Prolegomena to *Pastels & pastellists*

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to

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I. FOREWORD

Pastel is in essence powdered colour rubbed into paper without a liquid vehicle – a process succinctly described in 1760 by the French amateur engraver Claude-Henri Watelet (himself the subject of a portrait by La Tour):

Les crayons mis en poudre imitent les couleurs,
Que dans un teint parfait offre l'éclat des fleurs.
Sans pinceau le doigt seul place et fond chaque teinte;
Le duvet du papier en conserve l'empreinte;
Un crystal la défend; ainsi, de la beauté
Le Pastel a l'éclat et la fragilité.¹

It is at once line and colour – a sort of synthesis of the traditional opposition that had been debated vigorously by theoreticians such as Roger de Piles in the previous century. It is, simultaneously, bright and matt, fragmentary and smooth. It has a unique texture and luminosity – the éclat des fleurs, the dust from butterflies’ wings – derived from the light-reflecting facets of individual particles of pastel pigment, filler and binder. For the English pastellist Francis Cotes, “Crayon pictures, when finely painted, are superlatively beautiful and decorative in a very high degree in apartments that are not too large; for having their surface dry, they partake in appearance of the effect of Fresco and by candle light are luminous and beautiful beyond all other pictures.”² In a century when the human figure had moved to a central position (although portraitists still occupied a rank below history painters in the hierarchy of the academies), when unparalleled sums were spent on sumptuous clothing, a medium which is capable of creating the illusion of human flesh, powdered wigs, silk dresses and velvet coats was the perfect means to capture the spirit of the age. According to Chaperon, the author of an eighteenth century treatise on pastel, among various types of painting, “aucun autre n’approche autant de la nature. Aucun ne produit des tons si vrais. C’est de la chair, c’est Flore, c’est l’Aurore.”³

Pastel may be quicker to apply than oil paint, but it is also harder to correct: “Le pastel ne veut pas être tourmenté, trop de travail lui ôte sa fleur.”⁴ That lends a certain immediacy to its images – a spontaneity which retains the première pensée of an artist’s sketch even when finished, framed and hung: and that merit too was fully prized in the age of Rousseau. Unlike in oil painting, the colours a pastellist works with do not change after drying; and the directness of the medium is even symbolised by the contact of the artist’s flesh with the same substance that forms the image, in contrast to the distance embodied in the handle, ferrule and bristles of a brush.

Despite the remarkable achievements of Vivien and La Tour in producing full length pastels on an unprecedented scale, oil painting continued to be preferred for the official portrait en pied – possibly because the fragility of large, expensive sheets of glass was still a consideration, but with the result that the eighteenth century pastel portrait usually showed the subject, bust length, with few if any accessories, against an indeterminate background, or occasionally in an intimate domestic setting. There are few group portraits, battle scenes are rare – but self-portraits abound. There are numerous pendants of husbands and wives – many no doubt made at the time of their

¹ Watelet 1760. Full details of references given in abbreviated form will be found in the BIBLIOGRAPHY of the online site, www.pastellists.com. Hyperlinks shown in SMALL CAPS are references to files listed as tabs on the index page, dispensing with the need to provide the full url in printed copies of this document. Cross-references to the relevant artist article (which may be found on the ARTISTS page) are omitted on each mention of an individual pastellist. Specific pastels are given unique J numbers in the form J.123.456.

² Cotes 1797.

³ Chaperon 1788, p. 13.

⁴ Petit de Bachaumont 1750.
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marriage, and myriad portraits of children and unindividuated young women. Pastel never made significant inroads into modes of painting other than the portrait: there are virtually no history pictures, only one major artist (Pillement) systematically made landscapes in pastel, and there are relatively few still lifes or genre pictures in the medium. The reasons for that appear to be largely negative: there was simply no compelling reason to use pastel where there was no impatient sitter, and no obvious textural advantage; the difficulty of obtaining a stable green was another problem.

In these prolegomena we aim to summarise the main headings under which pastel may be approached, progressing through materials and methods to an historical survey of the principal artists who used the medium. The chapters are intended as introductory guides to the primary texts, detailed articles and worklists of the *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800* (which may be accessed through the index of ARTISTS) and to the supporting reference material also included on the *Pastels & pastellists* website (these are cited indiscriminately as “the Dictionary” below; references to Chapter, §, supra and infra are restricted to these prolegomena). The thematic approach in this document necessitates some overlap and repetition in the interests of readability. (Reproductions of pastels which may be found in the Dictionary articles are normally omitted here; numbers in the form *J.n.m* are references to the entries in the Dictionary articles, which may be located with the search facility on the home page, or with Google.) The philosophy of a Dictionary at least in part is a recognition that information is often too broad and too voluminous to be reduced conveniently to a single narrative, and these prolegomena do not set out to contradict that.
II. THE WORD

Pastel is a word with a variety of senses; in this chapter we discuss the etymology and uses of the term, its cognates and synonyms.

In the Dictionary it is primarily used to mean ground pigment mixed with fillers and binders, reconstituted into a solid stick and applied to a rough or roughened surface to create pictures. The substance, the medium and the method are all termed “pastel”, while the stick itself, as well as the picture, is “a pastel”. Since the point of mixing ground pigment with fillers is to create something soft enough to cover area rather than merely scratch lines, the method should really (and was in the eighteenth century) be termed painting in pastel (for Félibien the object was to “faire des portraits ou autres choses qui semblent estre peints”); but because the support is usually paper, some pedants insist on calling it a form of drawing. It follows that the singular is preferable to the plural: “in pastels” suggests discrete crayons, used independently, rather than as a medium which produces a continuous, graded surface. Pastels can of course be used graphically, as they predominantly were in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and again in the nineteenth and twentieth; but it is as a form of painting, practised widely across Europe in the eighteenth century, that pastel excites our interest and merit attention sui generis. Usage in eighteenth century France was normally to regard pastel as painting, not drawing. Although the drawing/painting debate can be avoided by referring to the pictures with the noun alone, the word is seldom used on its own to refer to the activity: “pastel painting” is more frequent than “pastel drawing”. The phrase “Pastel chalks” is to be avoided.

In the eighteenth century, pastellists were “peintres en pastel” or “crayon painters”. “Pastelliste” occurs at least as early as 1847 in an article in L’Artiste. Both “pastellist” and “pastelist” are accepted spellings in current British usage. The full Oxford English Dictionary (“OED”) lists the first appearance of the word (with two l’s) in The Times in 1881 (in relation to Whistler: the article however criticises the artist for referring to his sketches as “pastels” when in fact they were made in black chalk touched with colour in crayons), but among earlier examples is Henry Murray’s The art of painting and drawing in coloured crayons (London, 1856, pp. 33, 38). Successive editions of the Concise Oxford dictionary have oscillated between either as the preferred form, with the -ll- form currently favoured, in spite of general rules on -ll- forms, because of the word’s (supposed) French origin. The -l- form is generally preferred in America.

The derivation of “pastel” itself is surprisingly confusing, and no simpler because it can mean the same as “crayon” – although a crayon usually means something else (such as a lead pencil or a Conté crayon), but a crayon painting or a work “in crayons” usually meant a pastel. In early texts, “dry colour” was used. The Latin for pastel painting, had the term been required, would have been xerographia (borrowing from the Greek).

The word “pastel” is said to be derived from the Italian pastello, a diminutive of the Latin pasta, or paste; pastello, meaning a crayon made of pigment, is probably an extended use of pastello, meaning a little cake (perhaps as early as the fourteenth century). According to the OED, the word appears

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1 The use as a noun is much preferable to awkward and contentious phrases such as “pastel drawing”, used frequently for example in the Oxford DNB.
2 Félibien 1676, in TREATISES.
3 Among numerous examples, the passage in the Journal économique, VII,1751, p. 64 is typical: discussing portraits in oil, and then in pastel, the author continued: “À ces Ouvrages de Peinture nous en joindrons deux de Dessein.”
4 With the possible exception of legal documents: the US Internal Revenue Service had to consider, in 2004 (case reference TAM-100284-03/CC.PSL-B4) whether an item in H’s estate described merely as “Pastel attributed to –” fell under the section in the will dealing with “all oil paintings”. The decision was based on rather technical considerations.
in this sense before 1571: in fact, although Leonardo refers several times to “colorire a secco”, the word *pastello* appears c.1493–97 in his Codex Madrid,\(^{10}\) against the diagram of a mould “per far pastelli”. Leonardo is widely but erroneously credited with the invention of the technique; but he does seem responsible for the use of the term. Lomazzo described Leonardo’s technique as *a pastello* in 1584. *Pastillum* is “dough pasté”,\(^{11}\) but *pastillus* ("lozenge", particularly with medicinal properties) is the normally cited source in this disputed etymology; *pastellus* exists in post-classical Latin, but as a variant of *pastillus* rather than *pastillum*.

The first English use of the word is in Richard Haydocke’s 1598 translation of Lomazzo: “Pastilles, which are roules with sharpe points made of colours, first ground into pouder.” (The spelling\(^{12}\) is a clue to the correct English pronunciation of the word, /ˈpæstəl/, with the emphasis on the first syllable; in America /ˈpæstəl/ is prevalent.) It reappears in 1612, in Henry Peacham’s *Gentlemans exercise*, “To draw with drie colours, you may make long pastils, which you shall doe by grinding red lead, or any other colour with strong wort.” Norgate’s lengthy and important descriptions date from c.1628 but were in manuscript. By the middle of the seventeenth century the word was well established: Sanderson writes “Of Cryons or Dry-Colours, by Pastils or Powders” (1658), while John Evelyn (who was portrayed by Nanteuil) has “Rubbing in the shades with Pastills and dry Compositions” in 1662; as in Latin and French, however, there was a parallel pharmacological sense, now spelled *pastille*. In John Harris’s *Lexicon technicum* of 1704, “pastills” were defined as “Odoriferous Tablets, or Trochisks made up of Perfumes or Odorous Bodies with Mucillage of Gum Tragacanth” – which was one of the binders traditionally used in artists’ pastels.

The derivation of crayon is much simpler: from the French * crayon*, derived from *cruei*, which in turn comes from the Latin *creta*, for chalk. *Crayon* appears in Carel van Mander’s influential *Het schilder-boeck* of 1604; *croyons* is the spelling adopted in Edward Luttrell’s unpublished *Epitome of painting* (1683), and suggests that the word was pronounced /ˈkraɪəns/ rather than the modern English /ˈkriəns/. Pepys however (Diary, 15.V.1663) writes “croyon”. In Randle Cotgrave’s *A dictionarie of the French and English tongues* (London, 1611), pastel is not defined in our sense, but “crayon” is given, as “dry painting; or, a painting in, or Picture of, dry colours”, as well as “the first draught, or lineaments of a Picture”; but he also includes another sense, of “the Table whereon a Painter mingleth (such) colours”. The earliest example in the OED for its use in the plural, *crayons*, to denote pastel, is in Jonathan Richardson’s *Two discourses* (London, 1719), p. 174, although it was extensively used before in art treatises (as early as c.1628 in Norgate, followed by Sanderson, Huygens etc.) and general works (Hans Sloane, *Voyage to the islands of Madera…*, London, 1707, p. lxv).

In France the word *pastel* originally referred to herb and dyestuff woad, or *guède* (*Isatis tinctoria* L.), which was prepared into tablets known as *pastilles*. The obvious confusion can be found, for example, in a footnote to the entry for *Isatis tinctoria* in Antoine-Nicolas Duchesne’s *Manuel de botanique contenant les proprietes des plantes…* (Paris, 1764, p. 32, n.1) where it states:

Il y a apparence que c’est de cette matière que l’on a fait des crayons de pastel bleus, & qu’ensuite les crayons de pastel de diverses couleurs ont gardé le même nom, qui s’est aussi étendu au genre de peinture qui les a employés.

The word *crayon* however referred to drawing sticks: so Norgate (*Miniatura*, 1648: ed. 1997, p. 101 & n.248) says: “The busines I mean is Crayon when it speakes French, but Dry Colours in English.” But fairly rapidly, while preserving the alternative significance of woad, France adopted the word *pastel* as the preferred term for a crayon made of pigment paste (1676) and then for a picture made in pastel (1694). It is perhaps significant that, in giving Prince Rupert’s recipe, the

\(^{10}\) Codex Madrid I, c.1493–97, fol. 191r. For bibliographic details of this and other sources cited, see TREATISES and BIBLIOGRAPHY. Chapter III provides an overview of treatises before 1800 from the point of view of content as opposed to the purely linguistic discussion here.

\(^{11}\) The spelling in Lewis & Short.

\(^{12}\) Dossie 1758 has “pastils”, although he generally refers to crayons.
mysterious Sieur d’Emery refers to crayons (published in 1674, with a new edition in 1684 and in English translation 1685, as “Creyons”). Alexander Browne uses both terms, but prefers cryons, while the closely connected text of William Salmon (1672) refers throughout to “Pastils or Crions”, suggesting a misunderstood general instruction to the printer.

The entry in the 1762 edition of the Dictionnaire de l’Académie française is:

**PASTEL. s.m.** Sorte de crayon fait de couleurs pulvérisées, mêlées, soit avec du blanc de plomb, soit avec de la céruse ou du talc, & incorporées avec une eau de gomme. On fait des pastels de toutes sortes de couleurs. Dessiner au pastel. Peindre en pastel. On appelle aussi Pastel, Ce qui est peint avec le pastel. Les pastels de Nanteuil. C’est un curieux, il a beaucoup de pastels chez lui. Il a des pastels de toute la Cour. Il a toute la Cour en pastel. Voilà un beau pastel.

Early pastels could only achieve anaemic colours. Although a full range of colour was available by the late seventeenth century, already the word had begun to be used to indicate paleness (thus Paul Scarron, in *Typhon, ou La Gigantomachie*, 1644), perhaps by confusion with the dye: *Isatis tinctoria* produces the same dye, indigo, as *Indigofera tinctoria*, but in a lower concentration. (The term “bleu pastel” refers to this light blue colour which, coincidentally, might in English be termed pastel blue.) That sense persisted, and was encouraged by the efforts of amateur artists who used pastels for sketching, as they might use chalk. The celebrated pastel-maker Bernard Stoupan supplied “pastels pour dames, propres à peindre en petit les fleurs, figures & paysages”, consisting of 100 crayons instead of the regular assortment of 152. “Just what ladies do when they paint for amusement”, Sir Joshua Reynolds said, attempting to put down his dangerously successful rival Liotard. (Horace Walpole delivered a damning assessment of Reynolds’s materials: “his colours seldom stand longer than crayons.” Walpole in turn was the subject of a *Biographical sketch, in fugitive crayons*, 1799.) George Vertue (1742) deplored pastel painting in the strongest possible language: “all this is the depravity of skill, and lowness of Art by which means the unskillfull are deceived & pay for their Ignorance… the want of Ambition in Art thus shows its declining State… small pains & great gains…is this darling modish study”; while half a century later Pasquin used equally vigorous language to condemn “crayon painting” as “a facile pursuit, which no eminent genius will practice willingly.”

Perhaps a more insidious linguistic hazard arose in metaphorical uses. The verse form encouraged contributions such as the anonymous *To Flavella, occasioned by her picture in crayons, sent as a present, but damaged by carriage* (1750); here the damaged work “still represents/Precarious beauty’s transient fate.” Much the same theme was exploited by the German poet Friedrich Justin Bertuch in *Nänie, auf ein zerbrochtes Pastell-Gemälde* (1777). So familiar was the trope of pastel deterioration that Mlle Fontette de Sommery wrote of one character that “Son visage, qui conservoit d’antiques traces de beauté, avoit l’air d’un pastel dégradé.”

After about 1800 very few artists continued to use pastel for painting, as such; it reverted to being a graphic medium, in which the paper was not covered, and the visual impression accordingly pale and etiolated. Huckleberry Finn, who recorded his first encounter with pastels, noted that “they
was different from any pictures I ever see before”, despite thinking, inexplicably, that they were “blacker, mostly, than is common”, but concluding nevertheless that “I didn’t somehow seem to take to them, because if ever I was down a little they always give me the fan-tods.” (But Robert Lowell reverted to the normal sense when he described “a pastel-pale Huckleberry Finn”.)

By the nineteenth century, the stock idea of pastel was conveyed in the English novel. Jane Austen reserved this unsound activity for her dimmer or more vapid characters such as Miss Darcy or Mrs Elton. George Eliot talked of “portraits in pastel of pearly-skinned ladies with hair-powder”, while Thackeray, more robustly, observed “what awfully bad pastels there were on the walls.” Pastel has certainly inspired some purple passages in French literature, ranging from Arsène Houssaye’s La Tour et Mlle Fé (Princesses de comédie et déesses d’opéra, 1858) to poems by Théophile Gautier (La Comédie de la mort, 1835) and Paul Verlaine (poem XVI in the Lucien Létiniois sequence in Amour, 1888), while Marcel Proust (and Henry James) used eighteenth century pastel portraits as metaphors for decayed gentility or tempus acti. “Pastel”, a little-known song by Georges Bizet, is rather charming, but not because of the words by Philipe Gille.

By the early twentieth century, pastel, and the promotion by dealers of weak, late English examples, inspired the polemic of writers such as Lionel Cust who attacked the “the repellent exaggerations of the pseudo-classical, namby-pamby style which was unfortunately so much in vogue”.21 The word itself took on a specific literary use. A volume of Pastels in prose appeared in New York in 1890, with an introduction explaining the term, adding that “the very life of the form is its aerial delicacy, its soul is that perfume of thought, of emotion…”. That life was extinguished by the response of another critic: “The French pastel is really a little study … of a trifling topic which lacks complexity.” A different US newspaper later cut to the chase, defining the genre as “saccharine bits of wispy fluff”.

In 1975 Ronald Reagan rallied his supporters offering to raise “a banner of no pale pastels, but bold colors which make it unmistakably clear where we stand”. The language still resonates in France where intellectuals fight over the standard – or disclaim it. One writer (Jean Baudrillard), in a tirade against modernity, even felt that there was something immoral or dishonest about pastels which increasingly replace natural colours in modern life.

20 Some of these appear in the FLORILEGIUM, but many more are discussed in Maxine G. Cutler, Educations of the eighteenth century in French poetry, 1800-1869, Geneva, 1970.

21 In his review of Robert Rene Meyer-Sée’s English pastels (Burlington magazine, September 1911, p. 361).
III. TREATISES

PASTELLISTS FROM Luttrell to La Tour, Liotard, Russell and Vigée Le Brun left important accounts of their methodology, in documents ranging from letters to published treatises. A great many more treatises on the art of pastel painting were produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by professional colourmen, scientists and amateurs. The anonymous *Traité de la peinture au pastel*, published in Paris in 1788 by M. P. R. de C., now identified as the magistrate and amateur pastellist Paul-Romain Chaperon, is perhaps the most important, and certainly the most often cited, but the earlier texts provide important insights into the development and use of the technique. Following this can easily be confusing as some texts simply copy (often word for word) earlier ones, and modern authors occasionally cite later compilations instead of original sources. The principal texts are set out in TREATISES, and should be consulted directly. This chapter provides a broad overview.

Although three texts of Leonardo are frequently cited (and already mentioned in Chapter II) as marking the invention of pastel (which he credited to Jean Peréal), his influence was indirect rather than through these unpublished documents; Lomazzo (1584) mentions the use by Leonardo and others, but does not give a prescription for others to follow. Petrus Gregorius, in his *Syntaxeon artis mirabilis* of c.1583, provided the first practical recipe for making pastels, mixing ground pigment with fish glue, gum arabic, fig juice or whey. Peacham’s description (1612) is cursory: ground pigment mixed with wort, perhaps with milk.

By far the most important early account is that given by Edward Norgate in the various versions of his *Miniatura*, known from a confusing variety of manuscript copies which largely follow either the version from around 1628 (intended for the use of the expert Sir Theodore Turquet de Mayerne), or its substantial revision in 1648 (where however many of the passages about pastel were omitted, as presumably of no use to the broader audience to whom the revision was directed). Of particular interest is his description of three methods of using “dry colours or crayon”: (a) the early French crayon portrait (as practised by Dumonstier), in which powdered colours are rubbed into paper with stump (*v. infra*); (b) the use of sticks made up as Peacham describes; and (c), his preferred method, the use of pastels and natural chalks on paper prepared with a wash (applied by sponge) of colour matching the complexion of the subject; natural black and red chalks are used for the passages that require precision, as they may be sharpened more precisely than the pastel sticks. The paper is ordinarily “blewe” (parchment is also recommended) with the colours applied with the sticks and then rubbed in with finger, stump or sponge (Norgate refers to this as “sweetening”, a term later used by Russell and others). Norgate demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the need to get the composition of the pastels right, across the full colour spectrum, so that they are neither too hard nor too soft.

It is fairly clear however that these recipes were available only to the initiated. Thus Prince Rupert (*v. Dictionary*, s.v. Ruprecht von der Pfalz) communicated his secret method to Wallerant Vaillant (*q.v.*) in 1653, but the “secret très estimable...trouvé par M. le prince Robert” first appeared in print in Antoine d’Emery’s *Recueil des curiositez rares et nouvelles*, 1674 (it was described in more detail in *v. infra*).

22 Luttrell’s *Epitome* and Russell’s *Elements* are included in the TREATISES (as is Caroline Laise’s account of Liotard’s working method); La Tour’s important letters the marquis de Marigny, 1.VIII.1763, and to Belle de Charrière, 14.V.1770, are in the Chronological table of La Tour documents.

23 While it may seem surprising that a magistrate in Libourne should demonstrate the author of the treatise’s intimate knowledge of Paris as well as having a professional knowledge of the preparation of colours, the identification is confirmed in Carrière’s correspondence, published in Sani 1985 (Burns 2007 contains a useful thematic index), although it is not as systematically expounded as one might wish. Vigée Le Brun’s “Conseils sur la peinture du portrait”, published with her *Souvenirs*, were probably written c.1830, but may be assumed to describe studio practice from the eighteenth century; although pastel is only explicitly mentioned once, much of the advice applies to either medium.

24 The first use recorded in the OED is in 1688 by Randle Holme (*Academy of armory*) in relation to shadows in glass painting. Dryden’s translation of Du Fresnoy (1695) uses the term in relation to Correggio’s treatment of light and shadow.
Luttrell’s 1683 *Epitome*, but this too was a private manuscript). Vaillant was taken to Paris in 1659, and it seems unlikely to be coincidence that he and Nanteuil both turned to this medium at the same time.

Thus when Christiaan Huygens visited Sir Peter Lely in London, it was only with great difficulty that he extracted the secret of making pastel; but again this remained buried in private correspondence. One of the earliest printed sources is an anonymous London publication, *The excellency of the pen and pencil*, of 1668; although reprinted in 1688, it has been largely overlooked. It appears to derive from the work of William Faithorne (another important figure in the development of pastel: during his exile in Paris, following the English civil war, he was able to acquaint himself with the latest Continental practices); but the passage on pastels relates closely to the better known, and somewhat longer, texts of Alexander Browne and William Salmon. Browne’s *An appendix to The art of painting in miniture or limning, directing… also the several ways of making cryons or pastils, with the several ways of working with them* appeared in 1675. The relationship between Salmon and Browne’s texts is complicated: the supplement to Browne, which first appeared in 1675, seems to pre-date the Salmon’s longer version, as the two versions of his *Polygraphice* from 1672 and 1685 demonstrate.

It is perhaps curious that all of these texts were in English. It is not until 1684, with the appearance of Roger de Piles’s *Les Premiers Éléments de la peinture pratique*, that an account of the “la peinture en pastel” appeared in French, but even this was far shorter than the preceding English texts. It appeared in an English translation, with an introduction by Buckeridge, in 1706.

By the start of the eighteenth century, publishers recognised the demand for more information. The popular seventeenth century *Traité de la peinture en mignature* credited to Boutet was reissued in 1708 with an anonymous *Traité de la peinture au pastel, avec la méthode de composer les pastels*. It appears to show an awareness of some of the English treatises, but adds a somewhat theoretical account of “primitive colours”. There are useful notes as to which colours to use for different purposes, which paper to use, and directions for the construction of a pastel box (with compartments following the theoretical colour order, as well as space for bottles of ground powder to be applied with a stump: v. §IV.7).

In 1731, John Peele at Locke’s Head published, at the price of 1s., *The art of drawing and painting in water-colours*; two more editions appeared in 1732, and a fourth in 1735. Chapter XIV offered “Curious directions for drawing with crayons”, while the next chapter was on the “Use and nature of dry crayons”. The treatise was otherwise focused on watercolour, but included a number of recipes for preparing colour said to have come from Robert Boyle’s unpublished papers which the author had been shown by the famous scientist’s great-nephew, the late Lord Carleton. In 1732 Peele published the *Method of learning to draw in perspective, made easy and fully explained*, which included “the art of drawing in crayons, with receipts for making them after the French and Italian manner…chiefly from the manuscripts of the great Mr Boyle”. Dedicated to Lady Walpole (an amateur artist; presumably Sir Robert’s wife, née Catherine Shorter), this reached its third edition by 1735. What was described as the fifth edition was published by I. Jackson in Dublin in 1749 under the title *Arts companion, or A new assistant for the ingenious*. This included chapter III from the *Method*, while chapter IV was chapter XIV from the *Art*. It is unclear whether Boyle had any involvement in the sections on pastels. A large part of the text (the entire third chapter) coincides precisely with much of the entry in Barrow’s *Dictionarium polygraphicum*, 1735.

In France most of the literature in the mid-eighteenth century concerns methods of fixing pastel (v. infra). Articles appeared in a number of dictionaries and encyclopaedias, among them Jaucourt’s in

25 Overlooking the short definition of pastel in Félibien’s *Des principes de l’architecture…*, 1676, p. 683, cited in the Avertissement to the 1708 edition of “Boutet” as the only reference to pastel in the literature.

26 As Kuehni 2010 has shown, the section on pastel is almost certainly by a different author than the earlier treatise.
the *Encyclopédie*, which included the much-cited verses by Watelet. A little more detail was included in Pernety’s *Dictionnaire portatif de peinture, sculpture et gravure*, Paris, 1757. Much later Blanquart de Septfontaines gave a more thorough account of making pastels for the *Encyclopédie méthodique. Arts et métiers mécaniques* (1782–91), while Lacombe wrote the article on fixing pastels. But none of these provided anything like the wealth of detail included in Robert Dossie’s comprehensive account in *The handmaid to the arts*, London, 1758. Cotes’s notes were not published until long after his death, but John Russell’s *Elements of painting with crayons* (1772; second edition, 1777) was influential in England.

Treatises also appeared in other languages. Günther 1762 acknowledged the help of his friend Professor Lowitz, who had lent him works in English and French. Günther’s approach was of greater detail and prescription in the use of specific colours for different stages of the pastel, and the labelled colour charts provided instructions for painting by numbers.

