

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

HIEN, Johann Wilhelm

fl. Darmstadt, Rome 1752–57

Virtually nothing is certain about the artist of the very high quality 1755 pastel of an unknown man. It is clearly signed J. W. Hien, and the signature is very close to that of the two Rome pastels from 1757, as well as to the 1752 pastel surely executed in Darmstadt, where the 16-year-old sitter's father was the Hessen-Darmstädter Rentkammerdirektor Friedrich Wilhelm Hermann (1688–1766). They cannot be by the minor Dutch pastellist J. van Hien (*q.v.*) with whom this artist has been confused. Nor does it seem likely that either could be the Heems (*q.v.*), a pupil at the Académie royale in Paris, who won second prize in 1755, although there is a strong French feel to the Darmstadt portrait which suggests that he may have trained in Paris before 1752. The association of these works with Vien is simply a misreading of the signature. While the composition of the portrait of Bielke is similar to some works by Lundberg, the sitter did not return to Sweden after his conversion to Catholicism around 1729. An attribution to Mengs has been suggested for the Boston pastel, indicative of the quality of this virtually unknown pastellist. On 28.IV.1774 a painter named "Heen" passed through Capua with Solomon Delane and William Parry, all described as *pittori della Galleria Farnese* (Ingamells 1997, p. 290).

Ludwig (1999) understandably attributed the Darmstadt pastel to the local still-life painter Daniel Hien (1725–1773), who studied in Paris with Oudry, but he does not seem to have worked in pastel, nor to have been in Rome (although he was in Milan until returning to Zweibrücken in 1756, according to von Mannlich 1805, p. 204). However the Zweibrücken archives record a marriage (after obtaining the necessary dispensations): "den 29. August [1758] wurde H. Johann Wilhelm Hien Hofmahler mit Philipp Louysa Geissin zu Waldmohr nach erhaltener Dimissorialien copuliert"; Roland 1959 suggests that the name of Wilhelm might be an error for Daniel. Not only the stylistic differences but the clear initials in some of the signatures of the Rome pastellist point to there being two artists. Baptismal records for children born in the next two years note as godfather Johann Christian Hien, Zoller am Judenthor zu Straßburg, thought to be Daniel's father, and suggesting that Daniel and Johann Wilhelm were brothers.

One of them must have been Wille's old friend, who made a trip to Paris in 1760 with his employer to buy pictures, and paid several visits to Wille, who recorded on 15.II.1760 "M. Hin, peintre du duc régnant de Deux-Ponts et mon ancien ami, étant arrivé avec S.A.S., me vient voir tout de suite. J'en étois ravi. Nous nous sommes embrassés de bon cœur, comme de raison." The duke recruited a young painter called Meyer – presumably Georg Friedrich Meyer (1735–1779). Wille noted "C'est M. Hin, son ancien maître lorsqu'ils étoient encore à Strasbourg, qui lui a procuré cette petite fortune." The ages and dates make it unlikely that the reference is to Charles-Alexis Huin (*q.v.*) as previously thought.

Bibliography

Berthold Roland, *Die Malergruppe von Pfalz-Zweibrücken*, 1959, p. 33, n.125, citing Zwbr. Luth. Kb. 1731/1764, 1758 Nr. 588/89; Scheen 1981

Pastels

Il conte Nils BIELKE [Niccolo de Bielke] (1706–1765), sénateur de Rome, en habit officiel, pstl, gch./ppr, 96x74, sd "Hien 1757" (Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilj, inv. FC 627. Acqu. Rome art market 1891). Lit.: Carl Nils Daniel Bildt, *Svenska minnen och märken Rom*, 1900, p. 41 n.r.; Lafenestre & Richtenberger 1903–05, II, p. 233 n.r., as by Vien, sd "J. Vien 1757"; Gaetgens & Lugand 1988, p. 217, no. 64 repr., ??Vien ☐



~grav.: for cardinal Giovanni Costanzio Caracciolo (1715–1780), *Mémoire historique...Niels Bielke*, Rome, 1769

Frau Wolfgang Dietrich WEICKER, née Wilhelmine Eleonore Hermann (1736–1811), ∞ 1^o 1762 Darmstädter hochfürstlichen Archivar Kilian Wilhelm Buchner; 2^o p.1767 Obrist Weicker, pstl/pchm, 60x50, sd ʀ "Hien fecit/1752" (Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum, inv. GK 1291. Desc.: Dr Adolf Buchner, Darmstadt, 1909. Bruno Klittermann, Stuttgart. Acqu. 1980). Exh.: Darmstadt 1980a, no. 62 repr., as by Daniel Hien. Lit.: Ludwig 1999, pp. 82f repr., attr. Daniel Hien ☐



Homme inconnu, pstl/vl, 57.6x47.3, sd ✓ "JWHien/1755" (Amsterdam, Christie's, 13.XI.1995, Lot 228A repr., est. Df3–5000, Df3220; Saam & Lily Nijstat, The Hague, inv. N478; Amsterdam, Sotheby's, 19.V.2004, Lot 262 repr., est. €1800–2200, €3318) ☐



Photo courtesy Sotheby's

Boy in a blue silk coat, pstl, 56x43, sd "JHien/1755" (Maria Angiolillo (c.1929–2009); London, Christie's, 15.VII.2010, Lot 600 repr., as sd 1758, est. £4–6000, £5625) ☐



Dame inconnue, pstl/vl, 44x34.5, sd ✓ "JWHien/Rom le 20 Aug./1757" (Boston, MFA, inv. 65.2667. Turner, Paris, 1919; Cailleux, Paris, 1927; acqu. Forsyth Wickes 1935; legs 1965). Exh.: Paris 1927a, no. 132, pl. xx-29, as Vien. Lit.: Ratouis de Limay 1946, p. 203; Munger & al. 1992, no. 33 repr., ??Vien, ?Mengs [new attr.] ☐



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