

# La Tour and Lundberg's portraits of *la princesse de Rohan*

NEIL JEFFARES



## [Maurice-Quentin de La Tour](#)

Marie-Sophie de Courcillon, princesse de ROHAN (1713–1756)

Pastel on paper, 59 x 48 cm

c.1740

Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, inv. NMB 2650

**PROVENANCE:** Maurice Fenaille 1908–32. Desc.: PC 2013; Paris, Christie's, 26.III.2014, Lot 82 repr.

**EXHIBITIONS:** *Exposition François Boucher (1705–1770)*, Paris, hôtel Jean Charpentier, 9.VI.–10.VII.1932, no. 104, as inconnue

**LITERATURE:** Mme V[an Loo], “Vers sur le portrait de Mme la princesse de Rohan”, *Mercur de France*, .II.1745, p.51; Albert Besnard & Georges Wildenstein, *La Tour*, Paris, 1928, no. 432, records the La Tour pastel whose existence is inferred from Mme Tessin's copy; Olausson 2014; Gombaud 2015; Laine & Moberg 2015; Gombaud & al. 2017, repr.; Wunsch 2024, fig. 36; Salmon 2024, fig. 225; *Dictionary of pastellists* online, [J.46.273](#)

## RELATED WORK:

### [Gustaf Lundberg](#)

Marie-Sophie de Courcillon, princesse de ROHAN (1713–1756)

Pastel on paper, 63 x 50 cm

c.1740

Swedish private collection in 2008

**PROVENANCE:** Greve Carl Gustaf Tessin (1695–1770); listed in the *Catalogue général de tous les objets qui ont été expédiés à Stockholm*, août 1741, no. 24: “Portrait de la Princesse de Rohan, au Pastel, copié d'après La Tour, cadre doré et glace, 350 livres”; Tessin's estate sale, held in the Grande Salle d'assemblée de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture Stockholm, 8.V.1786, Lot 6, “Madame la Princesse de Rohan Soubise en mantelet de velours bleu. Demie figure peinte au pastel par LA TOUR. Même cadre qu'au précédent”; [acquired by ?Greve Fredrik Sparre (1731–1803), the nephew and adopted son of Tessin and his wife/or by his cousin,] the art collector Greve Gustaf Adolf Sparre (1745–1794), who acquired Kulla Gunarstorps slott, Skåne in 1775, with which the pastel descended as follows: friherrinnan Elisabeth Amalia Beata, född Ramel; her daughter Christina Amalia, who

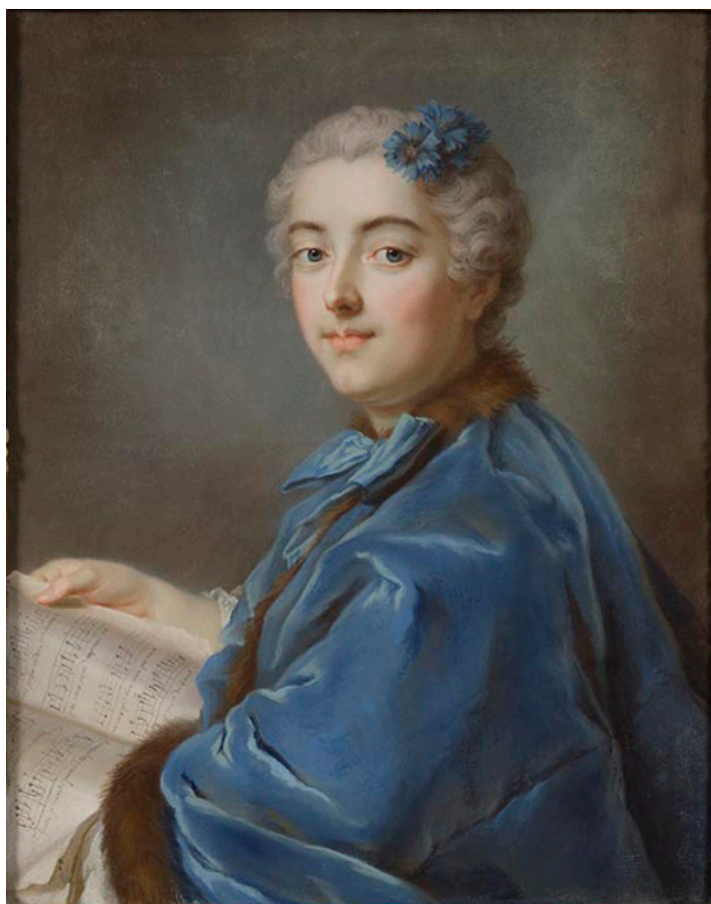
married greve Jakob Gustaf De la Gardie; Gustaf Adolf Fredrik De la Gardie; sold in 1837 to greve Carl De Geer af Leufsta (–1861); his daughter, who married greve Baltzar von Platen (1804–1875); his daughter friherrinnan Elisabeth von Platen, who married greve Axel Wachtmeister på Vanås; by descent]