Lalande (1769) provided a detailed account, mainly about fixing methods. Le Pileur d’Apligny’s more general *Traité des couleurs matérielles et de la manière de colorer* (Paris, 1779) drew on a number of sources, including English treatises. But Chaperon’s *Traité de la peinture au pastel*, published in Paris in 1788 under his initials, represented the definitive account of eighteenth century practices in France at least. Pierre-Barthélemy de Constant de Massoul’s more general *A treatise on the art of painting, and the composition of colours* (1797) offered the English a French view on this subject.27

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27 For a biography of this unlikely colourman, see [my blog post](https://neiljeffares.wordpress.com/2017/02/11/constant-de-massoul-soldier-emigre-and-colourman/), posted 2017.
IV. THE OBJECT

Pastels are executed on a flat surface which is mounted in various ways, but the most common arrangement is on paper, pasted on a stretched canvas. Each of these elements is relevant both to an understanding of what is involved and how it affects the finished work, and to the identification of artists and the history of that work. This chapter provides an account of the manufacture of pastels before 1800 considered under each component; Chapter V, infra, revisits these themes from the point of view of modern conservation.

IV.1 The strainer

From the late seventeenth century, apart from very small works, the vast majority of pastels were executed on a surface mounted on a wooden frame or strainer. The word is used in contrast to the more familiar stretcher employed today: the strainer is a rigid frame of four pieces of wood fixed together. A (keyed) stretcher, or châssis à clés, has moveable bars that can be expanded by hammering wedges, or keys, into the corners: the system was devised to maintain tension in stretched canvases, and was introduced (according to Pernety 1757) by the mid-eighteenth century. Initially used for very large canvases, stretchers became more common at the end of the eighteenth century; but their use with pastels is very rare (the canvases are smaller, and the wedges cannot safely be used once a pastel has been finished) and is usually an indication that the work is a later fake. (Unlike paintings which were frequently relined, the transfer of a finished pastel from one support to another is virtually impossible without visible damage.) There are exceptions: a large Coypel pastel from 1743 (J.2472.171; New York, MMA) is on a keyed stretcher, as are a number of large La Tour pastels, including the président de Rieux (1741; J.46.2722) and the marquise de Pompadour (J.46.2541). And by 1797 Constant de Massoul (a colourman whose knowledge of pastel was second hand) thought that “there must be wedges upon the angles of the frame, to allow the cloth to be stretched, when it has loosened.”

Most strainers are made of pine or spruce: some have cross-bars (écharpes in French) at the corners, while larger ones may have central bars fixed to the middle in one or both directions (diagonal corner bars are also common: examples include a 1748 pastel by Glain, J.351.126, or the unseen pastel depicted in Chardin’s 1779 autoportrait au chevalet). During the eighteenth century, limited attention was given to the appearance of parts of a work which would not be visible, and strainers were often constructed out of inferior or poorly finished components. Joints may be mitred or more often square cut, lapped or butt (the equivalent joints in outer frames are usually more elaborate, with mortise and tenon, slotted or spline or keyed joints common). They can be very

28 Nanteuil had used paper mounted on cardboard, a description of pasting process being provided by Tempesti (see Burns 2007, p. 46). However some sheets of his seem to be loose, and have pin marks suggesting they were originally fixed to a drawing board.

29 Pernety 1757, p. xc. A diagram showing one is included in the Recueil de planches sur les sciences, les arts libéraux et les arts mécaniques, 1771, VIII, article “Peintures en huile…”, planche V.

30 Russell 1772, p. 20, describes how Cotes transferred a pastel by Rosalba to a different canvas without damage, by soaking the canvas and thus wetting the paste. Among examples where the transfer has been less successful may be cited Liébard’s Néthorpe (J.149.2535; British Museum); Perronneau’s Robbé de Beaunoyer (J.582.1700; Orléans, musée des Beaux-Arts) and La Tour’s princesse de Rohan (J.46.273; Stockholm, Nationalmuseum). Lord Mountstuart, who gave MacAndrew’s original self-portrait in crayons to James Granger, “unluckily tore it in getting it off the Canvas”.

31 New York 2011, p. 20; information from Michelle Sullivan, Getty, 2019. Valérie Luquet, “Les supports utilisés par Perronneau et les pastellistes au XVIIIe siècle,” lecture, Colloque international, Jean-Baptiste Perronneau, Orléans, 22.11.2017 noted two examples among the larger La Tour pastels at the Louvre, Frémion (J.46.1819) and Danton le romain (J.46.1681). Despite the later addition to the right edge of the former, it does seem most likely that the main chassis is original; it measures 92x72.5 cm (Salmon 2018, p. 160, see also Jeffares 2018g for an analysis of the provenance and likely date of alterations). The latter suffered from the artist’s repeated attentions throughout his life, and its condition does not preclude a later transfer. For a discussion of the pastel of Mme de Pompadour (J.46.2541) see my ESSAY.

32 Constant de Massoul 1797, p. 110 (in TREATISES).
roughly cut or quite highly finished; in general the carpentry was not of high quality. In at least one case, a maker’s stamp (Infroit) has been found, indicating that some strainers were supplied by maitres-menuisiers. In some cases bark from the tree remains. Some care was required however to ensure that the inner edge of the battens touching the reverse of the canvas or parchment was not so sharp as to leave an impression, and these were occasionally bevelled or rounded.

Neither the type of wood nor the dimensions were standard, but as a general rule, wider, machine-finished mahogany components are indicators of later work. The appearance of original eighteenth century strainers can often be surprisingly bright: perhaps sealing works reduces the level of oxidation one might expect from exposed surfaces in furniture from the same period. While dendrochronology might seem to be a useful tool in detecting frauds, the angle at which the wood is cut from the tree (and the smaller surface area than revealed in wooden panels for painting) usually means that rings are only visible from the ends, which, even if uncovered, rarely if ever present enough rings to enable the technique to be applied.

Oval strainers, except for the smallest, usually have cross bars; they tend, like oval frames, to be made from four components with joins at the 45° lines. Since, unlike straight pieces for rectangular frames, these components cannot follow the grain, they are subject to stresses from humidity changes that can easily result in their failure over two hundred years, although it is the opening of joints seen on the front of oval frames that is more familiar.

IV.2 The support

To non-specialists it may be confusing that it is the paper, not the canvas, that is referred to as the (primary) “support” (the OED is of little help, defining support in this context as “The solid surface or material on which a painting is executed”). However it is termed, the choice of surface to which the pastel is applied is critical. As with all friable or pulverulent materials (charcoal, chalk etc.) there needs to be a certain texture to the support in order for the pastel to adhere.

IV.2.1 Marouflage

While it is possible to work on sheets temporarily fixed to a drawing board, the preferred method was to work on the paper after it had been mounted on canvas, in a process known as “marouflage”; this provided an elasticity to the surface which aided the compression of the chalk into the paper surface. It also allowed those artists who sometimes applied pastel wet to do so without leaving cockled areas of the surface as would appear on loose sheets of paper; the tension in the canvas would suffice to keep the surface flat.

All the indications are that the canvas was first stretched over the strainer, fixed with glue or paste and then tacked in place around the sides, with the corners folded as neatly as possible. (The canvas itself requires no treatment, although it is sometimes primed with oil, as discussed below.) The wet paper is then pasted over this assembly; while drying, it will create the necessary tension. One modern source suggests, however, that the regular method was to apply the paper to the canvas before either was fixed to the stretcher; consequently the heads of the tacks go through

31 Valérie Luquet, ibid.
33 Derek McCormick, private communication, 2014.
34 See for example Chaperon 1788, pp. 331f; Carrington Bowles 1773/1802, p. 53 (also in TREATISES describes the process in detail, indicating how the canvas is to be laid over the paper and pressed from behind etc.
35 Chaperon (§316) recommends “colle d’amidon”, starch paste, made from wheat or hair powder. Surprisingly Pilc & White 1995 reported that FTIR “suggests” the marouflage used animal glue; however Townsend 1998 (p. 26f) noted that most historic papers have been sized with animal glue, and it is very difficult to distinguish between this and the paste used to attachd the sheet to the canvas.
36 See Mayer 1991, pp. 296f for the neater way of doing so.
both layers (so that where tacks are hidden by paper, the work is likely to be a later fake). In Chaperon’s method, the tacks would be below the paper: but in practice, these iron tacks rust and burn their way through the paper to appear on the outside, providing a different explanation of the normal appearance. The discriminant would be the structure of the folds in the corners (which would be far bulkier if the paper were pre-attached to the canvas), but these are seldom observable. Some artists (e.g. John Russell) cut the paper to the front surface of the canvas so as to avoid having to fold it at all.

All of this is normally done before the pastel is commenced. Indeed artists’ suppliers would sell canvases so lined ready for use: the marchand papetier René Coiffier, for example, carried “vingt-deux toiles à pastel de toutes grandeurs” among his extensive stock of artists’ materials. Russell, however, reporting a discovery made by Cotes, suggests that the best practice is to do a preliminary drawing of the subject in “dead-colour” before the paper is pasted to the canvas, the advantage apparently being that when the work is continued after pasting down the pastel will adhere better and the the colours will be deeper. There is nothing to suggest that other pastellists did this; but the presence of pinholes on paper that has been pasted down (as is very occasionally seen) might be consistent with such a preliminary stage rather than evidencing later transfer. These rules are of course subject to exceptions: Ducreux, for example, habitually used his own discarded académies to line oval strainers, acting in place of canvas as secondary support for the paper on which he then worked in pastel.

IV.2.2 Types of paper

The surface of the paper might need to be roughened in some way. This may simply be a mechanical attack with a knife, razor or pumice-stone to abrade the surface (and smooth out any large imperfections), but in other cases might involve some kind of sizing, and could even involve the glue and ground pumice-stone preparation also used for direct painting on canvas (v. §IV.2.8).

Although wove paper was invented by 1757 (by James Whatman), it was not in general use until much later, and is of no relevance to the eighteenth century pastel. The papers employed were all produced using pulp from beaten rags formed into sheets in a mould, a rectangular frame with a network of wires that left chain marks on the surface of the paper. Russell recommended that the side with less visible lines be used to paint on. Paper came in various finishes: the finest and cleanest rags were used to produce white paper for writing and printing. But for pastel the rougher texture associated with coarser rags was more suitable, in particular the velour paper the long fibres of which presented an excellent vehicle for holding pigment.

IV.2.3 Paper colour

The paper for pastel was usually blue, but occasionally brown or even white. The required texture normally appeared in brown or blue paper which had numerous functions such as wrapping (blue was said to be particularly favoured for wrapping sugar so as to emphasise its whiteness). Constant de Massoul noted that Carriera and La Tour used a “blue Dutch paper”. By the mid-eighteenth century blue colourants were added to the rag pulp to produce more intense and consistent colours: the dyes used included smalt, or ground blue glass, indigo, woad or Prussian blue. Blue

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39 Salmon 2004a, p. 54f.
40 Inv. p.m. 25.t.1810, AN Ms./111/743.
41 Examples include Dusaulx (i.285.342), Méhul (i.285.595) and Thibault Laveaux (i.285.467).
42 Krill 1994 is a useful general source on paper; see also Bower 1996 and Bower 2002.
and red silk fibres were included\(^{43}\) in paper pulp intended for use with pastel in France from the
1750s and England the following decade.

As early as 1628 Norgate noted that “The ordinary Manner of working in Crayon is upon a Bleue
Paper”, while \textit{The excellency of the pen and pencil}, an anonymous treatise which first appeared in 1668,
instructed: “Provide your self also of fine Blew paper; some light-coloured, other some more sad;
as also with Paper of divers other colours, which now is very common to be sold in many places.”
According to “Boutet” 1708 [pp. 168f],

On a déjà dit au commencement, que cette sorte de Peinture se pratique sur du
\textit{Papier Gris}, on se sert aussi de \textit{Papier Bleuâtre}, il les faut choisir l'un & l'autre assez
\textit{forts} & d'un \textit{grain fin} & \textit{égal}; il doit être \textit{fort} afin de pouvoir souffrir que l'on repasse dessus avec des \textit{Pastels} autant de fois qu'il est nécessaire; & d'un \textit{grain fin} & \textit{égal}, afin que le travail en soit plus délicat & plus beau; il doit enfin avoir un \textit{grain}, afin que le \textit{Pastel} s'y attache d'autant plus facilement, & y tienne mieux, ce qui n'empêche pas que l'Ouvrage étant achevé, on ne doive y mettre une glace, de peur que quelqu'un y passant la main, ou autre chose ne vienne à l'effacer, & aussi pour le préserver de la poudre & de la fumée, que l'on ne pourroit pas ôter sans enlever en même tems le Pastel & l'Ouvrage./Nottez
que l'on doit attacher son papier sur un petit ais uni & mince, en y collant par derrière les bords dudit papier.

The significance of the colour arises because optically an image in a warm colour drawn on a cool
background appears to advance towards the viewer, an effect which artists usually find helpful.
This may be more relevant with early “pastels” where sheets were prepared with washes in the
technique Norgate describes: but it is disputed whether enough of this show-through is relevant
where eighteenth-century pastels are concerned, since the whole sheet is usually covered with
opaque pastel.\(^{44}\) Nevertheless La Tour describes\(^{45}\) an experiment in treating his paper with yellow
ochre mixed with egg yolk to facilitate the elimination of show-through of the blue colour:

\begin{quote}
mettre avec une brosse une légère teinture d'ocre jaune à l'eau simple, bien délayée ensemble avec un peu de
jaune d'œuf sur du papier bleu; cela empêche le lourd qu'il est difficile d'éviter par la quantité de couleurs
nécessaires pour couvrir le bleu du papier.
\end{quote}

In a few cases artists went to the further trouble of priming the canvas onto which the paper would
be pasted: Vivien for example used the same deep red as he would have used as a ground for oil
painting.\(^{46}\) Some later sources\(^{47}\) recommend that the canvas be primed with oil, with the intention
of protecting the finished pastel from humidity.\(^{48}\)

\section*{IV.2.4 Joins}

Although large sheets of paper were available from early on, it is common to find two or more
smaller sheets joined together on the same strainer. Sometimes this was the result of an artist
working say on a head on a smaller sheet for convenience, such as La Tour’s full-length Mme de
Pompadour or the heads of each of Canova and Tresham in Hamilton’s \textit{Canova’s studio} (V&A
version); but more often it was simply a question of availability of paper of the right finish for
anything beyond say 60x50 cm.\(^{49}\) Care was required to disguise the joins, usually by a small area of
overlap, and to ensure joins did not fall across the face or other areas where they would be
particularly noticeable. These joins can sometimes be confused with the rope marks where paper

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
on French paper of the time, intended for drawing with chalk or pastel; the development was sponsored by the Society of Arts. It continued to be
sold by retailers such as Dorothy Mercier.
\bibitem{Günter 1762} Günter 1762 (§2) nevertheless thought this was a fundamental objection to the use of blue paper, and recommended pastellists only used
parchment.
\bibitem{Belle de Charrière} In a letter to Belle de Charrière, 14.IV.1770; see \url{Chronological table of La Tour documents}.
\bibitem{Valérie Luquet} Examples noted by the author and by Valérie Luquet (private communication, 2017). It is possible of course that Vivien, who also painted in oil,
simply used canvases in his studio which happened to have been primed.
\bibitem{Watelet & Levesque} Such as Watelet & Levesque 1791, p. 709.
\bibitem{Burns 2007} This may however increase the dangers during transportation by altering the resonance frequency and amplitude under vibration.
\bibitem{Burns 2007} Burns 2007, pp. 71ff.
\end{thebibliography}
sheets have been folded and hung to dry during the paper manufacturing process.\textsuperscript{50} They can frequently present conservation problems today (v. §IV.7 infra).

**IV.2.5 Watermarks**

Because the sheets were normally pasted down and covered completely with pastel, very few watermarks have been recorded.\textsuperscript{51}

**IV.2.6 Parchment**

Other supports have included vellum or parchment,\textsuperscript{52} ideal for the very smooth effects sought by a Liotard, and much favoured by German pastellists.\textsuperscript{53} In France, Pierre Bernard preferred it, and Lenoir and Perronneau occasionally used it; among the British, Hayter was a notable enthusiast. But most French pastellists\textsuperscript{54} disliked it, and one authority\textsuperscript{55} expressed its disapproval:

Cette sorte de canevas plaît aux personnes qui ont moins le vrai goût de l’art que celui du léché, & qui regardent une propreté froide comme le premier mérite d’une peinture. … La couleur ne mordant point sur le fond, reste moins épaisse, & plus faible, mais comme elle est aussi plus unie, elle plaît davantage aux mauvais connoisseurs; & c’est, pour les mauvais artistes, un avantage qui n’est point à dédaigner.

Either side could be used: normally the “dos”, or outer side, was used for pastel, while the “chair”, or inner side, was preferred for miniatures as it was smoother.\textsuperscript{56} But the smooth side could be used for pastel, provided it was prepared, usually with a razor or pumice stone, to provide the bite needed to allow the pastel to adhere. The chemistry of the bonding of pastel with animal skins differs from that with paper, and may contribute to the unique luminosity achieved with this support. It was essential to extract as much of the grease as possible before use (this problem was among Russell’s main objections, but Hayter seems to have had his vellum rolled repeatedly to render it “calcareous”, or chalky). Even so parchment was more prone to mildew than paper.

In order to stretch the parchment over the strainer, it is necessary to wet it, but important to wet only the chair side, as any water on the dos side will cause it to dry out and lose its special surface. Lalande describes the technique of moistening the reverse after the pastel has been sketched in, which he says refreshes the colour. Günther 1762 (§4) gives detailed instructions on how the skin should be nailed to the strained during the streetching process.

Liotard pioneered a technique that had previously been used in Swiss miniatures of painting, in strong primary colours, directly on the back, particularly to highlight faces. He used this also on his coloured chalk drawings, as did his brother Jean-Michel Liotard. It was used by at least one other pastellist in Liotard’s immediate circle,\textsuperscript{57} and again much later by John Downman.\textsuperscript{58}

Although the normal arrangement with parchment is to fix it directly to the strainer with no canvas or other lining, there are some (usually smaller) examples where a very fine sheet of vellum is

\textsuperscript{50} Burns 2007, p. 110.

\textsuperscript{51} See Burns 2007, pp. 107f, for an IV mark on J.21.2429 (Carriera); the same mark appears on J.656.111 (Saunders). J.113.185 (Ashfield) shows the arms of Amsterdam; J.224.102 (Chevalier) has the A and C of an Arches watermark; J.14.288 (Hoin) the remnants of D. & C. Blauw; J.64.1704 (Russell) is also watermarked.

\textsuperscript{52} It is practically impossible to tell the species of animal (cow, sheep or goat) from which vellum or parchment has been prepared from its appearance, particularly if the work has not been unframed. The term “parchment” is used to refer to either in the Dictionary.

\textsuperscript{53} See Günther 1762 (§§ 1–2), as noted above.

\textsuperscript{54} In view of the widespread errors in describing supports, both in sale catalogues and monographs, caution is recommended in generalising. La Tour, for example, is widely thought never to have used parchment; but one version of Dachery in Saint-Quentin (J.46.1583) was found to use that support when examined in 2006 by Florence Herrenschmidt.

\textsuperscript{55} Watelet & Lévesque 1791, p. 709.

\textsuperscript{56} See Lalande 1762. The English terms are more often hair and flesh.

\textsuperscript{57} An anonymous lady in a costume resembling those of the Bayreuth court, sold Frankfurt-am-Main, Döhritz, 8.XI.2014, Lot 202 (J.92.2064).

\textsuperscript{58} Roethlisberger 1990.
mounted directly on canvas, or with an intermediate layer of paper. In these cases the vellum does not stretch around the sides. Liotard uses this, sometimes covering the whole sheet of vellum with a further thick preparation so that its existence is hard to detect. Liotard frequently used several pieces of parchment, usually overlapping; the joins can cause problems.59 In one case, Perronneau reused an oval strainer on which he had already started, but abandoned, a pastel on paper marouflé sur toile, but stretched a piece of vellum over it and started afresh.60

IV.2.7 Copper plates

Even in the seventeenth century, experimentation abounded. Luttrell used copper plates prepared for mezzotint engraving as a support for pastel; Gerard de Lairesse (Het groot schilderboek, 1707) compared the use of pastels on parchment with the “black art” described in Alexander Browne’s Ars pictoria of 1669 in which white chalk is applied to a rocked copper plate covered with charcoal. This technique allowed Luttrell to obtain deeply saturated colours with graded half-tones that are pastel painting in every sense of the phrase.61 This was repeated on a far larger scale by Alexis Loir much later in his 1779 morceau de réception, the portrait of Clément Belle, where the rigidity of copper was perhaps thought to have conservation advantages over the flexibility of canvas. In practice these metal supports did not become widespread: one obvious disadvantage is the weight, which is likely to exacerbate shock levels during handling (the rigidity of the support may also compound these). There was also a problem of enhanced sensitivity to humidity, which could cause a reaction with the salts in certain pigments, and was prone to the formation of verdigris.62 Curiously wood panel, once the preferred support for oil painting, seems almost63 never to have been used, with or without preparation, despite the apparent advantage of rigidity.

IV.2.8 Prepared canvas

It is however possible to use pastels directly on specially prepared canvas, working on a coating of some form of gesso, perhaps ground marble and pumice stone or chalk and glue. Pastels made with this technique are often misdescribed in sales catalogues – for example, a number of works by Pillement, in some of which surface damage like the craquelure in oil paintings is the most obvious indication where the sides are not visible. Chaperon discusses this technique in his §323:

A Rome, quelques Peintres en pastel font enduire une toile avec de la colle de parchemin, dans laquelle ils ont jeté de la poudre de marbre & de la pierre ponce bien tamisées. Ils unissent ensuite ce canevas avec la pierre ponce pour emporter les inégalités. Ils ne couvrent la toile de cette espèce d’enduit, que lorsqu’elle est déjà tendue sur le chassis. Le pastel prend très-bien dessus, & cette méthode réussit au mieux.

La toile, au reste, peut être préparée de la même manière sans poudre de marbre ni de pierre-ponce, mais avec une forte couche de craye mêlée avec la colle.

Constant de Massoul likewise describes a preparation of “the best Flanders’ Glue, and Pumice-stone sifted through tiffany” boiled and applied to the cloth with a brush. These or similar recipes were known much earlier. In a number of cases (e.g. Bessborough, 1754, and Phipps, 1774) Liotard worked with such prepared canvases (v. §IV.10 infra). The technique had been pioneered in 1753 by Reifenstein, who visited Liotard in 1761. Liotard’s recipe for preparing paper similarly, including ground pumice stone and fish-glue, was provided in a manuscript found among his papers.

59 Gombaud, Sauvage & van Leeuwen 2014 considers one case (J.49.1292) where the two sheets of parchment are pasted to canvas.

60 J.582.1345, discovered underneath Mme Fuet (J.582.1340) by Valérie Luquet in 2017; see Perronneau 2017. The motivation may have been less economy than the difficulty of obtaining oval strainers locally.

61 He was able to do so using less gypsum than required by other supports, as we learn from a comment in the continuation of his Epitome (p. 66), probably written under his direction by his cousin Dorothy Wynne: “these cryoons formerly was made up with 3 parts plaister of paris, & now for his cryoons to work upon Copper: he makes but one part of plaister of paris.”

62 Watelet & Lévesque 1791, p. 710.

63 An exception is Liotard’s Vénus endormie (J.49.2574). Loir exhibited “Deux Têtes d’Enfans peintes en Pastel sur bois” in the Salon de 1759; while the Italian miniaturist Toppino advertised that he also painted in oil on copper and in pastel on wood (Journal de Rouen, 16.IV.1790).
Innovations continued into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with materials such as the “toiles anti-ponce” that received awards in the “universelle” and “départementale” exhibitions in the mid-1850s.

These preparations were intended for use with conventional pastels; it was also possible to prepare supports for use with special, self-fixing crayons (inv. §IV.7 infra).

**IV.3 Scientific investigations**

Only a limited amount of information about pastel pigments and materials has so far been collected by modern scientific analysis. Townsend 1998 provides a useful summary of the work until 1998, very little of which related to pre-1800 pastels; its discussion of Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) omits Pile & White 1995, where the technique is applied to a La Tour pastel. Stratis & Salvesen 2002 contained a number of relevant articles, and Перова 2006 should also be mentioned. Proceedings of the triennial meetings of ICOM have included a number of relevant papers. Of particular note among the recent literature are the studies by Wallert & al. 2016, Gombaud & Sauvage 2016, which analysed Liotard’s pastels, and Gombaud & al. 2017, which investigated pastels by La Tour and Valade using photography (within and beyond the visual spectrum), as well as Fourier transform infrared and Raman spectroscopy and enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA). X-ray fluorescence techniques used on the *Schokoladenmädchen* were reported in Liotard 2018. Mention should also be made of the survey of the Bordeaux pastels from various approaches in Birot & al. 2014. An earlier paper by Caggiani & Colomban 2011 analysed some much less important pastels (of doubtful authenticity) with non-invasive Raman spectroscopy without removing the pastels’ glazing; this was sufficient to detect the presence of chrome yellow, demonstrating that the works were later than had been thought. Inspection with infrared or ultraviolet light is rarely as informative as it can be for oil painting (where restorations painted over varnish show up as darker areas in UV); but UV can show the presence of lead white (used by many eighteenth century pastellists), which fluoresces white in UV, while zinc white (which should not be present in an eighteenth century pastel) fluoresces a characteristic green.

Caution is required where later restoration may have taken place. It can also be difficult to distinguish between pigments and the chemicals used in the manufacture or the preparation of supports, particularly where parchment is involved. One should also note the inherent bias in that Liotard’s work appears to have been subject to a disproportionate number of recent investigations; this artist was self-taught, and his practices may not reflect those of mainstream pastellists of his period.

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64 The synthesis of chromates of lead was published by Vauquelin in 1809. The same element, chromium, detected by x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy, led to the same conclusion for a 19th century pastiche of a woman in Louis XV costume in Bordeaux (Birot & al. 2014, fig. 3).

65 A rather curious report by Geraldine Keen appeared in *The Times* on 7.XII.1970 entitled “The philosophy of fakes: the story of a painting which has obstinately remained genuine in spite of rigorous scientific testing”, and concerned a pastel offered at Sotheby’s on 16.XII.1970 as a painting by Nattier, but which apparently was a pastel version of La Tour’s *Vue de Genève* (*J.49.2597*), but the dating of that picture, usually reported as c.1765, is uncertain; R&L note that it must have been drawn before 1776 when the observatory was built. Given Liotard’s propensity to work on pictures over a long time, even that date is not an absolute terminus ante quem for Liotard’s use of the pigment. However Sauvage & Gombaud 2015 also report both tin white and zinc white in the 1746 pastel of Bouer (*J.49.1158*). The presence of elemental zinc and tin in the National Gallery’s supposed Perronneau (*J.582.189*) doesn’t contribute to the evidence given the uncertainty over its authenticity.

