

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

DROUAI, Hubert, le père

Saint-Samson-de-la-Roque 5.V.1699 – Paris
9.II.1767

The son of a regional painter Jean Drouais who settled in Rouen and married into the Tallon family, Hubert Drouais moved early to Paris and became a pupil of François de Troy. Here he learned to paint oil portraits, and seems to have worked as a copyist in the studios of a number of prominent painters from Oudry and Belle to Nattier. *Agréé* in 1730 and *reçu* six months later as a portrait painter (his *morceaux de réception* were the portraits of the artists Christophe and Le Lorrain), he exhibited at the Salons de l'Académie royale regularly between 1737 and 1757. He was called in 1744 to make a portrait of the 15-year-old dauphin, which required three trips to Versailles; although the accounts indicate that this was “d'après nature”, the oil painting sent to the dauphin's father-in-law Philippe V of Spain (now in the Prado) is however a copy of the La Tour pastel. The same year he was appointed fournisseur de portraits en miniature for the Menus plaisirs. A receipt for 300 livres for a miniature of the prince de Turenne, 1750, is in the INHA archives (autographes peintres, carton 12, f.156f, s.v. F.-H. Drouais).

He was married to the painter Catherine Lusurier's aunt in 1727, but her alcoholism led to her having to be confined at the Sainte-Pélagie. Their son François-Hubert (*q.v.*) continued the family tradition, as did his wife Anne-Françoise Doré and in turn their son Jean-Germain. At the time of his marriage, when he was living in the Enclos des Quinze-Vingts, Hubert already owned seven houses in Rouen, and he subsequently enjoyed considerable financial success, both as peintre du roi and as holder of offices such as that of contrôleur et marqueur des ouvrages d'étain de la ville de Saint-Germain-en-Laye. This enabled him to move from the rue des Moineaux (where he was recorded in 1731), first to the rue Thibaut-aux-dés (where he took a six year lease at 450 livres p.a.: AN MC CXV/473, 18.VIII.1731), then to the rue de Richelieu by 1733 until 1737. By 1740 he was investing in annuities (e.g. one on the Hôtel de ville de Paris purchased for 6300 livres, 17.VI.1740, AN MC LIII/395). His dealings in property provided him with an income of some 10,000 livres, and he managed to acquire a number of houses, including two on the rue des Orties. He was recorded there from 1738, and on 16.II.1743, when he witnessed the marriage of Pierre Lusurié, marchand bonnetier, with Jeanne-Marguerite Riviere, Saint-André-des-Arts; and again, with his son François-Hubert, when both were witnesses to the wedding of a François-Adrien Grosognon Latinville and Rose Papin, Saint-André des Arts, 9.XII.1756 (Fichier Laborde). He married his daughter advantageously to an avocat greffier au parlement de Paris, and his inventaire après décès (AN MC LIII/421, 13.III.1767) indicates that he had accumulated a significant collection of contemporary French pictures: 100 numbered items (many with multiple pictures)

covered oil paintings, drawings and prints, but curiously not a single work in pastel. A sale took place on 8.IV.1767 & seq., according to papers in his son's estate (AN MC LIII/521; 12.XII.1775; the sale is not in Lugt). The partage des biens requested by his two surviving children (AN MC LIII/486, 22.VI.1772) showed assets of some 79,740 livres, with debts of 51,944 livres.

We know a number of Drouais's oil paintings and miniatures, of which Pahin de La Blancherie admired “la couleur fraîche & brillante”. However even the œuvre in these media must be treated with caution, as the name (rather like Vigée), with its pale reflection of a child's celebrity, seems to have become a convenient attribution for dealers with second-rate portraits. Pahin said that he painted a large number of pastels, but none has come down as his work: his portraits are never signed, but are said to convey a characteristic light-hearted mythology with chic eroticism. It appears that his pastels mostly belong to a period around 1745, between the oil painting with which his career commenced and the miniatures to which he devoted himself in his final years. From an early stage he seems to have made chalk drawings as preliminary studies for portraits, and he may indeed (as is claimed) have turned to pastel under the influence of Carriera.