**LITERATURE:** Pierre Lespinasse, “Catalogue général de tous les objets qui ont été expédiés à Stockholm”, *Bulletin de la Société de l’histoire de l’art français*, 1911, p. 320 n.r.; Sigrid Leijonhufvud, *Omkring Carl Gustaf Tessin*, Stockholm, 1917, p. 113; Albert Besnard & Georges Wildenstein, *La Tour*, Paris, 1928 at no. 432, records the La Tour pastel whose existence is inferred from Mme Tessin’s copy; Gunnar W. Lundberg, “Pastellmalaren Gustaf Lundbergs Parisperiod”, *Nationalmusei årsbok*, Stockholm, 1929, pp. 23–50, p. 40; Gunnar W. Lundberg, “Carl Gustaf Tessins konstsamling på Åkerö”, in Per Bjurström, *Carl Gustaf Tessin och konsten*, Stockholm, 1970, p. 82, 84 reproduced; Merit Laine & Carolina Brown, *Gustaf Lundberg 1695–1786. En porträttmålare och hans tid*, Stockholm, 2006, pp. 74, 188, 250, 258; Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastelists before 1800*, London, 2006, p. 512Aiii, incorrectly as by Mme Tessin; Salmon 2024, fig. 226; *Dictionary of pastelists* online, J.503.1567

**OTHER RELATED WORKS:** the Åkerö inventory of 1757 refers to “Princesse Rohans porträtt af La Tour, en pastel, copié de Mme de Tessin, sous la direction de M. de Lundberg et retouché par lui”. This is possibly the second pastel of this subject recorded by Gunnar Lundberg in 1929 as at Övedsklosters slott.

**GENEALOGY:** [Rohan](#)

**B**ELLE COMME LE JOUR” wrote greve Carl Gustaf Tessin (1695–1770) to his wife after his visit that morning to the princesse de Rohan “à sa toilette” (1 November 1739). The celebrated connoisseur was Swedish ambassador in Paris from 1739 to 1742; his wife Ulrika Lovisa (1711–1768) was the daughter of greve Erik Sparre, formerly Charles XII’s ambassador to Louis XIV, and her culture and sophistication had in particular impressed the ladies at the French court. Mme Tessin and the princesse de Rohan established a firm friendship (17 letters from the princesse survive), and Ulla’s admiration for her friend was recorded in her letter<sup>1</sup> to her sister-in-law Augusta Törnflycht written a few days earlier:



Elle rassemble toutes les perfections avec la grande beauté qu’elle a. Elle est bien faite. Les plus beaux yeux du monde La taille grande et majestueuse, avec cela polie affable gaie chantant bien dansant parfaitement aimant à rire beaucoup et Badine. Vous ne doutez point avec ces Talents la combien tout le monde la trouve charmante pour moy j’ay ladessus La voye du peuple.

She goes on to refer to Lundberg’s portrait of the princesse which would show her to be this seductive, beautiful woman. According to a recent source,<sup>2</sup> this was never executed. But it seems clear that the portrait of the princesse which surfaced on the art market in 2008 was that commissioned from Lundberg by his great patrons, the Tessins, and that it was copied after a pastel by La Tour which in turn was only discovered five years later.<sup>3</sup>

The princesse de Rohan was the granddaughter of the marquis de

<sup>1</sup> Letters to Mme Wrede-Sparre, née Augusta Törnflycht, 21 September 1739, 3 October 1740, RA Börstorpssamlingen vol. E3082, cited in Laine & Brown 2006 and partly quoted in Gunnar von Proschwitz, *Tableaux de Paris et de la cour de France 1739–1742*, Paris, 1983.

<sup>2</sup> Laine & Brown 2006: “Detta porträtt kom inte till utförande”.

