

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

FREY, Franz Bernhard

Guebwiller 1716–1806

Little is known of Frey's origins and training, but he was the son of Philippe-Bernard Frey, membre du conseil de Guebwiller, and his wife Marie-Sybille, whose surname begins Than... but is partly obliterated on the only document (a division of their parents' estate between Frey and his brother, Jean-Michel Frey, vicaire du chapitre de Murbach), dated 1775 (Archives Haut-Rhin, Guebwiller, 10032). As confirmed by this document and other sources, Frey was in Paris from 1754 to 1777 (rue de Suresne), and worked for the Bâtiments du roi, becoming portraitist to Mesdames in place of La Tour (who refused to continue making portraits of the royal sitters in protest about their time-keeping). Numerous copies, repetitions etc. of these images create considerable confusion (several of the pastels catalogued in B&W may be by Frey), and some of the images are related to paintings by F.-H. Drouais. It is likely that Frey made copies for other clients: the portrait of Euler, for example, raises questions about both about the opportunity and the age of the sitter and the date suggested by the costume which may be explained if it was an updated portrait drawn from an earlier image rather than from life.

Frey's early work in Strasbourg in the 1740s appears to have been fairly primitive. His style developed rapidly in Paris to the level required for royal portraiture. The technique is heavily stumped, with ochre flesh tones built up on a bed of blue chalk on greyish paper; fabrics and furs are rapidly executed in a fluid style that looks like paint but appears to be entirely in dry pastel. Backgrounds are sometimes olive green.

A portrait of the baronne de Dietrich, which must date from the 1760s, is reminiscent of the work of Mme Therbusch (*q.v.*); its uncovered breast is a surprisingly rare appearance in pastel portraiture of the day.

Frey was also associated with the Académie de Saint-Luc, although he does not seem to have exhibited at the Salons. He served as an expert on the estate of the deceased painter Robert Mussard on 21.I.1777, described as François-Bernardin Frey, maître peintre, demeurant rue de Surenne, faubourg Saint-Honoré. He was listed in the *Almanach des peintres* of 1776 and 1777 (among the painters of talent unaffiliated to either academy) as Frey, peintre du duc de Deux-Ponts, hôtel de Deux-Ponts, rue des Moulins. In exchange for lodgings, his responsibilities on behalf of Christian IV. Pfalzgraf von Birkenfeld-Zweibrücken extended to copying portraits by Tocqué and negotiating the purchase of a Wouwermans painting from Joullain, as emerge from the correspondence of Pachelbel, the Duke's Paris ambassador.

Two pastels after Frey's departure from Paris testify to his friendship with the younger painter Johann Christian von Mannlich (*q.v.*): he owned Frey's self-portrait as well as that of Barbara von Mannlich, both executed in 1781.

Some secondary sources (probably drawing from Johann Friedrich Aufschlager's remark in *Das Elsaß: Neue historisch-topographische*

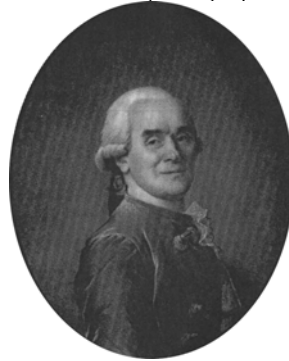
Beschreibung, 1825, I, p. 264) credit Frey with the invention of a process for fixing pastel.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Engerand 1901; Guiffrey 1885, p. 70; Guiffrey 1915, p. 297; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Roland 1961; Sanchez 2004; Saur; Sitzmann 1909–10, I, p. 526; Vallayer-Coster 2002, p. 227

Pastels

AUTO PORTRAIT, de $\frac{3}{4}$ vers la dr., en habit de velours gris à gros boutons, gilet broché or, jabot de dentelle, perruque poudrée; fond bleu, pstl, 72x54 ov., sd ← "Frey peint par lui-même 1781" (Mannheim, Städtisches Reiß-Museum, inv. 0318. Karoline von Mannlich. Mannheim art market; acqu. 1937–39). Exh.: Paris 1948b, no. 185 n.r. Lit.: Roland 1961, p. 58 repr. φ