66 Zinc white was first suggested as a pigment in 1782 by Guyton de Morveau; patents were issued in 1794, but the main use was after 1834. Chaperon 1788 (§68) discussed it, evidently as a very new invention. Wallert & al. 2016 (but delivered in 2013) note the earliest known use of tin white – in Liotard’s *Vue de Genève* (*J.49.2597*) – but the dating of that picture, usually reported as c.1765, is uncertain; R&L note that it must have been drawn before 1776 when the observatory was built. Given Liotard’s propensity to work on pictures over a long time, even that date is not an absolute terminus ante quem for Liotard’s use of the pigment. However Sauvage & Gombaud 2015 also report both tin white and zinc white in the 1746 pastel of Bouer (*J.49.1158*). The presence of elemental zinc and tin in the National Gallery’s supposed Perronneau (*J.582.189*) doesn’t contribute to the evidence given the uncertainty over its authenticity.

67 Burns 2007, p. 118f thus explains the presence of zinc white in a Rosalba pastel (Philip Duke of Wharton).
IV.4 The ingredients: pigments, binders and fillers

Although natural chalks (primarily black, white or sanguine) have been used since art began, instructions for making pastel, including the specific use of chalk or white lead both to modify the hues of natural minerals and to soften the stick to permit tonal rather than graphic application, date back to the late sixteenth century; the earliest surviving recipe is that of Petrus Gregorious of Lyon (1574). The difficulties with natural chalk are both the restricted palette and its unsuitability for colouring broad areas: its texture ensures that it is essentially a graphic technique for producing lines. “Crayons de couleurs”, or coloured chalks, allow other pigments to be bound together with a vehicle such as wax or oil (they are in effect artificial, reconstituted chalks), but, while extending the range of tonality beyond natural stones, they are still better suited to drawing than painting.

The true innovation of pastel is its soft consistency, which permits the artist to create broad expanses of graded and modelled colour. To achieve this, three ingredients are required: the ground pigment itself; a second, uncoloured (white) material such as kaolin or gypsum that can also be ground, and which bulks out (and reduces the colour saturation of) the pigment, known as the filler (or extender; “charge” in French); and some kind of adhesive substance, called the binder (“liant” in French), such as gum or glue. The principal objective was to achieve the softness required to give adhesion, as the basic gypsum/clay aggregate produced sticks which scratched the paper, and various forms of white chalk seem to have been preferred.

While it may seem simple to combine these, in practice there were huge difficulties in producing the desired properties. Ideally artists needed a set of pastels with uniform consistency, soft enough to paint areas rather than merely scratch lines, but with good adherence, light fastness and chemical inertness (some well known pigments reacted with other substances, while others oxidised rapidly). Some binders were too brittle, others were ineffective. The need to maintain uniformity of these properties throughout a set of crayons with hues ranging from the palest to the darkest was the challenge that is discussed again and again throughout the literature from Norgate to Constant de Massoul. It is unnecessary to summarise all the approaches; what is clear is how much commitment is required if the artist is to make these himself, and, as a number of authors mention, the commercially available crayons could not always be trusted to have followed the diligent stages in washing and purifying that, for example, Chaperon insists were required to remove potentially noxious impurities. (Impurities could also arise from ill-prepared supports or even from sweat from the pastellist’s fingers.) While these authors had every motive to exaggerate the hazards, it is notable that La Tour described a technique for removing salt traces from chalks and pastel using a knife and even a hot iron passed close to the pastel.

IV.4.1 Pigments

The pigments themselves are the same as those used in oil or watercolour painting, and are selected with exactly the same criteria of stability and colour-fastness. They are ground using the same equipment – Chaperon begins his treatise by describing the *porphyre*, or slab of porphyry, on which this is done.

Pigments may be animal, vegetable or mineral, and may occur naturally or be the product of the laboratory (e.g. Prussian blue, from c.1704; but the vast majority of synthetic pigments were created

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68 But other colours occur naturally, including a wide range of yellow ochres and even blue: Cennini (1857, p. 29) described finding natural seams in the Colle di Valdelsa: “io vidi vene di più ragioni colori: cioè ocrea, sinopia scura e chiara, azzurro e bianco”. See also Burns 2007, fig. 11 et passim.

69 The matter is discussed at some length in Burns 2002 and Burns 2007; see also Sauvage 2010. Artificial chalks may be further subdivided into natural, but reconstituted, chalks; and synthetic chalks, where the pigment is a chemical produced in the laboratory.

70 Dossie 1758, p. 181ff is one of a good many explanations of the challenge. Günther 1762 (§13), however, rejected the idea that all the crayons in a set must have the same hardness.

after the eighteenth century). Although ill-chosen materials will fade in sunlight (particularly vulnerable are the yellow and red lakes), most pastels do not in fact deteriorate when displayed sensibly; moreover the surface of the paper is less exposed when covered by pigment than in a watercolour drawing, so disintegration of the support through bleaching is rarely a problem (see §V.6.1 infra).

The treatises contain innumerable lists of pigments which there is no need to repeat here. Even the seventeenth century manuals contained not only numerous ingredients, but suggested combinations (in some cases further refined into suitable mixtures for different degrees of “shadowing”). But it is notable that Chaperon confined his requirements to fewer than a dozen essentials. These are the basic stocks he recommended, including their modern names and colour index numbers:72

6 pounds of blanc de Troies, white chalk (at 1 sou per pound, Paris prices in 1788);
1 pound of ocre jaune, yellow ochre [natural yellow iron oxide, PY43] (12s./lb);
1 pound of ocre de rue, brown ochre [darker iron oxide PY 43, or possibly raw sienna PBr 7] (16s./lb);
4 oz. stil-de-grain, yellow or gold Dutch pink [a fugitive yellow lake made from buckthorn berries from Avignon] (£1 10s./lb);
6 oz. cinabre, cinnabar (in stone form, to avoid being supplied with minium) [vermilion, mercuric sulphide, PR 106] (£8/lb);
2 drachms of carmin, carmine [made from cochineal NR 4] (£24/oz);
3 oz. of laque, fine carmine lake [a resin with a deep brownish red colour, now known as shellac NR 4] (£2 10s./oz);
4 oz. bleu de Prusse, Prussian blue [ferric-ferrocyanide, discovered by Diesbach in Berlin, 1704; PB 27] (£2/oz);
1 pound of terre d’Ombre, raw umber [PBr 7, found in Italy or the Cévennes] (10s./lb);
2 pounds of terre de cologne, Cassel earth [similar to Vandyke brown, a deep, almost violet brown PBr 8] (£1/lb);
2 pounds of noire d’ivoire, ivory black, made from charred bones, mixed with wood charcoal [PBk 9] (£1 10s./lb).

Note that Chaperon included no green pigment, recommending instead that yellow and blue pigments be mixed. Green earth, like Bremen blue, was readily available, but to be avoided for pastels. Green was in fact a notoriously difficult colour for pastellists: the yellow/blue mixes often combined good blue pigments with fugitive yellow lakes, so that greens turn to blue over time (see §V.6.1 infra). Much of Bernard Stoupan’s fame rested on his discovery of a stable green for pastel. Lowitz also claimed to have done so.

Chaperon insists that this palette is all that is necessary – although he goes on to describe many other pigments which were also available – advising that (his §46) “L’opulence ne consiste pas à posséder beaucoup, mais à savoir user de ce qu’on a. Le pastel est riche avec peu.”

Note should be made also of the occasional use of grisaille pastel, works executed entirely in black, grey or white chalks, often on blue paper. The technique was much favoured by F. R. West and his pupils at the Dublin school, but it was also employed by artists as different as Joseph Wright and Fragonard. Whether the materials they used were strictly pastel or simply various kinds of soft black chalk is not always easy to determine. Pillement specialised in blue monochrome pastel.

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72 See, for example, Mayer 1991.
73 “gros”, or one-eighth of an ounce [3.824g].
It should be noted that the manufacture of pigments was a specialised business. In the 1805 *Almanach du commerce de Paris*., 56 firms of makers and vendors were listed: of these four specialised in Prussian blue, three in other blues, and four in blacks.

**IV.4.2 Fillers**

Although tobacco pipe clay (sepiolite, closely related to kaolin and to fuller’s earth, although technically distinct from each) and gypsum (plaster of Paris, made from ground alabaster) are the best known, a number of other materials were used, including lead white (or lead carbonate hydroxide), ceruse (a form of lead white synthesized by exposing lead to vinegar), chalk, talc and starch. For Dossie 1758 (followed by the anonymous authors of the *Secrets concernant les arts et métiers*, 1790), pearl white, or “blanc de perle” (pulverised mother-of-pearl, containing bismuth nitrate), was superior to all these. Plaster of Paris is too hard, lead white too brittle, while pipe clay seems to drain the life out of colours. Spanish white (a mixture of chalk and calcinated alum) was useful with animal or vegetable pigments (which were more prone than minerals to react adversely with chalk).

**IV.4.3 Binders**

Petrus Gregorius listed a number of binders, including fish glue, gum arabic, fig juice and whey (which he preferred). Dossie preferred gum tragacanth to gum arabic, because it mixed better and avoided the formation of a crust on the outside. Early on substances such as ale-wort, gum tragacanth, fish-glue, oatmeal, candied sugar and honey were added to the possible choices. According to Hayter, Morland used gin to make his crayons, which were widely considered excellent. Some of these ingredients were tried fresh, others fermented or rotten: the essential chemical characteristic is that they are all polysaccharides, or carbohydrate polymers, whose long molecular chains provided the required bonding to hold the crayons together in usable form. The binder is not supposed to act as a fixative to provide the adhesion to the paper, but it is difficult to believe that they play no role in this function.

Olive or linseed oils were occasionally tried but these do not normally have the drying and adhesive properties required (one suggestion was to dip crayons formed with plaster of Paris in these oils to remedy its excessive cohesiveness). Some fillers such as tailor’s chalk (talc) had binding properties, while some pigments naturally carried their own gum, in which case water alone might be used to form the crayons.

**IV.5 Optical properties**

With pastels, a “pigment volume concentration” of up to 90% can be achieved, while oil painting typically produces less than half this level. And importantly the vehicle – linseed oil – that surrounds the same particles of pigment in an oil painting, making up the difference in the concentration, alters the refractive index and reflectivity of the pigment, providing a far less immediate visual effect. This is how pastel achieves its uniquely matt but brilliant impact. The role of the filler in providing a uniform texture is often overlooked.

The unusual optical properties of pastel have long been evident. In an early scientific treatise, abbé Noël-Antoine Pluche compared the reflections of light from a clock, a candle, a sheet of glass and

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74 Pilc & White 1995 (p. 83) reported only gum, and not honey, in the investigation of La Tour’s *Henry Darrow*.

75 See Burns 2007, p. xix.

76 Carriera is said to have preferred it to gum arabic, but this seems to read too much into her letter to Giovambattista Casotti of 26.IV.1718 where she writes “Sappia dunque che quelli che pretendono haver cognizione per fabricarne non li legano con goma, ma con gesso da sartore o scagliola”: this suggests that she was unaware of best manufacturing practice, which may account for why the pastels she tried to make were too hard, and why she relied on obtaining pastels from Rome or (better) Paris.

77 Lavédrine & al. 2009, p. 42. Good accounts of technical aspects of pastels will be found in Perova 2006 and Shelley 2011.
a pastel, noting that the image of the pastel was “nette, parce qu’il donne son propre arrangement à une grande quantité de lumière réfléchée.”78 In a completely different experiment, pastel was enlisted to demonstrate the properties of primary colours: pastels crayons of matching intensities of yellow, red and blue were each ground finely. Nine parts of blue and eight of red produced a violet; with the addition of seven parts yellow, the mixture became grey, not black, because of the inclusion of white binder which prevented the mutual cancellation expected from “primitive colours”.79

IV.6 Toxicity

There is relatively little information on the toxicity of pastel pigments,80 which seems to have been considerably less of an issue for pastellists than for oil painters. Chardin is said to have turned to pastel late in life because of an intolerance of oil painting; the same reason is sometimes given for La Tour’s preference much earlier (although the evidence is unclear, and this may perhaps be no more than speculation).

Treatises on oil painting such as Watin’s L’Art du peintre, doréur, vernisseur… (Paris, 1773), which included a lengthy chapter on “Observations sur les maladies appelées Coliques des Peintres, & précautions à prendre pour s’en garantir lorsqu’on emploie les couleurs”, revealed an awareness of the serious hazard run by those working with heavy metal compounds (Tronchin had written a treatise on it). Yet pastellists who worked with materials such as lead white and who habitually sweetened their work with their fingers (which oil painters did not) must have ingested significant levels of these poisons. It is impossible to say if these played any role in the maladies of artists such as Francis Cotes.

Those involved in the grinding of pigments (whether to be mixed with oil or made into pastels) faced more serious hazards. The Académie de Saint-Luc and the company of marchands-épiciers were long in dispute over the right to supply artists’ materials (see §IV.9 infra); one of the arguments raised by the Académie was the toxicity of the pigments which were ground by hand. On 23.X.1775 Jean-François Chevalier applied to comte d’Angiviller for a reward of 3600 livres for designing a “moulin à broyer les couleurs”; his application was supported by hospital reports of 272 admissions in the preceding 21 months.

IV.7 Compression

A vital technique in the use of pastels is how to get the material to stick to the surface. Although fixing methods (v. infra) were available and occasionally used, some basic form of adhesion is necessary before there is anything to fix; and for many eighteenth century pastels, this was the only form used. It relied on the compression of the pastel sticks into the support, and may have been facilitated by natural chemical bonding that ensued from this process. Fibres from roughened paper, natural substances in parchment etc. may all play a role, as perhaps the binders with which the pastel sticks were composed.

As early as 1628 Norgate discussed three ways of using “drye colours”. Noting what has become the standard form of using pastel in the form of sticks made of bound pigment, he also describes

78 Le Spectacle de la nature…, 1747, V, p. 563. Many of the plates were provided by the pastellist Madeleine Basseporte (q.v.). A portrait of Pluche was engraved after Blakey (q.v.).


80 Guides for current studio practice recommend elaborate precautions, including use of respirators and protective clothing, as well as ventilation and use of high-efficiency particulate arrestance (“HEPA”) vacuum cleaners; these would not have been available in the eighteenth century. Among modern studies may be cited Woodhall Stopford’s “Risk assessment for exposure to respirable dusts generated from the use of chalks and pastels” issued in 2003 by Duke University Medical Center. It examined dust production during use of pastels and use of vacuum cleaners, and estimated that pastel artists would be exposed to an average inhalation dose of respirable dust of 3 μg/day. The main concern in the report was inhalation of cadmium, which was a sufficiently small percentage of the dust to represent a low risk. The element is unlikely to have been present in pre-1800 pastels. But lead, which is not mentioned in the Duke University study, was widely present before 1800, and could be ingested orally.
his preferred method involved using paper prepared with a flesh-tone wash (other writers describe this as applied with a wet sponge). The one he disliked, used by Dumonstier (and presumably Clouet and others), involved simply applying ground pigments with a stump of some form:

[Dumonstier's] manner is to rubb in several Collours (being first reduced into powders and kept in several little boxes or papers) upon the paper which is commonly White. this hee doth with certayne stubbed pencells, the ends filled with Cotten or bumbast. His worke is reasonable neate, but not lasting, there being noething to bind on the Colours, which commonly faules off, and the worke lost or defaced in a shorte tyme after.

This method of applying ground pigment continued to play a (small) role in pastel. On the evidence of the box containing stumps and bottles of ground pigment it has been suggested81 that the early nineteenth century pastellist Mrs Cay made her pastels exclusively with this technique. But it seems more plausible that she also used conventional sticks kept in another box which (like almost all pastellists’ boxes: but $v$. Chapter VI infra) has been lost; indeed these bottles may contain the waste from sharpening pastel crayons (v. §.VI.1 infra). The anonymous pastel treatise known as “Bouter” (1708) recommends that a compartment in a pastellist’s box be reserved for bottles of ground pigment to be applied in this way as part of the technique, while the Secrets concernant les art et métiers, par une société d’artistes (Paris, 1791) regards stump as a method for applying colours which are too expensive to make up into sticks.82 Watelet & Lévesque 1791 (p. 710) note either the separate compartment, or separate box, for these powdered colours with a collection of paper stumps; and among the applications they suggest blending over a first coat of normal pastel where the exact tint sought was not available made up. Sharples, and no doubt other artists using the physionotrace and similar mechanical drawing devices, seeking to obtain particular precision with profiles, found the stump technique useful for making the sharp-edged outlines.

When using conventional pastels various methods of compression were possible. Norgate comments “with your several Pastills Rubb in the Colours. and with your Finger end sweeten and mix them together, driving them one into an other after the Fassion of the Oyle paynters”, and it is clear that the finger remained the tool of choice for pastellists throughout the eighteenth century. In Caroline Luise’s account of Liotard’s methods, the only tool allowed to compress the pastel was the pastel stick itself. (The porte-crayon was not used with pastel: $v$. §.VI.1 infra). To produce “extremely soft or delicate” effects with his wax crayons, Thomas Keyse recommended the use of a “Glass Instrument or Burnisher”, but this was not in use with conventional pastels. Carrington Bowles suggests that “Having thus outlined your Object completely [with chalk], the Crayons may be rubbed in; but Care is required concerning the proper Colours; then soften or blend them together with your Finger or Fitch.” The use of leather stumps or paper rolls is less clear, although during the late eighteenth century the technique became very popular in chalk drawing: as Mme de Genlis noted,

On dessinait jadis sans employer l’estompe, et il fallait beaucoup de main et d’habitude pour bien faire les ombres; maintenant l’estompe épargne toute peine, et l’on n’oublie jamais la manière de s’en servir. La peinture en pastel était une espèce de travail à l’estompe.

One of the problems is that stumps can only be used for a single colour if pigment transfer, with unfortunate muddying results, is to be avoided, and their main use may have been for laying in backgrounds in pastels. While Russell is cited (Shelley 2005) as the authority for the use of leather stump, in fact he recommends its use only for this purpose. Elsewhere the finger is to be used in sweetening; and in important areas such as the eye, “it will be a good general rule for the Student to use his Crayon in sweetening as much, and his finger as little as possible.” Chaperon is clear (p. 224f): “L’on appuye même un peu le petit doigt sur l’ouvrage, après avoir appliqué le pastel sur le

81 Burns & Roy 2014. The question could be resolved by seeing whether any binders are present in the finished pastels she made; this investigation has so far not been made.

82 Dossie 1758, pp. 194, 200, confirms this, in particular for carmine.
canevas pour l’y faire mieux adhérer. On s’essuie les doigts, on prend un autre crayon”,
emphasising the importance of ensuring no contamination between colours.
It is by no means clear that increased compression resulted in better adhesion. Pastels by Liotard,
whose uniform flatness was achieved with severe compression,\(^{83}\) nevertheless suffer particularly
from losses.

**IV.8 Fixing**
The major problem was how to fix the pictures: pastel is no more than dust rubbed into paper,
and it will fall off if shaken too vigorously. Mechanical bonding with fibres in the paper and
chemical reactions between ingredients in the support or the crayons, perhaps including the pastel
binders, were key to the survival of most pastels, and the initial compression when the sticks were
applied was a vital technique for pastellists to master. But its conspicuous fragility led to constant
demands for new methods and processes of fixing pastel; during the second half\(^{84}\) of the eighteenth
century such “discoveries” abound.\(^{85}\)
The basic requirements for a successful method were set out succinctly in the prospectus\(^{86}\) for
Abraham Fischer’s method:

1°. Que la maniere de le fixer soit si sure qu’aucune partie de la Peinture ne soit altérée ou perdue. 2°. Qu’après
la fixation les couleurs conservent la vivacité & la veludité qu’elles ont eues auparavant. 3°. Que la Peinture soit
si bien fixée, qu’on puisse la transporter avec sureté par mer & par terre. 4°. Que les couleurs ne palissent, ne
crevent, ni se détachent &c. 5°. Que si ce dernier cas arrive par quelque accident, l’endroit gâté puisse facilement
être refait & rétabli.

A longer, historical account of these developments is given in the essay on Loriot, Pellechet, Jurine:
the secrets of pastel.\(^{87}\) Perhaps surprisingly the main problem was less the selection of the fixing
chemical (which in almost all recipes turned out to be a mixture of fish glue and alcohol) than the
choice of a safe method by which to apply it to completed pastels. (It is sometimes overlooked
that fixing was also used by artists themselves\(^{88}\) as an intermediate layer during the drawing process,
allowing further application of pastel which would otherwise become muddy.)

Direct immersion (although occasionally recommended, particularly if done very rapidly\(^{89}\)) simply
resulted in water marks and more extensive damage, particularly since some pigments would lose
adhesion. The fixative could not be brushed on directly, as this would result in mechanical abrasion
of the delicate surface. Chaperon’s preferred method was to cover the surface of the pastel with a
thin silk cloth of tiffany and to apply the liquor through this.

The celebrated process invented by the engineer Loriot by 1753,\(^{90}\) and which seems to have been
considerably more successful than any of the other processes, created a fine spray, using a metal
rod drawn against the bristles of a stiff brush dipped in the liquor and held near the pastel; this

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\(^{83}\) Shelley 2002, p. 6, fig. 1.5.

\(^{84}\) Burns 2007 traces interest to the salon commentaries of Le Blanc and La Font de Saint-Yenne in 1747. But the concern is evident implicitly from
earlier texts, and was presented as well known in Charles-Étienne Pesselier’s Lettre au sujet du portrait de Sayd-Pacha, (1742, p. 14), where the artist’s
work was described as “périssable”.

\(^{85}\) Among the innumerable new crayons and processes, many discussed in the pages of the Académie’s Procès-verbaux; one may cite the development
of encaustic painting, often confused with pastel (\textit{v.} Vincent de Montpetit) and the pastels \textit{à l’huile}, in which Roslin and Bachaumont played a part,
but which were probably due to Pellechet and his daughter Mme Danican (Procès-verbaux, IX, 176).

\(^{86}\) Journal des sçavans, XLIX, I.XI.1770, pp. 253–62. Good accounts are to be found in Lalande, Chaperon etc.

\(^{87}\) In the ESSAYS section. The Index of inventors, writers and SUPPLIERS contains a more complete list of all these pioneers than is needed here.

\(^{88}\) As Shelley 2005 has demonstrated with La Tour and Perronneau.

\(^{89}\) For example, Le Pileur d’Apigny 1779. Mayerne and Hoogstraeten (see Burns 2007, p. 147f) described similar processes for chalk drawings that
are unlikely to have been suitable for pastels. There is an excellent survey of various methods of fixing in the anonymous 1790 Secrets concernant les
art et métiers, par une Société d’artistes, Paris, 1790; this includes a method of rapid immersion for no longer than a “coup d’œil.”

\(^{90}\) Loriot’s invention was certified by Lépicé on behalf of the Académie Royale in a letter printed in the Mémoires de France, s.1754, pp. 156ff.
required patience and a great deal of skill to avoid spattering the pastel with drops large enough to cause staining. It was copied by others but with little success.91

The principe di Sansvero developed a method (which he communicated to Lalande and which then appeared in the Encyclopédie in which the liquor was painted on the back of the canvas and soaked through. A letter published by the Rennes magistrate Charles-Élisabeth Maugé in the Journal oeconomique (1770) simply talks of brushing the liquor onto the back of the paper, and seems not to have envisaged pastels on paper already “marouflé” on canvas. His liquor was just candied sugar dissolved in vinegar or brandy, the former preferred if the work was on strong paper of the kind used by engineers to make plans, the latter if on the thinner paper normally used for pastels.

The weaknesses with all these methods were widely discussed.92 The fish-glue which most recipes employed would not easily be absorbed (the reason why alcohol was added was to facilitate absorption, but even so the effect was not uniform between different colours); any liquid coating changed the optical properties of the pigments, and resulted in perceptible darkening (despite claims to the contrary). But this effect itself was not uniform: mid-tones darkened more than others, and the effect was to destroy colour balance. Since one of the great merits claimed for pastel over oil painting was that the medium did not have to dry, so that the artist could see his final result while he was working, this was a vital disadvantage, and one which could not easily be allowed for in the choice of colours (as one source recommended). Occasionally a chemical reaction might occur between the fixing liquor and a specific crayon: this could explain the rust-coloured tide marks found on some fixed works. More seriously the methods all, to varying degrees, could result in debonding particular pigments (lakes in particular were vulnerable), and many of the descriptions acknowledged that the process had to be followed by rubbing the finger over all the affected areas to rebond the particles. Such interventions, particularly when the fixing was not carried out by the artist himself, cannot have been satisfactory.

Other fixing methods depended on using special materials to make the pastel in the first place.

A number of misconceptions about fixing arise in the literature. Among these is the idea that Liotard fixed his pastels: it appears from the much-quoted 28.VI.1763 letter93 to Lord Bessborough about this that the opposite was the case (he was recommending Jurine if Bessborough wanted to fix the pastels Liotard had already supplied). Further, in Liotard’s London 1773 exhibition, one item was explicitly described as “en pastel fixé”,94 while the list sent to d’Angiviller 8.V.1785 mentions two more, suggesting that his other pastels were not fixed. Significantly these included Apollon et Daphné and Les Trois Grâces, his two earliest pastels, done in Rome in 1736–37; the third was a lost “copie peinte en pastel fixé” of Isabelle de Bourbon-Parme, presumably, but not certainly, autograph. The scientific investigations95 so far have not found conclusive evidence of the presence of the standard ingredients of fixing mixtures in Liotard’s pastels.

