

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

## Online edition

### ROTARI, Pietro Antonio

Verona 1707 – St Petersburg 1762

Rotari began his career in his native Verona, studying under Antonio Balestra and practising engraving, before travelling to Venice (1725–26), Rome (1727–30), where he was a pupil of Francesco Trevisani, and Naples (1731–34), where he studied with Francesco Solimena and continued as an engraver. After his return to Verona in 1734, he joined the Accademia Veronese, remaining for 15 years; here he commenced conventional and genre portraits, engraved as well as drawn, alongside religious engravings and paintings. From 1750 to 1756 he travelled to Vienna, where he was influenced by Liotard's pastels, and Dresden, where he developed his mature style of genre portraits. Lehninger noted his pastel portraits of the royal family in Dresden (only the oils seem to have survived) as well as his *têtes de fantaisie*, and mentioned his skill in *chiaroscuro* to rival Correggio. Rotari was also mentioned in correspondence between the comte de Wackerbarth and Marie-Maximilienne de Silvestre (*q.v.*), then in Versailles.

Rotari was invited to Russia by the Tsaritsa Elisaveta Petrovna and appointed court painter in 1756, remaining until his death six years later. Here he executed many more of these *teste di carattere*, portraits of young women, mostly in oils, with some pastel versions which seem never to be accurate replicas but rather permutations of the same elements.

A further source of confusion is the possibility that he copied Boucher's famous pendants of *La Dormeuse* and *La Voluptueuse*. It is impossible without examining each of these directly to decide whether any is correctly attributed to Rotari, and it is easy to see why the chic eroticism of these images might have suggested an entirely unfounded attribution to the Italian who worked in so similar a genre. However the surviving oil versions executed by Rotari for Peter the Great, although clearly inspired by the Boucher pendants, move further in terms of costume and handling than some of the pastel versions which have been attributed to him, and these should all be treated as tentative attributions.

Mariette said that "le desir de plaire lui ont ... fait prendre une manière qui a du brillant, mais qui n'en a pas plus de solidité et qui n'est faite que pour jeter de la poudre aux yeux." Nevertheless he admired certain effects which made his compositions "piquants et assez intéressants". Technically Rotari seems to have experimented with mixed media, occasionally finishing oil paintings with touches of pastel applied over a coating of glass powder.

#### Monographic exhibitions

Rotari 1999: *Pietro Graf Rotari in Dresden*, Dresden, Sempertbau, 9.XI.1999 – 9.I.2000. Cat. Gregor J. M. Weber

#### Bibliography

E. Barbarini, *Pietro Rotari*, Verona, 1941; Bénézit; Brieger 1921; Briganti 1990; Dijon

2001; Grove; Lehninger 1782; Mariette 1851–60; Polazzo 1990; Shelley 2002

#### Pastels

*Elisabeth FRIEDERIKE Sophie von Württemberg* (Berlin, Henrici, 17.IV.1920, Lot 65 repr., as Rotari) [*v. Éc. fr.*]

*La princesse GALITZINA*, pstl/ppr, 55x45 (Giulio Lampronti, Rome, 1999. Koeliker 2003). Exh.: Milan 2003, no. I.39 repr.  $\phi$



~?=/cop., *Jeune femme* (New York, Sotheby's, 14.X.1998, Lot 1 repr., circle of Rotari, est. \$6–8000)  $\phi$



*Frau August Gottlieb von GÄRTNER, Gräfin Jepsy* (–1807)

~?pnt. (St Petersburg, Peterhof)

~version, pstl, 50x40, inscr. "Johann Stephan Liotard pinx" (Lucerne, Galerie Fischer, .VI.1960, Lot 2423 repr., Liotard. Lucerne, Galerie Fischer, 29.VI.1973, Lot 721 n.r., attr., SwFr4800. Lucerne, Galerie Fischer, 3.VI.1978, Lot 504 n.r., SwFr2200. Paris, Drouot, 11.VI.1990, Lot 50 repr., Éc. fr., inconnue, est. Fr20–25,000) [new attr.]  $\Phi$