The starting point for reestablishing his œuvre in pastel was the discovery of the Belœil portrait of Mlle Gausin which we believe is that exhibited in 1746. The similarity of expression and handling suggests that Mme de Rochambeau, the Reims *Naiade* and the *Dame en Flore* are by the same hand; they are consistent with the works known from engravings or in oil. Further examples are also tentatively proposed, including several male portraits which display the same highly enamelled finish, uniform lighting and rounded modelling, and share with his oils characteristic almond eyes and rhythmic S-shaped curls in the wigs. In the absence of documentation all must be treated with caution. Confirmation of these suggestions may be found in the version of Drouais's portrait of his daughter holding a cat rediscovered in 2015, having descended to the Champollion family (the artist's great-great-granddaughter married the nephew of the decoder of the Rosetta stone).

Drouais is known to have copied his son's works, and both artists seem to use a characteristic even lighting over the sitter's face. Hubert's treatment of fabric is distinctive, with white chalk marking the fall of light on the folds; his flesh tones are smoothly blended, occasionally with the enamelled finish of a miniaturist. Several works described as “circle of Drouais” are tentatively attributed to the father.

Perronneau left several portraits of Drouais, from which it has been suggested (but without firm evidence) that he was a pupil. Perronneau certainly seems to have used the striking pose in Drouais's miniature of Pierre Doré.

The presence of what seems to have been an oil version of the Drouais portrait of La Camargo that Pahin de La Blancherie admired in the group of pictures offered for same by

Allais's widow suggests the close contact among this small group of pastellists.

Bibliography

Ashmore 2001; Bellier de La Chavignerie & Auvray; Bénézit; Dorbec 1904–05; Dumont-Wilden 1909; Engerand 1900, pp. 165f; Gabillot 1905; Gault de Saint-Germain 1808, p. 288; Cathrin Klingsöhr-Leroy, in Grove 1996; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008, pp. 24, 200f; Mariette 1851–60; Pahin de La Blancherie 1783, p. 58; Rambaud 1965, I, p. 156; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Sanchez 2004; Saur; Thieme & Becker; Wildenstein 1966

GENEALOGIES [Drouais](#)

Salons critiques

LA FONT DE SAINT-YENNE, *Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France avec un examen des principaux ouvrages exposés au Louvre, le mois d'août 1746*, La Haye, 1747, p. 118:

J'aurois bien des choses à dire en faveur des Pastels des Sieurs Drouais [Drouais], Loir, Peronneau. Les Portraits en Miniature du Sieur Drouais mériteroient un examen particulier qui leur feroit beaucoup d'honneur, & seroit entièrement à son avantage; mais ce seroit répéter une partie des loüanges que je viens de donner aux tels de leur Confrères, & que je n'ai point l'art de savoir varier.

Mammès-Claude-Catherine PAHIN DE LA BLANCHERIE, “Essai d'un tableau historique des peintres de l'École française”, *Nouvelles de la république des lettres et des arts*, 1783, p. 58:

Cet Artiste, né à la Roque près le Ponteau-de-Mer en 1699, est mort à Paris en 1767. Il a été disciple de de Troy, & a puisé dans les leçons de ce grand maître les talents qu'il a manifestés dans la suite. Le nombre de portraits en pastel qu'il a peint, est très-grand: on admire entr'autres ceux des demoiselles Pellissier, Gausin &c Camargo. Ce genre lui donna l'idée d'en faire en miniature; & ce qui l'a fait le plus admirer, c'est la couleur fraîche & brillante, & qui n'a rien perdu de son éclat. Il a laissé un fils héritier de ses talents, & qui fut de l'Académie. Il est mort en 1775.

Pastels

J.282.101 Marie-Anne Cupis, dite La CAMARGO (1710–1770), pstl. Lit.: Pahin de La Blancherie 1783, p. 58 n.r.

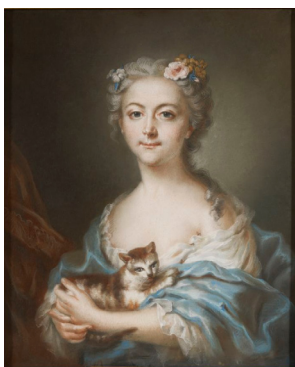
~?version, Camargo tenant du raisin & des pêches, pnt., 130x97 (Jacques-Charles Allais; sa veuve, adv. for sale *Annonces, affiches et avis divers*, 22.VII.1762)

Carlet, v. Marinvaux

J.282.103 Le fils de l'auteur [François-Hubert DROUAI (1727–1775), peintre], Salon de 1746, no. 95

