

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastelists before 1800*

Online edition

LE GRU PEROTTI, Angelica

Verona 1719 – London 1.IX.1776

Daughter of the portraitist Stefano Le Gru or Grù (born in Venice c.1663, the son of a French painter, Jean Le Gru, born in Paris c.1620), and sister of the painters Giuseppe, Tommaso and Lodovico. After initial training by her family, she went to Venice where she was one of only two pupils of Rosalba Carriera, according to Séguier 1752, who informs us that she stayed in the studio for nine years. Indeed, some nine years previously, a letter to Rosalba from Graf Schulenburg in Verona, of 28.VII.1743, introduced the artist “da me conosciuta e distinta per le sue qualità personali e per essere principalmente inclinata e valente nella nobile arte della Pittura”, and asked her to take her on. (Schulenburg, a major patron of the arts, had been portrayed by Rosalba in 1724 and owned one of her miniatures, probably that now in Cleveland.) A single letter from Angelica to Rosalba, dated 4.XII.1747, indicates that she was in Verona on family business, and had been in Vicenza; but she may have returned to Rosalba's studio soon after. Diego Zannandreis (1768–1836), in his posthumously published lives of veronese artists, noted that

Educata nei principi della pittura in famiglia, e dedicata essendosi particolarmente alla maniera di dipingere a pastello, recossi giovanetta a Venezia sotto la celebre Rosalba Carriera, ove approfittando delle dotte sue istruzioni e copiando insieme le di lei opere, le riuscì d'impossessarsi della sua bella maniera, in cui, essa non ebbe chi l'uguagliasse, divenendo una delle sue più valorose discepole. E se la nostra pittrice non arrivò a possedere tutta la bella vaghezza del dipingere ameno e lucidissimo della Carriera, non resta però che i suoi ritratti e le altre sue pitture non siano ben condotte e lavorate con forza e vigore, di modo che sono tenute in pregio non solamente dagli Italiani, ma dagli Inglesi stessi, ottimi estimatori, quanto altrettanto amanti di questo genere di pittura.

This is confirmed by Séguier 1752:

La seconde élève est la Sig^{ra} Angelique [fol. 136 v] le Grou ou Gru, comme on prononce ici, née a Verone et fille d'un peintre <français> originaire de Lyon. Celle-ci a passé neuf ans <a l'école de> la Ros' alba, et elle en a si bien pris le goût qu'elle et les manieres que peu s'en faut qu'elle ne l'égale. Elle vient de faire une élève qui est M^{re} la Comtesse Gazola, qui dans un âge que les personnes de sa condition donnent aux plaisirs a bien voulu s'en servir pour s'appliquer a peindre au pastel. Elle promet déjà beaucoup, et l'aisance qu'elle montre est un gage qu'elle y fera de grands progrès

The text is ambiguous as to whether the contessa Gazola (*q.v.*) was a pupil of Rosalba or of Le Gru.

In Venice she married the painter Pietro Antonio Perotti (*q.v.*), with whom she had a daughter, Anna Maria, born c.1759. At some stage while still in Italy she made the acquaintance of the German polymath Christoph Golttlieb von Murr (1733–1811): according to Will's *Nürnbergisches Gelehrten-Lexicon*, 1802, “die berühmte Pastelmalerinn Angelica Perotti, (le Gru) Schülerinn der Rosalba Carriera, erwiesen ihm ganz besondere Freundschaft.”

The Perotti family travelled to London in 1768. She worked mainly in pastel, exhibiting at

least five such works at the Royal Academy in 1772 (from Mrs Gamborine's, Poland Street) and 1775 (from Woodstock Street, where she continued to appear as a “portrait painter in crayons” into the 1778 edition of Kearsly's *Pocket ledger*). She also worked in oil.

An advertisement in the *Daily advertiser*, 1.III.1775, for an elegant house to let in Bath nominated “Mrs Perotti's, Lower Brook-Street” for enquiries. No homonym is obvious.

A series of portraits of the family of the Duke of Atholl made in 1771 must have been in oil, as they were described in a letter from George Steuart to the duke: “Sig^a has acquit herself very well, took great pains with the draperies, and fixing them on frames properly.” (Vicky Coltman, *Art and identity in Scotland*, 2019, p. 70) The accounts of the 5th Duke of Badminton for the Grosvenor Square house include a payment for “glass and case for Angelica Perotti's picture, 1774” (Gloucestershire archives, D2700/QJ3/14): this is no doubt one of the six pastel copies of old master religious paintings by Perotti works in the Duke's collection sold in Sotheby's in 1967.

