

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

## Online edition

### BORNET, Claude

Paris 1733–15.III.1804

Member (*reçu* 1766) and conseiller of the Académie de Saint-Luc; peintre, rue Guénégaud (1782); “un artiste distingué” according to the *Almanach des peintres* of 1776, which lists him twice as a portraitist in enamel, and again as an enamellist – “peint supérieurement la miniature en émail, ainsi que le portrait”. Research published here in 2021 reveals that he was the son of Pierre Bornet, employé au bureau des cuirs in Paris (who was dead by 1765) and his wife, Nicolle Moussard. On 17.IV.1765, at Paris, Saint-Barthélemy (by contract of 14.IV.1765 before Le Pot d’Auteuil, AN MC/LIII/397), he married the minor Charlotte de Noireterre, daughter of Charles and Marie-Anne Voile de Villarnou, sister of a brigadier des fermes du roi, and aunt of the miniaturist Marie-Thérèse de Noireterre (*q.n.*). The bride’s mother was represented by Edme Mentelle, a history and geography teacher at the Ecole militaire (whose portrait in miniature Bornet would exhibit in 1774), and the wedding was also attended by a diverse group including Bornet’s sister Marguerite-Louise, a goldsmith, Noël Thery, a couturière and an avocat au parlement, Edmé Philbert Gois, brother of the sculptor Étienne-Pierre-Adrien Gois; as well as by Gaspar Conti, an Italian literary figure who was also a professor at the École militaire in Paris, and his wife, Margaret Thornburgh (from the Kendal family), to whose memory Conti would, a few years later, dedicate an anthology of Italian literature with illustrations by Gravelot engraved by Jacques Le Roy.

The death of an 8-month old son, Claude-Edme (perhaps a godson of Mentelle or of Gois), was recorded at Le Pecq (Yvelines), 2.VII.1767, registered by the nourricier; the parents then resided at “rue Saint-Louis près le palais Marchand, paroisse Saint-Barthélemy, Paris”. A carte de sûreté, issued 8.VIII.1793, confirms that Bornet was living at 985 rue de Beaurepaire, having previously lived in the rue Guénégaud; the “peintre” was then aged 60 and had lived in Paris since birth. In 1798 he lived in the rue de la Sorbonne, en face du passage Benoît. Bornet died 24 ventôse an XII in Paris, 11<sup>e</sup> (état civil reconstitué); no posthumous inventory is known.

In view of the musical connections of the Noireterre family, it is possible that Bornet was related to Claude-Pierre Bornet, ordinaire de l’Académie royale de musique and his brother Louis Bornet, dit l’Aîné, violinist, teacher and music seller (rue Croix ds Petits-Champs; later rue des Prouvaires). This may have provided a connection with the Gosseume family; the amateur violinist’s father (continued by his widow) ran a tennis court in the rue Saint-Hyacinthe, near the Porte Saint-Jacques, where prints were also sold (the establishment figures in numerous police reports, and appears to have attracted a certain notoriety).

Little is known about Bornet’s training before the pastels he made in the 1760s, but one miniature which he exhibited in 1798, a Vierge avec son fils from the artist’s own collection,

perhaps relates to his early career as a religious painter. A painting for the chapel of the confrérie du Saint-Nom-de-Jésus in the église de Saint-Nicolas at Courville was commissioned by one Pierre Dubuisson, receveur de l’Hôtel-Dieu, on 4.I.1757, “peint à Paris par Claude Bornet” according to a note reported by Merlet (1896).

Bornet is best known for his miniatures and enamels, including among his clientèle several figures from royal circles (the princesses de Lamballe and de Lambesc, the comtesse de Verteillac) and the world of learning (Buffon, Mantelle, professor at the École militaire, etc.). Bornet’s name, as “peintre en Mignature & en Email”, appears among the many influential subscribers to Antoine Court de Gébelin’s erudite *Monde primitive* (Paris, 1787).

