

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

DU PARC, Anne-Marie-Élisabeth Rossa, dite La Francesina

France ? – Hammersmith 1778

J.2896.104 A head, pstl, Society of Arts 1762, as Signora Francescini

Mrs Du Parc, crayon painter, who exhibited three pastels in 1766, sent from Mr Williamson's, Princes Street, Leicester Fields, may or may not be the same as the Mrs Du Part who exhibited three (presumably oil) portraits at the Free Society in 1763; it seems rather improbable that the former can be identified with the genre painter Françoise Duparc (*q.v.*) as has been suggested. However she may be the Sig.ra Francescini who sent a pastel head to the Society of Artists in 1762 as an honorary exhibitor. Elisabeth du Parc or Duparc, a French soprano (and granddaughter of the Anne Duparc who played in Molière's troupe), was trained in Italy, and adopted the stage name of La Francesina (spelt in various ways). She came to London in 1736 and became Handel's leading soprano over the next decade, continuing to appear on the London stage until 1752. Her portrait (medium unknown) by Knapton was engraved by Faber (1737). By 1769 she was living in Chiswick, when she was left the painting materials of the pastellist Joseph Goupy (*q.v.*) in his will; she may well have been his pupil (both had known Handel well). Nine years later she died unmarried and was buried in the cemetery at Hammersmith Chapel (the stone could not be located in 2010). In her will, written in French (only the English translation has survived, where she appears as Anna Maria Elisabeth Rossa, otherwise La Francesina; the name Duparc is absent), she nominated her cousin, Margherita de La Forest, known as Gogo, as her executor (Marguerite De la Forest married George Towneley in Chiswick 2.IX.1780). Further biographical details are found in her mother's will (made 16.V.1769, proved 9.VIII.1773), of which the English translation is also in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury archives: she was Elisabeth Geneviève de La Fontaine, widow of James Duparc, a surgeon, and she appointed as her executor her "daughter A^e M^e Eth Rossa called La Francesina".

Bibliography

Greer 2001; Daniel Lysons, *The environs of London*, 1810, II, p. 268; *New Grove dictionary of music and musicians*; Waterhouse 1981, *s.v.* Du Parc, Francescini

Critiques

Anon., "To the Printer of the St James's Chronicle", *St James's chronicle*, 29.V.–1.VI.1762;

HONORARY EXHIBITION.

216. *A head in Crayons, by Signora Francescini.* – We might have been tempted to praise this Piece, if it had not unfortunately hung so near a *Head in Crayons*, by Mr Cotes.

Pastels

J.2896.101 Gentleman, pstl, Society of Artists 1766, no. 113

J.2896.102 Lady, pstl, Society of Artists 1766, no. 112

J.2896.103 Child, pstl, Society of Artists 1766, no. 114