=?, pstl/ppr, 49.6x40 (London, Bonhams, 7.XII.2005, Lot 85 repr., circle of Rotari, est. £2–3000)  $\phi$



~version, pstl, 44.5x34.2 (Prato, Farsetti, 8.XI.1998, Lot 368 repr., est. It£9–10,000,000)  $\phi$

??Louise-Marie GOUTHIER, *Jeune femme portant un chapeau livournesque*, pstl/ppr, 43.5x35, c.1760 (Bloomington, Indiana University Art Museum, inv. 80.105.1. Salomon; New York, American Art Association, 4–7.IV.1923, Lot 373 repr., as Louise-Marie Gouthier by Nattier. Shelton College; New York, Parke-Bernet, 29.I.1954, Lot 57; Cecile Bemtgen Beer; New York, Parke-Bernet, 28.XI.1978, Lot 175 repr., as circle of Rotari; Richard Collins, New York, adv. *Burlington magazine*, CXXI/915, .VI.1979, p. lxxx repr.; acqu. 1980). Exh.: Bloomington 2000, as Rotari, inconnue. Attr.  $\Phi$



*Adelgonda Christina WOLTHERS* (1752–1802), pstl, 30x24 ov. (Slochteren, Fraeylemaborg). Lit.: rKD repr., anon. [manner of Rotari?; new attr.]  $\phi$



*Jeune berger et son chien*, pstl, 45.5x36.5 (Paris, musée Jacquemart-André, inv. 2425. Georges Samary, 15, rue La Fayette, Paris; acqu. 20.X.1908, Fr200, Mme André). *Olim* attr. Grimou [new attr.,?]  $\phi$



*Homme en tenue vénitienne*, pstl, 42x31.5 (Chavaillon; Châtellerault, Christophe Sabourin, 31.V.2003, Lot 85 n.r., attr., est. €2500–3000, €1500)

*Dame mit einem schwarzen Halbschleier*, pstl/ppr, 48x35 (Dresden, inv. S196. Königliche Garde-Meubles-Verwaltung, Kap. IB, 144; Schloß Pillnitz 1937). Lit.: Marx 2005, II, p. 629, no. 2297, incorrect repr.; Henning & Marx 2007, pp. 121f repr.  $\phi$



~version, Junges Mädchen in hellblauem Kleid und schwarzem Gesichtsschleier, pstl, 46x34 (Berlin, Rosen, 11.XII.1950, DM300). Lit.: *Weltkunst*, 1951/1, p. 10 repr.  $\varphi$



Dame, pstl/ppr, 44.5x33.5 (Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Künste, 2159. Marianne Schieck, Leipzig; acqu. 1967)  
Jeune femme écrivain (PC 1921). Lit.: Brieger 1921, repr. p. 276  $\Phi$



Jeune femme (PC 1921). Lit.: Brieger 1921, repr. p. 277  $\Phi$



Bust of girl, pstl, 44x33 (Karl Haberstock, Germany; Magdalena Haberstock; seized by ERR; dep.: Oberstdorf; Munich CCP, Mü-Nr 43612 1947-49)

Crying girl, pstl, 44x33 (Karl Haberstock, Germany; Magdalena Haberstock; seized by ERR; dep.: Oberstdorf; Munich CCP, Mü-Nr 43613 1947-49)

Femme, pstl, 46x35 (Köln, Lempertz, 28.III.1969, DM6000)

Jeune fille dormant, pstl, 38x31.5 (London, Sotheby's, 28.X.1969, £110)

Young girl in a green bodice, pstl, 46x36 (Rome, Christie's, 11.VI.1973, Lot 114 repr., It£750,000)  $\Phi$



