

Luigi Castaldi (Pistoia 1890-Firenze 1945) and his outstanding contribution to the history of Florentine wax modelling

Alessandro Riva^{1,2}, Gabriele Conti² and Maria Alberta Lilliu²

¹Museum of Anatomical Waxes, Cagliari, Italy

²Dept of Biomedical Sciences, University of Cagliari, Monserrato (CA), Italy

Luigi Castaldi a pupil of Giulio Chiarugi and promoter, in 1929, with Nello Becari and Emerico Luna, of the Società Italiana di Anatomia was, from 1927 to 1943, Director of the Anatomy Institute of the University of Cagliari. His publications, encompassing various fields of anatomy, neuroanatomy, auxology, applied anatomy, biology, and experimental morphology were awarded with several prestigious national and international prizes. Similar acknowledgements were granted to his many publications on the History of Anatomy and Medicine. Among them, there are the biographies of Filippo Civinini (1805-1844), Filippo Pacini (1812-1883), Atto Tigri (1813-1875) and the oration given the 29th of September 1935 for the translation of the remains of these illustrious anatomists from Pistoia to the church of S. Maria delle Grazie, adjacent to the Ospedale del Ceppo, the seat of the old Medical School of Pistoia. Nowadays, the most well known of his historical studies, regarded as a true classic, is the masterly essay: "Francesco Antonio Boi primo cattedratico di anatomia a Cagliari e le cere fiorentine di Clemente Susini". The book, published by L Olschki posthumously in 1947 through the good offices of his friends, and still present in the catalogue of the original publisher, is scrupulously supported by documents found in the archives of Cagliari and Florence. Besides illustrating the figure of FA Boi the Sardinian Anatomist who, by order of Carlo Felice of Savoy, commissioned the wax models for the University of Cagliari to Clemente Susini, Castaldi gives a vivid and unprecedented description of La Specola Museum, and of the personalities responsible for its establishment. Moreover, though highly praising the outstanding scientific achievements of Felice Fontana, for the first time, he ascribes to Clemente Susini the wax modelling, formerly known as the work of Fontana.

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