In 1785 and 1787 he produced views of the salon du Louvre engraved by Martini. He also designed stage sets for the theatre at Fontainebleau. Three etchings illustrating “scenes intéressantes de Richard Coeur-de-Lion” were issued in 1786, and attracted the praise of *L’Année littéraire* (p. 285–87): they were “gravées avec goût, touchées avec esprit, & d’un effet piquant.” By the 1790s (if not before, considering the guests at his wedding) he had begun to produce book illustrations, including for *Gil Blas de Santillane* (1795) and the *Décameron* (1801); but the attribution to him of some wretched illustrations for de Sade is disputed by the editors of the Pléiade edition.

The few extant pastels (almost all of which belong to the period 1761–67, before he turned to enamel) indicate a skilful draughtsman with a good sense of colour which provided his work with expression and grace. Characteristic silver and light blue harmonies (often with a coppery hue, suggesting that he was already practising in enamel) work with a physiognomical honesty to provide a distinctive style suggestive of Perronneau and Loir. The dramatic impact of one portrait, now in Washington, was noted in a review of the Paris 1933b exhibition: “la révélation de l’Exposition est un Claude Bornet ..., avec un attachant *portrait de femme âgée*, en toilette violette.” (Charnet 1933). Lapauze 1923 had asked the same question, noting the “acuité, observation vraiment intenses.”

A single later pastel, of Mme Perregaux, has been confused with the work recorded in Hall’s livre de raison, but its style, while quite different from Bornet’s other pastels, is not inconsistent with that of his miniatures from the 1780s.

GENEALOGIES [Noireterre](#)

#### Bibliography

Bénézit; Fontainebleau 2005, pp. 177ff; Guiffrey 1915, p. 198; Le Brun 1776; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Lucien Merlet, “Note sur l’hospice de Courville”, *Mémoires de la Société archéologique d’Eure-et-Loir*, x, 1896, p. 191, n.3; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Sanchez 2004; Saur

#### Salon critiques

Anon., “Exposition des peintures, sculptures & autres ouvrages de MM. de l’Académie de St Luc, faite le 25 août 1774 & jours suivans, à l’hôtel Jabach...”; *Mercure de France*, x.1774, p. 185: Les portraits peints à l’huile, au pastel ou en miniature

par MM. le Noir, le Fèvre, Nicolet, Garand, Glain, Darmancourt, Bornet, Naudin, Lallié, Rabillon, de Saint Jean, par Mlles Navarre & Labille, ont fait connoître les talens de ces différens artistes.

Anon., “Académie de peinture”, *Gazette de littérature, des sciences et des arts*, 74, ix.1774, pp. 2–3:

Le 25 du mois d’Août dernier l’Académie de S. Luc a fait l’ouverture de son salon à l’Hôtel de Jabach.

Il paroît par le nombreux concours de monde qui s’y voit journellement que le Public accueille favorablement les Ouvrages en tous genre des Artistes déjà connu par ses talens, soutient sa réputation si bien acquise; on y distingue pour le portraits Mlles *Vigée & Boquet*, ainsi que Messieurs *Davesne & Charpentier* pour le paysage; M. *Morvan*, pour les fleurs; MM. *Prevôt* [p. 3] frères; M. *Sauvage* paroît Supérieur dans ses bas reliefs peints; M. *Bornet*, pour la miniature & l’email.

#### Pastels

J.171.101 [?] Denis DIDEROT (1713–1784), pstl, 62x52 ov., sd → “Bornet 1763” (Paris, Comédie-Française, inv. I 0074. Don J. Opigez 1838). Exh.: Paris 1885a, no. 47 n.r., éc. fr., Diderot; Paris 1980a, no. 213 n.r. Lit.: Arthur Wilson, *Diderot*, New York, 1972, repr.; *Revue de la Bibliothèque nationale*, 1984, p. 41; Cécile Giteau, *Les plus beaux manuscrits du théâtre français*, 1996, p. 180 repr. Φδ



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J.171.104 Pierre DUBUISSON, receveur général de l’Hôtel-Dieu, m/u, 1757. Lit.: *Mémoires de la Société archéologique d’Eure-et-Loir*, x, 1896, p. 191 n.r.