Junge Pilgerin, pstl, 70x55.5 (Sächsische Königshaus. Julius Böhler, Munich, adv. *Burlington magazine*, CXVIII/885, .XII.1976, pl. XXXVII; adv. *Weltkunst*, 1984, p. 3663 repr.)  $\varphi$



Fanciulla, pstl, 48x40 (Milan, Finarte, 28.IV.1977, Lot 43 n.r., scuola, It£1,100,000)

Young girl, pstl, 44x35 (New York, Parke-Bernet, 28.XI.1978, Lot 175 repr., circle, \$1800)

Young girl with hands clasped, pstl, 47.2x35.5 (Munich, Hugo Ruef, 16-19.XI.1977). Lit.: *Weltkunst*, 1977, p. 2294a  $\varphi$



Girl with fur cap, pstl, 47x35 (Jean-Luc Baroni, adv. *Burlington magazine*, CXXII/927, .VI.1980, p. cvi repr.)  $\varphi$



Young girl (Berlin, Seidel, K&K Auktionen, 17-18.IX.1982, as by Rotari) [v. *Éc. fr.*]

Girl with a fan; girl with red earrings; & peasant girl in red and white dress, pstl, 43.2x34 (London, Christie's, 12.IV.1983, £1500)

Lady, bust length, reclining her head on a blue velvet cushion, pstl, 38.2x31.0 (London, Christie's, 3.VII.1990, Lot 216 n.r., circle of Pietro Rotari, est. £800-1000) [version of Boucher, *Dormeuse*]

La voluptueuse, tête de jeune femme, a/r Boucher

~pstl, 40.8x32.5 (Monaco, Christie's, 30.VI.1995, Lot 18 repr. Vienna, Dorotheum, 4.III.1997) [v. Boucher]

~pnt., 45x34.8 (Colnaghi cat. 1993, no. 17, with provenance and list of other versions by Rotari)

~pnt. (Petrodvorets). Lit.: Polazzo 1990, no. 177

~version, pnt., 46.4 x 38.8, 1756-62 (Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO). Lit.: Mann 1999, repr.

~version (Paris, *Artcurial, Briest-Poulain-Le Fur*, 15.VI.2004, Lot 226 repr., attr. Rotari) [v. Boucher]

~other versions, v. Boucher

La dormeuse, tête de jeune femme, a/r Boucher

~pnt. (Tsarskoye Selo)

~pnt. (London, Sotheby's, 14.XII.2000, Lot 401, as Follower or Studio of Rotari)

Jeune femme tenant un éventail, pstl, 45.1x34.3 (Royal house of Saxony, Dresden? New York, Sotheby's, 21.XI.1980, Lot 22, est. \$20-30,000, \$19,000; Gloria & Richard Manney; New York, Sotheby's, 20.V.1993, Lot 46 repr., est. \$30-50,000)  $\Phi$



[larger image](#)  
Photo courtesy Sotheby's

~cop., pstl, 40x30 (Dijon, Sadde, 25.VI.2004, Lot 121 repr., est. €1000-1200)  $\varphi$



~version, pnt., 47x39 (Paris, PIASA, 24.VI.2005, Lot 52 repr., attr.; Paris, PIASA, 17.XII.2008)

~cop., pstl (PC 2011)  $\varphi$



Jeune fille de  $\frac{3}{4}$  vers la dr., au ruban bleu, à la boucle d'oreille, pstl/ppr, 43.8x33.7 (New York, Sotheby's, 12.I.1994, Lot 243, \$28,750)  $\Phi$



Photo courtesy Sotheby's

Dame russe à l'éventail (New York, Sotheby's, 16.v.1996, Lot 177, est. \$10–15,000, \$29,000) φ



Giovane donna con cestino di fiori, pstl/ppr, 70x55.5 (Prato, Farsetti, 8.XI.1998, Lot 371 repr., est. It.£50–55,000,000) φ