<sup>3</sup> The Lundberg was known as of the princesse de Rohan; the attribution to Lundberg was suggested by me in 2008. The La Tour was presented to me as an anonyme inconnue in 2013. This essay is subject to the important note at the foot of the index page of this website: it represents no more than a personal opinion and should not be confused with an assessment of any of the works discussed from a market perspective.

Dangeau (1638–1720) whose memoirs of the court of Louis XIV had so infuriated the duc de Saint-Simon that he devoted the rest of his life to correcting them. Dangeau's social ascent was marked by his daughter's marriage in 1694 to the duc de Montfort, creating an alliance with the important d'Albert de Luynes family. His son, Philippe-Égon de Courcillon, marquis de Dangeau (1687–1719) married Françoise de Pompadour, from whom Marie-Sophie de Courcillon inherited the title of dame du duché de La Valette as well as her beauty: *matre pulchra filia pulchrior*.<sup>4</sup> At the age of 16, she married her cousin Charles-François d'Albert d'Ailly, duc de Picquigny, pair de France (1707–1731), son of the maréchal-duc de Chaulnes.<sup>5</sup> He was dead within two years; a daughter<sup>6</sup> died in infancy, and the title passed to his brother.

His widow was again in search of a husband, and on 2 September 1732 she married a more distant relative, the elderly prince de Rohan. Their independent wealth was protected by a contract under the “séparation des biens” régime, signed by Louis XV at Marly, listing the “etat des meubles meublans, bijoux, diamans, pierreries, toilette et argenterie indépendante appartenans à Madame la Duchesse de Picquigny”.

Her husband was a member of one the most illustrious houses in France, whose origins as the ancient sovereigns of Brittany entitled the family to the quasi-royal status enshrined in the princely titles they were allowed to use in parallel with their French honours. Hercule-Mériadec de Rohan (1669–1749) had been destined for the church until the death of his elder brother in 1689, whereupon he assumed the title of prince de Rohan and pursued a career in the army. He rose to become lieutenant général des armées du roi in 1704, and served with honour in the campaigns against Marlborough. He was appointed gouverneur of Champagne in 1704. After the death of his father in 1712, he became prince de Soubise et de Maubuisson. Two years later, in recognition of his distinguished military service, he was created duc de Rohan-Rohan (the title of duc de Rohan was already in use by the Rohan-Chabot branch of the family) and made a pair de France. No doubt some of his influence at court was derived from his first marriage, in 1694, to Anne-Geneviève de Lévis Ventadour (1673–1727), daughter of the much-loved gouvernante des Enfants de France, whom Louis XV called his “chère maman”. Numerous children from this first marriage ensured the succession of his title, which passed to his grandson, a maréchal de France and a minister of state.

The couple were installed in hôtel de Soubise (now the Archives de France), triumphantly redecorated by the architect Germain Boffrand as a gift from the sexagenarian prince to a bride less than one-third of his age. Paintings by Carle Van Loo, Trémolières and others culminated in the spectacular mythological paintings of the *Histoire de Psyché* by Charles-Joseph Natoire (1738), a cycle that has been analysed both as a metaphor of male political ambition as well as an iconography of the female subject of desire.<sup>7</sup> But the geometry of Boffrand's new oval pavilion, with the prince's apartments on the ground floor, while those of the princesse occupied the first floor, testifies to the reality of this marriage, and it was perhaps inevitable that infidelity occurred. The abbé de Bernis (1715–1794), then a mere provincial chanoine and versifier, came to Paris in search of advancement around 1740. Mme de Pompadour fell under his influence, but was not yet in a position to obtain for him the prizes his ambition demanded. Instead he turned to the princesse de Rohan, and he shortly became “l'amant en titre et déclaré de la belle princesse de Rohan” in Marmontel's phrase. (The police inspector d'Hémery's report put it rather more coarsely,<sup>8</sup> while Bernis's own *Mémoires* are naturally more discreet.) However a seat in the Académie française, an embassy to Venice and a cardinal's hat all followed with the help of one

<sup>4</sup> In the words of the editor of the *Lettres de Madame de Maintenon*, Amsterdam, 1757, VII, p. 58.

<sup>5</sup> See for example Christophe Levantal, *Ducs et pairs et duchés-pairies laïques à l'époque moderne (1519–1790)*, Paris, 1996.

