

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

BARBER, Christopher

c.1736 – London 1810

Portrait painter in oil, watercolour and miniature (including “oil miniatures”), and “well skilled in crayons” according to his obituary (reporting his death at his apartments, Great St Marylebone Street, 8.III.1810). He exhibited at the Society of Artists in 1763 and the Free Society between 1765 and 1769, from 3 Furnival’s Inn Court; from Mr Singleton’s, New Exchange Buildings, Strand; and from Mr Volleton’s, corner of St Martin’s Lane, Strand. The numerous submissions included one head “in chalks” (Free Society 1766). Apparently he made a particular study of “magylp” or the art of preparing and mixing colours in the manner of the old masters; this accounted for the permanent brilliancy of his pictures (megilp, a mixture of mastic varnish and linseed oil, is in fact unstable). It is not clear if he also prepared his pastels.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Foskett 1987; *Gentleman’s magazine*, 1810, p. 293; Oxford DNB