There are numerous references in the literature to La Tour having invented a method of fixing. In the posthumous sale of the pastels (mostly now found in Saint-Quentin) announced by his brother, the preface states that “Tous les Tableaux en pastel sont fixes par l’Auteur, et sont d’une fraîcheur

91 Bernard Stoupan of Lausanne seems to have developed a method also involving an atomised solution, but his mixture used egg white instead of fish-glue. We have only Reifenstein’s report to Caroline Luise von Baden (v.1761) that he had seen a pastel by Handmann fixed with it.
92 For example, in Watelet & Lévesque 1791, p. 710f.
93 The essential part of the text was printed in Loche 1980, p. 201, and published in full by Anderson 1994 without it seems acknowledgement of the prior appearance.
94 This is in the French version of the catalogue only, not reported in R&L.
95 Schultz & Petersen 2011, which presents the results of enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay applied to several Liotard pastels in the Rijksmuseum (Les Trois Grâces among them). I am grateful to Cécile Gombaud and Leila Sauvage for drawing this paper to my attention. Practical problems with this approach include the degradation of the proteins over time and the difficulty of distinguishing fixatives from the possible use of fish-glue in preparing the surface before painting (a practice of Liotard and others) or even its incorporation in the pastel sticks themselves (as in the earliest recipe for pastel by Petrus Gregorius, and later treatises such as the anonymous Arts companion, or A new assistant for the ingenious, 1749). A further complication is that fixatives could be applied from the front or back of the work, or as an intermediate layer.
comme s’ils venaient d’être peints”, but that statement should be read with caution in view of the prejudice work in pastel encountered at that stage. Visual evidence from a number of his portraits (e.g. the autoportrait and Restout at Saint-Quentin) reveal tide marks indicative of local fixing. The preparation with egg yolk described in his letter to Belle de Zuylen of 1770 has been found in several works. An investigation of his portrait of the princesse de Rohan revealed the presence of sturgeon glue, suggesting that he had discovered the essential ingredient of Loriot’s technique far earlier than thought hitherto. He certainly experimented repeatedly, and not always satisfactorily; but at one stage his dissatisfaction with these experiments was such that he seems to have resorted to sandwiching his pastels between two sheets of glass, sealed together. No examples of these have survived.

George Romney was yet another artist who attempted to develop a satisfactory fixing method; but found it “attended with so much difficulty, that he was not tempted to make any more experiments.”

For others the search for a means of fixing pastel was misconceived:

Nous avouons que cette recherche ne nous sourit guère, et qu’un pastel fixé par une substance gommeuse, ou par tout autre procédé qui peut avoir l’apparence du vernis nous semble un contre-sens, presqu’une profanation. Izrez-vous enlever son duvet à la pêche, et sur la joue d’une fraîche jeune fille; mettrez-vous un enduit qui détruise le velouté dont la nature l’a revêtue? Non certainement; et bien alors comment pouvez-vous désirer trouver une préparation qui enlève au pastel sa plus charmante imitation de la nature, c’est-à-dire son velouté, son flou, son vaporeux, ce duvet soyeux et léger qui nous charme et nous plaît dans le pastel, parce qu’il nous transmet l’une des qualités les plus attrayantes de la jeunesse et de la beauté.

A succinct summary of the problem was provided by the poet Ezra Pound in a letter to a friend: “great hartists dont like it cause it bitches the colour.”

IV.9 Suppliers and costs

In view of the difficulties and complexities of the manufacturing process set out in so many of the treatises, it is hardly surprising that many pastellists preferred to buy ready made crayons from reputable sources. These were available from quite early: for example, Ralph Thoresby noted in his diary in 1677 that he obtained a set of sixty crayons for 2s. 6d. in the Strand in London. A number of these suppliers are listed in the Index of inventors, writers and SUPPLIERS, and no doubt represent only a small proportion of those sources. Biographies of some of the major names will also be found among the artist articles, including one on Bernard Stoupan, the supplier based in Vevay, near Lausanne whose fame extended throughout Europe.

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96 Gombaud & al. 2017 found indications in pastels by La Tour and Valade at the Nationalmuseum, and cited a similar discovery by Benoit de Tapol in the pastel of Laideguive (J.46.1969). See also Shelley 2005.

97 Gombaud & al. 2017. Unless the fixative was added in a later restoration campaign; the pastel was transferred to a new support at some stage. Similar investigations of pastels Liotard is known to have fixed (Schultz & Petersen 2011) did not reveal any surviving traces.

98 Numerous sources; see Watelet & Lévesque 1791, loc. cit.

99 This may however have been the technique used by the Portugese artist José Malhoa (1855–1933), eleven of whose pastels were studied with a view to reframing by Francence Figueira & Ria Fontes. “An evaluation of three mounting conditions for pastels”, ICOM Committee for Conservation, 12th triennial meeting, Lyon, 1999, preprints, 1, pp. 52–54, who concluded that the method of encapsulation between glass is “not necessarily the worst option”.

100 John Romney, Memoires de la vie et works of George Romney…, London, 1830, p. 123.


102 Letter to Viola Baxter Jordan, 5.V.1933 (Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, YCAL.MS 175).

103 But the numbers are unlikely to have been great at any stage. Even in 1850, Guillaumin’s Dictionnaire universel… stated that there were only eight makers in Paris.
The first pastels Rosalba Carriera saw were Flemish, but although the colours were good, they were too hard, so she preferred those she obtained from Rome; soon after she found those made in Paris best of all, and she engaged the help of friends such as Nicolas Vleughels to obtain them. There were difficulties however in sending even the crayons by post owing to their fragility: in a letter of 28.X.1718 Crozat wrote that he would send the next box lined with cotton; he suggested that it might be easier to send her the recipe so that she could make her own: “je ne croy pas que cela soit bien difficile” (it appears however that Carriera disagreed). The problem persisted: in a letter of 13.V.1745 Mariette apologised for having sent her “des pastels tout brisés et nullement dignes d’être mis entre vos mains.” He made up by sending her a range of pastels, each individually wrapped, including a number of novel colours. In a letter of 2.IV.1735 from cavalieri Gabburri, it emerges that Carriera obtained pastels from Paris to share with the young Florentine pastellist Giovanna Messini. A different problem arose when Saint-Non sent a set of pastels to Algarotti in Parma, the box broke in transit, spreading pastel dust over the duc de Parme’s latest Parisian perruques.

Pastels were available ready made, even in Venice, but at a price. According to Casanova, the young but impoverished contessa Lorenza Maddalena Bonafede showed him her drawings c.1740; when he asked why she didn’t take up pastel painting, she explained that a single box cost the prohibitive amount of 2 zecchini. Günther (1762, §26) offered boxes from 2 Thaler upwards, the basic selection including the colours shown in the two tables in his book; larger boxes were proportionately more expensive, but more so if they included quantities of the purest and most expensive colours – “Carmin, Ultramarin, Chinesisch Roth, Lack” etc.

Although it is unclear whether commercially produced or made by the artist, “cent cinquante douzaines de crayons, de pastels de diverses couleures” appeared in Nanteuil’s posthumous inventory of 1678, valued at six sols la douazaine, or 45 livres in total. Another indication of price was from the detailed inventory of the firm of Mesard in Paris prepared when the father Denis transferred the business to his son Jean in 1751. Although not specialists in pastel (they were better known as printsellers and publishers), they held six “boetes a pastel asortie” valued at 8 livres each, and “trois cent crayons de pastel a deux sols chaque”, 30 livres in total. (Presumably the boxes held at least 80 sticks.) The father was described as a “marchand épicier” and “maître peintre”. Of course Mesard were probably retailers rather than manufacturers of pastel, a conclusion one can infer from the posthumous inventory of the luxury stationer René Coiffier who died in 1810: despite extensive laboratories and equipment for the production of his special “crayons noir de velours”, when it came to pastels, his stock (which included “quatres boîtes de pastels de differentes grandeurs”, Fr10; various “étuis à pastels”, one holding 50 crayons (Fr4), one 25 and three a dozen each) was evidently bought in, as he owed “Mad' Giraud pour fourniture de pastels” Fr19.75. He also stocked “22 toiles à pastels de toutes grandeurs” (Fr4).

According to the Dicionnaire universel de commerce, d’histoire naturelle et des arts…, 1742, coll. 1133, “Ce sont les Marchands Épiciers, qui vendent ces Couleurs, soit en gros, soit en detail; soit toutes broyées, & mêlées avec de l’huile, soit en pierre, en pain, ou en poudre, suivant leurs qualités.” Several editions of a Catalogue des marchands épiciers in Paris were issued by Prault (e.g. 1759, 1765).

Caroline Luise’s agent in Paris, Pierre-Philippe Maehrondt (1710–1794), described in a letter of 10.III.1753 a visit from the pastel-maker Moule (probably Louis Moullé (1719–1797), marchand

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104 See the letter to Giovan Battista Casotti of 20.IV.1718 as well as earlier letters of 5.VII.1704, from Felice Ramelli, and those from 1705 on from Christian Cole.

105 His letter to her from Modena, 16.XI.1712.

106 Bédarida 1927, pp. 258, 277.

107 Mémoires de Casanova, ed. La Pléiade, 1958, I, p. 149; original manuscript, BNF, folio 107r ff.

108 Published by Loriquet in 1884; reprinted in Adamczak 2011, p. 314.
épicier of 43 rue Saint-Honoré) in which he bought for the Markgräfin a box of 202 assorted pastels for 84 livres; they were vetted by Perronneau.\footnote{Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe FA 5 A Corr 43, 33; transcription in Perronneau chronological table of documents.}

A particularly valuable document is the posthumous inventory carried out several years after the death of the first wife of Jean-Nicolas Vernezobre \((q.v.)\).\footnote{AN MC CXXII/711, 11.III.1760.} This provided a valuation of his stock, undertaken by the pastellists Jean-Baptiste Lefèvre and Claude Pougin de Saint-Aubin: there were 6534 “crayons en pastels a cinquante livres les cahier prisés entre les boîtes dans lesquels sont rangées”, valued in total at 330 livres 14 sols. It also provided an invaluable list of two dozen debtors who owed relatively small amounts for crayons they had purchased (about half were already known as pastellists, and several others known hitherto only as artists in other media). A smaller number of creditors include marchand de couleurs.

Boxes even of used pastels were of value. In the posthumous sale of Gabriel Huquier \((9.XI.1772 & seq.)\), Lot 1137, “Une boîte renfermant des crayons de Pastel” fetched 7 livres, higher than many other lots.

The costs of transporting boxes of pastels was not insignificant: in Joseph Vernet’s notes of daily expenses he recorded\footnote{Lagrange 1864, p. 397.} \((1766)\) “Ce que j’ai dépensé pour le port de la caisse du pastel que M. Brevet m’a envoyé de La Rochelle est 4 l. 03 s.”. Earlier the royal maître à dessiner Jacques-Augustin de Silvestre disclosed to Desfriches (letter of 26.V.1763) that it cost 3 livres to send to Orléans the two boxes with a complete set of Stoupan’s manufacture costing themselves 52 livres; they were imported from Lausanne by the concierge de l’Académie, Michel Chipault, dit Philpault.

One advantage of making one’s own pastels was control over the ingredients; adulteration was no doubt a problem where expensive materials were involved. Thus when Christian Cole was in Rome in 1705 ordering pastels for Rosalba Carriera “of the most beautiful blue, yellow and red”; as they were expensive, he insisted on their being made in his presence.

Henrietta Johnston’s difficulties in obtaining pastels in America in the first decades of the eighteenth century were documented in correspondence; the availability of materials of the right consistency may not only have limited her output but also may have affected what she did produce. When half a century later Copley started to use pastel, he wrote to Liotard in an attempt to secure a supply of Swiss pastels, but seems to have contented himself with those obtained from London. Francis Hopkinson had the distinction of employing both Franklin and Jefferson in Paris to send him pastels.

A letter of 1802 from Philipp Otto Runge, a former pupil of Juel, in Dresden informed his brother that he was about to despatch a parcel of pastels for Juel who was unable to obtain them in Lübeck or Kiel.\footnote{Philipp Otto Runge, \textit{Hinterlassene Schriften}, Herausgegeben von dessenältesten Bruder, Hamburg, 1840/41, II, p. 155; cited Slotsgaard 2019, as unavailable in Copenhagen.}

By the end of the eighteenth century, Constant de Massoul noted that “They are made very good at Lausanne, Vevai, Nuremberg, and Paris.” In Mme de Genlis’s \textit{Manuel du voyageur}, the traveller was instructed in how to ask “Avez-vous des pastels de Lausanne? J’en voudrois de petits et de gros” and “L’assortiment est-il bien complet?” in six languages.\footnote{Paris 1810, pp. 148f.}
IV.10 Alternative processes

During the eighteenth century there was considerable interest in the reinvention of encaustic painting as thought to have been practised by the ancients. The Swiss painter and writer Johann Heinrich Müntz was particularly interested in the technique, which he thought could be used to fix pastels. 114 While experimenting with pastels in Kassel early in 1753 (v. §§IV.2.8; IV.7 supra), Johann Friedrich Reifenstein investigated the use of wax pastel applied directly to canvas prepared with a coating of ground glass rather than paper. He found that pigments mixed with deer fat and wax enabled stronger colours to be made with a consistency that could be used more satisfactorily than the normal recipes. The method is described in Le Pileur d’Apligny 1779 and the Encyclopédie méthodique of 1782–91; through his contacts with Liotard he may have had some influence on the preparation of supports for conventional pastel. For what seems to have been a very similar invention by the Göttingen astronomer Tobias Meyer in 1757, see Günther 1762; it seems Professor Meyer died before it was perfected.

Thomas Keyse’s wax crayons received a bounty from the Society of Arts in London in 1764. 115 Detailed instructions for the preparation and use of wax crayons were added by John Payne to the third edition of his Art of painting in miniature, on ivory (London, 1800), an “art not only useful, but much admired, although at present in a State of Infancy”. He recommended the use of Russian wax, the purest and hardest available, to be mixed with ground pigments, of which only ten were suggested. Compound tints were to be obtained by use of watercolour washes. The wove paper had to avoid excessive coarseness, leaving discrete marks of the crayons, or excessive fineness, with insufficient bite.

Another process was invented by Jean-Antoine Pellechet, an engineer and Loriot’s brother-in-law. After his death it was promoted by his widow, who persuaded Bachelier and Roslin to try it (or perhaps a refinement of the technique) in works shown at the 1765 Salon. 116 This new pastel à l’huile involved priming a sheet of taffeta with oil so that the pastel takes on the appearance of oil painting. Diderot, dismissing Bachelier’s efforts, nevertheless praised Roslin’s tête de jeune fille, 117 whose vigour appealed to him more than “cette poussière précieuse que le peintre en pastel dépose sur sa toile, et qui s’en détache aussi facilement que celle des ailes du papillon.” The invention did not however take root; the surface of these works lacks the flowery bloom and subtle luminosity that are so much valued in pastel, and presents instead a sticky gloss; but it is indicative of the fascination which many of the leading pastellists retained with the technical processes of their medium.

The enigmatic chevalier de Saint-Michel developed a secret method which he tried to market by lottery; it seems to have been a synthesis between the Pellechet–Loriot ideas (although Chaperon dismissed it as nothing more than Sansevero’s method), using specially prepared support and pastels which harden into a cementitious surface that retains much of the special luminosity of normal pastel. The main limitation seems to be have been the need to use only specific pigments.

In his 1794 manuscript treatise on the manufacture and use of pastels, Onderrigting in het maaken van pastel, crayon en de manier, hoe daar mede te werken en wat daartoe behoord, Rienk Jeglerhuis describes a method of impregnating a sheet of paper with glue or varnish before drawing on it, then floating it on a bath of hot water so that the glue melts and causes the pastel to bond with the paper. Not

114 An English translation of his Encaustic, or, Count Caylus’s method of painting in the manner of the ancients: to which is added a sure and easy method for fixing of crayons appeared in 1760.

115 The only surviving example, dated 1763, appears to have darkened considerably.

116 See my essay on Loriot, Pellechet, Jurine: the secrets of pastel for the background and further details.

117 J.629.184 (Stockholm, Nationalmuseum); once thought to depict Mme Roslin.
only is this difficult to use in practice, but most surviving Jelgerhuis pastels show the oxidised tidemarks one would expect from such immersion.118

IV.11 Wet pastel

While pastel was perceived as an ideal medium for capturing flesh and fabric, it was more difficult to use than oil paint for depicting hard or precise objects such as lace, gold braid or metal buttons. A considerable number of pastellists resorted to wet application for such areas, ranging from highlights on buttons (La Tour) to broad areas of flesh (Rosalba) or drapery (Lundberg). La Tour used the technique only very occasionally, at the start of his career; while artists of the English school mixed their media much more liberally, with Gardner an extreme example (in some of his larger works, only the faces are depicted in dry pastel). Luttrell (1683) noted that Ashfield had used this technique “but twas only for some beautifull Draperyes and that only in the infancy of his practice before his experience had taught him better.” These applications are not always immediately obvious, but brushmarks, flows of pigment and even pockmarks from evaporating air trapped in the liquid medium can all betray the technique.119 The appearance is that of gouache (and the result often described as such); but it may simply be that the tip of the crayon has been moistened before use, while larger areas with brushmarks may be the result of grinding pastel crayons and mixing with water or alcohol before application (Gardner is reputed to have used brandy).

IV.12 Use of pastel with similar media

As noted above, a number of artists added touches of what is often described as gouache to facilitate the rendering of highlights or broad areas of flesh. Whether this was in fact gouache or wet pastel is unclear. Similarly, particularly among earlier writers, use of natural chalks for sharp outlines was recommended, as the chalks could be sharpened more readily. But the difficulty was that natural chalk often stands out prominently in a picture where the other material is all pastel: the absence of the filler which provides the uniform appearance and texture for the other colours is immediately noticeable. For the same reason it seems likely that pastellists went to the trouble of using complete sets of pastel from a single source rather than mixing crayons made with different fillers and binders.

Pastel was rarely if ever used with oil paint, although it was apparently chosen by Carlo Maratti to restore Raphael’s Amore e Psiche fresco series in the Villa Farnesina, with the intention of reversibility.

IV.13 Copies

A good many portraitists produced more than one version of their pastels. Such replicas were usually produced at the same time as the primary version, but occasionally artists would retain a studio ricordo from which further finished versions might be made. The collection at Saint-Quentin contains many such examples from La Tour’s studio. Zeno’s letter to Marmi of 3.XII.1729 mentions of Rosalba Carriera that “Essa tiene una gran galleria dove ser ba copia di tutti i ritratti da sé fatti.”120

Sometimes the versions were all in pastel, but sometimes versions in pastel and oil were produced: detailed invoices survive for works such as Perronneau’s prince d’Ardore (J.582.1026) and Vigée Le Brun’s duc d’Orléans and Mme de Montesson (J.76.314, J.76.305 &c.). These often display considerable

118 See Leeuwen & al. 2012.
119 Burns 2007 has an extended discussion of Rosalba’s practice.
120 Principessa Trivulzi’s letter of 26.VI.1741 also appears to imply that Rosalba kept versions of her portraits from which repetitions could be ordered without further sittings.
differences in quality; prices even for autograph repetitions in whichever medium were usually far lower than for the initial portrait. For royal portraiture the purpose was political or diplomatic: a production line for gifts to ambassadors occupied government departments such as the Bâtiments du roi or Menus plaisirs. Boze’s accounts for three years provide detailed evidence of his repetitions of his royal portraits. The level of variation between these autograph répliques may be assessed by comparing the passementerie in three versions of his 1785 portrait of the duc d’Angoulême (left to right: Louvre, J.177.115; Versailles, J.177.117; private collection, J.177.1431):

The powerful might also bestow their images upon associates or higher servants (e.g. the Boze above was presented to the prince’s sous-gouverneur, the marquis d’Arbouville), as of course would families (much later copies might be made when estates were divided, or when originals were sold to dealers who offered a copying service). Portraits were lent to other artists for copies to be made. Correspondence in the Stuart papers in the English royal archives reveals how Rosalba Carriera’s 1737 portrait of Prince Charles was sent from Venice to Vienna to be copied, but that “noe good painter” could be found to come to the agent’s house to do so in secret. Famous pictures (particularly those in public collections such as the Louvre, Saint-Quentin or Dresden) were copied as student exercises. Portraits that were to be engraved had first to be copied, as described by Voltaire in his letter to Berger, VII.1738, cited §VI.3 infra.

Often these copies were very precise replicas, and there has been much speculation as to how they were produced when the originals were in pastel: similar copies of oil paintings were typically made by direct tracing which would have destroyed the surface of a pastel (although Günther 1762, at his §§47ff, provides a detailed prescription for making oiled paper from which to take transparencies from Pergamenttafeln, his term for pastels, while Chaperon’s instruction for brushing fixative onto pastels through a tiffany cloth suggests that laying transparent materials directly on the pastel surface may not then have been regarded with such alarm as today). Russell 1772 explained how to make copies using pounced tracings taken from the glazed pastel:

The Picture being placed upon the Easel, let the Outlines be drawn on the Glass with a small Camel’s Hair Pencil dipped in Lake, ground thin with Oils, which must be done with great exactness: After this is accomplished, take a Sheet of Paper of the same size and place it on the Glass, stroking over all the lines with the hand, by which means the colour will adhere to the paper, which must be pierced with pin-holes pretty close to each other. The paper intended to be used for the painting must next be laid upon a table, and the pierced paper placed upon it;

121 An 11.VIII.1756 letter from Marigny to Mlle de Bracq, dame pour accompagner Mesdames les Cadettes, concerns a portrait of Madame Louise by “le sieur Dufrey” (Franz Bernhard Frey, q.v.) commissioned by the princesse to present to her on her imminent retirement.

122 Correspondence between James and Owen O’Rourke, cited in article on Carriera with references.

123 See Dossie 1758 for a summary of the procedures for pictures other than pastels.
then with some fine-pounded Charcoal, tied up in a piece of lawn, rub over the pierced lines, which will give an
exact Out-line; but great care must be taken not to brush this off till the whole is drawn over with sketching
Chalk, which is a composition made of Whiting and Tobacco-pipe Clay, rolled like the Crayons, and pointed at
each end.\textsuperscript{124}

It should also be noted that replicas by other artists were not always exactly to scale (e.g. La Tour’s
Saint-Quentin version of the abbé Pommyer is approximately 90\% of the primary version), while in other cases (some of Liotard’s ricordi) the correspondence is astonishingly accurate locally but results in misaligned parts (e.g. ear to elbow) on a global scale, indicating that they were made freehand. The role of the Geneva tracing of the Belle Chocolatière remains uncertain, but it seems likely to have been made later, in Dresden. The statistics are widely divergent: some artists seem never to have made repetitions, while those who were most often copied were also those credited (rightly or not) with the most autograph repetitions (La Tour, Liotard, Carriera).

While chalk drawings (particularly in sanguine) were widely copied by taking counterproofs during the eighteenth century, pastel as a medium is unsuited to this process. It was not until the late nineteenth century that techniques were developed (derived from lithography) to enable artists such as Cassatt and Renoir to make pastel counterproofs.

**IV.14 Restoration**

One of the claimed advantages of fixing pastel was that the process destroyed mould, a problem evidently as widespread soon after the pastels were made as it remains today when the works are not kept sufficiently dry (see §V.6.2 infra for a discussion of modern conservation). Darker colours were more prone to it than others (one author thought that the use of ivory black was responsible), and pastels on vellum were more at risk than those on paper. Impure pastels and of course water damage would also give rise to salt stains, for which La Tour\textsuperscript{125} describes treatment involving removal with a knife and the use of hot irons close to the pastel to remove any residual traces. Cotes and Russell both similarly describe the removal of mould with a knife.

**IV.15 Glazing**

Unlike drawings, pastels had to be glazed to protect them from contact with fingers and dust, from humidity and from insects.\textsuperscript{126} They were intended to be framed and displayed. Oil paintings required no glazing, and so could be as large as desired; but methods of producing glass were vital to existence of pastel. Both terms “glace” and “verre” seem to have been in use throughout the eighteenth century, the former term often restricted to higher qualities of product.\textsuperscript{127}

From the time of the Syrians in the first centuries AD to the Venetians, and in Normandy from 1330, until the end of the seventeenth century, glass (for windows, mirrors etc.) had been made by processes which were inherently limited as to size. The oldest technique, crown glass, involved spinning blown glass into large, flat discs, which with skill could exceed 1 metre in diameter; but as the central boss could not be used, the largest rectangular sheet that could be cut from these discs was much smaller (say 40x50 cm). A development was the use of blown cylinders which could be cut and flattened, but the results were not optically true, and in any case widths in excess of about 30 cm were apt to break with handling.

\textsuperscript{124} Russell 1772, pp. 20f.

\textsuperscript{125} In his 1770 letter to Belle de Charrière, \textit{ibid}.

\textsuperscript{126} There is extensive evidence of damage from adult insects and larvae provided by characteristic damage as well as carcases. (Burns 2007, p. 48, cites the damage in the lower left corner of Nanteuil’s Uffizi self-portrait.)

\textsuperscript{127} Thus, in the marquis de Félin sale (Paris, 27.III.1775), Lot 132 consisted of twelve pastels, “partie sont sous glace, les autres verre blanc.” But in the 1763 sale of Nattier’s studio contents, the terms “glace” and “verre” are used interchangeably for successive lots (p. 7).
In 1688, the Italian glassmaker Bernard Perrot (Bernardo Perrotto, 1640–1709), who had settled in Orléans, discovered the process of making molten glass flow onto smooth iron tables where it was rolled and cooled. Under the influence of Colbert, Louis XIV granted a charter to Nicolas du Noyer for the Manufacture royale des grandes glaces (Saint-Gobain), which commenced production using this process in 1691. Saints-Gobain retained its monopoly on the production of flat plate glass (which was mainly used for mirrors) until 1790. The manufacture involved two stages: molten glass was cast by being poured onto large tables, and secondly the sheets were ground and polished. The first, casting step was carried out at Saint-Gobain (Aisne), where there were local supplies of soda. The grinding and polishing took place at Reuilly, near the faubourg Saint-Antoine.

Tables of prices show that sheet as large as 110x50 pouces or 297x135 cm were available (for 2750 livres, 17 times the price of a 1 sq metre sheet, although it is only four times the area). The scale of some of Vivien’s pastels demonstrated that it was not the technology but the expense of these large sheets of glass (which often cost more than the frames or the pictures they protected) that restricted their use. The early eighteenth century saw the largest pastels ever produced: Vivien’s pastel of Max Emanuel at Mons (1706) measures 215x146 cm; La Tour’s président de Rieux (c.1741), which Mariette thought the largest pastel ever made, was 201x150 cm (the Louvre’s celebrated Madame de Pompadour is a mere 177.5x136 cm), while John Russell’s group portrait of Lady Johnstone and her children, at 162x120 cm, was evidently not (as the Oxford DNB claimed) the largest pastel ever made.

There were several attempts to replicate Saint-Gobain’s monopoly, although the costs of setting up the equipment required were a major barrier to entry. In England the British Plate Glass Company was established by act of parliament of 1773 using the French technology transmitted by former workers at Saint-Gobain; employing capital of £40,000, its factory at Ravenshead commenced production in 1786. In France, the verrerie de Saint-Quirin had been established in the 1730s making window glass (too small for use in larger pastels) in the 1730s; Hugues Drolenvaux was granted lettres patentes in 1750 for a process of producing sheets of white glass suitable for prints and pastels. Around 1769 they developed a method of making glace soufflé (blown plate glass), which could be polished and used for pictures or mirrors: this too required large levels of capital investment, the water-powered polishing machines “de Wirtemberg” alone cost 1,000,000 livres. Although it still relied on blowing instead of the sophisticated casting process over which Saint-Gobain retained a monopoly, there was nevertheless a dispute as to whether the Saint-Quirin process infringed the Saint-Gobain patent which was not resolved until 1785.

