

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

RANSON, Jean-Baptiste-Marie

Paris 1739–1803?

Ranson (or Rançon) was a member of an important family of artists working at the Gobelins factory. His parents, Jean-Baptiste Ranson and Marie-Anne Rondet, were married at Paris, Saint-Hippolyte, 6.II.1730; three years later, Jean-Baptiste was witness with Jean Audran at the marriage of Étienne-François Ranson. In a memorandum concerning staff at the Gobelins factory from Garnier d'Isle to Le Normant de Tournehem of 10.VIII.1749 (*v. s.n.* Neilson), the father was described as “le meilleur ouvrier de basse lisse dans ledit atelier: il y a un mémoire de dix à douze ouvriers qui témoignent ses talents qui sont connus”; it was recognised however that by bringing back Jacques Neilson over his head, Ranson père would probably leave the Gobelins factory.

Jean-Baptiste Ranson père died aged 79 and was buried at Paris, Saint-Hippolyte 9.IV.1773. Two sisters were married at the same church: Marie-Anne to a Clair-François Rousseau, 23.VIII.1763, and Marie-Sophie to a Claude Robert, marchand de vin, 12.VIII.1766. In 1776, aged 37, Jean-Baptiste Ranson enrolled in the école de l'Académie royale as a pupil of Belle. He was living with his mother, rue Saint-Honoré, vis-à-vis les écuries du roi.

Jean-Baptiste-Marie Ranson collaborated with his cousin (not brother) Pierre (1736–1786), peintre des fleurs, and attended his funeral at Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, 26.IX.1786. An Abel-François Ranson, tapissier aux Gobelins is also recorded. By 4.VII.1786, when he attended the funeral of the child of a friend, “Jean-Baptiste-Marie Ranson, peintre” was living at the rue des Fossés Saint-Germain-des-Près. He may be the “Ranson, dessinateur aux Gobelins” included among the “savants et artistes” granted a “récompense nationale” of 2000 livres by the Comité d'instruction publique (session of 16.VII.1795).

The pastels exhibited in 1930 reveal the influence of La Tour, Perronneau and Lenoir according to the catalogue:

Lorsqu'il donne libre cours à sa vision, il est capable de grande souplesse et de riches observations psychologiques. Volontairement il recherche les harmonies sobres qu'il sait rendre distinguées et si la facture est un peu professorale, on goûte infiniment en étudiant ces visages bien construits, l'analyse en profondeur qui lui est propre, et qui est sa qualité la plus attachante.

Arsène Alexandre, reviewing the show in *Le Figaro* (18.VI.1930), concurred: “Il n'est pas excessif de dire que ces quelques portraits ne sont pas loin des La Tour... et que même il en doit exister de par le monde qui en sont devenus.”

Monographic exhibitions

Ranson 1930: Paris, Galerie Jean Charpentier, 17.VI.–5.VII.1930. Cat. N.-J. G. G.

Bibliography

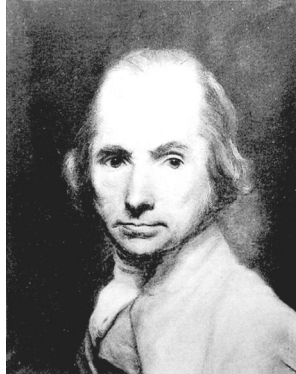
Henri Clouzot, “Documents inédits sur les Ranson, peintres et tapissiers aux Gobelins”, *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de l'art français*, 1915–17, pp. 140–61; Curmer 1878, pp. 15ff;

Mercur de France, 11.IX.1795, p. 335; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Fichier Laborde

Pastels

J.6094.101 AUTO PORTRAIT, pstl, 39x31, 1798.

Exh.: Ranson 1930, no. 1 repr. Φ



J.6094.103 L'abbé RAMON, chanoine de Sainte-Geneviève [?Charles-Jacques de Crozat de Ramon (1724–), chanoine de la cathédrale de Chartres], pstl, 61x51 ov., 1783. Exh.: Ranson 1930, no. 4 n.r.

J.6094.104 Jean-Baptiste RANSON (1704–1773), marchand tapissier, père de l'artiste, pstl, 63x52, 1764; & pendant: J.6094.105 épouse, née Anne-Marie Rondet (c.1708–1779), mère de l'artiste, pstl, 63x52, 1764. Exh.: Ranson 1930, no. 2/3 repr. Φ

