

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

SHEE, Sir Martin Archer

Dublin 1769 – Brighton 1850

The future president of the Royal Academy was trained in the Dublin Society school by Francis Robert West. At the age of 15 Shee left home and set up as a portraitist in pastels, of which only one example has come to light, apparently executed in Dublin in the 1780s. (It suggests that he may be responsible for some pastels which are overambitiously attributed to Hamilton or Lawrence.) Two years later he had turned to oils where he met with immediate success in Dublin. He moved to London in 1788. Finding his introductions to the leading painters of little use, he nevertheless expressed his determination not to return to working in crayon, and within a few years had become firmly established as a successful portrait painter. He exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1789, becoming an associate in 1799, a full member in 1800 and president in 1830.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Crookshank & Glin 2002; Dublin 1969; Figgis & Rooney 2001; Grove; McGuire 1939, p. 15; Oxford DNB; Strickland 1913; Waterhouse 1981; Wright 2006

Pastels

Mrs James BURKE, née Margaret Carey, sister of Mathew Carey, publisher in Philadelphia, pstl, ov., Dublin, c.1788 (Philadelphia, Library Company. Desc.: Mrs H. Lee Hudson; don 1994). Lit.: *The Library Company of Philadelphia 1994 annual report*, p. 25 repr. ♀

