

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

CANY, Jean-Baptiste de

fl. Paris 1671–1693

Also spelt de Cani. Painter of portraits and religious subjects (such as the tableau votif given to the chapitre de Notre-Dame in 1671), some of which are known from engravings; he was also active as a copyist. He is possibly the son of the landscape painter and sculptor referred to as Cany père, who died in 1672. The Welbeck portrait of a Spanish Capuchin is a typical subject. Mariette dismissed him as a “peintre froid...dont le principal talent étoit de copier avec une grande propreté” while noting “sa vertu et la douceur de ses mœurs”. This moral uprightness is also found in a 1200-page manuscript *Réflexions d'un chevalier de Malte sur la grandeur et les devoirs de son état* by a chevalier de Cany, identified tentatively by Engel as Jean-Baptiste Le Marinier de Cany de Beauvalet, younger son of a Norman family, received into the Ordre de Malte with his brother in 1666 (the de Cany estate was later sold to his maternal grandfather, Pierre I^{er} de Becdelièvre). The connection with the knights of Malta also offers a clue as to how the picture came into the possession of Matthew Prior: he was attached to the British embassy in Paris when, in 1713, a diplomatic crisis developed concerning the treatment of English sailors in Malta. Negotiations took place between Prior and the bailli de La Vieuville, the order's ambassador in Paris, and proceeded with courtesies on both sides.

Bibliography

Bénézit, Claire-Éliane Engel, *L'Ordre de Malte en Méditerranée, 1530–1798*, Monaco, 1957; Claire-Éliane Engel, *Knights of Malta*, 1963; Goulding 1936, p. 433; Heim Gallery, exh. cat. 6.VI.–31.VIII.1979, no. 10; Mariette 1851–60; Rambaud 1971, II, pp. 906, 963; abbé de Vertot, *Histoire des chevaliers hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem*, Paris, 1727

Pastels

Bernard de Porto-Moriso, general of the Capuchins [Don Benito BERNARDO DE PORTO MAURICIO, minister general of the Capuchin order of Friars Minor 1678–84, vicario generale de Buenaventura de Recanati 1684–85], head and shoulders, to left, in light brown habit, pstl/ppr, 56x44.5 ov., s “De Cany f.”, 1671 (Matthew Prior (1664–1721), inv. 1721, as Du Vivier, valued £3; Harley, Welbeck). Lit.: Goulding 1936, no. 15; Wright & Montgomery 1945, no. 13 n.r.
~cop, pnt., 56x51 (Welbeck). Lit.: Goulding 1936, no. 196