Perotti was buried in St Pancras Old Church, 3.IX.1776. Her widower and their daughter (who had been trained to paint, but abandoned the art) returned to Italy.

Her posthumous sale, by Christie and Ansell, included pastels by herself and by Rosalba (although one is tempted to suspect that some of these may have been her copies). It also included further copies by her, not catalogued as in crayons and so probably in oil; some were versions of the same old master pictures. None of her original pastels is now known for certain; but a Rosalba-esque young woman, signed AP, is here tentatively attributed to her, although it might be by Arthur Pond. Similarly two Rosalba copies of Apollo and Diana at Doddington Hall recently attributed to Pond might correspond to the works in the 1777 sale as by Rosalba and perhaps also hers.

Zannandreis, commenting that she cultivated art “con genio, assiduità e valore”, notes some of her work in the Galleria Serpini, now Salvetti, but cites her best work as those kept in her own house in the Gargerie: a set of Four Seasons, some portraits, and a Pietà (all medium unspecified).

Bibliography

Bénézit; Sani 1985; Sée 1911; Séguier 1752; Waterhouse 1981; Diego Zannandreis, *Le vite de' pittori, scultori e architetti veronesi*, ed. G. Biadego, Verona, 1891

Pastels

- J.471.101 Gentleman, pstl, Royal Academy 1772, no. 195
- J.471.102 Gentleman, crayons (the artist; sale p.m., London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 1)
- J.471.103 Lady, pstl, Royal Academy 1772, no. 193
- J.471.104 Lady with a cat, pstl, Royal Academy 1772, no. 194
- J.471.105 Lady; whole length, pstl, Royal Academy 1775, no. 220
- J.471.106 Lady; whole length, pstl, Royal Academy 1775, no. 221

J.471.1063 Holy Family, crayon (Graf von Brühl; London, Christie's, 24.III.1770, Lot 79 n.r., 50 gns). A/r Raphael pnt., of same size, ex Grimani collection

J.471.1065 Holy Family, crayons, a/r Carlo Maratti (Pier [?Perotti]; London, Christie's, 7.III.1776, Lot 32 n.r.)

J.471.1066 Boy with goats, crayons (Pier [?Perotti]; London, Christie's, 7.III.1776, Lot 54 n.r.)

J.471.1067 Virgin and Child, crayons (Pier [?Perotti]; London, Christie's, 7.III.1776, Lot 84 n.r.)

Madona, Child, St John and St Elizabeth, m/u [pnt.], a/r Raphael (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 2)

J.471.1068 Callisto, crayons (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 3)

J.471.107 Head of a Magdalen, crayons, after Old Palma, crayons (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 7)

J.471.108 Flora, crayons (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 8)

J.471.109 Clio, crayons (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 9)

J.471.111 Madona, crayons, a/r Guido (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 21)

J.471.111 Madona and Child, crayons, a/r Sassoferato (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 22)

J.471.112 Aurora and Zephyr, crayons, a/r Liberi (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 36)

J.471.113 Charity, crayons, a/r Carlo Dolci (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 37)

J.471.114 Holy Family, crayons, a/r Carlo Maratti (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 38)

J.471.115 A dead Christ, the Virgin Mary, St Francis and two angels, crayons, a/r Carracci (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 41)

J.471.116 Finding of Moses, in a small and particular manner, crayons, a/r Titian (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 42. Sale, London, 1802, 5s.)

J.471.1162 =?Finding of Moses, crayon Graf von Brühl; London, Christie's, 24.III.1770, Lot 80 n.r., 21 gns). A/r pnt. Titian, same size, ex Grimani collection

J.471.1163 =?Finding of Moses, crayons, a/r Titian (London, Christie's, 7.III.1776, Lot 63 n.r.)