But for the most part pastel remained a medium for pictures in smaller format throughout the century. Pastels were almost invariably framed “close”, i.e. with no mount, and instead a fillet or spacer was used between the surface of the paper and the glass (hidden in the rebate of the frame behind the sight edge); but this was less for technical restrictions as for financial and functional

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128 See Savary’s Dictionnaire universel de commerce..., Geneva, 1742, ii, p. 634ff, s.v. Glace. Letters patent were issued in 1665 and registered at the parlement 12.I. and 23.III.1666. See also Burns 1997 and references therein.

129 Augustin Cochin, La Manufacture des glaces de Saint-Gobain de 1665 à 1865, 1865, p. 85 & passim.

130 In a letter to Carrera of 24.IV.1722, Gerard Michel Jabach in Livorno discusses a glass of 50 by 40 pouces (135x108 cm), possibly for a mirror, which he has ordered from Amsterdam and which he is to send to her. Sea transport involved less vibration than roads.

131 Until my correction, 2014. The DNB still gives the measurements as 185x140 cm which have not been verified, and may include the frame.

132 Philippe Macquer, Dictionnaire portatif des arts et métiers, 1756, ii, p. 685, noted that “Le verre en plats pour la consommation de Paris, vient de la forêt de Lions en Normandie, où il y a quatre verreries établies: savoir, à Erouiteau, à la Haye, la Verrerie neuve & l’Holandele. On fait dans beaucoup d’autres endroits du verre à vitres, mais qui se débite dans les Provinces. On fait de deux espèces de verre à vitres, un qui a une légère couleur, & un autre qui est parfaitement blanc; ils se vendent l’un & l’autre à la somme ou au panier. Le verre blanc s’emploie dans les beaux appartements, & pour mettre sur des tableaux, sur les pastels & sur les estampes; celui qui a de la couleur est employé dans les bâtiments pour les croisées.”

reasons (for what were conceived as paintings rather than drawings). (However when the celebrated mounter Jean-Baptiste Glomy inserted a notice in the Mercure de France, IV.1771, p. 206, in response to competition, he warned amateurs of the need for his long experience to mount certain drawings, “principalement ceux où il y a du pastel”, “sans quoi ils risquent d’être gâtés.”) Expense however did in part drive the search for fixing methods that could allow glazing to be dispensed with altogether.

A decree of 15.VIII.1752 imposed a duty on glass for pastels:

Ordonne au surplus Sa Majesté que les Verres blancs coulés en table sans boudines, propres à estampes & peintures en pastel, continueront de payer à l’entrée du Royaume, tant des Cinq Grosses Fermes, que des Provinces réputés étrangères, trente livres de quintal; & qu’à cet effet les Marchands & Voituriers seront tenus de les mettre dans des caisses séparées, & de déclarer le poids desdites caisses, sous peine de confiscation, & de pareille amends de trois cent livres.

Gautier-Dagoty’s little known critique134 of the 1755 salon includes an interesting discussion of the effect of glass on La Tour’s pastel of Mme de Pompadour:

L’harmonie de ce Portrait surpasse les compositions en huile de ceux de M. Michel Vanloo & de M. Tocqué: c’est, dit-on, la glace qui a cet avantage; elle met tout d’accord, & laisse une unité que l’on perdroit entièrement, si le Tableau étoit à nud. Des demi-Connoisssieurs qui ont déjà écrit sur le Salon, ont prétendu au contraire que la glace étoit noire, & qu’elle gaitoit le Tableau. On voit bien que ces Auteurs n’ont pas vû comme moi le Tableau sur le chevalet. Le Pastel & la Peinture en caustique sont des Peintures froides & sèches que l’on ne peut vernir; la glace seule peut adoucir ces Peintures féminines, & leur donner une certaine chaleur suave que l’huile porte naturellement en lui-même; les yeux mâles sentent la beauté de cette composition; le beau sexe seul peut s’accommoder du Pastel & de l’anoustique.

In the 11.VII.1803 sale catalogue where the pastel was offered for sale (Lot 335), Paillet and Delaroche were careful to note that “ce morceau … est recouvert par une belle glace blanche fait exprès à Saint Gobin.”

The lawyer and engineer Claude Bernier de Saint-Martin wrote to La Tour in 1764 describing the various problems with finding suitable glass for pastels.135 That made in France used Spanish soda which rendered it dark and greenish, while flint glass, developed in England, was weak, unless supplied in thick sheets. To avoid the colour problem, pastellists tried to use thinner sheets, but this put their work at risk from glass breakage. The glass from Saint-Quirin, which was known as verre de Bohème, was excellent (practically colourless) apart from its annoying undulations, which were disagreeable and annoying for viewers, and even made the picture invisible from certain angles. Bernières’s proposal was to straighten this type of glass with the machine he used to make curved sheets. Alternatively he suggested an even better plan: to provide the sheet with a deliberate, regular bulge (“bombé”); these were already in use for protecting wax and plaster medallions. This route resulted in greater strength, and also dealt with the spacing problem without resulting in the pastel frame having to be too deep and projecting untidily from the walls of the room. He proposed to use a curve that would result in a space of 8 to 10 lignes (18 to 23 mm) at the centre of the largest canvas.

An idea of the scarcity of the product may be gleaned from an advertisement136 in Toulouse by a certain M. Peyronnet, who offered “verre de Boheme” in various sizes, suitable for “toute sorte de Voitures, Chaise à porteur, Croisees, Portraits au pastel & Estampes”; if he didn’t have the right size in stock, he required a delay of only two months to obtain it.

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135 A version was published in the Mercure, VI.1764, pp. 158ff. See TREATISES.

136 Affiches, annonces &c. de Toulouse, 10.VII.1782.
This useful entry for “Glaces” appeared in the *Almanach général des marchands, négocians et commerçans de la France et de l’Europe* for 1772 (Paris, Valade, 1779), pp. 349–50:

Les Manufactures de Glaces établies en France depuis moins de 80 ans, y ont fait les progrès les plus rapides & les plus brillants; à la place des Glaces soufflées qu’on recevait autrefois d’Italie, & dont la plus grande dimension étoit de 40 à 50 pouces de hauteur, on envoie aujourd’hui en Italie & dans tout l’Univers commerçant, des glaces de 90 & de 100 pouces.

La Manufacture des Glaces coulées & soufflées est établie à St. Gobin. Voyez St. Gobin.

Mais c’est à Paris que les glaces reçoivent la perfection nécessaire pour entrer dans le commerce. Le travail qui leur donne cette perfection consiste dans le poliement & dans le teint.

Les Glaces destinées simplement à orner des voitures, à éclairer des appartements, à couvrir des pastels, n’ont besoin que de poliement: celles qui n’ont épouvé que cette opération s’appellent glaces en blanc.

Dans la vente des Glaces en blanc, on se règle sur les pouces & les lignes de hauteur & de largeur : on ne compte les lignes que dans les petites glaces appelées de numero ; les glaces de numero sont celles qui on moins de 14 pouces sur 12.

Les glaces de numero se divisent en huit.

- N° 8, 6 pouces 6 lignes, sur 4 pouces 9 lig.
- N° 10, 7 p… 3 lig… sur 5 p.
- N° 12, 7 p… 10 lig… sur 5 p… 10 lig.
- N° 17, 8 p… 7 lig… sur 6 p… 8 lig.
- N° 20, 9 p… 5 lig… sur 7 p… 4 lig.
- N° 30, 10 p… 4 lig… sur 8 p… 7 lig.
- N° 40, 11 p… 6 lig… sur 6 p… 6 lig.
- N° 50, 12 p… 6 lig… sur 10 p… 6 lig.

Les glaces au-dessus de ce numero, s’appellent glaces de volume réglé, les plus grandes sont de 100 pouces sur 60. Ces magnifiques glaces se vendent 3000 livres; les autres baissent graduellement de prix jusqu’aux 14 pouces, qui ne valent que 6 liv. 4 sols. Pour cette gradation voyez les Tarif des glaces qui est public & connu.

Le poliement, ou l’adouci se donne dans un vaste atelier, etabli au Fauxbourg st. Antoine.

Directeur, M. GALLOIS, rue de Reuilly.

**IV.16 Frames**

Pastels are almost invariably framed for protection. The dangers of removing pastels from their frames have always been known, so, in a good many cases, pastels have come down to us in their original frames, frequently with the original glass and occasionally with backing boards that have never been unsealed.\(^{137}\)

Many, probably most, artists arranged the framing and glazing of their works before they left the workshop, although in some cases these may have been replaced by owners seeking a uniform appearance for their collections, in much the same way as they would have rebound books. One can see both practices with the pastels made for the Stuart family in exile: accounts\(^ {138}\) show the five pastels by Fratellini were invoiced by the artist including itemised charges for the glass, the canvases and the frames (“custodi di pino nero”). For the three Liotard pastels delivered in 1737, separate payments were made to the joiner (“Senti falegname”) and gilder (“Vasselli indatore”). Several letters from Carriera indicate that she sent pastels, carefully encased, to recipients for them to have framed (this is revealed for example in letters to her from Crozat, 7.VI.1721 and Vleughels, 29.XII.1721 and 9.VI.1736). Voltaire, when his portrait was to be engraved in 1738, was reluctant to lend the original, but knew that the réplique could not leave the artist’s studio until framed and

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\(^{137}\) There is now an extensive literature on frames: see for example Mitchell & Roberts 1996; Simon 1996; Burns 1997; Harden 1998. Henry Vial’s *Les Artistes décorateurs du bois* remains an important reference for individual craftsmen.

\(^{138}\) See the extracts quoted with references in the articles on Fratellini and Liotard extracted from Stuart Wortley 1948.
glazed: “On ne veut point envoyer mon portrait en pastel; mais m’de La Tour en a un double. Il n’a qu’à y faire mettre une bordure et une glace. Je mande à M. l’abbé Moussinot qu’il en fasse les frais.”

Another consideration may have been (although there is no specific evidence of pastels where this arose) the bizarre system of excise duties levied on pictures during the eighteenth century: thus Flemish pictures entering France were taxed by ad valorem if framed, but merely by weight if not. But generally pastels were supplied to clients already framed, the frame selected by the artist and invoiced inclusively. There are very few public advertisements such as that inserted by Louis Thibault de Montigny in *L’Avant-Coureur* offering to frame pastels under glass in gilt frames – and even that notice covered prints and plans as well, and was intended to sell his composition frames.

When pastels were supplied to clients with frames, there is little evidence about the dealings between artist and framer: for conservation reasons (for the same considerations that remain today), it is likely that the frame was delivered and fitted at the artist’s studio rather than the unprotected pastel being sent to the framer’s workshop. One example may be Labille-Guird’s portrait of Pajou, later her morceau de reception at the Académie (and now in the Louvre). It is signed and dated 1782, but the frame is stamped by Claude Pépin who died on 13 January in that year. An elaborate fronton with sitter’s name sits on a standard sized (“toile de 20”) frame. There is some evidence that pastellists kept frames ready for use: on 19.I.1786, the contents of La Tour’s logement in the Louvre were auctioned off, and included “Pastels, Ustensiles de peintre, bordures dorées et cartes géographiques, le tout provenant du cabinet de M. de La Tour, peintre du Roi.” When La Tour made a réplique of his pastel of Rousseau to give to the writer, he paid for the frame and glass, expenditure which Rousseau thought it his duty to reimburse (letter to Le Nieps, 9.I.1763). Whe Robbé de Beauveset sat to Perronneau, her reported to Desfriches (letter, 6.VIII.1759) “La glace et la bordure sont, je pense, une affaire de 30 ou 36 livres; il n’est pas naturel que Perronneau les tire de sa poche; j’en ferai les avances.”

For the most part framemakers remain anonymous. In eighteenth century Paris, marks by some two dozen makers – maîtres menuisiers or ébénistes – have been identified. Few posthumous inventaires or financial accounts survive from which to identify clients or payments.

In the case of major names such as Carriera, La Tour and Perronneau, a good many frames were changed in the early years of the twentieth century when their work became fashionable and dealers sold their pastels as de luxe objects to extremely wealthy collectors who would not have been satisfied with the rather modest *cadres d’origine*.

Early English pastels (by Hoare, Pond etc.) were often in Kentian frames (some of the best were made by Isaac Gosset); by the time of Cotes, French-inspired rococo frames were fashionable. Russell preferred Maratta frames; but all these were used also for oil paintings. In France a fairly standard rectangular “pastel frame” was widely used throughout the reign of Louis XV: it had an ogee moulding, with cadochon back-edge, gadrooned top edge, sanded frieze and leaf sight. Apart

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139 Letter to Berger, 3.VII.1738.
140 Michel 2007, p. 153f.
142 To the 22 listed in Harden 1998 may be added Jean-Baptiste Detroulleau (1737–1780) and Louis Boussard (Brunno Hochart, private communication, 8.III.2018).
143 This may be because the businesses were not sufficiently profitable, and estates were renounced to avoid the assumption of debts. One of the best-known framers, Étienne-Louis Infrout, was certificated as incapable in 1771; but the inventaire taken at the time has been mistaid in the Minutier central (2018).
144 Examples in Perronneau’s œuvre include original frames on two Bordeaux pastels, Gorsse (J.582.1364) and Mme Molles (J.582.1626), both extremely simple baguettes, while the original frame on J.582.1041 is visible in the background of the photograph of Marius Paulme in his sale catalogue.
from the moulding another national difference was the aspect ratio: a typical French pastel might have a sight size of 61x50 cm (“toile de 12” in the system145 adopted by some French framers for portrait sizes), with a ratio of 1.22, while an English frame of a similar height might be narrower, say 45 cm, the ratio typically being 1.33.146 A wider range of mouldings appeared in the 1760s, and an increasing number of them were oval. But none of these was exclusively used for pastels, and the practice of artists such as Vigée Le Brun who supplied her clients with framed works in both media was to use the same frames.

While the best frames were carved and gilded, there were some surprisingly early examples of stuc doré, or composition frames. Several examples147 bear a stamp “Ornements de composition DL.”, possibly the Sieur de Launay, quai de Gesvres recommended by Petit de Bachaumont for his composition frames at this time.

Elaborate picture frames were of course widely used in the baroque and rococo eras. The great pastel collection in Dresden (v. §VIII.1 supra) was equipped (by 1752) with uniform “Dresden Gallery” frames, mostly carved by Matthaeus Kugler and Joseph Deibel. French rococo frames n particular achieved an extraordinary level of sophistication and beauty. They were made by craftsmen who belonged to one (or sometimes more than one) of the crafts of ébéniste, menuisier, sculpteur or doreur. They are however rarely identifiable: few frames are stamped, and documents rarely survive identifying the framers: this was especially the case with pastels where frames were supplied by the artist. The few exceptions include several royal commissions handled by the Bâtiments du roi, including frames for La Tour’s portraits of the king, queen, dauphin and dauphine by Louis Maurisan. Among pastels few reached the ambition of that for La Tour’s président de Rieux (for which however no document identifies the maker, although René Gimpel148 suggested it might be to a design by Caffiéri): as one critic noted,

ce Tableau sera toujours un chef-d’œuvre en son espèce; et pour vous donner une idée de son Prix, on prétend que la Glace et le Cadre courent seuls cinquante louis.149

But by 1753 the abbé Le Blanc felt the need to attack the prevailing fashion for ostentatious expenditure on elaborate gilt decorations surrounding third-rate pictures: a “contraste ridicule” which resulted from a reluctance to pay more for the picture than for the “cartouche bizarre qui lui sert de bordure”.150 By the time of Louis XVI’s accession, a neo-classical sobriety had set in. But for the most part pastel frames, being domestic and of smaller scale, were less prone to excess than oil paintings. For the same reasons as discussed below, a concern to avoid ridicule prevailed in France. When the French traveller de Beaunoir visited Mainz in 1789, he spotted a group of pastels by Urlaub “dans des cadres de la plus grande richesse, mais la bordure magnifique ne nuit pas au tableau” – a comment indicating that such concerns were not far from his mind.151

145 Dimensions for all these standard sizes will be found in the ABBREVIATIONS file.
146 The reason for this is unclear. A pure conjecture is that the narrower English frame may have involved less waste from cutting locally produced glass.
147 One is the imposing pastel of Orry by La Tour (j.46.2431). For de Launay, see Pons 1987, p. 42.
148 Journal, 4.XII.1918.
149 Anon., Lettre à Meneur de Poëtrissou-Chamardane, lieutenant général au baillage et siège présidial de Chaumont en Bassigny, au sujet des tableaux exposés au Salon du Louvre, s.l., s.d. [1741].
150 Anon. [abbé Jean-Bernard LE BLANC], Observations sur les ouvrages de MM. de l’Académie de peinture et de sculpture, exposés au Salon du Louvre en l’année 1753 et sur quelques écrits qui ont rapport à la peinture, à M. le président de B****, x.l., 1753, p. 155f. The passage is discussed in Pons 1987, p. 43 and n.18. It anticipates to some degree Kant’s remark in Kritik der Urtheilskraft (1790, §14: Gesammelte Schriften, Berlin, 1913, V, p. 226): “Besteht aber der Zierath nicht selbst in der schönen Form, ist er wie der goldene Rahmen bloß, um durch seinen Reiz das Gemälde dem Beifall zu empfehlen, angebracht: so heißt er alsdann Schmuck und thut der ächten Schönheit Abbruch.”
151 Alexandre-Louis-Bertrand Robineau, dit de Beaunoir, Voyage sur le Rhin, Neuwied, 1791, p. 11. The frames on these pastels do not seem particularly ostentatious today.
The taste for oval frames was particularly prevalent in rococo France. This was primarily for aesthetic reasons – the oval was seen as a fashionable alternative to the rigid rectangle that had prevailed for centuries. The choice of an oval provided an opportunity to demonstrate the skills of Parisian maîtres-menuisiers in the construction of these sophisticated luxury objects (ovals raise considerably more technical and conservation difficulties than rectangular frames). In the case of portraits they also provided a neat visual solution as to how to deal with empty corners; the giltwood oval frame was seen as a sophisticated advance on the trompe-l’œil painted stone oculus which artists from Hogarth to Perronneau sometimes adopted.

In Paris the ovals were geometrically perfect ellipses during the eighteenth century; earlier seventeenth century examples, and those in Scandinavian countries throughout the eighteenth century, were often fatter shapes. The practical manufacturing difficulties in eastern Europe, Russia and even Germany meant that oval pastels were often made on rectangular strainers with rectangular frames so that only an oval slip need be cut; octagonal frames were often used as a simpler alternative. In Britain small carved oval frames were commonly found with pastels, usually mounted on card, from the middle of the second half of the century. Later the spandrel frame emerged: pastels could be executed on rectangular strainers, the corners hidden behind giltwood spandrels with foliate decoration. By the 1790s these evolved into a common neoclassical motifs, often a single flower, rosette or star. The model is found in pastels by Russell (infrequently from late 1780s) and Hamilton, from his Italian period (mid-1780s and later), but is also widely found on pastels by Tischbein, Schröder and his German followers.

IV.17 Traditional assembly

The traditional arrangement for mounting and framing a typical eighteenth century pastel is as shown in this simplified diagram:

![Diagram of traditional assembly of pastel](image)

Ideally the rebate should be deep enough for the whole strainer to fit inside (it will often need to be extended or commonly the backing is held in place by angled brackets), but first a sheet of glass

152 As with oval strainers, oval frames experience shrinkage problems to a far greater degree than rectangular ones: while a straight piece of wood can be cut along, or across, the grain for a consistent response to climate changes, the four pieces of a traditional oval frame unavoidably include pieces cut at varying angles to the grain.

153 Earlier examples of octagonal frames date back to the seventeenth century: for example, in the posthumous inventory of conte Federico Beroaldi were found “Tre ritrattini di tre Pittori disegnati come di Pastello con Cornice à ottofaccie dorata” (Bologna, 1695, f. 6; repr. Raffaella Morselli, Collezioni e quadretti nella Bologna del Seicento, 1998, iii, p. 93).

154 Pastels with plain sanded spandrels include the 1766 Valade pendants J.74.183 & J.74.184; but the French do not seem to have favoured the decorated spandrel. The earliest examples seem to be on oil paintings: a Reynolds self-portrait of 1773 (see Nicholas Penny, “Reynolds and picture frames”, Burlington magazine, xi,1986, fig. 46) or Angelika Kauffmann pendants of Sir Robert & Lady Harvey (Yale Center for British Art). Stubbs’s 1781 oil self-portrait (London, NPG 4575) seems to be the earliest example of the single flower motif favoured by Hamilton. By 1786 Tischbein was using these frames on his pastels of the ruling family in The Hague.
is placed next to the sight edge, then a wooden spacer or fillet is cut to lie within the rebate. The pastel sits behind the spacer, isolated by acid-free lining paper or thin card; and finally a backing board is fitted and closed up. Lining tape (not shown in the figure) or other arrangements are made to ensure the pastel is protected from dust and insect infestation (the adhesion of lining tape can fail over long periods, and should be relied upon for neither mechanical support nor dust exclusion). Backing boards were sometimes omitted, which left the pastel vulnerable to damage with careless handling evidenced by losses in the central area where the support has been pressed onto the glass. More often card was used; the same problem of pastel–glass contact still arose where the card was too flexible. Both are useful deterrents to the unfortunate practice of auctioneers, transportation firms and even framers of writing directly on the back of canvases. In some cases (larger rectangular strainers and most ovals), cross-members attached to the strainer provided additional rigidity.

There are numerous variations of this basic configuration, some original, others modern (see Chapter V).

Even making a spacer to separate the pastel from the glass is more complicated with oval frames: in place of the rectangle’s four thin lengths of wood, applying pressure evenly to the strainer, original assemblies for ovals often involved a few widely spaced pieces of cork, or in some cases lengths of cord pinned around the boundary. Rectangular works are also often found with just six or eight short spacers (of wood, card or cork) instead of a continuous structure of fillets with morticed corners: the latter is preferable as it distributes the pressure more evenly, and the geometry should make it impossible for the spacers to fall if adhesives fail. (This may not be possible if bulky corners project further than the main runs of the strainer.) In at least one example four nails, hammered incompletely into the corners of the strainer through the paper, stand proud to act as spacers: the objections to such a system do not need to be listed.

IV.18 Transport during the eighteenth century

Flavella was not alone in being damaged in transit. Rosalba Carriera’s international fame resulted in a correspondence that provide much information about the transport of her pastels. When she sent these to clients in Paris and elsewhere, she sometimes packed them carefully in cases without the glass. When they were not so packed, accidents could happen: in his letter to her of 20.I.1720, Pierre Crozat reported unpacking a case sent by Zanetti–

dans laquelle j’ay trouvé une demy figure de femme sous une glace de cristal, qui a eu le sort de s’estre trouvée entre cent morceaux. Ce qui est facheux est que le tableau en a fort souffert…

A number of Carriera pastels are found with “santini”, small woodcuts with devotional images often of the Tre Magi, enclosed between the strainer and primary support; these she thought would protect the works in transit. When Carriera was ready to send her morceau de réception to the académie, Crozat took care to write to her (11.VIII.1721) setting out in detail how best to pack the work (without glass), with the case carefully marked not to be opened except in his presence. He

155 Very few pastels are inscribed with artists’ or sitters’ names. (Several examples in William Hoare’s hand are known, giving the name and address of the subject.) Disassembling to view the back of canvases directly is however a useful precaution where later work is suspected; art suppliers’ stencil marks can provide objective proof of such suspicions.

156 In one case (a large pastel by Pillement), a network of strings across the strainer was presumably intended to supplement this protection.

157 See Chapter II supra.

158 See letters to her from Crozat, 7.VI.1721 Vleughels, 29.XII.1721 and 9.VI.1736 cited supra.

159 One was found behind Winter in the Royal Collection; the 9.V.2017 press release provides details, citing a letter of Pier Caterino Zeno to Cav. Marmi of 3.XII.1729 explaining her practice. The original text is: “È particolarmente divota, e data all’ opera di pietà; e à divozione distinta ai tre Santi Magi, che portaronsi all’ adorazione del bambino Gesù nella grotto di Betlemme. Una volta mi raccomandò certo ritratto da spedire a mio fratello a Vienna; e diedemi una cartuccia co’ suddetti tre Magi adoratori; e disse che a quelli raccomanda l’ andata felice di quell ritratto; soggiugnendo, che ogni qualvolta aveva con tali immaginette accompagnate le sue pitture, sempre erano giunte a salvamento.” (G. Campori, ed., Lettere artistiche inedite…, Modena, 1866, p. 196). For other examples, see Henning & Marx 2007, p. 56; J.21.2259, now in the Fogg, was also formerly in Dresden; and J.21.1727, in the Louvre, repr. Salmon 2018, fig. 11.
recommended the pastel be shipped from Venice via London rather than travelling by road: “Il est certain que la voye de la mer est la plus assurée pour le transporter” – provided of course that her friend (presumably Christian Cole) supervise the opening in London. The following year (letter, 22.XI.1722) he received two female heads from her: one was given to Rigaud, the other he retained, fearing that it had been damaged in the journey, but when Vleughels removed the glass, they found that the damage was simply pastel dust on the inside of the glass.

In a letter to Carriera of 14.IV.1714 from Düsseldorf, Theodorus Hartsoeker (son of the celebrated microscopist) allayed her concerns that her pastel had not suffered in transit, “car en ce cas là on aurait au moins trouvé tant soit peu de poussièere sur le miroir”. Similarly she was concerned that the pastel she had sent to the Gran Principe Ferdinando de’ Medici might have been damaged, as Lord Molesworth reported (6.VIII.1712) that it had been concealed in a wardrobe, but Georg Engelhart Schröder was able to reassure her (4.IX.1715) that the picture was on display and in perfect condition.

In 1747 Oudry sent a pastel (a precious landscape which he had exhibited at the Salon) to comte Tessin as a mark of his friendship and esteem. In the accompanying letter he wrote:

“J’ai fait fermer la caisse et toutes les séparations avec des vis, parce que les coups de marteau detruisent entierement le pastel en le faisant tomber. ... Quand le tableau en sera tiré, il sera à propos de prendre un canif, de couper tout autour le papier qui est colle derriere pour tenir le pastel à la bordure, ôter le tableau, essuyer bien la glace, et remettre le pastel et aussi recoller les bouts de papier, parce que le transport détache toujours quelque partie qui s’attache à la glace et ternit l’ouvrage.”