J.171.105 Jacques GOSSEAUME (1742–1817), paumier des enfants d’Apollon, au violon, pstl/ppr bl./toile/châssis, 64x53, sd → “Bornet 1763” (Louvre inv. RF 31366. Desc.: Gaston Brière; legs 1963). Exh.: Paris 1965b, no. 18; Paris 1980b, p. 16; Paris 2018. Lit.: Monnier 1972, no. 24; A. P. de Mirimonde, *L’Iconographie musicale sous les rois Bourbons*, 1977, p. 55; Salmon 2018, no. 25 repr.; [Jeffares 2018g](#); Jeffares 2018m φσ



J.171.107 Mme Jean-Charles-Louis GOSSEAUME, née Marie-Louise Doré (–1788), veuve d'un maître paulmier à Paris, mère de Jacques Gosseume, pstl/ppr bl./toile/châssis, 63.5x53, sd → "Bornet 1763" (Louvre inv. RF 31367. Desc.: Gaston Brière; legs 1963). Exh.: Paris 1965b, no. 19; Paris 2018. Lit.: Monnier 1972, no. 25; Salmon 2018, no. 26 repr.; [Jeffares 2018g](#); [Jeffares 2018m](#) φσ



J.171.109 Mme Jean-Frédéric PERREGAUX, née Adélaïde de Praël (1758–1794), pstl, ov., 1780? (*olim* Neuchâtel, Abbaye de Fontaine-André? Swiss PC). Lit.: P. de Pury, "Jean-Frédéric Perregaux", *Musée neuchâtelois. Recueil d'histoire nationale & d'archéologie*, I.–II.1919, repr. opp. p. 6, as "C. Bornet, 1780"; Hedley 2004b, repr., *olim* attr. Bornet; Jeffares 2006, p. 220Bii, as by Hall [?]; traditional attr. restored] φσσ



J.171.111 Abbé, pstl/ppr, 54x44, sd ✓ "Bornet 1764" (Dijon, musée Magnin, inv. 1938 DF 72. Henri Cain; Paris, Drouot, Ader, Féral & Catroux, 12–13.VI.1935, Lot 10 n.r.; acqu. Magnin; legs 1938) φσ



J.171.113 Homme en habit vert, pstl, 61x51 ov., sd "Bornet 1767" (London, Christie's, 14.III.1924, Lot 12 repr., 29 gns; Metsu) φ



J.171.115 Homme en habit bleu marine à revers rouge et à boutons dorés (Fossard 1946)

J.171.1156 Femme en robe bleue, polonaise violette doublée de soie blanche, bordée de fourrure, pstl/ppr bl./toile/châssis, 53.5x43.5, sd → "Bornet/1761" (Paris, Drouot, Jean-Marc Delvaux, 16.XII.2016, Lot 122 repr.) φσ



J.171.116 Femme âgée, pstl, 61.4x51.2 ov., sd \ "Bornet fecit/1767" (Washington, NGA, inv. 2001.21.1. Cailleux 1923; Mme Thalmann 1927–46; desc. son neveu, 1999; Artemis; don Helen Porter & James T. Dyke 2001). Exh.: Paris 1923c; Paris 1927a, no. 4, pl. LXXIX-115; Paris 1933b, no. 3; Washington 2004; Washington 2009, no. 96 repr, p. 12 ("stands out for the honest presentation of the effects of aging on the sitter's countenance, set off against the frou-frou prettiness of her fashionable attire"). Lit.: Lapauze 1923; Charnet 1933; Ratouis de Limay 1946, pl. LV/83 φ



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J.171.117 Femme en robe bleue, pstl/ppr, 54.5x45, sd → "Bornet/1769" [damaged] (Paris, Drouot, Binoche & Giquello, 30.XI.2016, Lot 22 repr., est. €300–400) φ



J.171.118 Femme en robe rouge doublée de fourrure, pstl/ppr, 58x46.5, sd ✓ "Bornet" (Maison Villette, Lege, 2019) φ



J.171.119 Jeune demoiselle, pstl, Salon de la Correspondance, .IV.1782

J.171.12 Homme de qualité, pstl, 73x64, sd "Bornet 1762"; & pendant: J.171.121 Dame de qualité, pstl, 73x64, sd "Bornet 1762" (Paris sale, date uncertain, Lot 5 repr.) φ



