

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

STOUPAN, Bernard-Augustin

Lausanne bpt 1.V.1701–17.XII.1775

Also Auguste Bernard; Bernhard; Stupan, Stouppan or Stupanus; celebrated pastel-maker of Lausanne. He was also professor of mathematics and a Ratsherr in Lausanne, and he was related to the celebrated mathematician Jacob Bernoulli. He was baptised Bernhard Augustin Stouppan, son of Petrus and Elisabeth Zehender. Stoupan's brother Benjamin-Thomas (1689–1753), a baker, is credited in some sources as involved in the pastel business. Bernard Stoupan married, in 1725, Marie-Madeleine Isoot (1704–1780), sister of a merchant, Peter Isoot and of Rose Isoot (1714–1787), who, in 1736, married Jean-Baptiste Michod (1715–1798) for whose apprenticeship to a watchmaking and jewellery business Stoupan and Isoot provided bonds. Michod's son, and Stoupan's nephew (in a loose sense) François-Augustin Michod (1750–1796; *v. SUPPLIERS*) continued the pastel business from Vevey (as did Helmhodt, *q.v.*). A daughter, Louise Stoupan (1733–1791), married Jean-Louis Penserot (1732–1804).

Stoupan's pastels were celebrated from the middle of the century. When, fresh from her lessons with Liotard, Caroline Luise von Hessen-Darmstadt (later Markgräfin von Baden, *q.v.*) sought the best pastels, she was directed to those of Stupan, and was sent a shade card with about ninety tints (Henning letter of 2.VIII.1746; it is reproduced in [TREATISES](#)).

By 1770 Stoupan had achieved “un haut degré de perfection (éclat de couleurs)”. A footnote in a letter of the Hanoverian scientist Andreae in 1763 recorded—

Beiläufig sei hier angezeigt, daß in Lausanne bei Stupan sehr feine Pastellfarben verfertigt werden. Ein gros Assortiment, so, durch alle Schattirungen hindurch, vollständig ist, und 152 Stängel enthält, kostet 33 L. 10 s. Ein zweites von 76 Stängeln 17 L. 15 s. und ein drittes von 80 Stängeln 24 L.

The chevalier de Boufflers (*q.v.*) noted in 1764 that Lausanne “est connu dans toute l'Europe par ses bons pastels”; his editor noted “on peut s'adresser pour les avoir, ou à M. Stoupan lui-même, ou à M. François Grasset libraire à Lausanne.” Stoupan's pastels were “recommended for the best in Europe” according to a 1766 receipt from Bonhôte (*q.v.*), who supplied them in London (he was one of a number of suppliers of Swiss luxury textiles in London who sold pastels with haberdashery rather than the usual stock of colourmen). When Charles Pache, who may have been an associate of Stoupan, submitted his pastels to the Society of Arts in London in 1772 they were found indistinguishable from Stoupan's (although some of the experts preferred Morland's, but they were difficult to obtain commercially). The Swiss pastels were criticized for being dry and friable, and “would not admit of one colour being laid on another without some part falling off”; the white would soon turn black, while the black was prone to mildew. That said, the Lausanne crayons were esteemed in England more than any other, and “are now the only pastels made use of by the best artists in Paris.” Some of the green shades were particularly prized, as artists such as Cotes had been unable to replicate them

himself. Russell 1772 in his directions for making pastels noted that “Brilliant Greens are produced with great difficulty. In *Switzerland*, they have a method of making them, far superior to ours”, recommending that they be purchased from the importer, Bonhôte, since “the ingredients which compose these brilliant crayons are not to be met with in England.” Stoupan's secret remained closely guarded. Two of the four greens in the Henning shade card have been analysed by Gombaud & Sauvage 2016 and identified as green verditer and a mixture of indigo and iron oxide (yellow ochre).

Bonvoisin, Meyer and Philipault (*qq.v.*) supplied them in Paris, and they were advertised in the *Avant-Coureur* (1762, p. 491; 1769, p. 85; 1771, p. 503; 1773, pp. 435f). In the *Almanach général des marchands, négocians et commerçans de la France et de l'Europe* for 1772 (Paris, Valade), the entry for Lausanne (p. 166) noted—

Pastels. Excellents pour les portraits.
Le grand assortiment en deux boîtes de 24 nuances qui forment 152 crayons, 64 liv. de France.
Demi-assortiment de 77 crayons, 27 liv.
Pastels pour dames, propres à peindre en petit les fleurs, figures & paysages, 100 crayons, 44 liv.
Marchands de pastels, MM.
STOUPAN, (Bernard), FRANÇOIS GRASSET & comp.
Librairies & Imprimeurs.

This announcement appeared in the *Franckfurter Frag- und Anzeigungs-Nachrichten*, 20.XII.1776 and other dates:

Es sind von dem so bekandt als berühmten Pastell Farben Fabrikanten, Herrn B. A. Stupanus in Lausanne, verschiedene Assortiments darer feinsten Pastell Farben allhier angelangt, davon die grösseren Assortiments 9. Laubthaler, die feineren aber 5. Laubthaler, vier genommen zu stehen kommen, und können die darzu Lusttragende, bey Ausgeber dieses vernehmen, bey weme solche zu finden sind.

In Pahin de La Blanchere's *assemblée ordinaire des Savants & des Artistes*, of 21.II.1782, among the pictures wer exhibited:

37. Plusieurs assortimens de Crayons & de Pastels, de la fabrique du feu sieur Stoupan, en Suisse.

According to the *État actuel de Paris*, the “Dépôt des pastels de Stoupan” was at no. 68, quai de l'Horloge du Palais, at the Pont-Neuf end (ed. 1788, III, p. 37).

Reifenstein (*q.v.*) reported to Caroline Luise von Baden (.v.1761) that he had seen a pastel by Handmann fixed with the process invented by Stoupan, involving an atomised mixture of strong vinegar and egg white; he also indicated that Stoupan learned his techniques from the apothecary Wilhelm Otto Struwe. Sulzer (1798, III, p. 719) mentions “Herr Stupan, von Geburt ein Basler, der sich in Lausanne aufhält, wird schon längstens für den besten Zubereiter dieser Farben behalten”. “Personne n'a jusqu'ici pu atteindre le brun de Stoupan”, wrote Guthrie. Agricola 1784 (reprinted by Brusatin & Mandelli 2005 as *Maniere diverse per formare i colori* erroneously attributed to Rosalba Carriera) gives a recipe for “il rosso bruno di cui si serve il signor Stupan a fare i suoi pasteli.”

Bibliography

[Johann Gerhard Reinhard Andreae], *Briefe aus der Schweiz nach Hannover geschrieben, in dem Jare 1763*, Zurich, 1776, II, p. 259; Georges-Antoine

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