Unfortunately the pastel was last recorded in the Swedish royal collection in 1911, and we cannot assess just how severe the losses were.

The risks from hammer blows were apparently well known: the inscription on the reverse of Liotard’s 1768 pastel of Lord Albemarle requests “ne point toucher a la peinture/ny aucun coup de Marteau”; in 1755 the invoice he submitted for a version of Madame Infante noted “Il faut observer quand on mettera une bordure au tableau de la fixer avec des visses, a fin qu’il ne receive aucun coupe de marteau.” The German pastellist Conrad Geiger put it more succinctly: “An Pastellmahlerey darf nicht geklopft warden.” Inscribed on the back of Nanteuil’s 1670 pastel of Louis XIV now in the Uffizi is “Ce faux fond/conserve l’ouvrage ainsi il ne faut/jamais l’oster/Il se faut empecher de/hurter ce tableau et de le/manier rudiment.” Perronneau inscribed this more optimistic observation on the back of one of his pastels (Mme Schweighäuser, 1767):

“Si il arrivoit que l’on voulu transporté en voiage ce tableau il faudrait faire une caisse ou bouette qui ne ferma qu’avec des crochet ou non avec des clouts parce qu’il ne faut pas frappe crainde de gatter le pastelle et lier la caisse avec une corde et bien l’emballé alors on ne risque rien.”

Another example is provided in correspondence concerning pastels by Katherine Read for the Duke and Duchess of Argyll. In a letter to the Duchess, dated 2.VII.1771, Read reveals that the pastel is being shipped from London to Edinburgh, but for the last part of the journey, the road from Edinburgh to Hamilton Palace (over 40 miles), a letter from the Duke of Argyll to his agent insists that to avoid damage the pastel “be carried on a man’s back”.

Further evidence on the transportation of pastels in the 1760s can be found in the Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe (available online), including invoices for pastels by Perronneau, Boucher and Rosalba acquired for Caroline Luise and despatched to her. Two Boucher heads in pastel were purchased with a Boucher landscape in oil; the bill included a frame for the oil, while

161 R&L. 432, label reproduced, fig. 634.
162 González-Palacios 1996, p. 382; not in R&L.
As to who would bear the risks during transportation, no doubt there were numerous disputes. In the invoice issued by the framer Beaumont for two versions of Perronneau’s prince d’Ardore, the frame with glass for the pastel version was charged at 52 livres, while the simpler frame for the oil was 14 livres; the packing and transport was 7 livres 10. To this was added 23 livres for “Remis une glace qui a ette Cassé”, but this sum was deducted from the total, apparently by the client. Other transportation documents for works sent to Brussels for the Lorraine family are marked “sans être garant de la rupture des Glaces ni des choses fragiles”. Other transport hazards were faced by all works of art, but pastels often came off worse than say oil paintings. Thus the version of Liotard’s Belle Liseuse acquired by the duc de Richelieu and now in Dresden has clearly suffered from falling into a river on its journey from Lyon. Less severe was the damage suffered in transit by Sharples’s pastel of Alexander Hamilton which Talleyrand acquired in the US and shipped back to Paris: but when Hamilton’s grieving widow sought to acquire it, Talleyrand’s secretary Théophile Cazenove (himself the subject of a pastel by Perronneau) wrote back from Paris describing the damage already suffered, and taking the precaution of having it copied (in oil) before sending it back:

"The picture being painted in pastel, time and crossing the sea has degraded it, still the likeness remain; & at the view of it, your tender and afflicted heart will bleed to much, I fear…In fear the original picture should not reach you with my present letter, I have ordered a copy of it, in oil painting, which I’ll sent by an other opportunity."

Unsurprisingly little evidence has survived documenting the costs of transport or hanging of pastels. But in 1755 two men were paid 15s. 6d. for “takeing Down 9: picters of the Royall Familly at Pallmall” and 6s. in 1756 “for takeing Doune, and hanging up Pickters of the Royall Family, in the Green Dressing Roome” at Leicester House – probably Liotard’s portraits of Augusta Princess of Wales and her children.

IV.19 Wartime transport

Chief amongst cases where pastels have had to be moved for non-discretionary reasons were wartime removals. The La Tour pastels from Saint-Quentin were sent to Maubeuge in 1917; the episode is well documented, most recently in the exhibition catalogue Saint-Quentin 2007. Less well known was the fate of the Louvre pastels during World War II. While La Tour’s Mme de Pompadour was sent (with many of the Louvre’s paintings) to the château de Chambord, it was recognised that many of the best pastels were too fragile to travel any distance. An attempt to store them several dozen of in two climate-controlled underground vaults of the Banque de France (which had been leased from 1938 for this purpose) had to be abandoned in 1940 due to detrimental conditions (especially humidity control after the bank’s air-conditioning system broke down) and difficulty in monitoring them. There are conservation reports noting the resulting damage.

164 Arnoult 2007, fig. 5.
165 Arnoult 2014, p. 142, document of 1.VIII.1760 (this does not seem to be the Perronneau works discussed there).
166 Trivas 1940, p. 91.
167 The letter, dated 9.IX.1805, was among the Hamilton manuscripts sold in New York, Sotheby’s, 18.I.2017, Lot 1066. It is unclear which version of the Hamilton this is, or whether it survived.
168 Millar 1963, p. 190, citing disbursements in the Duchy of Cornwall records, XXXVII(1) and XXXVIII(1).
169 See Gerri Chanel, Saving Mona Lisa, London, 2018, based on archival research. I am most grateful to the author for sharing details of these documents, principally from the Archives des musées nationaux ser. R6, which includes the list of 23 eighteenth century Louvre pastels deposited with the Banque de France on 28–30.VIII.1939.
damage, mostly minor spots of mould. The Banque de France was also used to store pastels belong
to Jewish private collections before being confiscated by the Germans.170 The National Gallery in
London made use of the Manod slate quarry in Wales for their more important pictures. They also
looked after two major La Tour pastels belonging to Gulbenkian. His pastel of Marie Sallé was
sent to Monod, while Duval appears to have remained in Trafalgar Square.171

IV.20 Artists’ conservation instructions

In addition to the labels mentioned above warning of transportation risks, a number of artists had
labels printed with general guidance on conservation (humidity and light being frequently
identified). Examples include Lawrence and Russell: the texts will be found in the artist articles.

Among less frequently noted conservation issues, a letter from Marie Fel to La Tour’s brother,
dated 5.I.1785,172 refers to a report by the enamellist Pierre Pasquier concerning “les dangers, et le
domage que la fumée pourroit causer aux pasteles de M. de La Tour”: it perhaps refers to those in
his house at Chaillot, and invites the chevalier to visit and “faire fermer les écartemens du mur”.

170 Thus the Hirsch family lost three La Tour pastels: Belle-Isle and his wife and an inconnu: see Meaux 2018. Similarly a pastel by Huet was taken
from Georges Wildenstein’s vault in the Banque de France: see New York 2005a, no. 139. Arthur Veil-Picard’s Mlle de La Boissière (now in the
Louvre) was taken from vault 63 in the Banque de France; transferred to the Jeu de Paume on 29.X.1940 before being taken to Germany
(errproject.org daabase, consulted 2018).

171 See my ESSAY.

172 Reprinted in chronological table of La Tour DOCUMENTS.


**V. CONSERVATION AND TRANSPORT TODAY**

In this chapter we review some of the particular considerations of interest to collectors and conservators today. In particular, the debate about how to move pastels safely (the biggest threat they face) has not yet been resolved: exactly the same concerns expressed in the eighteenth century (v. §IV.18 supra) remain. All the standard sources recognised the difficulties.

From the vast historical documentation of pastel conservation concerns, a useful perspective on the issues can be taken from two sources at very different periods. In a letter of 28.X.1718, Crozat wrote to Carriera expressing concern that the four heads he had just received, although in good condition, were nonetheless at risk: “il faut un très grand soin pour les conserver”: he goes on to ask if she could not use pastels “dont la couleur fût plus solide”, noting however that Barocci heads, made very similarly, had lasted well. Little has changed in three hundred years, as is clear from evidence submitted to the Scottish parliament by Jeremy Warren of the Wallace Collection in 2013:

Any honest curator or conservator would tell you that pastels, for example, are about the most fragile and difficult objects to look after in museums. I was asked to try to find a home for a very important pastel portrait as a gift, but two major museums turned it down because they simply could not cope with the hassle of trying to look after pastels.

Two concepts are crucial in differentiating risks to pastel from those to works in other media. The first is the possibility of cumulative, invisible damage with pastel which leads ultimately to degradation. Second is that while pastels are exposed to the same hazards as other works of art – for example the risk of dropping a pastel may be no different from that of dropping an oil painting (obviously the greatest care should be taken both cases), the risk calculus is fundamentally changed by the different consequences of doing so. Shock will have no impact on an oil painting (unless the paint surface has delaminated); even when glazed, the glass can be safely taped, and if untaped glass fractures, the resultant abrasions to an oil painting can usually be repaired satisfactorily. The consequences for a pastel are far graver. It is not the probability of damage, but the implications of the results that differ.

It is sometimes thought that the concerns in this chapter are exaggerated, and that there is little evidence of actual damage from transportation. We return to this question later, but it is worth noting that the problems of lending, transportation and even static conservation all revolve around the questions of adhesion, and the multifactorial hazards which require a holistic understanding and response. The discussion is necessarily interwoven throughout the following sections, and links back to the original structural issues considered in Chapter IV.

**V.1 Evolution of museums’ policies on lending**

The problems of protecting pastels in transport are particularly relevant in the case of elective events such as loan exhibitions, where many museums operate a strict refusal policy. There is...
nothing new in this: in 1894 George Williamson noted in his introduction to the Russell loan exhibition at the Imperial Institution that only owners in or about London were asked to lend to the exhibition because of the risk of damage. The impossibility of lending pastels was not questioned in the Chardin (1978) or Boucher (1986) exhibitions (and, after considering the issue carefully, Versailles decided not to include pastels in their Nattier exhibition in 1999), although the scientific consequences were deplored, and – since they are self-reinforcing – serve to maintain the neglect of this field. Henri Loyrette put it succinctly in his preface to Jean-François Méjanès’s 2002 monograph on La Tour’s Mme de Pompadour, denied its star turn at the Versailles/Munich/London exhibition on the subject: “la poudre fragile du pastel n’autorise ni vibration ni done mouvement.” There were of course exceptions: four Liotard pastels from Winterthur travelled to Berlin, Los Angeles, New York, London and Geneva in 1993–95 (and were again lent to Edinburgh and London in 2015).

Considerable experience in handling nineteenth-century pastels has now been built up, but even here (where the risks are significantly lower) caution is required. A detailed scientific investigation (including inter alia microphotography of the insides of glass, before and after movement) was carried out on nine Degas pastels exhibited at Tate Liverpool and the Burrell in Glasgow in 1989; all involved air-cushioned road travel only. Norville-Day & al. 1993 concluded that “pastels are so delicate that moving them is risky and likely to result in some damage no matter how much care might be taken.”177 In contrast however a pastel by Degas was reported as safely travelling by air to New Zealand; the loan was approved by the National Galleries of Scotland on the basis of Degas’s particular technique, involving multiple layers of fixative.178

Whether earlier works (which usually involve thicker layers of material than nineteenth century works, and are usually – and should be assumed to be – unfixed) can safely be moved, and if so how, remains in dispute. Norville-Day’s conclusion would apply a fortiori to such works. A document entitled General principles on the administration of loans and exchange of works of art between institutions, issued 1995 originally by the Réunion des musées nationaux (revised 2002, and adopted by the Bizot Group of some 67 major museums worldwide), observed that the potential dangers of damage were “very real” and concluded that “unfixed pastels are usually too fragile to travel.”179 The Bizot Group principles have been revised in part, but the section about pastels appears not to have been amended.

The La Tour tricentenaire celebrations in 2004 were marked by simultaneous exhibitions of pastels at various locations, with the Louvre, Chantilly and other museums displaying their own collections with a common catalogue, De poudre et de papier (a model for future pastel exhibitions which seems not to have been attractive to organising institutions), while the main retrospective, La Tour 2004a, was held at Versailles, in order, it was said, to benefit from superior climate control equipment that was available in Saint-Quentin. Many of the 50 pastels exhibited were lent by the musée Lécyuer, but a good many travelled from further afield, some by aeroplane. The Boze retrospective...

177 This paper established beyond doubt the dangers of taping glass during transport.

178 Evidence given by Graeme Gollan, Senior Paper Conservator, at the committee stage of the Burrell Collection (Lending and Borrowing) (Scotland) Bill, 3.X.2013, paper BC/S4/13/4/A, instancing to two different lending cases, both post-1800, to support his proposition that each pastel loan request should be independently assessed. (Some conservators would regard multiple layers of fixative as a concern.) The other example, a pastel by Sisley, was refused because microscopic particles were found inside the glazing. At the committee hearing of 19.X.2013, however, the Convener reported that “The conservators have suggested that it is always dangerous to move pastels because the pastel itself does not stick to the paper and no way has been found of making that happen.” See above for Jeremy Warren’s evidence to the committee. According to a report in The Australian (8.3.2016) relating to the Burrell loan to the Degas exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in 2016 “special care was given to the two travelling Degas pastels lent to the NGV (the only ones assessed as robust enough to travel out of a collection of 14) because of the medium’s notoriously fragile properties: they travelled horizontally in temperature-controlled, shock-resistant crates designed to minimise vibration.” Thirteen Degas pastels were transported from the Burrell to The National Gallery, London, in 2017: all but one travelled horizontally, in museum cases with several pastels per case; Plastazote foam was used to line each layer, the softer grade used for the outer case.

179 Stratis 1997 considered that neither unfixed pastels nor pastels executed on paper that has been adhered to canvas, stretched and wrapped around a strainer should be lent. It is unclear whether her advice to the organisers of the Liotard 2015 exhibition was based on a change of mind.
in Martigues in the same year included some 28 pastels, all but one of which travelled considerable distances by road or air.

Following these international exhibitions of eighteenth century pastels, the Commission des prêts et dépôts de la Direction des musées de France commissioned a report asking whether the prohibition on loans of pastels should be reconsidered. The report advised against this: because each pastel is a complex and vulnerable object, sensitive to shock, vibration and hygrometric variations, and because each exposure to vibration contributes to fragility, all loans of pastels should be avoided (“formellement déconseillé”).

Not to lend remains the policy of the Louvre, indisputably the greatest collection of eighteenth century pastels. There is nothing new in this, nor was the policy confined to its own works: in 1891, when a Perronneau pastel was offered to the Louvre by an owner in the Gironde, the directeur des musées nationaux reported to the minister that “Le transport d’un pastel étant toujours chose périleux, un des conservateurs du Louvre ira..l’examiner chez M. du Mas de Paysac.” Reviewing the history of travel (voluntary or not) of the La Tour pastels at Saint-Quentin, and noting in particular that degradation from transport is often not immediately perceptible, Cabezas 2009a came to the same conclusion. Brunetti 2009, in the same journal, wrote of the “quasi-impossibilité d’éviter entièrement ces risques.” A number of potential exhibitions of eighteenth century pastels were quietly shelved or abandoned around this time. A strict non-lending policy is essentially followed by most of the other major collections of eighteenth century pastels, including (apart from the Louvre and Saint-Quentin) the museums in Geneva, Rijksmuseum, Warsaw, Dresden, New York etc.

Despite these principles, significant numbers of pastels have travelled to recent exhibitions, lent or borrowed by major institutions. Carriera 2007b included 38 pastels from collections in Italy, France, Germany, England and Ireland. New York 2011 involved only a small number of pastels travelling long distances. More recently, Karlsruhe 2015, Vigée Le Brun 2015 and Liotard 2015 all included international loans. (Warsaw 2015 – perhaps the largest ever exhibition exclusively devoted to pastel – included only works from the museum’s own collection.) Liotard 2015 displayed 28 pastels in Edinburgh, with a further 8 added in London: all travelled by road (the museums in Amsterdam, Dresden and Geneva withheld pastels, lending only works in other media). It is notable however that while Vigée Le Brun 2015 included some 32 pastels at the Grand Palais, the American leg (Vigée Le Brun 2016) included only 5 pastels.

180 Coural 2009b. An extract from the report and the oral presentation on 11.VI.2009 by Natalie Coural and Michel Dubus appeared in Coural 2009a, p. 27.
181 The Département des arts graphiques also successfully resisted suggestions in 2015 that the reserve pastel collection be removed to a remote site at Liévin along with the other reserves (see reports in La Tribune de l’art, 11.VI.2015 etc.).
182 Archives des musées nationaux, cabinet des dessins, letter of 20.X.1891.
183 I am not aware of any subsequent publication presenting scientific research refuting their conclusions. See Volkhamp 2013 for a broad overview of museums’ approaches, as well as the excellent articles by Cabezas 2009a and Herrenschmidt 2009 concerning the La Tour exhibition. At the Liotard exhibition in London in 2015 however the publicity material claimed that the “safe handling” of the “pastel paintings” [sic] “has been ensured through important developments in both the understanding of the medium’s physical properties and advances in methods of art transportation.” These have not (so far) been published.

184 In his evidence to the Scottish parliament, 18.IX.2013, also in connection with the Burrell Collection bill, Neil McGregor, perhaps the greatest proponent for the scientific and cultural value of lending, noted that “the best argument…seems to me to be the practice of all the world’s great museums”, and conceded that there are some objects which are not fit to travel. In the appended statement of the British Museum’s own practices, it was noted that “the BM has historically not collected pure pastels and does not have any of the classic pastel artists such as Liotard or Perronneau in the collection.” In contrast 19th and 20th century pastels, being fixed, were eligible to be lent. A small pastel by Gainsborough was mentioned, presumably the coloured chalk drawing of the Duke of Montagu lent to Edinburgh in 2008.

185 The round trip from Vienna to Edinburgh is over 4000 km.
186 Two pendant pastels, purchased shortly before the exhibition, and one drawing with touches of pastel were exceptionally lent by the Louvre and allowed to travel the very short distance to the Grand Palais.
Many factors explain why this is happening. The positive side may be an increased interest in what has for long been an unpopular field. But the other factors include a lack of awareness of, or disbelief in, the special risks at director or curatorial level; a disregard for the views of paper conservation staff (compounded by their belief in the inevitability of lending and a preference to assist rather than block); a rapidly proliferating model of museum funding which relies on the temporary exhibition for revenues; a culture of reciprocity among museum lenders; the ignorance and goodwill of private collectors; and the availability of government indemnity schemes to remove accountability and market price for the risk from the organisers (but v. §V.15 infra).

V.2 Shock and vibration

The eighteenth century literature demonstrates a constant hunt for methods of fixing pastel, an impossible quest since successful fixatives alter the optical properties of the medium (see Chapter IV). Fixing is not normally considered an acceptable intervention by modern conservators. It is safest to assume that pre-1800 pastels have not been fixed and remain especially vulnerable to damage from shock and vibration. Shock is a sudden, instantaneous force in a single direction, while vibration involves the transfer of energy from a cyclical source over a longer period. There is no certifiably safe level of either: shock levels below 0.5g are usually thought not to present any immediate hazard (however v. §§V.3–4 infra), but this is a level likely to be greatly exceeded when they are moved with all but the most careful handling.

Shock and vibration can occur most obviously during transportation (see below), but are also issues when pastels are being moved for any purpose. During conservation screw fixings should be used; pins may not be hammered (as Oudry, Lirot and Perronneau noted in the documents cited §IV.18 supra), nor may staples or nail-guns be applied. Even the type of tyres fitted to a museum trolley can have a measurable impact on shock levels when rolled over floors. Shock and vibration can also occur in situ, from nearby construction work, street traffic, musical, dance or gymnastic events. Even such matters as the hanging system, the display on pedestals and the exposure to visitor footfall (particularly on wooden parquet floors) can give rise to unexpected levels of vibration or shock. When in 1912 a new omnibus service was introduced in the faubourg Saint-Honoré, Henri de Rothschild’s famous La Tour pastel of Duval de l’Épinoy was sufficiently jeopardised that he built a new house in a quieter neighbourhood.

Sophisticated forms of damping shock and vibration have been developed for various engineering applications. As a general principle these seek to interpose some form of shock absorber which converts part of the transmitted energy into harmless heat; for vibration, typical approaches

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187 See however Gombaud, Sauvage & van Leeuwen 2014, where fixative of an historical recipe (sturgeon glue in a 0.25% solution in water and ethanol) was applied to the surface of a pastel by Lirot (unspecified, but apparently 149.1292).

188 Even in the rare cases where contemporary documents indicate that a pastel has been fixed (see Chapter IV for cases involving Lotot and Jurine, and pastels by Lirot, Cotes and Perronneau), it may be that the fixative was applied in insufficient quantities or has simply degraded over time so as to offer little or no protection today. It should be unnecessary to say that conservators should not think of applying modern fixatives to pastels, but this is recommended in some sources.

189 Based on personal communications with David Saunders (British Museum, describing investigations carried out also at the National Gallery), 2006 and Ross Merrill (Washington, NGA), 2006. Shocks are often accompanied by vibration which may offer more serious hazards but is less easy to detect or measure. In an important report for the conservation research group at the British Museum (no. 1999/6, published as “Vibration damage levels for museum objects”, 13th Triennial Meeting, Rio de Janeiro, preprints, pp. 90–95), David Thickett found several instances of damage (including severe loss of pigment in one case) to objects with pre-existing weaknesses during demolition work for the Great Court Project. These occurred at far lower levels of vibration (0.2g, equivalent to a peak particle velocity of 1.6 mm/s) than expected to cause damage, and demonstrated distant transmission that contradicted exponential decay models.

190 Esser 2011, confirming the conclusion reached by Stratis 1997.

191 Kracht & Klechowski 2017 summarises research into oil paintings; the risks apply a fortiori to pastels. Recently a number of museums (including the MMA in New York, the Louvre and the V&A) have started to hold gymnastics classes in the galleries. In July 2017 the National Gallery trustees debated the impact of vibration within the gallery from a motor racing event in Trafalgar Square; steps had been taken where necessary to remove items from display during the event.

192 See ESSAYS; also the passage on the tambourine effect from Moreau-Vauthier 1913, p. 106 discussed below under Transport.
interpose devices with a natural frequency below that of the source (it is imperative to avoid resonance effects which occur when the frequencies match). While there are many sophisticated solutions to specific problems, the multiplicity of sources (particularly during transport) preclude any universal solution. In a review of 40 years’ research on the topic of protecting paintings from such risks, Kracht & Kletschkowski 2017 conclude that the strategy of vibration reduction through packaging is unreliable: “most of these solutions amplify the input instead of reducing the incoming noise.” There are inherent problems too because of the natural resonant frequencies of canvases. Such problems are only likely to be exacerbated for pastels (which are not discussed in Kracht & Kletschkowski 2017), where in addition to all the problems to which oil paintings are exposed must be considered the additional dynamic system of the bonding of pastel pigments to their support: systems for which natural resonances have not been determined.

V.3 Phenomenological models for damage

It is natural to assume that the effects of shock and vibration will be immediately apparent, as debonded pigment will fall from the surface and, even if blank areas of the paper are not immediately visible, the pigment dust should be seen lying on the lower spacer. Unfortunately this is not a reliable indicator: the outcome may not be a neat binary alternative of damage/no damage. Pigment can be loosened without falling immediately, and the nature of the adhesion (at micro- and macro-scoopic levels) is both highly complicated and imperfectly understood (but v. §V.4 infra for one approach): it is not even clear if the problem belongs to physics, chemistry, biology or crystallography – if indeed there is a single problem – or whether the answer is the same for all pastels of all ages on all supports, or is so idiosyncratic that it is not admissible to a single solution.

The variety of techniques employed by different artists makes inference from samples unreliable (although it is clear that some artists’ work was more fragile than others). It is logically easier to demonstrate that there is a risk than to prove that there isn’t. Proof of the effectiveness of any proposed solution would strictly require destructive testing of a sample from each class of object – but individual variation means that there are as many classes as there are surviving pastels. Even if this standard were relaxed, evidence gathered from transportation protocols would have to be consistently gathered (in practice many exhibitions with stated protocols have been willing to waive requirements to accommodate the requests of individual lenders) from many hundreds of specimens observed over a long-term time scale (to allow for the emergence of latent damage).

Fatigue: Although this is in area in which research is progressing, one theory likens the adhesion of pastel subjected to vibration to the behaviour of metal in aeroplanes, where nothing is seen until failure occurs after a certain number of cycles. Metal fatigue produces catastrophic results: whether the same phenomenon occurs with pastel has yet to be proved. The approach is best understood in terms of a Wöhler diagram or S–N curve, in which cyclic stress S required to failure is plotted against duration, or number of cycles N: the curve falls steeply initially, but the question is whether there is a horizontal asymptote (known as an “endurance limit”), and if so whether it lies safely above the stress levels encountered in practice. Whether the relevant “stress” is shock levels (acceleration) or vibration (frequency or amplitude?) is unclear.

Diminished luminosity: A second theory notes that (based on subjective assessment) pastels can sometimes show subtle changes in appearance (notably a dulling in luminosity) without any
noticeable loss of particles. This may be due to microscopic displacement of the reflective surfaces of the pigment, and arises after travel (and possible heating to high temperature – as in the Quorum v Schramm case cited below, §V.6.4). Whether it accelerates debonding is unclear, but it is thought to occur at far lower levels of shock or vibration than those needed to observe significant levels of falling particles. Evidence is currently anecdotal (if admissible in English courts), based on subjective assessments of appearance that are difficult to capture in photography.

Both these models could explain the apparent contradiction between evidence of the effect of single journeys and the observed condition of many pastels today. Either model should give concern to those who think there is no special danger in moving pastels, as they undermine the evidence they rely on; but they may continue to believe that the endurance limit will not be met and may not accept claims of changes in luminosity. It is difficult however to ignore the evidence from transfer onto the inside of glass (see §V.5 infra).

While research on mitigating shock and vibration is focused on methods for reducing measurable parameters, any comfort that might be derived from remaining within safe harbour limits that such research might establish is undermined by the absence of a clear link between these particular hazards and the actual mechanisms explaining the debonding and degradation. In particular the need to subject samples to very extreme levels of shock and vibration to cause pastel to fall in the laboratory suggests that these are not the sole explanations of deterioration. Common sense indicates that they should be minimised, but prudence dictates that there is no safe level at our current level of understanding.

V.4 Fundamental models for adhesion

There is a surprising void at the heart of pastel literature concerning the basic mechanism for adhesion, although an understanding of this would seem to be a first step in mitigating hazards in transport.196 Evidently however there are multiple mechanisms at work, and a danger that measures to protect against one hazard increase others.

