figures rather than the marble allegories and bronze effigy of the present tomb.⁹¹

Stress on the cardinal's finances, dynastic concerns, and pressures on the strength of his religious vocation manifested themselves simultaneously at the turn of the century. Ottoboni proposed marriage to the daughter of the deceased Duchess of Sora who had just inherited her mother's Duchy of Piombino.⁹² Although the Sora family turned him away, the status of Ottoboni's financial situation was resolved temporarily with his appointment as arch-priest of Santa Maria Maggiore by the newly elected Albani pope, Clement XI, in July of 1702.⁹³

⁸⁷ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 30, fasc. 1, "Rollo di Famiglia," January 1694, listed with a monthly stipend of twelve *scudi* which is raised to fifteen in April; no. 24, "Rollo di Famiglia," April 1694. Lists of the Ottoboni family rolls are missing for 1689, 1692-1693, 1696-1697, 1699, 1701-1702, 1705-1706, 1719-1721, 1730, 1738. For the Vatican tomb, see Olszewski, 1986, 2004.

⁸⁸ The designs submitted for approval involved a niche of twelve *palmi* or c. nine feet in depth in a left transept pier. The drawings for the plan and elevation of the tomb have been published by Braham and Hager, pp. 55-56, figs. 29-31.

⁸⁹ San Martino is still listed as a resident in the official rolls as late as 1698 as "Conte S. Martino Cavallerizzo" with a monthly pension of twelve *scudi*; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 38, "Rollo di Famiglia," no. 6, January 1698. He is not entered in 1700 (family rolls for 1699 and 1701 are missing); BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 40, fasc. 1, "Rollo di Famiglia," January 1700.

⁹⁰ For more on Rossi, see Franz-Duhme, and Olszewski, 2004.

⁹¹ Valesio, III, p. 547, February 1, 1706; pp. 559-560, February 18, 1706.

⁹² Valesio, I, p. 262, January 9, 1701.

⁹³ Valesio, I, p. 272, January 22, 1701; II, p. 210, July 11, 1702.

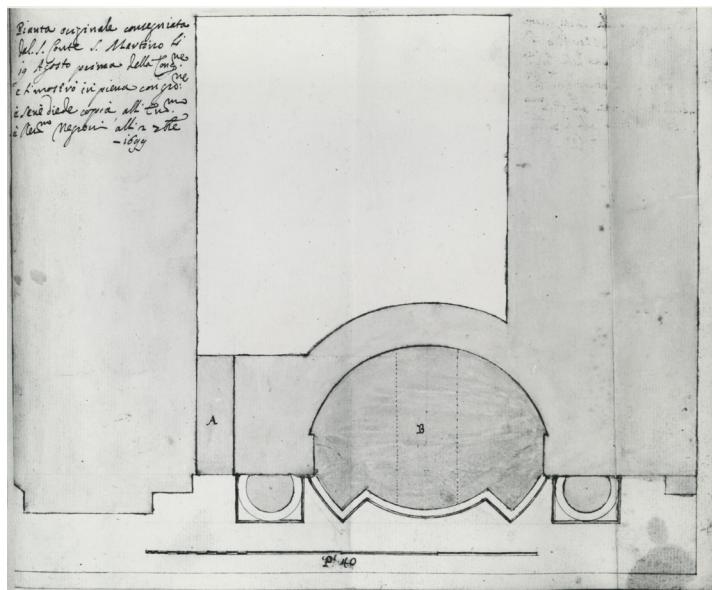


Figure 2.8: Carlo Enrico di San Martino, *Plan of Vatican Niche for Tomb of Pope Alexander VIII*, 1699, drawing.

Unexpected expenses for repairs to the Cancelleria and its basilica were encountered in the first weeks of 1703 when a devastating earthquake terrified the Roman populace, and caused serious damage to buildings and monuments including the Colosseum.⁹⁴ Extensive repairs were required in the Cancelleria's Sala Riaria and on the soffit of San Lorenzo in Damaso. Ottoboni celebrated his rescue from the tremor with an architectural statement. He commissioned an illuminated *machina* to accompany a display of the Sacred Host.⁹⁵ Such temporary devices were highly popular, and Ottoboni's sponsorship of them engaged a number of architects over the years as will be reviewed shortly. In this case, Ottoboni's apparatus also honored the reigning pope, Clement XI, by depicting the paleo-Christian subject of his predecessor and namesake, Clement I, kneeling in prayer before the gaze of Trajan. In the construction, a lamb appeared above a small cliff with water gushing from a rock. At the right of the *machina* thirsting Christians were shown running to a miraculous font emerging from ruins. The phrase, *Orante sancto Clemente*, appeared as if chisled in marble. Clouds parted in an *epiphanias* to reveal the Sacred Host adored by a choir of angels. For Valesio, the *machina* demonstrated the cardinal's generosity and piety.

⁹⁴ Valesio, II, pp. 501-506, February 2&3, 1703.

⁹⁵ Valesio, II, p. 551, March 17, 1703. Valesio does not mention the architect of the *machina*.