Jeune femme au collier de perles, pstl, 45.8x38 (Lore & Rudolf Heinemann; London, Christie's, 4.VII.2000, Lot 134 repr., est. £3–5000, £5500 [=£6462]) [Patr.] Ⓢ



Jeune femme, pstl, 46x34.5, s "G. P. Rotari p." (Köln, Van Ham, 1.VII.2000, Lot 1448 repr., attr., with pendant, est. DM12,000, DM52,000. New York, Sotheby's, 23.I.2001, Lot 229 repr., est. \$15–20,000, b/i) Ⓢ



Jeune femme, pstl/ppr, 46x34.5 (Köln, Van Ham, 1.VII.2000, Lot 1448 repr., attr., with pendant, est. DM12,000, DM52,000. New York, Sotheby's, 23.I.2001, Lot 231 repr., est. \$15–20,000, b/i) Ⓢ



Young maid in a lace bonnet, blue dress, silver pendant on a ribbon, pstl/ppr, 44.5x33 (Los Angeles, Butterfields, 16.V.2001, Lot 4009 repr., attr., est. \$10–15,000) φ



Lady in a fur-lined dress, with lace and ribbon around neck, pstl/ppr, 44.5x33 (Los Angeles, Butterfields, 16.V.2001, Lot 4010 repr., attr., est. \$10–15,000) φ



Jeune femme, pstl/ppr, 48.3x36.2, a.1756 (Köln, Van Ham, 2.XII.2000, Lot 1829 repr., attr., est. DM11,000, DM35,000. New York, Sotheby's, 23.V.2001, Lot 48 repr., est. \$40–60,000, \$70,000 [= \$81,250]) Ⓢ



Photo courtesy Sotheby's  
Jeune fille; and pendant (Doyle, 23.I.2002, as Rotari) [v. Boucher]

Jeune femme (London, Sotheby's, 11.XII.2002, Lot 161, follower of Rotari) [v. Carriera, Jeune femme Tyrolienne]

Jeune femme tenant une masque, pstl, 38.8x30.8 (London, Christie's, 10.VII.2001, Lot 84 repr., attr., est. £6–8000; London, Christie's South Kensington, 12.XII.2003, Lot 395 repr., est. £3–5000, £6200 [=£7285]) Ⓢ



Photo courtesy Christie's  
~version, pstl, 39.5x30.5 (Zurich, Koller, 25.IX.2002, Lot 6473, with pendant, Éc. fr.) φ  
Une Vénitienne/une Prinzessin, pstl, 46.5x35.5 (baron de Geer. Zurich, Koller, 25.III.2004, Lot 501 repr., as Rotari, est. SwFr16–24,000, SwFr100,000). Lit.: Oulmont 1928, no. 1 repr., as Carriera φ



Jeune femme, pstl, 46x35.5 (Schloß Moritzburg, near Dresden. Swiss PC; Thomas Boller Kunstberatung, adv. *Weltkunst*, 2004, p. 104 repr.; Zurich, Koller, 16.III.2005, Lot 3086 repr., est. SwFr30–50,000, SwFr30,000) φ



Young woman in blue dress, pstl/ppr, 45x35 (Vienna, Dorotheum, 11.VI.2012, Lot 326 repr., as Venetian sch., 18<sup>th</sup> c., certificate Egidio Martini as autograph Rotari, est. €8–12,000) φ



Mann; & pendant: Dame in orientalischem Kostüm, pstl, 46.5x35.5 (Berlin, SMB, inv. 2246/2275 Borgsdorf PC; don 1970). Lit.: *Gemäldegalerie Berlin – Gesamtverzeichnis*, 1996, fig. 2642/2643 φ



Anon. related pastels  
Jeune fille à la rose, pstl, 38x30 (Paris, Rieunier Bailly-Pommery, 27.III.2000, Lot 10). Lit.: Polazzo 1990, no. 207 repr. *Olim* sch. Louis Vigée. A/r Rotari decoration (St Petersburg, Peterhof Palace)