The principal mechanisms for adhesion seem to be (a) physical interlocking or mechanical entrapment of pastel particles within the mesh of fibres from the support; (b) chemical bonding, perhaps involving polysaccharide chains (v. §IV.4.3 supra); and (c) adhesion forces found in fine cohesive powders, including van der Waals and electrostatic forces.197

The importance of van der Waals forces relative to gravitational forces (and shock levels which in practice are usually of the same order of magnitude, perhaps up to 10g) depends crucially on pigment size and separation. In particular the ratio of van der Waals to gravity forces can be roughly estimated198 in practice as

\[ \frac{F_{vdW}}{F_G} = \left(\frac{0.1}{d}\right)^2 \]

where \(d\) is the particle diameter. In other words particles need to be smaller than 0.1 mm (100 μm or microns) in diameter for van der Waals effects to dominate gravity; between 10 and 100 μm, they are slightly adhesive; below 10 μm they may be considered adhesive or very adhesive.

Particle diameters are not known with precision for pre-1800 pastels. An estimate based on modern samples suggests that they are of typically in the range 0.1–10 μm depending on pigment.199 The efficacy of the adhesion (and its resistance to shock) depends crucially on the

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197 For a useful discussion of these, see for example Jürgen Tomas & Sebastian Kleinschmidt, “Improvement of flowability of fine cohesive powders by flow additives”, Chemical engineering & technology, 2009, XXXII/10, pp. 1470–83.
198 Equation 7 in Tomas & Kleinschmidt, ibid.
199 “Other paint pigments such as carbon black in its smallest physical form, iron (Prussian) blue and phthalocyanines have sizes as small as 50 nanometers but most demonstrate a size range of 0.1 to 10 microns depending upon type and use.” (Philip E. Plantz, “Pigment particle size using laser diffraction technology”, Microtrac application note SL-AN-30 revision C; see also handprint.com). Similar information is given in Kosek 1995,
diameter, and the difference in observed condition among pre-1800 pastels today and even between different colours may be due to particle size.

While the above formula might seem to suggest that if all the particles were of 10 μm diameter, they would remain in place against a shock of up to 100 g (and thus be immune to the roughest treatment), this ignores several issues apart from the imprecision of the sizing. While the particles may cohere, it is less clear what holds the whole mass of particles to the paper, and the potential for entire cohesive lumps to behave as a single particle cannot be ignored. For this reason all shock and vibration recommendations based on conventional dynamic behaviour must continue to be observed.

V.5 Electrostatic effects

It is well known that pastel is vulnerable to lifting by low levels of electrostatic forces. While it can be seen if adhesive tape is used to protect glass from breakage during transport: when the tape is peeled off, particles of pigment can often be found adhering to the inside of the glass, or even be observed jumping from the surface of the picture onto the inner surface of the glass (this is another reason why deeper spacers should be used than framers often think: a 6 mm gap is an order of magnitude better than 2 mm since the force obeys an inverse square law).

Pigment transfer onto the inside of glass is routinely observed when an old assembly is opened, even with standard glass which has never been taped. Often the pastel surface appears to remain intact. Pigment is spread uniformly to the edges, indicating that the transfer has not been the result of contact (which would be denser at the middle). Individual colours show different propensities to such transfer (often the effect is more visible against a black than a white surface, as lighter colours seem to be more mobile). Whether the effect is due to shock alone or to triboelectric effects is uncertain, but experiments with modern samples suggest that robust handling (including repeated shaking and flexing of the paper) removes far less pigment than a close pass with a charged object. The micrographs below (at approximately 100x magnification) show some pastel on paper (a) before; (b) after flexing; and (c) after removal of particles with static electricity. While isolated particles still adhere well, losses were greater where layers of pastel accumulate. While it is difficult to detect losses of pastel from large cohesive masses, it is often easier to find isolated particles on the inside of glass or on charged rods that have removed them.

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p. 17: “The sizes of pigment particles range from less than a micrometer, like zinc oxide (0.25 μm – 1 μm), titanium white (0.5 μm – 1 μm), or indigo (0.25 μm–0.1 μm[sic]), to relatively large particles, like smalt (10 μm–50 μm), terre verte (up to 60 μm), or sienna (10 μm–60 μm). The most common sizes of pigments fall into the range 1 μm to 10 μm and less often between 5 μm and 20 μm.” An estimate using a photomicrograph of Unison Red 9 particles lifted from a sample using electrostatic forces suggests particles can be up to 12 μm in diameter.

200 See for example Norville-Day & al. 1993. Shelley 1987 (pp. 38, 85 & passim) is clear that acrylic sheeting, even with antistatic coatings, should never be used with pastel; it is unclear that more recent products have entirely overcome this concern.

201 Experiments by author, 11.V.2018, using a digital microscope. Each image is 0.5mm in width. The very shallow depth of field makes sharp focusing extremely difficult. The sample used was Unison Red 9 applied to white uncoated 80gsm office paper. Background colour is uncorrected. Static electricity was generated with human hair and a plastic pocket comb.
The implications of the electrostatic properties of pastel for conservation and transportation are extensive (v. §§V.8–10 infra). In particular current packing arrangements may exacerbate the problem, by juxtaposing soft foam with glass or backboards where vibration may cause rubbing leading to the creation of static: even though this may be remote from the pastel surface, the discharge of that electricity may be unpredictable. Various materials have been designed for the transportation of electrostatic-sensitive devices (“ESDs”) and components. Metal-coated plastic bags can create Faraday cages to insulate the object from charge: but the surface may not be appropriate to put in direct contact with gilt frames, and the bags will not prevent the creation of static within the package, whether from any lining used or even the materials in the pastel itself. Special pink anti-static polyurethane foam sheets are used in the electronics industry, but while these can dissipate electrostatic charge they do not prevent it arising from other components. Black conductive foam is preferred for other ESD applications, and it is unclear which is the better choice with pastels.

Pastel’s susceptibility to electrostatic forces was the theory behind an idea put forward in 1978, in which the pastel is placed in front of an electrically charged plate which maintains a constant charge and is intended to hold the pastel particles in place. Perhaps because of the practical requirements for constant electricity (with battery powered backup for outages) the technique has not been adopted.

V.6 Ideal display/storage conditions

Pastels are intended to be hung on walls like other paintings. If stored, they should still be kept vertical, on walls or fixed shelving (not on, or even near, sliding racks which are regularly pulled out).

V.6.1 Lighting

Light levels for any works on paper should be controlled (a level of 50 lux is widely accepted as standard, although of course the duration of exposure is also important); there is normally less of a problem with pastels than with drawings and watercolours where the paper is exposed and can be bleached and become brittle with exposure to too much light, a process known as photolytic degradation. The acidity of the paper is also a key factor in its ageing; since most pastel materials


203 For an account of the vibration levels these can cause (including to works on adjacent racks), see Kracht & Kletschkowski 2017 and the references cited.

204 See for example Pilc & White 1995, p. 83.
are alkaline, they can act as a buffer and mitigate deterioration through acid hydrolysis.) No work of art should ever be in direct sunlight. Most pigments in eighteenth century pastels are light fast: the exceptions are the lakes, such as the red (favoured by artists from Liotard to Cotes) which has often faded from crimson to a pale pink or grey (the same effect is found in Reynolds’s oil paintings); the yellow, made from vegetable dyes, which was often mixed to produce green, also tends to fade, leaving so much foliage a naked blue.205 Such changes are irreversible.206 The questions of optimal lighting for exhibitions are discussed in §XII.6 infra. The growing popularity of LED and other light sources, often driven by energy consumption considerations, raise both aesthetic and conservation issues, although usually museums are aware of the need to control light emissions at different wavelengths.

V.6.2 Humidity

Humidity levels are important: a relative humidity level in the range 40–50% is ideal, but rapid variations and extremes are the main enemy. In an English climate with central heating, humidifiers will be needed in winter (whenever the external temperature is below say 5°C this becomes especially important) and dehumidifiers in summer (particularly with wet weather). Basements should generally be avoided. Insufficient humidity can result in pastel debonding. There are several consequences of excessive humidity, including the growth of mould (v. §V.6.3 infra). Actual condensation, like flood damage, is almost impossible to repair satisfactorily: water marks and the dispersion of salts etc. can seriously disfigure a pastel.207 Variations in humidity can also lead to warping both of frames and of strainers. The latter can first appear either as cockling in the support, or as “draws”, or ripples radiating from the corners of the picture. These can occur during exposure to low relative humidity, and may disappear when moderate relative humidity returns. In some cases however they can lead to tearing of the support (this can also arise from friction between ill-fitting strainers and frame rebates).208 While the majority of pastels are on strainers, those on board are less prone to damage; mounting on strainers has been identified as one of the principal causes of deterioration of pastels.209

Maintaining climate control during international travel is a particular challenge. Smaller packing cases, favoured for other reasons (v. §V.12 infra), may be more exposed to fluctuations than triple lined cases depending on how and where they are loaded onto vehicles.

V.6.3 Microclimate and similar assemblies

It is important for pastels to remain in a sealed environment at all times. Opinions differ as to whether this should be a completely airtight “microclimate” box or assembly, in which the pastel is encased in an integrated, sealed structure (faced with the glass) resting within the rebate of the frame; this can help mitigate fluctuations in humidity, but can also lead to build-up of excessive humidity if not carefully monitored. The alternative is to use gummed paper tape for all joins, ensuring a dust-free environment, and physically excluding any fungal or insect infestation. (While

205 Thus the “fauteuil couvert de damas vert” of La Tour’s Mlle Sallé [J.46.2842] noted by the critic in 1741 is now completely blue. Two examples in Liotard’s œuvre are the coats of George III (Royal Collection), faded from red to neutral, and of Maurice de Saxe, in the uniform of the Saxe-Volontaires, faded from green to blue in both the Amsterdam and Dresden versions, to different degrees. The cause has been assumed to be light, but a recent examination of the George III out of its frame (2015: private communication, Alan Donnithorne, Royal Collection, 14.I.2016) indicates that there is no difference in fading under the concealed areas. The fading of these vegetable dyes may simply be age related (it is also possible that the very small concealed area has been abraded). In other cases (examples by artists ranging from Cotes to La Tour), unframing reveals areas of the original colour demonstrating that light is the cause.

206 However Caroline Corrigan (in Carlo James & al., Old master prints and drawings: a guide to preservation and conservation, Amsterdam, 1997, p. 73) observes that “This fading is practically always superficial. The color can be recovered by revealing the underlayer using the tip of a fine sable brush, but this sort of extremely delicate intervention should be done, if ever, only by a very experienced conservator.” This would not be universally approved.

207 An additional problem can be the caking observed in Daniels 1998.

208 Although post 1800, examples are illustrated in Choi & Makin 2013.

209 See for example Birot & al. 2014.
seals on back boards can be inspected regularly, particular care is needed with traditional assemblies to ensure that the lining paper sealing the glass is still effective: this can only be checked by opening the pastel.) One arrangement which is commonly found is the “montage paquet” in which the spacers are pinned or glued directly to the face of the pastel, the glass in turn rests on the spacer and is held in place by tape extending from the front of the glass round the sides to the backing board, creating a sealed unit. It is often found where dealers have removed pastels from original frames, and is used by some museums: it is however particularly unsatisfactory should it subsequently become necessary to clean the inside of the glass, as it can be difficult to take apart safely. Numerous pastels bear the traces of cuts from scalpels inflicted during such operations.

It should be noted that the montage paquet is not necessarily a microclimate assembly. The key distinction is the method of sealing. Where traditional materials which are permeable to air (cardboard backing, standard brown gummed paper tape) are used, even when fully dust resistant, adjustments to external humidity levels occur quite readily. It might be thought that the process of applying wet tape, either to a montage paquet or a traditional assembly, would lead to excessive humidity being sealed in, but simple experiments with mock-ups indicate a return from 90% to 45% RH within eight hours.

Microbial deterioration can result not only from air-borne sources, but from constituents of the support or pastel crayons. Mould readily grows on pastels (it often shows a preference for black areas, and works on parchment are more vulnerable). Fumigation with thymol used to be the technique of choice (and even appeared to have some apparent fixing effect on pastels), but is not now approved (there are concerns over its toxicity, and suggestions that it can accelerate ageing in paper). The removal of dust with fine brushes, a light current of air or a specially adapted vacuum cleaner is regularly undertaken by skilled conservators, but it is a hazardous procedure. Pigments such as lead white can oxidise and become black over time; it is sometimes possible to reverse this with chemical treatments.

V.6.4 Extreme heat

Excessive heat can also cause problems, ranging from inadequate humidity to damage to primary and secondary supports. The case of Quorum A S v Schramm [2001] EWHC 494 (Comm), heard in the English High Court, concerned a pastel by Degas exposed to very high levels of heat as a result of a warehouse fire ten years before. The analysis of different types of damage, at paragraphs 83ff of the judgment, is particularly interesting in relation to the possibility of latent damage which is either invisible or revealed in a loss of brilliance that may be apparent only to the expert eye. The court accepted evidence from one of the experts that—

The heat and the humidity had caused molecular change, the effect of which depended on the extent of the heat and the humidity. In simple terms, he considered that the heat and humidity were similar in effect to an oven and the crystals were cooked and became like flour; in consequence, they lost their adhesion and shine… Loss of adhesion: The pastel appeared in good condition, but with time each particle of pigment would fall away. He did not consider that long term damage would have been visible in 1995 [four years after the fire].

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210 This arrangement is illustrated in fig. 4 of Voßkamp 2013.
211 See for example Anthony H. Rose, Microbial biodeterioration, 1981.
212 Gombaud, Sauvage & van Leeuwen 2014 describe a method using a vacuum cleaner and a glass Pasteur pipette with a 1 mm diameter end. Many conservators simply use a fine brush to remove the mycelia spores and dust particles.
213 The Getty’s La Tour preparation for Silvestre was treated with hydrogen peroxide suspended in ether, as revealed in their exhibition The secret life of drawings, 2011. Such an approach may be more difficult with full pastels.
214 Available on the BAILII website. An account of the case will now be found in many textbooks on insurance law or tort.
V.6.5 Mitigating shock in permanent locations

Minor in situ shock and vibration can be mitigated to some extent by the simple expedient of placing a small (2.5 cm) cube of soft plastic sponge between the wall and the bottom of the frame. Vibration can still travel down the picture chain, but two degrees of freedom are damped; shock from neighbours’ building work etc. is most likely to be in a horizontal direction. The sponge also helps keep air circulating round the work and avoids humidity being trapped; this is particularly relevant if pastels are hung on external walls (if so, temperature differentials should be monitored to ensure there is no risk of condensation forming on the glass).

V.7 Supports and structure

Mostly this chapter concerns pastels of conventional construction as described in Chapter IV. Some pastels – especially seventeenth century ones, or those of smaller dimensions – are not mounted on canvas and strainers, but may be pasted on board or even made on loose sheets of paper, like conventional drawings. Pastels have also been made on supports (v. §IV.2 supra) as varied as silk, prepared canvas and even copper plates, each of which present particular problems. Pastels on parchment are normally fixed onto strainers unlined, i.e. without an additional canvas support; parchment’s weight and uneven thickness can cause particular problems. Natural tensions in the skin, possibly exacerbated by changes in the humidity, can result in cockling and even tearing: these require complex and time-consuming interventions which should only be undertaken by the most experienced conservators. Paper which has been pasted to canvas in the traditional process of marouflage have often survived well, the tension in the paper created by drying serving to hold the whole object together.

A problem analogous to that with frames discussed below (again far worse with ovals) is the possibility of failure of the wooden strainer. When this happens with an oil painting, a straightforward repair can be made; with a pastel, however, the consequences can be catastrophic (particular care should be taken not to take a pastel out of its frame if the strainer shows any risk). It should also be noted that most strainers will have lost some tension since they were originally made: this can result in the canvas billowing during any movement, thereby loosening the bonding. The problem may be compounded by the loss of tension being uneven.

Even mid-sized pastels are frequently made on several sheets of paper joined carefully (v. §IV.2.4 supra). Such sheets are more liable to come adrift than single sheets wrapped around the edges of the canvas/strainer, but can sometimes be carefully refixed to the support. (Where separate sheets become completely detached and pass over the surface of other sheets of the pastel, irreparable damage can occur.) Joined sheets of parchment, without a support on which to rest, are far trickier: they are held together only by paste along the overlap, and can very easily separate with movement from transport or change in atmospheric conditions.

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215 My experiments suggest an attenuation of about 60% using Gemini Tinytag shock meter; these were not carried out to laboratory standards, but are in line with the results reported in Saunders 1998 for foam damping during transport (comparing shock levels sustained by a painting compared with its outer case). However other experiments suggest that foam and other damping mechanisms can on occasion create resonance effects which exacerbate rather than attenuate the effects (Saunders, noted above).

216 Ideally Plastazote LD33 (Cécile Gombaud, private communication, 2015). Plastazote is a closed-cell, cross-linked polyethylene, the cells filled with nitrogen; polyethylene foam ages better than polyurethane, and is an effective replacement for PVC and polyurethane foams as well as for neoprene and natural rubber. Foams are broadly divided into shock-absorbing “cushioning” foams and spring-like “upholstery” foams (mostly polyurethane), which rebound, creating further shock and vibration. But open-celled polyurethane foam has superior vibration damping to closed-cell polyethylene foam and is typically employed in acoustic insulation. Typically polyurethane (as produced in dimpled or alveolated sheets) is softer and spongier, and while it offers superior impact absorption at lower levels, the stiffer polyethylene actually performs better in drop tests at the higher shock levels likely to cause severe damage.

217 For reasons including courtesy to current owners, actual examples are not illustrated in this public document, although the author has drawn on personal experience.
V.8 Spacers

One of the most important conservation considerations (and the one most often ignored) is the spacing between the surface of the pastel and the inner face of the glass: there needs to be a clear gap over the full area of the work, normally achieved by having a spacer or fillet (ideally of at least 6 mm for a 60x50 cm sized portrait) all the way round the border. This will normally be hidden behind the rebate, and the side edge blackened so that it is less visible. A simple way to measure the gap without disassembling the work is to use a torch and observe the shadow of a particle of dust, an imperfection in the glass or a piece of paper placed on the front of the glass: moving the torch beam from an angle of incidence of 90° to 45° will show a lateral displacement on the surface equal to the distance from the surface to the spot. Allow for the thickness of the glass (typically 2 mm). Inadequate spacing is a common problem (not only in historical assemblies: most framers today need special instruction) and can lead to serious problems when pastel surfaces meet glass: the danger is during transport, not only where careless handling pushes through the backing but also, particularly with larger works, where the support has lost tension, and movement occurs. (A simple non-invasive way to see if tension has been lost again uses the paper/45° light method on a central point in the picture while hanging vertically; this should be repeated with the pastel laid flat, face up. The difference in the lateral displacement measures the sag in the middle of the support under a force of 1g; if it is measurable, the pastel is not in a fit condition to travel.218) It can also occur with increased humidity when paper expands. If the humidity is so high that moisture condenses on the inside of the glass, the droplets may also bridge the physical gap.

The spacer should be made from a low-density wood such as obeche with little risk of resin seepage (museum mounting board can be used, but will need to be laminated – doubled or even tripled – to achieve the necessary depth). It should be cut and mitred to fit the rebate so that it is not in danger of sliding across the pastel if lining tape adhesive dries out. (Such damage is not uncommon.) It was common for spacers to be pinned in place, but pins often rust and can cause problems. Ovals present special difficulties. In older assemblies the spacing devices may be blocks of cork placed at intervals or even pieces of thick cord. These are often held in place only by pressure, and care is required when unframing such a pastel: in theory a pastel should never be placed face down,219 but the risk of a spacer (or the glass itself) sliding over the front surface when released may be a greater concern.

V.9 Glazing

The author’s view is that original glass should always be preserved wherever possible; minor occlusions or other blemishes should be regarded as part of the work’s charm, unless unfortunately located over a sitter’s face.220 This is consistent with the ICON duty to “conserve cultural heritage [as] reliable evidence of the past.”221 Several difficulties can arise, some of which (such as breakage) require the glass to be replaced. It is quite common in old glass to find “glass disease”, which causes a fogging effect that cannot be reversed. The vocabulary can be confusing, but most cases with picture glass arise from the same phenomenon where non-silicate constituents of the glass

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218 In the case of pastels with cross-bars fitted to the strainer, there is an equivalent risk of the support touching these bars in transit. The separation can only be evaluated by opening the back. Such impact is known to cause loss in oil paintings. Marks on the front of a pastel from strainer edges may have occurred during execution or in subsequent mishandling.


220 Sometimes this arises because glass has been refitted upside down. Occlusions, which are often long pointed ovals in shape, normally are visible with their shadows in directional light; sometimes tiny spherical air bubbles in the glass are invisible, and only their shadows (caused by internal refraction) are apparent as small black spots.

221 The Institute of Conservation’s Code of Conduct article 4.2, adopted 2014.

222 The requirement is for an imperfect ratio of ingredients. This is found more often in continental than in English glass (Alan Derbyshire, private communication, 2018). For a review of the phenomenon, its causes and management, see Jerry J. Kunicki-Goldfinger, “Unstable historic glass: symptoms, causes, mechanisms and conservation”, Studies in conservation, 9, VI.2008, pp. 47–60.
(sodium oxide in soda glass or potassium oxide in potash glass) react with water vapour to form alkaline solutions; the hydroxides react with carbon dioxide to form carbonates, resulting in the appearance of a white powder on the glass or crizzling. Temperature and humidity facilitate this irreversible process. In the case of La Tour’s full-length Mme de Pompadour (see §IV.15 supra), the original glass had to be abandoned when it developed similar symptoms.223 In theory glass can grow mould – fungal infestation from the Aspergillus genus or similar air-borne microorganisms224 – but chemical glass disease is the more likely cause of the opacity in picture glass.

Hand-made sheets are rarely perfectly flat, but neither are frame rebates, and fillets may need to be sculpted to ensure a closer fit and proper, even support for the glass to avoid additional breakage hazard on refixing and transport. Hand-cut oval sheets of glass are especially at risk as the jagged edges can result in a single point taking all the pressure during transport if lining tape has lost its adhesion; this risk is compounded as the mechanical strength of oval frames is compromised by their construction (see below).

When replacement glass is required, there is some merit in using standard 2 mm picture float glass. There is a wide range of newer glazing materials225 on the market, said to have benefits ranging from ultraviolet light reduction to being shatter-proof. Some of these claims need to be examined carefully. Apart from price, the deficiencies of such products can be serious. Many are not colour-neutral; those that are for transmitted light will nevertheless yield distracting blue or green reflections of white light sources as a consequence of anti-reflective coatings. Laminated safety glass can be very much heavier than normal picture glass, with the consequence that frames can be compromised and the weight of the refitted picture can result in more severe shocks during transportation; this deficiency is compounded by the fact that many products are more flexible than glass, and to avoid contact with the pastel surface must be used in thicker sheets, particularly for larger works. They are not immune from breakage. Acrylic sheeting of any kind has a far lower melting point than glass, and while no work of art should ever be subjected to high temperatures, glass provides far better protection.226 The ageing properties of new materials may not be fully understood: degradation can lead to progressive discolouration, and in particular the risk of outgassing, where hazardous chemicals are released from the plastic over time. By far the biggest concern lies in the electrostatic properties of some of these new materials. While some very expensive products are marketed as “low static” the phenomenon is not eliminated (it is unclear if claims for the long-term anti-static performance and transparency of certain materials have been validated independently).

V.9.1 Glass cleaning

Problems can arise even when cleaning glass with a normal duster. While plastics are naturally triboelectric (v. §V.5 supra), this can also occur with normal glass.227 It has been suggested228 that this risk can be managed by undertaking the work within a stream created by an ionizing air blower (a machine developed for use in the manufacture of electronics components): this may or may not

but were described as synaeresis

223 Salmon 2018, p. 182f, drawing from Le Peut & Laquet 2013 which discusses the reports of Germain Bazin observing the glass while at Chambord in 1942. The subsequent description as “cynérèse” [sic], recte synérèse, or synaeresis (a spontaneous separation of liquid from within the glass), occurs only as Bazin’s note of a telephone conversation with Jacques-Charles-Marie Cogniard, head of the laboratory at the Banque de France; the circumstances as well as the misspelling suggest this may have been a confusion.

224 T. Ohtsuki, “Studies on the glass mould: On two species of Aspergillus isolated from glass”, Botanical magazine Tokyo, LXXV 1962, pp. 436–42, where the mould was identified in glass lenses.

225 A number of these products are mentioned in Voßkamp 2013 and Sauvage 2010. A good survey is Freemantle 2004. See also Sauvage & al. 2018 which summarises many conservators’ views that no form of acrylic glazing should be used.

226 For example in the circumstances that arose in Quorum v. Schramm, cited at §V.6.4.


228 Leila Sauvage, “Bench-top ionizing air blower”, Journal of paper conservation, XIII/3, 2012, p. 38. Manufacturers’ cleaning instructions are easily forgotten years after specialist glazing has been fitted.
be the best solution in a restoration studio (the complexities of the electrostatic forces discussed above is indicate caution), but is unlikely to be practicable in most private collections, and offers an additional hazard with temporary loans where gallery staff may ignore special stipulations.

V.9.2 Transportation without glazing

For safe transport, it might seem sensible to remove the glass and ship the pastel attached only to its strainer. This would permit the work to be packed in a very light container. The obvious difficulties are in how to secure the pastel within its box (wedges which touch the edge where the paper folds over the strainer risk weakening the most vulnerable part of the work), while preventing any possibility of the surface being touched (including by an over-zealous customs inspector). Maintaining precise climate conditions will also require additional care. Less obvious but of greater concern is that the presence of the backing board and glass seem to play an essential role in damping the vibration in the canvas.\(^{229}\) The air cushioning these components offer can be enhanced by ensuring the fit is tight so the air flow between the cavities is slow.\(^ {230}\)

It should be noted that even when small sheets mounted safely on conservation board with mount separating the work from direct contact, and where there is no glass present, offset can still occur. A good example is the pastel by Hugh Howard (J.4068.101) in the British Museum, evacuated to Wales, where the conservator (Edward Croft-Murray) annotated the card “This rubbing was due to insufficient packing when in transit to Aberystwyth 1939”: the figure shows the pastel with an inverted image of the card.\(^ {231}\)

V.10 Wadding and canvas vibration

Moreau-Vauthier\(^ {232}\) recommended (in addition to inserting cotton wool between strainer and canvas, and more between canvas and frame) lining the canvas with a second canvas with oil priming turned towards the strainer: this is intended to react to vibration in the opposite phase to the pastel, neutralising the effect by destructive interference; he further suggested mounting pastels on cardboard to avoid the “tambourine effect”. Polyester wadding has been used, directly supporting the reverse of the canvas or parchment; its electrostatic properties would seem to make

\(^{229}\) Bäschlin & al. 2011.


