Donato Bramante Encyclopedia Article

Donato Bramante

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Donato Bramante

1444-1514

Italian architect who launched the High Renaissance style in architecture. Bramante was born in Monte Asdruald (now Fermignano), near Urbino. Details of his early life are sketchy, but it is known that at an early age he studied painting under the Italian masters Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) and Piero della Francesca (1420?-1492). Bramante later relocated to Milan, where he is believed to have shared discussions on architectural style with Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519). Bramante completed several structures in Milan before moving to Rome in 1499. His architecture was characterized by its use of illusion, which was more commonplace in painting than in building design. In 1503, Bramante entered into the service of Pope Julius II (1443-1513) and two years later began work on his greatest achievement, the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome. His other major projects included the Belvedere courtyard in the Vatican (begun c. 1505), and the choir of Santa Maria del Popolo.