Finding of Moses, in a small and particular manner, pnt., a/r Titian (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 46)

J.471.117 Venetian lady with a cat, crayons (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 43)

J.471.118 Madona and Child and St Joseph, crayons, a/r Rubens (Angelica Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 44)

J.471.119 Madona and Child, St John, St Jerome and St Francis, crayons, a/r Raphael (Angelica

Le Gru Perotti; London, Christie & Ansell, 17.IV.1777, Lot 45)

J.471.1191 Four Seasons, m/u (casa Perotti, Verona). Lit.: Zannandreis 1891

J.471.1192 Some portraits, m/u (casa Perotti, Verona). Lit.: Zannandreis 1891

J.471.1193 Pietà; m/u (casa Perotti, Verona). Lit.: Zannandreis 1891

J.471.1194 The tribute money, crayons, a/r Leonardo da Vinci (Vansittart; London, Christie's, 1.III.1782, Lot 91, £11; William Comyns) = (Vansittart; London, Christie's, 2.VI.1781, Lot 25, 10 gns; William Comyns)

=?A capital crayons of Christ rebuking the Jew offering Tribute Money (London, George Squibb, 10.V.1782, Lot 32, as by Maceni of Florence, 6 gns)

J.471.12 David as a herdsman attending his flocks, crayons, with plate glass (George Bubb Dodington, Baron Melcombe; London, Christie's, 30.V.1785 & seq., Lot 36, as by Aug. Perotti, £6/10/-; Lloyd) [new attr.]

J.471.1201 [olim J.5808.103] Madonna with infant Saviour, crayons, plate glass (John Barber; London, Christie's, 9.V.1787, Lot 52, £4/14/-; Oliver)

J.471.12015 The Aurora; and Bacchus and Ariadne, crayons, plate glass, a/r Guido Reni (John Barber; London, Christie's, 10.V.1787, Lot 88, £6/10/-; Dr Stevens)

J.471.1202 A concert champetre, crayons, plate glass, a/r Titian (John Barber; London, Christie's, 10.V.1787, Lot 99, £5/15/-; Holmes)

J.471.1203 =?A concert champetre, crayons, plate glass, a/r Tintoretto (Walsh; London, Christie's, 29.V.1795, Lot 58, b/i)

J.471.1204 Venus taking the thorn from her foot, crayons, plate glass (Korrelles; London, Christie's, 21.IV.1792, Lot 90, £4/14/-; [Philippe Joseph] Tass[aert]. =?Colnaghi & Torre; London, Christie's, 28/ii/1793, Lot 64, £9/19/-; Dr Trusler)

J.471.121 Madonna con Bambino e san Giovannino, pstl/ppr, 76x60 (Duke of Beaufort; London, Sotheby's, 15.XI.1967, Lot 9 n.r., a/r Bonifazio, £70) φ



J.471.122 Madonna con Bambino e san Giacomo e Santa Lucia in adorazione, pstl/ppr, 54.8x67.5 (Duke of Beaufort; London, Sotheby's, 15.XI.1967, Lot 10 n.r., as San Rocco (?) e santa Lucia, a/r Bonifazio, £20) [?a/r Palma il Vecchio] φ



J.471.1221 Madonna con Bambino, SS Giovannino, Girolamo e Francesco, pstl, 91.5x73 (Duke of Beaufort; London, Sotheby's, 15.XI.1967, Lot 11 n.r., £40). A/r Innocenzo da Imola

J.471.1222 Holy Family before a landscape, pstl, 65.3x55.3 (Duke of Beaufort; London, Sotheby's, 15.XI.1967, Lot 12 n.r., £40). A/r Carlo Maratta

J.471.1223 Holy Family, pstl, 92x74 (Duke of Beaufort; London, Sotheby's, 15.XI.1967, Lot 13 n.r., £20). A/r Rubens

J.471.1224 Head of the Virgin, pstl, 46.3x35 (Duke of Beaufort; London, Sotheby's, 15.XI.1967, Lot 14 n.r., £35). A/r Sassoferrato

J.471.123 Adamo; & pendant: J.471.124 Eva, pstl/ppr, 56x55.5 (Venice, Semenzato, 15.V.1999, Lot 746 n.r., est. It£10–12,000,000, b/i)

J.471.125 =?tempera/ppr, 57x48 (Milan, Finarte, 31.V.2000, Lot 4 repr., as by Rotari, est. It£20–25,000,000, b/i) [?attr.; neither Perotti nor Rotari seems reliable]

J.471.135 [olim J.597.424] Jeune dame tenant une colombe, pstl, 68.2x55.5 ov., s "AP" (Monaco, Sotheby's, 11.II.1979, Lot 54 repr., est. It£13–20,000; London, Sotheby's, 29.XI.1979, Lot 35 repr.). Lit.: Jeffares 2006, p. 602Ciii, éc. fr. [new attr., ?; cf. Arthur Pond] J.597.406 Φαν

