

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

JOURDAIN, François-Laurent-Bruno

Besançon 6.X.1745–18.IV.1815

A pastellist signing “Jourdain” was active in France mainly in the early nineteenth century, but some examples as early as 1784 seem sufficiently close in style to attribute to the same hand. These pastels show strong colouring; the faces have a provincial and somewhat Teutonic directness, with characteristic eyebrows and blueish shadows. It is quite possible that this was the “Jourdain” who exhibited several pastels at the open Paris salon of 1802, from rue neuve des Bons-Enfants, no. 26 (no further details are vouchsafed in the livret). There are also a couple of miniatures with similar signatures, of varied quality. He may also have been the “Jourdain” who provided intermediate drawings after Correggio and Raphael for Antone-Louis Romanet’s engravings in the Galerie du Palais Royal, a set of engravings published 1786–1808. The matter requires careful analysis to unravel the confusions, particularly since two of the pastels are in Besançon.

He has been assumed to be François-Laurent-Bruno Jourdain, an artist who cannot be placed in Paris in 1802 with documentary evidence, and whose style and signature on legal documents appear different (albeit the signatures on the pastels seem to vary between works that are stylistically similar); further he died before 1818, the date that appears on one of the pastels (it is followed by the symbol ∴, suggesting that the artist was a freemason). However a notice in the *Annonces, affiches et avis divers de Metz* on 25.1.1813 records the pastellist on a brief visit to the town, and provides convincing evidence that François-Laurent-Bruno did work in the medium:

Jourdain, ex-professeur de dessin à la ci-devant école centrale de Besançon, fait le portrait en grand, dans un genre nouveau, qui réunit la fraîcheur du pastel à la solidité d l’huile; il n’exige qu’une seule séance d’une heure, et garantit la plus parfaite ressemblance. Il est logé pour peu de jours, rue de l’Abbaye, maison de M. Nicolas, traiteur...

François-Laurent-Bruno Jourdain was the son of an orléanais painter François Jourdain (1700–1787), peintre de la princesse d’Orange and a protégé of Mgr de Durfort, and his wife, née Toussaint Royer (1713–1786); this was probably the François Jourdain, maître peintre à Paris, rue Bourg-Tibourg, listed as a creditor for 240 livres of the marchand-bijoutier Jacquelin du Buisson (AN MC/XXVIII/423, 29.IX.1770). The son François-Laurent-Bruno Jourdain was also a pupil of Wyrsh. It was not until 1776, at the age of 31, that he succeeded in obtaining first prize at the école de Besançon. In 1785, when Wyrsh wanted to leave, Jourdain submitted an *Adam et Eve trouvant mort leur fils Abel*, but this was not considered adequate to justify his appointment to succeed his master, and the place was given to Simon-Bernard Lenoir (*q.v.*). Although Jourdain continued to teach drawing at Besançon after the closure of the École centrale in 1803, the drawing school had

declined after the departure of Wyrsh and the short-lived tenure of Lenoir, and could not withstand the imposition of fees which his pupils, mainly drawn from the working classes, had been unable to afford. Jourdain appealed to the municipality in an impassioned letter of 11.VI.1803, and four years later was permitted to open an École gratuite de dessin to which he and the much younger dijonnais, Dominique Paillot (*q.v.*), were appointed professeurs. Jourdain’s classes were attended on average by some 200 pupils. He made allegorical and religious paintings (such as the *Martyre de saint Vernier* in the Sainte-Madeleine at Besançon), miniatures and oil portraits.

On 30.I.1770 in Besançon François-Laurent-Bruno Jourdain married Anne-Étiennette Sairon; their third son François-Xavier-Gabriel (1773–1856) became a receveur de douanes, while the eldest, François Jourdain (Besançon 9.XI.1770–12.III.1817) became a drawing teacher and competent topographical draughtsman. He in turn married twice, in 1795 and 1802, both occasions in Besançon from which there is no evidence that he moved; he too died before 1818; his inventaire après décès included no evidence of work as a pastellist; further his signature also bears no relation to the pastellist’s.

