

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

CHEVAUX, Bertrand-Léon

Bordeaux 1739 – Gentilly, Val-de-Marne
7.VIII.1809

J.2242.101 M. ***, pstl, 59.4x51.3, Salon de
Bordeaux 1774, no. 37

Also Cheveaux, Chevau etc.; genre painter, draughtsman and illustrator, *agréé* 1773, *reçu* by the Académie de Bordeaux in 1774, where he exhibited a *Repas de famille* as his *morceau de réception*, together with a dozen pictures including one pastel. In the *Étrennes bordelaises* of 1776, among the list of associates of the Académie, his name is annotated as “actuellement en voyage”, and in the *Tableau de MM. de l'Académie de... Bordeaux en 1780*, he is listed as an external correspondent associate. In 1786 he was in Lyon, where he exhibited three paintings at the Salon. Charvet noted that he seems to have been “doux et modeste”, being willing to retouch his pictures following colleagues’ advice before and after his reception.

Sanchez provides his first name as Henri, a confusion with his father, Marc-Henri Chevaux of Bordeaux, who was married to a Marguerite-Suzanne Giac. His father was employed at the Hôtel des fermes du roi, and the artist’s parrain (at his baptism in Saint-André) was Bertrand-Léon Lesseps, a marchand fourbisseur in the city. His first marriage was in Bordeaux, Saint-Pierre, 10.II.1763, to Marie-Rachelle-Jeanne Pexiotte, a Jewess who married him against her father’s will. “Bertrand-Léon Chevaux” was described as a “peintre de l’Académie de Bordeaux” when his one-year-old son (by his second wife, Marguerite Clouin), also Bertrand-Léon, died in Nantes, 2.I.1778. On 6.XII.1792 Chevaux appeared before the Société d’Émulation du Jura and presented an allegorical picture of the triumph of Liberty and the stability of the République française (*Mémoires*, 1896, p. 101).

He was married for the third time, to Louise Laye, in Lons-le-Saunier, 11.III.1793; she survived him, dying in Paris in 1832 aged 70. A daughter, Victoire-Liberté, born in Poligny in 1794, died the following year in Besançon.

“Le citoyen Bertrand-Chevaux, peintre, de l’Académie de Bordeaux” advertised his services as a portraitist in oil and pastel and as a teacher to the citizens of Dijon: *Journal de la Côte-d’Or*, 25.IV.1804. He was last recorded as a “peintre de passage”, charged in 1807 with painting over the nudity the Rogier van der Weyden altarpiece at Beaune (Paul Lafond, *Roger van der Weyden*, 1912, p. 48); fortunately the essence he used disappeared rapidly.

Chevaux was living in Gentilly at the time of his death, the acte describing him as a “peintre en histoire”.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Braquehave, “Les peintres de l’Hôtel de ville de Bordeaux”, *Réunion des sociétés des beaux-arts des départements*, 1901, pp. 606, 617; Marionneau 1883; Sanchez 2004; Z. Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Revolutions...*, 1970, p. 43 n.69; “E.-L. G. Charvet, “Enseignement public des arts du dessin à Lyon”, *Réunion des sociétés savantes des départements*, XXIX, 1905, p. 551

Pastels