<sup>6</sup> Omitted from the standard works since infant girls had no genealogical significance; recorded in André René Le Paige, *Dictionnaire topographique, historique, généalogique et bibliographique de la province et du diocèse du Maine*, Le Mans & Paris, 1777, tome I, p. 116.

<sup>7</sup> See Katie Scott, *The Rococo interior*, New Haven & London, 1995, and Ewa Lajer-Burchard, review in *The art bulletin*, December 1997.

<sup>8</sup> Translated as “he is a lecher who has had Madame la princesse de Rohan” in Robert Darnton, “Policing writers in Paris circa 1750”, *Representations*, 5, Winter 1984, pp. 14f.

or other of his admirers. The princesse lavished a fortune on the Mlles Pelet de Narbonne, said to be the nieces of the abbé de Bernis.

That Bernis was not the only admirer is also evident from the scandal sheets of the day. Typical of these is one from 1734, intended to be sung to the tune of *Servantes, quittez vos paniers*; the first stanza will suffice:<sup>9</sup>

Princesse avec votre beauté  
Comment voulez-vous plaire,  
Si bêtise et méchanceté  
Sont votre caractère?  
Coquette sans habileté,  
Rusée avec grossièreté,  
Priez Dieu que par charité  
Il daigne vous refaire.

And indeed, as the duc de Luynes,<sup>10</sup> writing at the time of her death, noted, her will directed that no fewer than 12,000 masses be said for the repose of her soul, in addition to a substantial bequest to the poor. He observed that she died after a long illness despite the ministrations of Dr Tronchin (whom she consulted only four days before her death, from what may have been tuberculosis). “C’étoit en effet une femme bien faite et d’une figure agréable; elle étoit grande et avoit l’air fort noble; elle dansoit très bien”, he wrote (he had previously noted her skill in presenting a new dance, consisting of a menuet and tambourin, with M. de Clermont d’Amboise at a ball at Versailles in January 1739). However she had a regrettable tendency to find double entendres in inappropriate places: the duchesse de Caumont quipped that when she attended mass “elle rioit à l’*Introit* et entendoit finesse au *Kyrie eleison*.”

Evidence that the princesse was at the centre of the artistic and literary circle from which La Tour drew his clientèle (in addition to Dr Tronchin, Rousseau, who refers to her in his *Confessions*, and Voltaire, who mentions her in his 1734 verse *Discours de l’Envie*) comes from a letter<sup>11</sup> written to the Jacobite Colonel Daniel O’Brien, “Lord Lismore” in Rome about a reception that his wife had attended one evening in St Ouen at Prince Charles de Rohan’s residence. Margaret Josepha O’Brien, herself a rather formidable lady and reputedly the mistress of Fénelon, archevêque de Cambrai, mentions that among the guests were the celebrated Marie Fel (who according to the Nuncio sang more beautifully than the finest performers of Rome), the poet Paradis de Moncrif, and “La belle ou la Courcillon”, as Mrs O’Brien called her to distinguish her from the other princesse de Rohan (of a sufficiently similar age for easy confusion) – Marie-Louise-Henriette-Jeanne de La Tour d’Auvergne (1725–1793), wife of Jules-Hercule-Mériadec, prince de Rohan-Guéméné, mistress of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Sophie de Courcillon was godmother to Louise’s short-lived illegitimate son by that liaison, prince Charles de Rohan (1748–1748).

The princesse was the subject of portraits other than the present pastels. A bust by Lemoyne was completed in 1737 for the hôtel de Soubise, but is now lost. Gobert’s portrait of her in a blue *habit de masque*, still hanging in the grand salon of the Rohan family’s château de Josselin, was until recently attributed to Nattier. This most fashionable of portraitists was the author of the most celebrated image of the princesse, of which the primary version, exhibited at the Salon of 1741 (no. 58), is now in Toledo, Ohio (fig. 1).<sup>12</sup> It excited much praise from the usual critics as well as more unusual tributes such as the *Fable sur un portrait de la princesse de Rohan* by Paradis de Moncrif.<sup>13</sup> Among the numerous repetitions and copies, one was given (without a frame) by the

<sup>9</sup> The full text, and several others, can be found at <http://satir18.univ-st-etienne.fr>.

<sup>10</sup> *Mémoires du duc de Luynes sur la cour de Louis XV*, Paris, 1860–65, xv, pp. 7–10.

