

POURVOYEUR, Jean-Baptiste

Troyes c.1724 – Poissy 13.XI.1795

Pourvoyeur, or Le Pourvoyeur, was a portraitist in oil and pastel and inventor of a new pastel composition, known from a notice in the *L'Avant-Coureur*, 1768:

M. le Pourvoyeur, peintre de l'Académie de S. Luc, qui peint en Pastel, a trouvé, après plusieurs essais, le secret de le fixer. Son pastel préparé se conserve très bien, ne craint point l'humidité, & peut être transporté facilement sans que l'on ait lieu d'appréhender qu'il tombe en poussière, défaut des pastels ordinaires. M. le Pourvoyeur offre d'en faire la preuve. Il demeure à Paris, rue des Bourdonnois, au grand Monarque, chez un Tapisserieur.

He is evidently the Jean-Baptiste Pourvoyeur, peintre de l'Académie de Saint-Luc, who married on 17.IV.1749 at Paris, Saint-Eustache, Catherine-Françoise Gaillard (the daughter of Pierre and Nicole-Elisabeth Lepentre). Pourvoyeur's father Nicolas was a maître de pension, Latin teacher and poet, long established in Troyes; his mother, Anne Simonnot. He was probably born in Troyes (several siblings were baptised there around 1715, but his name does not appear in the parish registers for 1724, the year his age at death implies).

It is notable that Pourvoyeur, in his advertisement, should mention the Académie de Saint-Luc, as, in 1763, he was party to the legal case which ultimately contributed to the demise of that institution. Pourvoyeur, an élève protégé of Claude-François Desportes at the Académie royale, had relied upon an ancient privilege accorded to apprentices of artists housed in the Louvre to become masters without the normal requirements and fees imposed by the guild. He was sued by the maîtres-peintres de l'Académie de Saint-Luc for infringing their monopoly. He initially lost at the Châtelet in 1762, but on appeal, the artists resident in the Louvre, mostly painters of the Académie royale de peinture, seeing their own position under threat, came to his rescue (they had written to Marigny in .VI.1761 without result; *v.* La Tour documentation file). Cochin enlisted the help of the avocat-général Séguier to secure victory, and Pourvoyeur ultimately received 300 livres in damages. Cochin celebrated this in his famous *Allégorie de la Justice protégeant les Arts*, engraved by Demarteau in 1764, and dedicated to Séguier. At the time the judgment was delivered by the parlement de Paris (20.VIII.1763, also in La Tour documentation), Pourvoyeur was living and working in the rue Feydeau. It was alleged that he had previously absented himself from his master to two years, spent at Auxerre; and that he had not received any lessons from Desportes, who was an animal painter.

At the time of his 1768 advertisement, and from the same address, Pourvoyeur purchased an annuity ("constitution de rentes annuelles de 100 livres", 7.VII.1768, AN MC LIV 929). On 17.X. and 31.XII.1772, he receipted the sum of 60 livres from the estate of the abbé de Bailleul (XCVIII/600); he was then living in rue de la Tabletterie. By 28.IV.1773, when he was reimbursed the sum of 2600 livres by the garde

du trésor royal for unspecified reasons (presumably connected with the litigation), he was living in the rue de l'Eguillerie. "M. Pourvoyeur, rue d'Enfer, près le caffè" was listed as a *maître à dessiner* in the *Almanach des peintres*, 1776, p. 154.

It seems however that Pourvoyeur adopted at least two pseudonyms to continue his business, one almost an anagram. It is here proposed (2021) that he be conflated with the untraced "Le sieur Rupelvoër, peintre de l'Académie de Saint-Luc" who advertised that he had discovered—

des crayons en pastels, plus durables que ceux dont on s'est servi jusqu'à présent. Les portraits qu'il fait avec cette nouvelle composition ont l'avantage de la solidité, & de pouvoir être transportés sans souffrir le moindre dommage du transport. Il n'emploie que deux séances pour faire un portrait quelconque. Il prend deux louis quand il va peindre les personnes en Ville, et 36 livres, quand elles viennent chez lui. Sa demeure est dans le cloître S. Opportune. Il vend aussi à juste prix les crayons en pastels de sa composition.

(*L'Avant-Coureur*, 1771, p. 503; cf. *Journal encyclopédique*, .IX.1771, p. 451f.) A similar notice appeared in the *Osservazioni spettanti*, adding "Li ritratti, ch' egli fa con questi pastelli, sono sodissimi, e possono essere trasportati, senza che punto patiscano nel trasporto." This Rupelvoër is obviously the "M. Rupelvoer, Peintre, à Paris" whose "Pastels nouveaux & plus durables que les pastels ordinaires" were advertised in 1772. The crayons en pastel of "Rupelvoër, Peintre, Cloître Sainte Opportune" appeared in Lacombe's *Dictionnaire de l'industrie*, 1776, II, p. 400.