2.4 G.F. Pellegrini

At the end of the 1690s another architect joined Ottoboni's household, listed in the family rolls as, "Giovanni Francesco Pellegrini Architetto."⁹⁶ Pellegrini (c. 1656-1732) is referred to elsewhere as *Maestro di Camera* for the Duke of Fiano, indicating that he served as a court functionary when not involved in architectural projects.⁹⁷ The biographer Scipione Maffei has underscored his rare mechanical talents for the Ottoboni court with the observation, "Era il Pellegrini di rara abilità nelle meccaniche," and the anonymous biographer of Juvarra called him a "dilettante in meccaniche."⁹⁸

Accounts in contemporary chronicles inform us of Pellegrini's architectural duties for Ottoboni. In 1702, he was cited in a pamphlet published in honor of the occasion as flaunting his usual engineering skills as the "solito Ingegniere delle Machine del prenominato Eminentissimo Porporato" for the *machina* that Ottoboni had ordered constructed for that February's Forty Hours devotions (see Appendix, doc. 1). The description is especially noteworthy, because it gives the dimensions of Pellegrini's apparatus as 100 x 60 *palmi* or more than seventy feet high and almost 45 feet in width. This would clearly have dominated the nave of Ottoboni's basilica in the Cancelleria (Figure 2.9).

Valesio reported that in 1705 Pellegrini erected a noble theater for Ottoboni in the courtyard of the Cancelleria (Figure 2.10) for the performance of an oratorio that had been written by Ottoboni himself.⁹⁹ Such temporary structures were a frequent activity

⁹⁶ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 38, "Rollo di Famiglia, diversi," no. 6, January 1698. He is listed initially under *Diversi* with a monthly allowance of eight *scudi*. A decade later his name appears under the heading of *Gentiluomini* with a monthly stipend of ten *scudi*; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 59, "Rollo di Famiglia," January 1710. It has been reported that the Venetian Sebastiano Ricci on his arrival in Rome in 1691 replaced Francesco Bibiena as Ottoboni's stage designer at the Cancelleria; Gross, p. 338. There is no evidence of either artist working for Ottoboni, and Gross's citations do not confirm his claims; Michel, O. (1981). L'Accademia, *Le Palais Farnèse* (I, part 2, p. 572). École française de Rome. Ricci provided Bibiena with scenography for *Orfeo* which was dedicated to Cardinal Ottoboni but was performed at the Torre della Pace in 1694, by which time Ricci had already departed for Milan.

⁹⁷ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 74, fasc p.o, "Rollo di Famiglia, Diversi," January 1717, "Gio. Fran.co Pellegrini Mastro di Cam.a del Sig.e Duca di Fiano." Tommaso Manfredi refers to Pellegrini as Ottoboni's *maestro di camera* and *scenografo*, but is not certain of his activities after 1709; "Pellegrini Giovanni Francesco," in *In Urbe*, p. 419; "L'arrivo a Roma di Filippo Juvarra e l'apprendistato di Pietro Passalacqua nelle cronache domestiche di una famiglia messinese," *Architettura*, 1-2, 1989, 419.

⁹⁸ Viale Ferrero, p. 20.

⁹⁹ Valesio, III, p. 438, August 23, 1705; "Si vide hoggi nel cortile della Cancelleria preparato un nobile teatro fattovi erigere del cardinale Ottoboni et architettato da Giovanni Francesco Pellegrini, per cantarvi questa sera un oratorio, la di cui poesia era del medesimo cardinale." An anonymous chronicle identifies the subject as an Assumption of the Virgin, and reports that 10,000 visitors attended the spectacle; BAV, Ottob. Lat., 2733, p. 89v, August 29, 1705; Si vede nella notte mutato il Cortile del Palazzo della Cancelleria in un nuovo Anfiteatro tutto adobbato et illuminato da numerose torcie, e celi, ove fù cantata à Quattro voci un Oratorio composto dell'erudita penna dell'Emo Ottoboni in lode

for Ottoboni's resident architects, and more will be said of them and of Pellegrini shortly.



Figure 2.9: San Lorenzo in Damaso, nave interior after 1815, Rome.

del Regno di Maria Vergine assunta al cielo, accompagnato da Virtuose Sinfonie, che tirò un Popolo infinito misto di Cardinali, Prencipi, Dame, e Cav.ri che anche in questo ammirarono la grandezza della naturale generosità di S. Em.a nel fare distribuire a tutti gl'Astanti abbondato rinfreschi, che potevano essere da m/10 persone in circa.”



Figure 2.10: Cancelleria, courtyard, Rome.

2.5 Nicola Michetti

Two other architects entered Ottoboni's court as the first decade of the century came to a close. These were the Roman, Nicola Michetti (c. 1675-1758),¹⁰⁰ and the Sicilian, Filippo Juvarra (1678-1736).¹⁰¹ The cardinal had commissioned Michetti to construct

¹⁰⁰ For information on Michetti, see Pinto, 1982; Kelly, C. (March 1991). Carlo Rainaldi, Nicola Michetti, and the Patronage of Cardinal Giuseppe Sacripante, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 50, 57-67; Thieme-Becker, 24, p. 532.

