

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

AGASSE, Jacques-Laurent

Geneva 24.III.1767 – London 27.XII.1849

History and animal painter as well as portraitist. He was born into a family of merchants, and developed an interest in animals at an early age, copying the plates from Buffon's *Histoire naturelle* in paper cut-outs in the manner of Huber. From 1782 he learned drawing in Geneva, working with Töpffer and Firmin Massot (*q.v.*) with whom he is said to have collaborated on two early pastels, of Agasse and his sister. From 1786 to 1789 he studied with David in Paris. The revolution sent him back to Geneva, where he encountered George Pitt, later Lord Rivers, who persuaded him to travel to England. He returned to Geneva, Lausanne and Paris before definitively settling in London in 1800. A signed pastel of a group of merinos was executed to illustrate the methods adopted by Charles Pictet de Rochemont (1755–1824), a diplomat and celebrated agriculturist, in his model farm at Lancy near Geneva (according to Renée Loche's expertise). Agasse made several drawings of the same subject.

Monographic exhibitions

Agasse 1988: *Jacques-Laurent Agasse (1767–1849)*, Geneva, mA.H., 10.XI.1988–22.I.1989; London, Tate, 15.II.–2.IV.1989. Cat. Lucien Boissonas, Renée Loche & Colston Sanger

Bibliography

Bénézit; Grove; Saur; Wright 2006

Pastels

J.1014.101 Troupeau de merinos sur un fond de paysage, pstl/pchm, 42x53, sd ↓ 1787 (Zurich, Sotheby's, 2.XII.1998, Lot 15 repr., est. SwFr7–9,000, SwFr8625. Fondation Asbjorn Lunde; Paris, Sotheby's, 14.VI.2023, Lot 150 repr., est. €800–1200, €760) φ

