

CLAVAREAU, Victoire

fl. Vienna 1765

Daughter of the comédien Pierre Clavareau, she was recorded as a singer (“jeune premier rôle, et chante”), with her father and younger sister Lucie (“première soubrette, et chante”), in Vienna after 1752, Warsaw in the 1760s, and Kassel 1778–83. Her father seems to have been the Pierre-Augustin Clavareau who declared himself (MC ET/LXXVI/381, 15.X.1761) as “peintre de l’Empereur, Autriche”; he was son (1721–1805) of the actor Augustin Clavareau (1685–1769) and his wife, née Marguerite Rochebelle. Pierre-Augustin made his debut at the Comédie-Française in 1755 as “Clavareau de Rochebelle”; despite praise in the *Mercur* (and being compared to Lekain by Voltaire, letter of 13.VI.1755, although Grimm thought him “détestable et sans ressource”), he was not admitted to the company. He was no doubt also the book illustrator (engraved by Fessard and others); a theatrical drawing from 1752 was sold in 2008. He married his cousin Marie-Françoise-Jeanne Clavareau c.1748. Their son Auguste-François Clavareau (1751–1805) is also listed in *Bénézit*; the daughters are not recorded in the published records, possibly because they were born before their parents’ marriage. However in 1767 they both were the subject of scandals: Lucie eloped in Warsaw with prince Casper Lubomirski, who married her against his family’s wishes. while Victoire married the composer Mattia Gerardi, maître de chapelle of Prince Nikolai Vasilevich Repnin (1734–1801), the Russian ambassador in Warsaw, a camouflage for her affair with the prince. His niece Princess Alexandra Repnina (*q.v.*) was an amateur pastellist. Van Swieten had been ambassador in Paris and Warsaw before 1764 but seems to have been in Vienna in 1765 when Clavareau’s pastel was made; he was to become Mozart’s patron.



Bibliography

Max Fuchs, *Lexique des troupes de comédiens au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, 1944; Heinecken 1790; Mieczysław Klimowicz, *Początki teatru stanisławowskiego: 1765–1773*, 1965; *Pamiętnik teatralny*, 1967, XVI–XVII, pp. 61f; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Karyna Wierzbicka-Michalska, *Aktorzy cudzoziemcy w Warszawie w XVIII wieku*, 1975, p.62

Pastels

Gottfried Freiherr van SWIETEN (1734–1803), Leibarzt Maria Theresias, Direktor der Hofbibliothek, Musikförderer, pstl, 58x47.5, sd “Victoire Clavarau/1765” (Wienmuseum, inv. 16.913. Acqu. Baronin van Swieten 1898). Exh.: Vienna 1930a, n.r.; Vienna 1990, no. II/52 repr. . Lit.: Cantagrel 2005, p. 156 repr. φ