

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

## Online edition

### MUSSON, Pierre

Orléans 15.X.1739 – Paris 29.V.1820

A pastellist and miniaturist, he exhibited a case of miniatures at the Salon of 1799. He was more celebrated as a hoaxer and female impersonator than as an artist, according to the *Mémoires secrets* and a number of other sources; among his victims were Isabey, the princesse Dolgorouky and général Thiébault. Pierre Musson, peintre, rue Pierre-Sarrazin married a Marie Sautrin on 21.XI.1774 (AN MC/ET/XXVII/373). He was living at 17 rue du Faubourg Montmartre in 1820 when he died in a traffic accident in the rue de la Chaussée-d'Antin (then named rue du Mont-Blanc). Herluison praised the several works that were exhibited in the Orléans retrospective: "on a remarqué de ravissants portraits (miniatures et pastels), dus à son pinceau délicat, tous d'un faire charmant, d'un nacré suave et sans doute d'une grande exactitude de ressemblance".

There are confusions with his father, the Protestant clockmaker from Orléans Pierre Musson (maître 1746, 1717–1795; he was married to a Charlotte Girard) as well as with one of the pastellist's (numerous) younger brothers Pierre-Salomon, a pupil of David and Brenet at the Académie from 1784, when he was staying with his brother in the rue Montmartre. The pastel of the bishop of Clermont-Ferrand is given to the father in the dealer's catalogue.

An early nineteenth century portrait of "Musson, peintre de Marie-Antoinette" by Isidore Péan du Pavillon is in the château de Blois (inv. 869.11.1). Mme du Barry's accounts record 6120 livres owing to "Mussard, peintre" alongside Pajou, Vernet and other artists

#### Bibliography

Bénézit; Herluison & Leroy 1899; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Sanchez 2004

#### Pastels

J.5504.101 AUTOPORTRAIT, pstl. Exh.: Orléans 1895, no. 35 *bis*, "Musson, horloger du Roi".  
Lit.: Herluison & Leroy 1899, pl. XXIX φ

J.5504.121 François-Marie LE MAISTRE de La Garlaye (1700–1776), évêque de Clermont-Ferrand, pstl, 56x42, sd ρ "musson/fecit 1762" (Torrent Antiquités, Vic-le-Comte, 2024) [Patr.] φαυ