<sup>11</sup> Mrs O’Brien to Colonel Daniel O’Brien, 20.v.1752, RA SP 331/119A, cited Laurence Bongie, *The love of a prince*, Vancouver, 1986, pp. 281f. For Mrs O’Brien, see Frank McLynn, *Bonnie Prince Charlie*, Oxford, 1988, pp. 107, 316, and *The Jacobite peerage*, 1904, p. 76.

<sup>12</sup> See *Jean-Marie Nattier*, Versailles, 261999 – 30 janvier 2000, cat. Xavier Salmon, p. 136.

<sup>13</sup> *Œuvres de Moncrif*, tome II, Paris, 1791, p. 151.



subject to Mme Tessin, and was recorded among the Tessin works sent back to Sweden in 1741 and, sold at auction on 8 May 1786, lot 5. The Lundberg pastel was the following lot, in a similar frame bought by the Tessins for their Nattier.

The Tessins waited impatiently for their copy of the Nattier, but the artist would not permit it to be released before the Salon. Lundberg was a natural artist for the Tessins to turn to for a portrait of someone they so dearly loved. The Swedish artist had been in Paris since 1717, and was able to build an important reputation as a pastellist in the wake of the fashion created by Rosalba Carriera on her trip to Paris in 1720. However Lundberg's Protestantism presented an obstacle to his admission by the Académie. Tessin was able to influence the king to make an exception, and Lundberg was eventually *reçu* in 1741 by royal command. Their relationship remained close after Tessin returned to Sweden, with Lundberg following a few years later. Lundberg made innumerable portraits of Tessin, his wife and members of their family.

The Lundberg pastel shows all the characteristics of the finest work the artist produced during his Paris period. It is technically similar to another Tessin Lundberg, the portrait of Élisabeth-Alexandrine de Bourbon-Condé, Mademoiselle de Sens (now in the Nationalmuseum).<sup>14</sup> Characteristics include the splendidly rich colours (Lundberg's deep blue is a particular trademark), the handling of the hair and the beautifully smooth flesh.

Tradition dating back to the 1786 sale (and the old backing board) has it that the Lundberg pastel was itself by Maurice-Quentin de La Tour. This arose from a confusion with the lost source. The 1741 Tessin inventory refers only to a pastel copied after La Tour (without specifying by whom), while the Åkerö inventory of 1757 refers to "Princesse Rohans porträtt af La Tour, en pastel, copié de Mme de Tessin, sous la direction de M. de Lundberg et retouché par lui". We know that Mme Tessin made some pastel copies (for example, one after Aved's portrait of the actress Mme Quinault Dufresne appuyée sur un balcon, tenant un chien) under the direction of her teacher, Lundberg, whose portrait of her husband she also copied. It seems likely that the 1757 inventory refers not to the Lundberg pastel (whose quality excludes any possible involvement by an amateur), but, as it says, to a copy by Mme Tessin after the Lundberg; this further derivative may be the version recorded in 1929 as at Övedsklosters slott (and may have descended from Tessin's friend, the architect Carl Hårleman, 1700–1753). By the 1786 sale, the "original", that is the one from which Mme Tessin worked, was inferred to be the La Tour rather than the intermediate version by Lundberg.



Figure 1

In 2008 it was necessary to ask if there ever was an original by La Tour on which Lundberg based his portrait. There was no record of La Tour having exhibited a portrait of the princesse, but the identification of the source as La Tour went back to 1741 and could not be dismissed. Even established artists like Lundberg worked from models by other artists. I have written elsewhere<sup>15</sup> of the particularly confusing subject of the royal princesses Madame de Clermont

<sup>14</sup> See Jeffares 2006 for further details of this and other pastels mentioned in this article.

<sup>15</sup> Neil Jeffares, "Les portraits des princesses de Bourbon-Condé par Rosalba Carriera", *Le Musée Condé*, décembre 2004, n° 61, pp. 14–19.

and Madame de Charolais, two pendants by Rosalba Carriera of which Lundberg made copies – one of which is also recorded in Tessin’s 1741 inventory, no. 84, valued at 250 livres.<sup>16</sup> Those were direct copies with no compositional alterations, although Lundberg’s personal style is immediately evident from his handling.

Any doubts about whether La Tour made a pastel of the princesse were dispelled with the discovery<sup>17</sup> of these verses appear in the *Mercur de France* in February 1745 (p. 51), apparently by Mme Van Loo:<sup>18</sup>

VERS sur le portrait de Madame la Princesse de ROHAN, par Mde. V.

