

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

## **DE GREE, Pieter Jan Balthasar**

Antwerp 12.IX.1751 – Dublin 12.I.1789

The Flemish painter was a pupil of Geerarts. On 10.IX.1785 Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote to the Duke of Rutland concerning certain old master paintings the Duke had charged him with acquiring in Antwerp. Reynolds used de Gree as his agent, and explained to the Duke that “De Gray [was] a very excellent Painter in Chiaro oscuro, in imitation of Bas-relievos. He paints likewise Portraits in oil & in crayons extremely well.” He had been invited to Dublin by “Cunningham” (probably William Burton Conyngham), and he settled there in 1786. En route he visited the Duke of Bedford bearing another letter from Reynolds in which he is described as “a very excellent Connoisseur”. His work in Ireland for the La Touche and Fitzgerald families included further painted trompe l’œil marble reliefs in the manner of Geerarts and Jacob de Witt. No pastel is known.

### **Bibliography**

Bénézit; *The letters of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, New Haven, 2000; Strickland 1913