

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

SIRANI, Elisabetta

Bologna 8.I.1638–28.VIII.1665

Bologna's most famous woman artist, Elisabetta, daughter of Giovanni Andrea Sirani (*q.v.*), was not only renowned as a talented painter but was also intellectually accomplished, socially well connected and physically beautiful. Her death – poisoned by her maid at a tragically young age – inevitably added to her celebrity. She is said to have produced chalk and pastel studies in the manner of Reni, her father's master, but descriptions in pre-1800 inventories are unreliable. Modern examples appear to be chalk drawings with occasional touches of pastel. A famous painting of Beatrice Cenci, much copied in pastel, formerly given to Guido Reni was supposedly by her and retained here for convenience; but the latest attribution is to Ginevra Cantofoli (1618–1672).

Bibliography

Bénézit; Bohn 2002, pp. 52–79; Babette Bohn, “Elisabetta Sirani and drawing practices in early modern Bologna”, *Master drawings*, XLII/3, 2004, pp. 207–36; Bowron 1980; Meder 1923, p. 137; Modesti 2001; Washington 2007

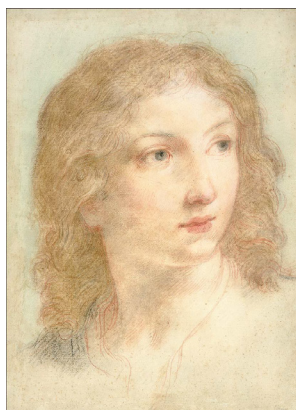
Pastels

J.68.061 Testa d'un giovine, red, black, yellow, blue chlk/ppr, 40.2x28 (Florence, Uffizi, inv. 6299F). Lit.: San Francisco 2021, p. 24, fig. 13 φ



J.68.101 Testa d'un giovine (Lorenzo Zacconi; inv. p.m., 22.II.1677)

J.68.102 Head of a youth, red, black, brown, blue chlk, 32x23.5, inscr. Sirani (Mia N. Wiener 2008) φ



J.68.104 Testa di donna, pstl (Conte Girolamo Ranuzzi, Bologna, inv. 13.III.1788)

J.68.105 Testa, pstl, al naturale, Florence 1737 (Gabburri)

J.68.106 Testa, pstl (Annibale Ranuzzi, Bologna, inv. 19.IV.1698)

Anon. related pastels

Beatrice CENCI (1577–1599), pnt. (Rome, Palazzo Barberini). *Olim* attr. Guido Reni

J.68.109 ~cop., pstl, 38x29, s illegibly “?Ismene Duroiy ...Reni” (Pfarrkirchen, Reibnitz, 11.XI.2011, Lot 117 repr., est. €200) φκ



J.68.109 ~cop., pstl/ppr, 62x47 (Schloß Karlsruhe, inv. 712; inv. 1898, p. 44, no. 596. Heidelberg, Metz, 20.III.2020, Lot 28 repr., attr. Philipp Jakob Becker) [??] φκ



~cop., pstl, Giordano; J. Lisiewska, qq.v.