Latour, dans ce Pastel dont l’éclat nous enchante,  
La divine Rohan à nos yeux est parlante.  
Que d’amours malheureux naissent de son regard,  
Qui cacheront toujours leur charmante blessure!  
Son portrait nous paroît le chef-d’œuvre de l’Art,  
Comme cette beauté celui de la Nature.

These confirm that the La Tour pastel was made, and almost certainly in Paris – quite probably in the hôtel de Soubise for which Mme Van Loo’s husband had provided important dessus-de-porte. La Tour and Carle Van Loo’s connections go far beyond merely being colleagues at the Académie: Van Loo had been present at his *agrément* (when a portrait of his brother, Jean-Baptiste Van Loo, had been set for La Tour); Van Loo used La Tour’s head of the queen for his own full length portrait of her; and the 1810 sale of La Tour’s studio revealed that he had owned a sketch by Van Loo for *La Clairon dans le rôle de Médée*. Mme Van Loo, née Christina Antonia Somis (1704–1785), was Marie Fel’s teacher.



Figure 3

It is entirely natural for the princesse de Rohan to commission a portrait from the up and coming La Tour. Not only had the artist already made a strong impression at the salons, but it is even possible to speculate about another connection: La Tour’s great friend was the abbé Jean-Jacques-Clément Huber, a member of the Swiss banking family who had converted to Catholicism and become, from 1725, a member of the retinue of Sophie’s brother-in-law, the bishop of Strasbourg and grand aumônier de France, cardinal Armand-Gaston-Maximilien de Rohan (1674–1749). La Tour’s portraits of his friend were before and after the present work, and when Huber died in 1744 he made the artist his heir (although this apparently valuable estate was disclaimed as it was heavily encumbered and embroiled in disputes).

La Tour often portrayed young women holding books or music (his portrait of Marie Fel at a table with a volume of music is another example). A close parallel would be La Tour’s portrait of Mme Rouillé, in a similar *mantelet à la polonoise*, shown in the 1738 Salon, which shows a markedly different concept of space – as of course do La Tour’s

<sup>16</sup> The present pastel was valued at 350 livres, the same as Tocqué’s arresting portrait of Tessin now in the Nationalmuseum.

<sup>17</sup> I am most grateful to Ólafur Þorvaldsson for drawing my attention to this on 1.11.2020.

<sup>18</sup> The author, Mde V, is given as Madame V in the index (p. 214); she may be the addressee of a “Lettre sur les tableaux, 1750” published in the same journal in .XII.1750, identified by Georges Duplessis (*Catalogue de la collection... Deloynes*, 1881) as Mme Van Loo, the writer, Porcien, being a pupil of Coypel.

celebrated images of the princesse's rival Mme de Pompadour.

The words of the song in the music she holds are legible only in incomplete phrases, among them:

“...veut passer soudain je le.../je ne veux point desespérer ne.../... ne veux qu’il m’en coute qui veut.../fierte je l’écoute quand à la preuve il... engager...”

It has not been possible to identify a particular composition from which this simple C major melody comes, but it would appear to be a love song whose *galanterie* is in keeping with her reputation. Was this the reason why the words were later erased in the La Tour version? The writing however is not that of the princesse herself, which we know from a number of samples that have come down to us<sup>19</sup> (fig. 2): these share a consistent forward slope, and what a graphologist would recognise as a high form level.

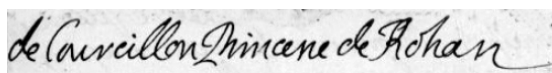


Figure 2

The music provides also a useful area in which to analyse the sequence of the versions (fig. 3). The simplifications introduced into the Lundberg (below) would allow one to conclude that the piece was written in 2/4 time, while the La Tour (above) is evidently in 6/8 and includes more precisely located slur marks. It is interesting to follow the line of the staves across the centre fold in the music: the Lundberg appears to lose a line, while the control of light and shade in the La Tour accomplishes the illusion of a much deeper fold, so that the displacement is of a whole stave. Similar comparisons, e.g. between the handling of the bow, oppose the spontaneity of the La Tour to the controlled finesse of the Lundberg.