The name Rupelvoer evidently caused problems, and there is no trace of him beyond these advertisements. But it seems probable that Pourvoyeur (or possibly his son) adopted a further pseudonym of "François" when he advertised (in virtually identical language) a new composition for pastel in the *Journal des sciences et beaux-arts*, 1/ii, 30.I.1778, p. 233:

Le sieur François offre au Public un nouveau Pastel de sa composition, plus solide, plus ferme & plus moëlleux que celui dont on se sert ordinairement; lorsque ces crayons se brisent en tombant, il a le secret de les refondre sans altérer la vivacité des couleurs. Il se propose de montrer son secret à tous ceux qui pourront le desirer. Le prix des boîtes d'assortiment est depuis 6 liv. jusqu'à 24 liv. Le sieur François entend de faire des portraits en miniature & au pastel, en deux séances. Le prix de ses portraits est de 36 liv. chez lui, & de 48 liv. chez les Particuliers. Il prie ceux qui lui écriront d'affranchir leurs lettres.

Sa demeure est rue d'Enfer, Fauxbourg Saint Germain, place Saint Michel, au Café de Toulouse, à Paris.

A notice appeared in the *Mercure de France* in 1779 in which a 16-year-old miniaturist, "qui excelle dans le genre du portrait en miniature", offered his services, noting that "Il demeure chez M. Pourvoyeur, son père (qui est aussi Artiste pour le portrait dans le genre de l'huile & du pastel), the address by then being "rue Saint-Hyacinthe, la première porte cochère à droite en entrant par la place Saint-Michel, à Paris." This son, the miniaturist Francois-Catherine Pourvoyeur, was recorded later in several

documents; in 1784 at Poissy he married a Catherine Jouan.

On 27.V.1773, at Sainte-Opportune, Paris, Pourvoyeur's daughter Elisabeth-Françoise (who engraved her father's portrait of Charles Noblet according to the lettering on one impression of the print) married an Antoine-Étienne Mille, an avocat who died in 1787; on the avis tution (3.III.1787, AN Y5151^A) for their daughter after Mille's death, Pourvoyeur was described as "peintre des Galeries du Louvre, demeurant Grande rue du Roule". Apart from relatives, family friends included various nobles, among them Guillaume Raviot, receveur des finances de Dijon, Jean-Charles Filziau de Sainte-Colombe, conseiller du roi au parlement de Dijon. Elisabeth-Françoise, who was born in Paris 1.I.1754, was remarried on 24.II.1795 to Francois Dorey in Beaune, where she died, 28.IV.1805.

On 5.VII.1779, at Saint-Cosme, Paris, his daughter Dorothee-Claude married Nicolas-Augustin Gigot, sculpteur, de l'Académie de Liège; while on 28.VII.1787, at Saint-Philippe-du-Roule, Paris, another daughter, Catherine-Julie, later known as a miniaturist, married Charles-Damien Goust dit Longpré or Dulompré, a commissaire de police who was later executed. (Fonds Andriveau).

The engraver Jean-Baptiste-François-Catherine Pourvoyeur (1784–1851) who exhibited at the salon from 1831 was probably a grandson. François Pourvoyeur is usually credited with a small oval engraving of La Tour's portrait of Voltaire.

Jean-Baptiste Pourvoyeur died in Grande Rue, Poissy, aged 71; one of the witnesses on his death certificate was Pierre de Puget, ancien maréchal de camps (archives départementales).

So far only one pastel signed by Pourvoyeur père has come to light; it is consistent in style with a print after a lost portrait which may also have been in pastel. A pastel, apparently signed Lourdoyer (and included in Jeffares 2006 under that name), is evidently by the same hand. They are surprisingly weak. **Bibliography** *L'Avant-Coureur*, 1768, p. 759; *Mercure de France*, 25.VI.1779, p. 312; J.-J. Guiffrey, *Nouvelles archives de l'art français*, 1873, pp. 12–13, 47–60; J.-J. Guiffrey, "François Gentil, sculpteur troyen", *Nouvelles archives de l'art français*, 1876, pp. 127–28; Wildenstein 1966, p. 124 *For Rupelvoer*. Chatellus 1991, pp. 18, 71; Duchesne 1801, II, p. 246; *Osservazioni spettanti alla fisica...*, .XII.1771, p. 179; *Almanach général des marchands, négocians et commerçans de la France et de l'Europe*, Paris, 1772, p. 613

Pastels

J.6004.101 Nicolas-Benoît MOREAU, pstl, 58x45, inscr. verso "peint par POURVOYEUR le 1^{er} novembre 1783" (Paris, Drouot, Rieunier & de Muizon, 30.X.2013, Lot 259 n.r., est. €500) φ



J.6004.103 Charles NOBLET (1715–1769), compositeur, organiste et claveciniste, de l'Académie royale de musique de 1737 à 1768, m/u

~grav. "Jean B^e Pourvoyeur pinx. Gravé et présenté par M^{lle} Elizabeth Pourvoyeur", pour père Lelong, *Bibliothèque historique de la France*, 1775, IV



J.6004.106 Femme à mi-corps tenant un chien sur ses genoux, pstl, 55x45.8, sd "Lourvoyer 1776" (Paris, Christie's, 8.VII.2004, Lot 96 repr., est. €200–300). Lit.: Jeffares 2006, as by Lourvoyer Φ



Photo courtesy Christie's