

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

HOLBEIN, Hans, d. J.

Augsburg c.1498 – London 1546

Holbein was the supreme draughtsman of his age. By 1524 he was using coloured chalk in the drawings he made on his journey through France. Whether he learned this technique directly from Jean Clouet or from the circle around Leonardo and Jean Perréal is now difficult to decide. The coloured chalk in these drawings is sometimes referred to as pastel; certainly the yellows and pinks he employed have a density and luminosity characteristic of fabricated colours, but their use was graphic and unmodulated, in contrast to soft pastel used to paint portraits with gradations of tone. The self-portrait in the Uffizi comes closest to pastel in our sense; with coloured chalk drawings such as the portrait of John Godsalue (Windsor), he resorted to watercolour and gouache to produce areas of colour. These drawings are not catalogued here, nor are the copies by Lutterell, and possibly others (*v.* English sch.), of his famous portrait of Erasmus.

Monographic exhibitions

Holbein 1988: *Dessins de Hans Holbein le Jeune provenant de la collection de SM la reine Elisabeth II à Windsor Castle et de la collection du musée des Beaux-Arts de Bâle*, Bâle, Kunstmuseum, 12.VI.–4.IX.1988

Bibliography

Barrow 1735, *s.v.* Crayons; Bäschmann & Griener 1997; Brieger 1921; Foskett 1987; Claude Kuhn, “Dessins de Hans Holbein le jeune”, *L’Œil*, 395, .VI.1988, p. 38–43, Lavallée 1949, p. 81; Meder 1919, p. 137; Wright 2006

Pastels

AUTORITRATTO, cr. clr/ppr, 32x26, c.1540 (Uffizi). Lit.: Bell 2000, p. 75 repr. clr φ



Two portraits in crayons (London, Christie's, 28.XI.1812, Lot 29 part, 10/-; Joseph Woodin)