There is an intriguing footnote in the form of a letter from another bluestocking, Belle de Zuylen, Mme de Charrière, whose difficult features La Tour struggled to capture in repeated sessions during 1766 as she recorded in a series of letters, in one of which<sup>20</sup> she noted with pride that “La Tour voit souvent Mme d’Étioles dans mon visage et la belle princesse de Rohan dans mon portrait”. A face remembered after a quarter of a century by a master who had portrayed the greatest beauties of the era.

The La Tour pastel was acquired by Maurice Fenaille before 1908, when it was submitted to the Cent pastels exhibition: but, without identification or attribution, there was no room for its inclusion. By 1932, no doubt based on the parallels with the Boucher *Dame au manchon* from the David-Weill collection, it was submitted to the Boucher exhibition in the Galerie Charpentier presented by the Fondation Foch. The organisers, who preferred to exhibit and illustrate the Louvre oil copy of the David-Weill pastel to the original, did include the Fenaille pastel as of an unknown sitter, by Boucher (no. 104). My personal copy of the catalogue of that exhibition has been heavily annotated by an unknown French connoisseur, and this item bears a penciled note relating it tentatively to La Tour, reinforced by an additional “à certain”, a comment which was either not communicated or forgotten until now.

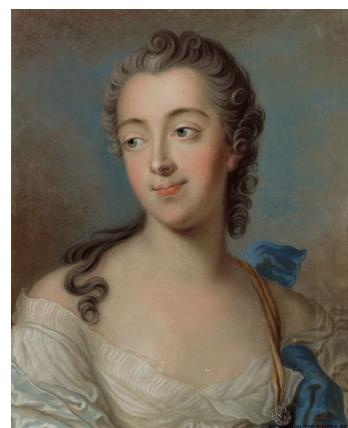


Figure 3

Although lost after 1912 (when it was in the von Platen collection in Stockholm), the Tessin copy of the Nattier portrait of the

<sup>19</sup> For example, the letter of 28.VIII.1750 to M. de Clairambault, généalogiste du roi (BnF, *volumes consacrés à l’histoire de l’Ordre du Saint-Esprit*, I. Cxx, f.18) from which the signature above is taken; or the delightful letter of 21 juin, c.1745, inviting the comte d’Argenson, ministre de la guerre to the country (on the French manuscript market in 2013).

<sup>20</sup> Letter to Constant d’Hermanges, 7 October 1766.

princesse also provides an additional footnote and further source of confusion. In 1757 – some sixteen years after the original was executed, and long after the La Tour pastel and Lundberg copy of it, Tessin recorded in his diary that he had executed a copy “en buste” of it under the supervision of Lundberg.<sup>21</sup> That copy may well be the pastel in Helsinki,<sup>22</sup> hitherto catalogued as anonymous but evidently in the later style of Lundberg and his studio (fig. 3). It has the same lock of hair falling over the sitter’s proper right shoulder found in other oil copies of the Nattier (e.g. that offered in New York, Sotheby’s, 19.v.1995, Lot 110) which could well be a detail found in the version of the Nattier owned by Tessin.

While Nattier’s deified princesse holds a book (inscribed *Histoire Universelle*), the subject of the earlier La Tour/Lundberg pastel holds instead a sheet of music with the words of a love song. The dramatic outdoor setting is replaced by nothing more elaborate than the cornflowers in her hair (*Centaurea cyanis* is the emblem of délicatesse, or “un sentiment tendre et délicat qui se nourrit d’espérance”<sup>23</sup>). Beautiful as the Toledo painting is, the averted eyes, contrived pose and mythological garb all contribute to a certain frigidity which the Helsinki pastel copy does nothing to relieve. In contrast there is a directness and immediacy in the earlier pastels which embody the seductiveness of “la Divine Princesse” that captivated both Tessin and his wife. What is perhaps most fascinating is to observe the partnership between La Tour and Lundberg on these two versions of the pastel: the spark of La Tour’s original creation is replaced by a finesse in the Swedish artist’s hand. Neither of these works, which on one level are so similar, could be by the other artist.

Neil Jeffares

<sup>21</sup> Salmon, *loc. cit.*, without citation; the passage has not been located in Gustaf Montgomery’s 1824 edition of *Tessins Dagbok 1757*.

<sup>22</sup> Finnish National Gallery, inv. S24. Legs Sinebrychoff 1921.

<sup>23</sup> Charlotte de Latour, *Le Langage des fleurs*, Paris, 1825, p. 264; it is also said to represent contentment in the unmarried state.