J.282.104 Mlle DROUAI, fille de l'auteur [Marie-Étiennette (1733–), plus tard Mme Jean-Baptiste-Bernard Lutton], tenant un chat, Salon de 1746, no. 95 (desc.: fille du sujet, Adélaïde-Marie-Jeanne Lutton, Mme Michel-Firmin Graud de Saint-Vincent; sa petite-fille, Mme Aimé-Lous Champollion-Figeac, née Claire-Adèle Graud de Saint-Vincent)

J.282.105 ~cop., Bathilde-Émilie Rouargue, Mme André-Henri Ulrich (1862–1931), pstl (Vif, musée Champollion, inv 2006.0.12, as XIX^e, 2^e moitié) øk



??Mme DU CHATELET, n. Belle

J.282.108 Mlle GAUSSIN [Jeanne-Catherine Gossem (1711–1767)], tragédienne, m/u (comte d'Haussonville, Paris, 1909). Lit.: Dacier 1904, repr. p. 193 [olim attr. Nattier] ~repl., pnt. (Paris, Comédie-Française). Exh.: Paris 2006b, no. 114 repr. clr

J.282.11 Mlle Gossin [GAUSSIN] tenant un livre, pstl, c.60x50, Salon de 1746, no. 95 (Belœil). Lit.: Pahin de La Blancherie 1783, p. 58 n.r.; Bronne 1979, repr., as La Tour [new attr.] Φσ



Photo courtesy Fondation Ligne

J.282.113 M. JACQUEMAIN tenant un crayon, Salon de 1746, no. 95

J.282.114 [?]Chrétien-Guillaume de LAMOIGNON de Malesherbes (1721–1794)], en habit brun aux brandebourgs, pstl/ppr, 53x44, [c.1745] (Paris, Drouot, Brissonneau, 26.III.2010, Lot 52 repr., attr. Louis Vigée, inconnu) [new attr. ?] φαδνσ



Zoomify

J.282.116 Étienne LETEXIER, sgr de Villebourjon, puis de Mennetou [(1670–1736), trésorier de France à Orléans, secrétaire du roi], en habit brun, manteau bleu, pstl, 64x51 [c.1725] (Paris, Drouot, Millon, 5.XII.2012, Lot 35 repr.; Paris, Drouot, Millon, 1.III.2013, Lot 42 repr., anon., inconnu; Galerie Alexis Bordes, cat. 2014, as of Letexier père; Paris, Artcurial, 23.III.2017, Lot 151 repr., est. €6–8000, b/i; Paris, Drouot, Art Richelieu, Castor Hara, 23.XI.2019, Lot 241 repr., est. €3–4000; Versailles, Osenat, 19.III.2022, Lot 171 repr., est. €3500–4000) [new attr. ?] φαδνσ



J.282.118 LOUIS, duc de Bourgogne, dauphin (1729–1765), 1744

J.282.119 ~cop. (comm. d'Argenson; don: Philippe V d'Espagne, 19.XII.1744, 200 livres). Lit.: Engerland 1900

J.282.12 [?]Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de MARIVAUX (1688–1763), écrivain dramatique, pstl, 61x49.5, [c.1725] (M. Courtois, propriétaire, Amiens. olim cabinet Saint Marisse). Exh.: Amiens 1860, no. 1661, as by La Tour. Lit.: B&W 333, ?attr. [new attr. ?] φαδν



J.282.121 Mme de NARBONNE, pstl (Charles Magne 1897). Lit.: Perrier 1897, p. 297 n.r.

J.282.122 Mlle Marie PELISSIER (1707–1749), de l'Opéra, pstl, 1732. Lit.: Pahin de La Blancherie 1783, p. 58 n.r. ~grav. Daullé 1736 (FD 355)



~repl., pnt., 99x81 (Louvre inv. RF 2147. Legs Schlichting). Lit.: Compin & Roquebert 1986, repr.