¹⁰¹ There is a vast literature on Juvarra, but the most recent sources are Millon, 1984; Boscarino; Viale Ferrero.

machine for pre-Lenten celebrations in 1707 and 1708 (see Appendix, docs. 2, 3), and in October of 1708 his name was entered in the palace rolls.¹⁰² He was given quarters next to the studio of Ottoboni's painter, Trevisani.¹⁰³ As in the case of del Lino, Michetti's entry into the court followed the completion of a project for the cardinal. This was a customary practice for Ottoboni with many of his artists.

Michetti became involved with other Roman projects such as the Sagripanti Chapel in Sant'Ignazio in 1710, and the Rospigliosi Chapel in San Francesco a Ripa that same year. He had already left Ottoboni's court when he replaced Fontana at the Santi Apostoli in 1712. Michetti also succeeded him at the Ospizio di San Michele when Fontana died two years later. On his departure for Russia in 1718, Michetti earned renown as architect for the Czar, Peter the Great, then returned to Rome in early 1724 whereupon he gave an accounting of his travels to Ottoboni.¹⁰⁴ Michetti had maintained contacts with Ottoboni, perhaps in hopes of re-entering the cardinal's services on his return to Rome. In 1721, Ottoboni had been sent a gift of a fur from the Czar, no doubt at Michetti's instigation.¹⁰⁵

Michetti was accepted into the Academy of Saint Luke in 1725. His most productive years between 1729 and 1733 began with his elaborate sets for the opera, *Carlo Magno*, performed in Ottoboni's theater in celebration of the birth of the dauphin in 1729 (Figure 2.11). Michetti is identified on the title page of the libretto as the scene designer and "Ingegnire del Signor Cardinal Ottoboni."¹⁰⁶

Michetti's work for Ottoboni was limited essentially to theatrical production. He did not enter the cardinal's court a second time, and Ottoboni failed to turn to him for his projects in San Lorenzo in Damaso, especially after the death of Pellegrini in 1732. Alternatively, Michetti may have been simply unavailable as he was already working on a wing of the Palazzo Colonna in 1731.¹⁰⁷ He seems not to have commanded the

102 Pinto reports that Michetti "officially entered the household of Cardinal Ottoboni in 1709; 1980, pp. 292, 293, but the first entry for Michetti in the Ottoboni family rolls is in October 1708 under the heading of "Agiut," without a stipend; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 55, no. 19, October 1708. He is entered in the court rolls in January 1709 under "Agiut.i di Cam.a" as "Nicola Michetti Novo Guard.ta" without a stipend; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 57, no. p.mo, "Rollo di Famiglia," January 1709. In July his name appears under "Agiut.i di Cam.a" as "Nicola Michetti Guardarobba," with an allowance of eight *scudi*; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 57, fasc. 10, July 1709. Michetti's name does not appear in the rolls for 1711 where he is replaced as "Guardarobba" by Giuseppe Celli; Viale Ferrero, p. 70, n. 35.

103 BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 55, fasc. 59, 1708. The suite is not located precisely, but presumably was on the third floor.

104 His return is noted in a letter by Poerson of February 1, 1724, who refers to him as "un sculpteur italien;" *Correspondance*, vol. 6, no. 2594, p. 330.

105 *Correspondance*, vol. 6, no. 2305, January 7, 1721.

106 (1729). Inventore delle scene. Il Cavalier Nicolò Romano Ingegniere del Signor Cardinale Ottoboni. *Carlo Magno. Festa Teatrale in Occasione della nascita del Delfino...*, Rome: Antonio de' Rossi. See Pinto, 1980, pp. 289-322 for a comprehensive discussion of Michetti's involvement with this opera.

107 Blunt, p. 174.

same respect as Juvarra, and was not accepted as having the same level of talent.¹⁰⁸ He retained a monetary tie with Ottoboni after the cardinal's death: Michetti is one of the few artists still mentioned in the lists of Ottoboni's creditors as late as 1750. He was owed more than 600 scudi "P(er) Spese fatte p(er) il Teatro e p(er) l'espoz.e del Venta."¹⁰⁹ This may have been for work on the lantern of Ottoboni's theater which Michetti renovated in 1729. The cardinal's theater requires a more extensive discussion.



Figure. 2.11: Nicola Michetti, *Carlo Magno*, libretto, frontispiece, 1729.

¹⁰⁸ Viale Ferrero, p. 61, n. 21.

¹⁰⁹ RSV, Arch. Ottob., vol. 82, p. 18, for 609.50 scudi. This could have involved work on the lantern of Ottoboni's theater during its construction in 1709-1710, but more probably during its renovation by Michetti in 1729; Schiavo, 1972, 345; Pinto, 1980, p. 296. For other lists of Ottoboni's creditors, see ASV, Arch. Ottob., vol. 126, October 1, 1750 (256 pp.).