Madame ADÉLAÏDE de France (1732–1800), pstl (comm. Bâtiments du roi, 1764, 720 livres). Lit.: Engerand 1901

~repl., pstl, \approx 37x31, 1766 (comm. Bâtiments du roi, 400 livres. =?Alfred Bégis/Charles Moisson a.1901, attr. La Tour). Lit.: Engerand 1901

=?pstl (Paris, 20.III.1852, Lot 1). Lit.: B&W 2, ?attr. [v. La Tour]

La comtesse de BAR [née Marguerite de Pionne], 83x73, sd 1755 (comte A. de Cheveigné 1908). Exh.: Paris 1908a, no. 17, pl. 11 Φ



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~related F. H. Drouais pnt., Madame Sophie (Vienna PC)

M. de BERINGHEN [Henri-Camille, marquis de Beringhen, premier écuyer du roi (1693–1770)], gouverneur des pages de Louis XV, en habit rouge, avec le cordon du Saint-Esprit (baron Thomitz 1932). Lit.: Ratouis de Limay 1946, p. 177

La baronne de DIETRICH, comtesse du Ban de la Roche, née Amélie-Anne-Dorothee Hermani (1729–1766), pstl, 65x52 (baron A.

de Dietrich 1908; desc.: Paris, Drouot, Rémy Le Fur, 30.XI.2011, Lot 171 repr., est. €1500–2000). Exh.: Paris 1908a, no. 18, pl. 12 Φ



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??La marquise DU CHÂTELET, née Gabrielle-Émilie Le Tonnelier de Breteuil (1706–1749), pstl, 77x60.5, sd v. "Frey 1758" (Paris, musée Jacquemart-André, inv. MJAP-P 1498. Demidov; Paris, 8–10.III.1860, Lot 398 n.r. A. Fêret, Paris; acqu. 13.VI.1891, H700 [vente Gauchet, 20.IV.1898]). Lit.: Tourneux 1903, p. 56, as by Perronneau; Sainte Fare Garnot & al. 1998, p. 51 repr.; Gétéreau 2011, no. 99 repr. φ



~grav.: Kreutzberger, repr. *Le Musée artistique et littéraire*, 1880

Jean-Baptiste-François DUREY de Mesnières (1705–1785), président au parlement 1731, collaborateur des *Mémoires secrets*, pstl/ppr, 47x38.5, sd → "frey pt/1765" (French PC 2004; Paris, Sotheby's, 19.VI.2006, Lot 45 repr., est. €10–15,000, b/i; Paris, Sotheby's, 19.VI.2007, Lot 21 repr., est. €5–7,000, b/i; Vendôme, Rouillac, 24.II.2008, Lot 23 repr., est. €800, €1700; Galerie Ratton Ladrière) Φ



Leonhard EULER (1707–1783), Mathematiker, pstl, ov., s. v., a.1766 (Bern, Dobiaschofsky,

17–18.X.1974, Lot 261). Lit.: Herbert Fleischner, *Eulerian graphs and related topics*, 1/1, 1990, p. vi repr. φ



Madame LOUISE de France (1737–1787), en corps de robe richement orné, pstl, 65x40.5, 1754 (700 livres). Lit.: Engerand 1901
~2 repls., 1755

Madame LOUISE de France, pstl (comm. Bâtiments du roi, 1764, 720 livres). Lit.: Engerand 1901

Frau Johann Christian von MANNLICH, née Barbara Simon (1752–1794), en corsage gris décolleté, tournée vers la g., la longue chevelure retombant sur les épaules, pstl, 71x56 ov., sd ← “Frey pt. 1781” (Mannheim, Städtisches Reiß-Museum, inv. 0354. Karoline von Mannlich, the sitter’s daughter. Mannheim art market; acqu. 1937–39). Exh.: Paris 1948b, no. 186, inconnue. Lit.: Roland 1961, identified; Louis Réau, *Houdon*, Paris, 1964, p. 142 n.5 φ