J.282.126 ??Mme de POMPADOUR, pstl. Lit.: Leroy 1935, repr., as Carriera [new attr. ?] φαδν



J.282.128 ~variant, ??Marie-Antoinette, pstl, 34x26 ov. (London, Sotheby's, 11.XII.2002, Lot 164, follower of Fragonard, est. £1500–1800, £1762) [new attr. ?] φαδν



Photo courtesy Sotheby's

J.282.131 La comtesse de ROCHAMBEAU, née Jeanne-Thérèse Tellez d'Acosta (1730–1824), femme du maréchal, pstl [c.1749] (PC France). Exh.: Vendôme 1872. Lit.: Alfred Darcel, *Gazette des beaux-arts*, vi, 1872, p. 180, as by La Tour; Weelen 1936, repr., attr. La Tour [new attr.] Φν



Photo courtesy owner; rights reserved

J.282.134 [?]Mme Louis-Clément de SAINTE-HERMINE, née Elisabeth de Maulévrier, dame d'Agonnay, ??Mme René-Louis de Sainte-Hermine, née Élisabeth-Augustine-Aimée de Polignac, pstl, ov. (Périgueux, musée de Périgord, inv. B.2120. [Le sujet; son fils René-Louis, marquis de Sainte-Hermine (1741–1805); sa fille Adèle, comtesse de Barde (1780–1868)] comte de Barde 1864). Exh.: Périgueux 1864, no. 484. Lit.: B&W 460, ?attr. [new attr.] Φαδν



Photo courtesy Collections du Musée d'art et d'archéologie du Périgord, Ville de Périgueux

- J.282.139 M**, pstl, Salon de 1747, no. 103
 J.282.1393 Jeune prince, pstl (Bretonville; Paris, Pillet, Féral, Mannheim, 5–7.II.1872, Lot 11 n.r.)
 J.282.1395 Homme en armure, pstl, ov. (Raymond Kraemer a.1945; procedure close 5.VIII.1961). Lit.: *Répertoire des biens spoliés*, item 1671, OPIB no. 31.331 n.r.
 J.282.14 Mad. **, Salon de 1746, no. 95
 J.282.141 Mlle *** tenant des fleurs, pstl, Salon de 1746, no. 95
 J.282.142 Une demoiselle qui rit, Salon de 1746, no. 95
 J.282.143 Dame, pstl, Salon de 1747, no. 103
 J.282.144 L'Automne, pstl, Salon de 1747, no. 103
 J.282.145 Jeune princesse en naïade, pstl/ppr, 80.0x63.2 (Reims, mBA, inv. 898.13.8. Max Sutaine 1876; legs H. Sutaine 1898, “une fille du Régent par La Tour”; dep.: sous-préfecture de Reims 1950–63). Exh.: ?Reims 1876, no. 2311, attr. La Tour. Lit.: B&W 562; =? B&W 631; Sartor 1909, no. 872, *Éc. fr.*; Bury 1971, p. 194, attr. La Tour [new attr.] φνσ



- J.282.146 Jeune femme en buste, vue presque de face, les épaules découvertes, le visage souriant; portant une toque bleue sur ses cheveux relevés, poudrés et ornés d'une rose, un ruban autour du cou, pstl, 31x26 (Henri Lacroix; vente p.m., Paris, Drouot, Chevallier, Paris, 18–23.III.1901, Lot 209 n.r., as by Hubert Drouais)
 J.282.147 Jeune dame en Flore, pstl/ppr, 58.6x48.5 (Paris, Galliera, 4.III.1961, Lot 8, as Vigée; ?Ananoff; Clarendon Gallery, London, 1986; London, Christie's, 5.XII.1989, Lot 64 n.r., follower of Nattier). Exh.: London 1986, no. 10 repr., *Éc. fr.*, c.1760. Lit.: Riffaut 1987, no. 15, as Vigée [new attr.] φνσ



Zoomify

- J.282.149 Jeune fille en robe bleue, ruban bleu au cou, tenant un bouquet de fleurs, pstl (Paris PC). Lit.: Whitehead 1992, repr. p. 89 [new attr., ?] φαν



Femme tenant des fleurs (Versailles, Palais des congrès, 1.IV.1990, Lot 27 repr., attr. Carriera). Lit.: Jeffares 2006, 162Aii, attr. H. Drouais [v. Glain]

- J.282.152 Jeune femme, 62x51 (Moulins, Sadde & Colette, 17.III.2002, Lot 126 repr., *Éc. fr.*, est. €2800–3100) [new attr., ?] φαν



- J.282.154 Jeune femme tenant un chien, pstl, 58x47 (Orléans, Binoche, de Maredsous, 19.XII.2009, Lot 7 repr., est. €500–700) [new attr.] φαν



- J.282.156 Jeune fille au panier de roses, pstl, 53x44 (Alphonse Saint-Martin, Paris, c.1826. Vannes,

Ruellan, 14.V.2022, Lot 243 repr., as *Éc. fr.* fin XVIII^e, est. €1000–1500) [new attr.] φν

