

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

DUPRÉ, André-Joseph-Guilhaume

Montauban 4.V.1733 – ?Paris a.1801

Dupré exhibited regularly at Toulouse between 1758 and 1766, and again from 1781 to 1784. Most of the works were paintings or miniatures, but a few pastels were included. The pastel *tête de chien* was lent by François-Philippe-Antoine Garipuy (nephew of Louis de Mondran and son of Philippe Garipuy, ingénieur de la Province); this amateur exhibited his own drawings after the engraved *Fables* of La Fontaine as the preceding item at the same salon, and the layout of the livret misleadingly suggests that the *tête* was also his work. In 1765 Dupré lent twenty small paintings by Bellotto to the Salon de Toulouse, suggesting that he lived in the city and was of some affluence; again in 1784 he sent eight pictures in various media from his studio, confirming that he resided there.

He evidently cannot be (*pace* Mesuret and later sources, including here to 2023) the Claude Dupré (Clay 1740 – Paris 1815), rue de la Verrerie, who was *reçu* in 1772 by the Académie de Saint-Luc de Paris, but who was a peintre-doreur en bâtiments; his carte de sûreté (12.IV.1793) indicates that he arrived in Paris in 1755.

The pastellist is identified here (in 2023) as the “S^r André-Joseph-Guilhaume Dupré Peintre en portret”, who was married to Rose Vigourel and whose son Paul-Louis was baptised at Toulouse, Saint-Étienne, on 25.III.1759. Further research shows that he married Roze Vigourel in Montauban, Saint-Jacques, 28.V.1755; he was a native of that parish, described as the son of the late André Dupré, écuyer, and Hélaïne Dulis. The details lead us to the somewhat unusual baptismal entry in the parish register of Saint-Jacques, Montauban:

Guilhaume fils naturel d'André Dupré ecuyer de monseigneur le duc de Duras, ainsi quil nous apparit par une lestre quil nous a esté escrite du cinquieme may, par le dit dupré dans laquelle il nous prie de vouloir le Baptiser sous son nom de pere et a demoiselle helaine de Dulis, né le quatrieme may mil sept cens trente trois, a este baptise le septieme dudit mois, Parrain Guilhaume Sevres peigneur de laine, Marraine Margueritte Sadorg et presens François sadorge qui nont signé pour ne scavoir

Hélaïne Dulis gave birth to other illegitimate children, including a girl on 23.IV.1742, and died in Montauban in 1760 aged 45.

Suspicious about the artist's real father can never be confirmed, but it is not impossible that he was the subject of an “Épître à M. Dupré, Peintre” published by Charlotte Bourette (1714–1784) in *La Muse limonadière*, Paris, 1755, p. 240f, which is followed by a few verses in response by the artist himself.

Guilhaume's bride in 1755 was the daughter of a huissier de la cour de Bourgogne. She must have died soon after their son's birth, as the artist was remarried to an Anne Méric in Saint-Paulet, Aude, in 1760; their daughter, Marie-Jeanne-Françoise Dupré, was baptised in Béziers, Saint-Félix, on 25.I.1762, when he was again described as “peintre en portret”. Anne Méric appears to have been baptised in Carcassonne, Saint-Vincent, 25.XII.1743, and to

have had a sister, Gérarde-Marquette Méric, who married a Jacques Arbaud there in 1764; their daughter married (Saint-Roch, Paris, 29.XI.1800) a Jean-Baptiste Devolvé, lieutenant de la garde, who was described as the nephew and heir when Anne Méric, “veuve de Dupré Lautour” died on 3.XI.1801, at Cloître Saint-Nicolas, Paris; he disclaimed the inheritance as she died with no assets according to his letter (Archives de Paris, Tables de successions, DQ8 14).

The gap in his appearances in Toulouse would be explained if, as we here suggest (2024), he was the “Dupré, peintre en miniature” who appeared in long notices in the *Annonces, affiches, nouvelles et avis divers de l'Orléanois* on 1.XII.1769 and soon after in the *Annonces, affiches et avis divers de Bordeaux*, 7.VI.1770. In the latter, he explained that, after some 25 year of travels, and a long stay in Paris, he had decided to settle in Bordeaux. He painted miniatures for rings, bracelets, watches, snuffboxes etc., and also painted in oil and pastel:

A l'égard de ceux au pastel, il a, à force de recherches, trouvé un secret, que les connoisseurs reconnoîtront pour unique, par sa beauté, imitant la chair naturelle, aussi belle qu'elle puisse être. Quant aux ressemblances, il ne reçoit nul paiement, que les personnes qu'il peint ne soient frappantes, autant que l'art peut le permettre, c'est-à-dire, au point d'être reconnus au premier instant, par les grandes personnes, & les enfans même. Il a fait sa dernière épreuve à Orléans, par un enfant d'environ sept ans, appartenant à M. Malmus, du Portereau. Il est logé chez Madame Tusereau, Place du Marché-Royal.

Nevertheless he was presumably the “sieur Dupré, Peintre en Miniature” who advised the amateurs des beaux-arts that he was lodging opposite the Pénitens Noirs in Toulouse (*Affiches et annonces...*, 5.V.1784).

Bibliography

Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Mesuret 1972; Sanchez 2004

Pastels

- J.2912.101 Trois tableaux, pstl, Salon de Toulouse 1758, no. 98
- J.2912.102 Tête de chien, pstl, Salon de Toulouse 1765, no. 12 (M. Garipuy fils). Lit.: *Mémoires de l'Académie des sciences inscriptions et belles-lettres de Toulouse*, 1917, p. 516, as by Dupré
- J.2912.103 Portrait, pstl, Salon de Toulouse 1766, no. 125
- J.2912.104 Portrait, pstl, Salon de Toulouse 1784, no. 81 (atelier de M. Dupré)