✶MARIE LESZCZYŃSKA, pstl, 63.5x50 (B. Svenonius, Stockholm, as La Tour; sale, Bukowskis, c.1930, details n/k; Carl Ulric Palm. PC 2010; Stockholm, Bukowskis, 7–10.XII.2010, Lot 401 repr., est. SwKr20–25,000). A/r Van Loo pnt. (MV 8492) [new attr.] φ



Jean-André SILBERMANN (1712–1783), facteur d’orgues et historien à Strasbourg, de $\frac{3}{4}$ à g., habit et gilet noirs, tenant un tricorne noir galonné d’or sous le bras g., fond bleu, à g. une colonne, pstl, 59x45, 1742; & pendant: épouse, née Anne-Salomé Mannberger

(1725–1769), de $\frac{3}{4}$ à dr., corsage de soie bleu ciel, broche de grosses fleurs polychromes, fichu de dentelle fermé devant par trois roses, collier d’or à six rangs et ruban noir avec croix au cou; fond bleu, à g. un buisson, pstl, 59x45 (Strasbourg, musée des Arts décoratifs). Exh.: Strasbourg 1910, no. 580/581. Lit.: Haug 1938, no. 395/396, n.r. Φ



Photos courtesy musée des Arts Décoratifs de Strasbourg

Madame SOPHIE de France (1734–1782), pstl, 1766 (comm. Bâtiments du roi, 1764, 720 livres). Lit.: Engerand 1901

=?pstl/ppr, 57x44, 1766 (Stockholm, Auktionsverk, 19.V.1998, Lot 1460 repr., inconnue, attr. Glain, est. SKr10–15,000, SKr19,000; 25–26.X.1988, Lot 313 repr., as by Glain. US PC; Boris Wilnitsky Kunsthandel, Vienna, 2005, as La Tour, inconnue; PC). Lit.: Vallayer-Coster 2002, repr. p. 227, as Frey, Mme Sophie Φ



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Photo courtesy Boris Wilnitsky Kunsthandel

~repl., pstl, ?37x31, 1766 (comm. Bâtiments du roi, 400 livres. =?Alfred Bégis/Charles Moisson a.1901, attr. La Tour). Lit.: Engerand 1901

=?pstl (Legrand; 21.XI.1827, Lot 53. Bégis; 12.XI.1900, Lot 217). Lit.: B&W 493, ?attr.; v. La Tour

Frau von TÜRCKHEIM, née Anna Elisabeth (Lili) Schönemann (1758–1817), l’amie de Goethe, pstl, ov., 1782 (Baronin von Türckheim, Schloß Dachstein). Exh.: ?Paris 1932c, no. 176. Lit.: *Der große Brockhaus*, 1954, IV, p. 741 repr.; Sitzmann 1909–10, II, p. 898 n.r., “ravissant pastel”; Astrid Seele, *Frauen um Goethe*, 2000, p. 57 repr.; Ruth Istock, *Goethes Lili*, 2005, repr. cvr Φ



~version, pstl (PC). Lit.: Hans Wahl & Anton Kippenberg, *Goethe und seine Welt*, Leipzig, 1932, p. 46 repr., anon. φ



~cop., miniature, 5.5x4.5 ov. (Frankfurt, Goethe-Museum, inv. II,77)

Madame VICTOIRE de France (1733–1799), pstl (comm. Bâtiments du roi, 1764, 720 livres). Lit.: Engerand 1901

~repl. pstl, ?37x31, 1766 (comm. Bâtiments du roi, 400 livres. =?Alfred Bégis/Charles Moisson a.1901, attr. La Tour). Lit.: Engerand 1901

=?pstl (baron Silvestre; 11.XII.1851, Lot 235, F80). Lit.: B&W 523, ?attr. [v. La Tour]

Femme, pstl, sd “Frey, à Paris, 1760” (Moscow, Pushkin Museum). Lit.: Réau 1929, no. 529 n.r.

Femme en blanc, ov. (Cailleux 1933). Exh.: Paris 1933b, no. 10 n.r.

Dame, 73x62 or 66x53? (Berlin, Henrici, 11.VI.1925, Lot 257 repr. Kaufman; Luzern, Fischer, 18–21.V.1938, Lot 1986) [new attr., ?] Φ

