

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

JONES, Thomas

Trevonen 26.IX.1742 – Pencerrig 29.IV.1803
Landscape painter. He went to Oxford with the intention of becoming a clergyman, but after the death of his sponsor turned instead to art. He enrolled in Shipley's Academy in 1761 and was subsequently taught by Richard Wilson. On 28.II.1769 a Thomas Jones was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools. Among numerous oils sent to the Society of Artists from 1762 to 1780 were two pastels, both in 1768. We learn the background to this choice of medium from his *Memoirs* (p. 15):

About the beginning of the Year 1768 – happening accidentally to be on a morning lounge at a Crayon painter's [unnamed] – to pass the time, I took up his Crayons, and on a Scrap of Paper, made a Sketch of a Landscape, which pleased beyond Expectation – and I was encouraged to persevere – the Novelty of the Thing – the Soft union, and brilliancy of the Tints charmed the Ladies, particularly, and I had as many commissions in a short time, as I could possibly execute – A pair which were put into the Exhibition, procured Applications from a number of Governesses to know my terms of *teaching* “as they were the most beautiful little pictures they had ever beheld” – but with more Pride than Policy perhaps, I rejected all proposals of degrading myself into a drawing-master at boarding schools. [...] During this summer I made three or four short visits to *Gadbridge* – Went on with my Crayon Pictures.

None of these pastels appears to be known today. This may be because, when he returned from his travels in Italy 1776–83, he discovered that the prints and drawings he had stored with an unnamed gentleman (perhaps his cousin Rice James of Gadbridge) had been irretrievably damaged by damp.

Monographic exhibitions

Jones 1970: *Thomas Jones (1742–1803)*, Twickenham, Marble Hill House, 1.VI.–16.VIII.1970; Cardiff, National Museum of Wales, 24.VIII.–30.IX.1970
Jones 2003: *Thomas Jones (1742–1803): an artist rediscovered*, Cardiff, National Museum & Gallery, 21.V.–10.VIII.2003; Manchester, Whitworth Art Gallery, 22.VIII.–26.X.2003; London, National Gallery, 12.XI.2003 – 15.II.2004. Cat. Greg Smith & Ann Sumner

Bibliography

Waterhouse 1981; “Memoirs of Thomas Jones”, *Walpole Society*, XXXII, 1946–48, pp. 1–143

Pastels

J.421.101 Landscape; & pendant: J.421.102 sunset, crayons, Society of Artists 1768, no. 78/79