François-Laurent-Bruno Jourdain had a brother, Claude-Julien Jourdain (Besançon 10.VII.1738 – Toul 22.XII.1815) who was also a miniaturist. He moved to Paris fairly early, and was recorded in the rue de Tournon in 1770 and in the cartes de sûreté (16.VIII.1793) in the rue Guénégaud, having previously lived in the rue des Saint-Pères. Around 1765 in Paris he married Constance-Gertrude Galli (c.1740–1780), from Rome. Their son Pierre-Julien married Marguerite-Elisabeth-Sophie Leroux in Paris 28.V.1798. Claude-Julien maintained his links with Besançon, and was parrain to his brother’s son bearing his name, baptised at Saint-Maurice, 6.X.1772 (the nephew died in Besançon in 1786). A note in the AN (comités d’instruction, dossier 1094) records that Claude-Julien Jourdain was employed in the écoles primaires de dessin (22 brumaire an II). However he too died in 1815, and his signature (found on a 1770 tuition and the 1772 parish register) does not match that of the pastellist. The inscription on the pastel apparently dated 1818 may have been misread or altered.

A Charles-Henry Jourdain, peintre, de Paris, was enrolled in the école de l’Académie royale on 17.X.1783, aged 14½, a pupil of Vincent, but does not seem to fit the information on the pastellist.

Bibliography

Bellier de La Chavignerie & Auvray; Bénézit; Besançon 2022; Castan 1888, pp. 128–32; Müller & Singer 1921; Charles Nodier, *Correspondance de jeunesse*, ed. Jacques-Rémi Dahan, Paris, 1995, 1, p. 127; *Mémoires de la Société d’émulation du Doubs*, 1925, p. 131; Richard de Vesvrotte 2016; Albert Troux, *L’École centrale du Doubs à Besançon*, 1926

Pastels

J.4226.101 Jean DUTESTU à 28 ans, pstl, 48x38, sd “Jourdain 1787” (Blois, Valoir-Blois, 11.XI.2007, repr.) φ



J.4226.102 Jacques-Antoine-Louis GUÉRIN (1774–1852), pstl, 47x37, sd → “Jourdain/fecit 1818 ∴”, inscr. *verso* “Mon grand père/jacques antoine louis Guérin/fait en 1809/18/a L’age de 35 ans” (M. F...; Paris, Drouot, Ader, 27.X.2012, Lot 250 repr., est. €150–200) [Pattr.] φ



J.4226.103 M. de LA BROSSE, en habit bleu, pstl, 65x50 ov., sd ∴ “F Jourdain/P^r an 10” [1802] (Nantes PC; desc.; PC 2010) φ

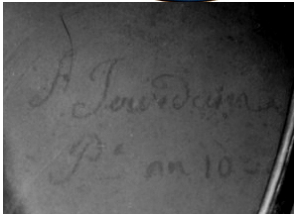


30.XI.2019, Lot 238 repr., anon., est. €150–200) [new attr.] φν



J.4226.141 Une tête d'étude, pstl, Salon de 1802, no. 142 *bis*

J.4226.151 Plusieurs portraits, pstl, Salon de 1802, no. 142 *ter*



J.4226.106 Claude-Pierre PAJOL (1772–1844), colonel au 6^e régiment de hussards, pstl, 59x50, sd *verso* “Jourdain fecit, 1804” (Besançon, mBA, inv. D.3449. Don Charles Paol 1888). Lit.: *Inventaire général des richesses d'art de France*, 1913, IV, p. 202 n.r.; Richard de Vesvrotte 2016, fig. 5, as by L.-B.-F. Jourdain, as inscr. 1804; Chatelain 2018, no. 87 φ

J.4226.107 Mann mit Zweispitz, pstl/ppr, 50x39, sd ∨ “Jourdain fecit 1810” (Bern, Galerie Vogler, 13.XI.2004, Lot 680, est. SwFr700, b/i; Bern, Galerie Vogler, 28.v.2005, Lot 670, est. SwFr350, SwFr95. Paul De Grande; Jabbeke, Rob Michiels, 22–26.VI.2022, Lot 1465 repr., ?autoportrait, est. €400–600. Bruxelles, Coronari, 29–30.XI.2023, Lot 1465 repr., est. €400–800) φ



J.4226.108 Homme, pstl/ppr, 50x39.5, sd ∨ “Jourdain/1812” (Cannes, Pignon & Naudek-Deniau, 14.IV.2022, Lot 56 repr., est. €200–300) [?attr.] φα



J.4226.1063 Man in blue coat, pstl, 41x32 ov., s → illegibly “f jourdain/?83...” (PC 2024) [new attr.] φαν



J.4226.121 Jeune femme en robe bleue, pstl, 46x38, sd ∨ “Jourdain 1784” (Besançon, mBA, inv. D.5486). Lit.: Chatelain 2018, no. 85φ



J.4226.1065 Homme, pstl/ppr, 61x43 ov., sd *verso* “Jourdain/Px 1791” (Vernon, Briault,