\(^{231}\) I am most grateful to Richard Stephens for drawing my attention to the card and identifying the source (31.V.2018). In the letter by Ezra Pound cited above (to Viola Baxter Jordan, 5.V.1933), he notes “Pastels usually double in transit, so put a pasteboard in front of it, that will take the replica.”

\(^{232}\) Moreau-Vauthier 1913, p. 106.
it an unsuitable material for this purpose (its very high surface resistance places it very far away from animal skin in the triboelectric series); further it is unclear if compression or resonance effects could exacerbate vertical forces, so that the risk of damage from surface–glass proximity or physical contact might actually be worsened. Wadding of an indeterminate material was used to line Mme de Pompadour (J.46.2541) in 2017, but as the pastel never moves out of its gallery the concerns are lower. Nevertheless wadding has been observed to expand over time (presumably from humidity), and can compress the secondary support, reducing its tension and ultimately risking glass-pastel contact.

V.11 Frames

Original frames, as well as mounting, glass, backing etc. are all part of the work and should be preserved intact unless there are overriding considerations. Good French rococo frames are often worth more than the pastels they frame (no doubt many have been stripped out for this reason: leaving pastels unprotected out of their frames is probably the biggest cause of their destruction). But such frames can be very fragile, not just because fine details (e.g. decorative corners and especially ribbons projecting above the top rail) can easily be broken in handling, but also because carved giltwood frames have an inherent problem: the oak carcass has a tendency to shrink over long periods, while the hard gesso onto which the gilding is laid does not: this means that frames should only be handled on the flattest part.

Many original frames have been altered during misconceived restoration campaigns, such as the fitting of microclimate assemblies or montages paquets (see §V.6.3 above); simpler structures, in which thin battens are fixed to the sides of the strainer, projecting beyond its front surface but onto which the glass is taped; and a variant of these, known as the Lepeltier box (an L-shaped wooden moulding incorporates the spacer with outer wrap for the strainer: once favoured by the Louvre, but now rejected as the fitting involves enlarging, and thus weakening, the rebates in original frames). Composition frames, particularly favoured in the nineteenth century, are vulnerable to loss of large sections of decoration. They are also far heavier than carved wood frames, exacerbating the problem of shock in transportation.

As with any piece of period furniture, control of humidity levels is important. While these problems are no different from damage to all period picture frames (and while it is relatively straightforward to repair them), the difference between pastels and oil paintings lies in the hazards pastels face when taken out of the frame. This should not been attempted in a gilding workshop, where a fine layer of gesso dust is likely to settle on any exposed surface. Pastels should be unframed by a skilled paper conservator and immediately stored flat in a dust-proof solander box before the frame is taken offsite.

V.12 Packing and stowage

Packing cases have to be fastened by hand (although staff in logistics companies will habitually reach for labour-saving power tools unless supervised). Triple-lined museum cases may seem to offer better transit protection than soft packing, but they become much heavier and harder to move without greater shock levels than careful hand transport which is only possible for smaller packages: it is in practice virtually impossible to ensure that a large case does not suffer shock when it reaches the end of a loading ramp. (However they offer superior climate control: v. §V.6.2 supra.) Stacking of cases is not recommended, as this is likely to result in excessive vibration at some

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233 The restoration was the subject of a video posted on YouTube by the sponsors Canson on 10.xi.2017.

234 Although Łukasz Łasyk & al., “Vibration as a hazard during the transportation of canvas paintings”, Conservation and Access: Contributions to the London Congress 15–19 September 2008, concluded that paintings wrapped in a tissue and transported in soft cardboard boxes were better cushioned from vibration that a painting rigidly fixed in a wooden case. More recently Läußli & al. 2014 (supported by Kracht & Kletschkowski 2017) concluded that packaging systems were ineffective (and occasionally counterproductive) protections against vibration.
levels. Whether cases should rest on some additional form of shock protection (whether foam or pneumatic, air cushions etc.) is debated.

V.12.1 Angle and orientation

A considerable amount of research has been undertaken into optimal orientation during transport, but the results are still inconclusive.\(^{235}\) Common sense suggests that vertical travel aligned with the direction of motion will minimise the risks, as cornering is more within the driver’s control than road bumps or rapid braking. Recognising that vertical shocks from dropping a packing case are the greatest risk, it is sometimes suggested\(^{236}\) that horizontal packing is to be preferred because such shocks compress the pastel into the support: but this is the opposite of what happens (the shock is vertically upwards, projecting the particles away from the surface). The key question however is whether pastel’s vulnerability to shearing forces is greater parallel or orthogonal out from the surface: the answer is likely to be specific to each work. Saunders & al. 1999 argued that horizontal transport was optimal; Esser 2011 investigated handling and transport strategies for the National Gallery of Denmark, and reached a similar conclusion on the basis of experiment. However the tests used simple samples of pastel applied mechanically to paper which does not appear to have been mounted on an elastic secondary support, so the results showing lower losses with horizontal transport on a museum trolley are some way from the real conditions of an eighteenth century pastel (with multiple thick layers of pastel) travelling on a lorry (where resonances may exacerbate movement in the middle of a large pastel travelling flat). While generally favoured, horizontal travel has not been universally accepted.\(^{237}\) The compromise suggested for the Degas exhibition in 1989 was to make the pastels travel at 45°; this would seem to be an each-way losing bet, as resolving a horizontal or vertical shock will contribute 71% of its force at this angle. Further the packing cases become larger and far heavier, resulting in increased shock levels in handling. According to a podcast issued by the Royal Academy, loans to the Liotard 2015 exhibition were transported either flat or vertically according to the lenders’ requests; private communications indicate that several lenders favoured travel at a near-vertical inclination of c.10°.

V.13 Air \(\rightarrow\) other modes of travel

Even among the supporters of lending, however, opinion differs as to the advisability of air travel. The vibration levels experienced in air travel are obviously undesirable, particularly during take-off (although even higher shock levels are recorded during airport cargo handling procedures, and attract more concern perhaps because they are more readily measured). The organizers of the Liotard 2015 exhibition are understood prudently to have forbidden all air transport, and therefore not to have solicited loans from North America. In contrast, in evidence given to the Scottish Parliament, a senior paper conservator\(^{238}\) regarded road travel and the handling of the case on the ground carried greater risk than the flight itself, and accordingly recommended air travel for one item. The Bizot Group guidelines also prefer air travel to long road journeys on account of the longer exposure to vibration. The recommendation may seem counterintuitive, but is a logical consequence of numerous studies including Saunders 1998, who reported surprisingly low levels during air flight of what he termed “vibration” (the figures were however quoted in g; the relationship between vibration, velocity and acceleration depends on factors such as frequency, and causes widespread confusion).

The damage from vibration at different frequencies has yet to be investigated fully, and it is unclear whether aero engine vibration can be directly compared with irregular road shocks. Saunders also

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\(^{235}\) The recommendation of Norville-Day & al. 1993 has still not been completed to universal consensus.

\(^{236}\) Stratis 1997.

\(^{237}\) Vößkamp 2013.

\(^{238}\) Graeme Gollan’s evidence, 2013, cited above.
reported shock levels of up to 10g in cargo handling areas of airports. While museum and road handling risks can be mitigated as has been suggested\(^{239}\) by a courier accompanying the work, it is difficult to see what action could be taken in the air, nor, with modern security arrangements, is it likely that a courier could influence the airside cargo-handling procedures.

No one recommends rail for pastels as far as I am aware, although numerous studies for perishable fruit and other industries indicate that rail vibration levels may be lower. Air-ride suspension for large trucks may be an improvement on traditional leaf springs, but the compressors themselves generate vibration and the systems can malfunction. Hydraulic tail-lift equipment used on such vehicles can independently create significant levels of vibration: they can only be operated with the ignition running, with engines which create alarming levels of vibration when idling.

The choice depends on balancing the risk of a small number of very high level shocks in cargo areas against far longer exposure to vibration on the road: no one knows the answer at present.\(^{240}\)

V.14 Secrecy and underreporting of damage

The scarcity of evidence of actual damage from transportation is one of the barriers to general acceptance of the risks. This compounds the possibility of debonding which is not immediately visible (or too subtle to be observable from photographs). Reporting of either is biased by the reluctance of museums and owners to publicise damage. The culture of secrecy surrounding avoidable damage inhibits open discussion of the extent of the problem. There is however enough evidence from the compromised state of so many pastels today that damage has occurred, even if confidentiality obscures establishing a causal link to specific transportation operations.

There are other factors that result in underreporting of damage, or cognitive errors that have this effect. Conflicts of interest among those involved are obvious. “Survivor bias” is an issue in that many damaged pastels have been abandoned, and those that survive today (particularly in museums) are those which have not suffered so much. Estimates (n. §VI.2 infra) suggest that the proportion of pre-1800 pastels which have survived is lower than for work in other media. With signed works by the best-known artists the retention rate is higher: Perronneau is perhaps a good example, but of the 227 autograph pastels known today at least from photographs, perhaps half are in compromised condition, and another quarter might be considered ruined.\(^{241}\)

V.15 Insurance

An additional consideration relates to insurance and governmental indemnity programmes. Most of these specifically exclude pastels from cover due to inherent vice.\(^{242}\) Even where damage to pastels is covered, it may be difficult to establish loss where damage is not immediately visible or where the specific cause cannot be proved to be an insured risk as opposed to general wear. Accordingly the additional risk posed by pastel may not be fully reflected in higher premiums, since commercial insurers rarely pay out for such claims. Government programmes, funded by the taxpayer rather than the lender, borrower or carrier, put an even greater distance between those in control of the perils and the market price for that risk, and encourage what is known as moral hazard. In any case financial compensation is an inadequate response to damage to heritage assets.

\(^{239}\) Gollan, ibid.

\(^{240}\) There is also a risk of too much comfort being drawn from scientific measurement of a single parameter (e.g. an accelerometer to assess multiple sources of vibration); conceptual deficiencies in models can include overlooking the multiplicity of hazards to which a specific work may be sensitive. Common sense should not be overruled.

\(^{241}\) My subjective judgments.

\(^{242}\) The US Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act of 1975 established the indemnity programme administered by the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities covering loans into and out of the US, and generally excludes both “pastels” and “works on parchment or vellum.”
V.16 Decisions before undertaking unavoidable travel

If exceptions are to be made, or travel must be undertaken, further decisions must be taken on all the issues discussed above. At what angle should pastels travel? Should glass be taped, replaced with toughened sheets, or removed altogether? Should some form of wadding between the backing and the canvas? What containers should be used? How should they be secured? Should they travel by air, road or rail? All these perfectly sensible questions, and the many intelligent suggested responses, do not currently meet with agreed answers or fully tested solutions. For the moment risk assessment will depend upon the skill and judgement of conservation and curatorial staff. Basic inspection of construction and measurements such as of the glass–pastel separation should be carried out, as well as the more obvious visual assessment of condition and friability. Each case is different, but the risks are greater for ovals, works on multiple sheets or on parchment, and compound greatly with size. The only safe advice is not to allow pastels to undergo unnecessary travel – in line with the policies of each of the half dozen European museums with the finest pastel collections.
VI. PASTELLISTS AT WORK

The information that we have about pastellists’ working practices comes from a range of different sources. Chapter III discusses the treatises about pastel, many of which are set out in the TREATISES section of the website. Artists’ correspondence provides further information. Visual evidence comes from the portraiture of the time.

VI.1 Depictions of pastellists at work

There are numerous depictions of pastellists at work during the eighteenth century, both in pastel and in other media. Some of these, such as Pesne’s oil painting of Wilhelmine Markgräfin von Bayreuth, c.1750 (Sans Souci), simply show pastels among the attributes demonstrating the sitter’s cultivation. Others offer valuable evidence of studio practice.243

They also show various types of box for holding the pastels during their use.244 Descriptions of these arise in the treatises from “Boutet” to Russell and Chaperon. Chaperon is the most detailed, recommending two or three trays of 15 to 20 inches in length, a little shorter in width, divided into compartments of three inches in diameter [sic]. The pastels are laid on cotton or bran within the compartments, each of which should only be used for pastels of similar colours. This explains the account in Thomas Mulvany’s biography of Hugh Douglas Hamilton, reporting the artist’s claim that he was so busy that he had each evening to pick out the guineas “from amongst the bran and broken crayons, in the several crayon boxes into which, in the hurry of the day, he had thrown them.”245

Georg Anton Urlaub’s 1735 self-portrait (J.7298.101) shows him in a somewhat contorted pose, his coat dangerously close to the surface of the pastel he is working on, holding an improbably small box of pastels. The oil painting of Rhoda Delaval at work, attributed to Arthur Pond (NPG 5253; fig. 1), shows her seated before the easel in a far more credible composition: Russell would probably suggest that the pastel on the easel is a little too high, and may cause fatigue in her right arm, but she is comfortably seated with her pastels in her lap. This

243 Reproductions of those in pastel will be found in the relevant artist’s article in the Dictionary.

244 A diagram showing one is included in the Recueil de planches sur les sciences, les arts libéraux et les arts mécaniques, 1771, VIII, article “Peintures en huile...”, planche VI. This also shows the porphyre for grinding pigment.

245 M. [Thomas James Mulvany], “Hugh Hamilton”, The Dublin monthly magazine, 1/1, 1842, p. 69.
wooden tray is properly divided into 12 compartments, although the colour arrangement may not be entirely as prescribed. Two depictions of Suzanne Roslin painting are known, both showing her with a little table with drawers for her pastels. In her self-portrait copying La Tour’s autoportrait à l’index (J.63.101) she sharpens one of these, using a knife in the direction recommended by the *Arts companion* of 1749. In her husband’s oil double portrait showing her painting the portrait of Peill (1767; Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, fig. 2), she has taken a dozen or so pastels from the open drawers and placed them in a smaller tray, thus allowing quite different colours to lie side by side (against all recommendations).246

Pastels needed to be sharpened more or less frequently according to the softness of the material and the accuracy of the work: but sharpened they were, and with considerable waste. Günther (1762, his §§.27ff) advocated collecting the dust in papers marked with the number of the colour: when sufficient was collected, he described how to recombine the dust into new crayons. If this is not possible, an alternative was to mix the dust with water and gum arabic to use as watercolour or gouache. No doubt this practice was common, and may have led to developments such as Gardner’s use of ground pastel with brandy (§.IV.11 supra) or Mrs Cay’s bottles of dry powder applied with a stump (§.IV.7 supra).

Very few original pastel boxes have survived from the eighteenth century. The V&A has a small wooden box storing a few ends of pastels said to have belonged to John Russell, but it does not appear to have been the box from which he worked.247 An empty pastel box (fig. 3) is said to have been left by La Tour at the slot Zuylen during his 1766 trip (it may have been intended specifically for travelling), and was given to the musée Antoine Lécuyer (inv. LT 84) in 1919 by a descendant of Belle de Charrière.248 It measures 9x32.5x24.5 closed, and still has traces of blue pigment in one of the compartments.

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246 There is no description of the “Case, with numerous drawers, used by O. Humphrey to hold his crayons, &c.”, Lot 487 in the Upcott sale (London, Evans, 25.VI.1846).

247 V&A P44-1925. It was nevertheless exhibited in Liottard 2015, and reproduced p. 25. It was exhibited again in London 2018 with a caption describing the contents as “pastels hand-made by John Russell with the assistance of his daughter Nancy, including a piece of paper with colour tests.”

248 The son of Eugène-Jean-Alexandre, comte de Bylandt, who, in 1837, had married Belle’s great-niece Maria Henrietta van Tuyll van Serooskerken (Gaggetta Dalaimo 2011, p. 55; see also *Bulletin de l’Aisne*, 27.XI.1919. I am most grateful to Hervé Cabezas for details of the box. However its authenticity rests on family legend rather than tangible evidence; the box may be later.
A box of similar size, 6x34x18.5 cm, supplied by Vernezobre in 1772 (private collection; fig. 4), still contains its original contents. It has fewer compartments.

Élisabeth Armand, later Mme de Saulces de Freycinet, showed herself (in her 1772 autoportrait) using the Mahlstick, or appuye-main, the use of which is described by Chaperon (his §26), who also notes that some pastellists use their little finger for the same purpose. Liotard’s famous 1745 depiction of his patron and pupil Caroline Luise von Hessen-Darmstadt (Karlsruhe; fig. 5) not only shows her Mahlstick in use, but reveals the full height of her easel. Prudently she has removed her ermine lined mantle and wears a dress with sleeves ending at the elbows with passementerie rather less elaborate than the full pagoda lace that might jeopardise the pastel. Her tray of pastels is barely visible, resting on a low table beside her. Close inspection reveals that there are no compartments, but a large number of pastels are neatly arranged on what may be bran (as recommended to protect the crayons from breakage and keep them clean). These pastels are shorter and thinner than normal, about the size of modern Conté crayons. Close inspection reveals that the blank support she works on is a sheet of parchment pinned along the sides to the strainer, and that there is a further thin board behind the strainer, presumably to ensure that the back is protected while the work progresses.249

Lord Mahon, later 3rd Earl Stanhope, was another student who was clearly influenced by Liotard (although correspondence reveals that he also had a drawing teacher, both of whom were mentioned in his mother’s letter); in his self-portrait (J.6922.101) he holds his own pastel of his

249 Other examples in oil include Pietro Longhi, painter (Stanford, inv. 1941.274); Vivien’s Autoportrait (Munich, inv. 53/4989); another oil of Vivien painting a woman in pastel (London, Christie’s, 3.XII.2008, Lot 153). An anonymous self-portrait, c.1800 (Museum voor Schone Kunsten Gent, inv. GENT 1964-B), shows a woman standing by her easel. Other pastels include F. J. Kaufmann’s portrait of Melchior; self-portraits by Faustina Braschi, Gabrielle Capet, Rosalba Carriera and Jean Huber. An allegorical gouache by de Sompois showing Mme du Barry painting Louis XV, surrounded by putti engaged in the fine arts, has one sitting on the floor, holding his strained canvas in one hand, reaching into a tray pastels lying beside him (1774; with Galerie Alexis Bordes 2016).
mother, resting on a table, steadied by his right hand which also holds a blue pastel between thumb and forefinger; his tray of pastels, also on the table, reveals a limited palette reflected in the work.

One must of course be careful not to read too much into pastellists’ self-portraits at work, as there is often an element of contrivance in the arrangements. Thus Elizabeth Ziesenis, by then surely Frau Lampe, shows herself in her oil self-portrait (fig. 6, Copenhagen) with a pastel of a lady and a miniature of a man, presumably her parents.\(^{250}\)

All the evidence is that, rather than using a holder such as a porte-crayon, artists held the crayons directly: they were after all fashioned for this purpose, and were thicker than the natural chalks used in a porte-crayon: black, white and red chalks are almost always shown in the holders where artists are shown using the holder; they are then sketching an outline on canvas if not simply drawing on paper. An exception is Liotard’s autoportrait à la barbe (J.49.1014, exhibited in 1752), where his porte-crayon has blue chalk at one end: this is probably for visual reasons rather than a reflection of studio practice. Some artists (e.g. Sharples) turned to natural chalks for precision in profiles (\(v. \S IV.7\) supra), but it was impracticable to use the porte-crayon for multiple colours. The 1791 Encyclopédie méthodique explicitly states (\(s.v.\) Pastel) “on ne les manie pas à l’aide d’un porte crayon, mais avec les doigts”; and they explain that because of their consistency, pastel crayons need to be thicker than sanguine etc.\(^{251}\)

VI.2 Sittings

Descriptions of pastellists conducting their sessions range from Nanteuil (as described by Tempesti) to Perronneau (as discussed by Robbé de Beauveset, \(v. \text{infra}\)). Tempesti’s testimony (in a manuscript entitled Avverti e regole del maestro per ritrarre dal naturale in pastello attached to Nanteuil’s own Maximes on painting and engraving portraits, Biblioteca Marciana, Venice) is a particularly valuable account of his master’s working methods, including his typical use of three sessions: in the first, he examined his subject and “pénétrait son esprit, tout en causant, de l’ensemble de sa physionomie, observant ce que sa figure devait donner à son portrait suivant l’éclat ou la qualité du personnage”. It was not until the third session that the portrait was given “l’expression et la vie”; during this session the master used all his wit to enliven his subject, seeking topics of conversation that would animate or amuse him, “estimant que les yeux reflétaient le cœur et que les mouvements du corps décelaient le caractère.” Such a technique was of course not restricted to pastellists: Vasari tells much the same story in relation to the execution of the Mona Lisa.\(^{252}\)

This insistence on Nanteuil’s psychological penetration of his subjects in an age preoccupied with spirituality foreshadows La Tour’s approach a century later. La Tour’s legendary ability to explore

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\(^{250}\) I am most grateful to Veronika Gerhard (private communication, 11.XII.2015) for drawing this picture to my attention, and for suggesting the reattribution of the picture to Frau Lampe rather than her father to whom it is given in the Statens Museum for Kunst files.


\(^{252}\) “Usovvi ancora questa arte, che essendo Monna Lisa bellissima, teneva mentre che la ritraeva, chi sonasse o cantasse, e di continuo buffoni che la facessino stare allegra, per levar via quel malinconico, che suol dar spesso la pittura a’ ritratti che si fanno.” Vasari, Le Vite..., 1568 ed., repr. Milan, 1963, iii, p. 403
his subjects’ souls was described by many authors: in the review of his obituary in the *Année littéraire*, the anonymous author mentioned that—

"tandis qu’il ne semble occupé qu’à saisir la ressemblance de ses modèles, sa conversation vive, animée, spirituelle, charme l’ennui de l’attitude, et l’ame est peinte sur la toile avec autant d’énergie que les traits du visage."

One of the subjects over whom La Tour fussed to extremes was the future Mme de Charrière, who wrote to her friend Constant d’Hermenches in 1766 describing her three-hour sittings:

“Je ne m’ennuie point, parce qu’il sait causer; il a de l’esprit, et il a vu bien des choses, il a connu des gens curieux.” (A month later he was still having difficulty with the eyes, and the first version was abandoned.)

Perronneau’s approach to his sitters was described in three letters in 1757–59 by Robbé de Beauveset to his uncle Desfriches. The last of these noted again the artist’s technique of animating the sitter:

"Il a voulu que je lui récitasse des vers pendant sa composition, et je le voyais saisir avidement et transporter rapidement sur la toile tout le feu qui sortait de ma déclamation."

But the sessions were tiring, as Robbé complained:

"Ah! mon cher oncle, que c’est un cruel métier d’être mannequin! Ce diable de Perronneau exigea, hier, de ma complaisance que j’endossasse la casaque de soye de mons Cochin qui, pendant ce temps-là était aux noces de Mme Jombert, dont, par parenthèse, je n’ai pas été prié; il exigea, dis-je, en outre, que je tinsse le bras gauche tendu, ayant un porte-crayon entre l’index et le pouce, et que je restasse dans celle gênante attitude, la journée entière, mon dîner néanmoins prélevé sur ce temps-là. J’ai cru que le poids du levier que formait mon bras étendu emporterait ma clavicule. Jamais Spartiate n’a poussé si loin la patience. Je me suis tenu comme un terme dans cette gênante attitude, avec un beau serment cependant de refuser à jamais quiconque me proposerait de faire de ma carcasse un homme d’osier, et de me mannequiniser ainsi. …

and again:

"La séance de samedi m’a cruellement fatigué. Perronneau m’a tenu sur les jambes une demi-journée entière, toujours dans la même attitude. Mon nez lui a fait souffrir les douleurs de l’enfantement. Il dit qu’il renoncerait au métier, s’il fallait qu’il accouchât tous les jours de pareil nez. Il y trouve autant de finesse que Marcel trouve de choses dans un menuet. Jamais Spartiate n’a poussé si loin la patience. Je me suis tenu comme un terme dans cette gênante attitude, avec un beau serment cependant de refuser à jamais quiconque me proposerait de faire de ma carcasse un homme d’osier, et de me mannequiniser ainsi. …"

Other artists employed the techniques of conversation and humour to put their clients at ease. Thus Schadow described Darbes at work:

"Da er mit seiner Komik, mit seinen drolligen Erzählungen und den theatralischen Gebäuden immer in den Grenzen des Anstandes verblieb, so war er in Gesellschaften, unter den Künstlern insbesondere, immer angenehm."

Nothing could however replace the importance of personal friendship in portraiture. Just as Mengs was leaving for his second stay in Rome (1746–49), Friedrich August II. noted the particular perfection of the portrait of Domenico Annibaldi; Mengs explained that “c’est le portrait de mon ami, genre d’hommes que les Roi n’ont pas”, to which the Elector replied by asking him not to forget “de mettre l’ami dans mon portrait” in Rome.

The fact that pastels did not need time to dry meant that portrait sessions could often be quicker than those required for oil painting, a feature which particularly appealed to royalty who faced constant demands for sittings. In a letter from Alexander Pope to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (c.1720), the poet asked her to sit for Sir Godfrey Kneller, but to minimise her inconvenience, he was to do her face “in crayons” at her house in Twickenham, to be transferred to canvas back at

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253 This review of Duplaquet’s *Éloge* appeared in the revived *Année littéraire*, VIII, 1789, pp. 318–29; and was reprinted in *L’Esprit des journaux, français et étrangers*, xiv/3, mars 1790, p. 30.


the studio. This too was how Vigée Le Brun made her portrait of Beaujon, at what is now the Élysée palace rather than her own studio.

The small ovals which Hugh Douglas Hamilton continued to make in his early years in Italy might be thought to have required only a few sittings, but John Ramsay’s diary records at least six sessions, each of one or two hours, from 27.IV.1784 before the diary ran out a week later; it is unclear if the portrait was complete by then.

An anonymous example, possibly Dutch, now in the musée Antoine-Lécuyer at Saint-Quentin (fig. 7) shows that the activity could be sociable, although the spectator on the right could be a teacher.

Russell’s account of the sequence of executing the pastel portrait also emphasises the importance of getting the nose right, as does Chaperon, who points out (his §232) that this is the part of the face that we look at most often, and accordingly the most difficult to capture convincingly in portraiture.

Once the pastel is finished it would normally be immediately glazed and framed, to protect it from damage. In theory that would make it less likely to be subsequently altered. But there are many examples of later intervention. La Tour was notorious for reworking his pastels, often far later (such as his retrieval of his portrait of Restout from the Académie royale). Three particular reasons seem to have lead to later alterations to portraits, whether in oil or in pastel, although whether by the original artist may not always be easy to determine: the addition of later chivalric orders, usually for men;256 the alteration of unfashionable hairstyles, particularly when the high-piled styles of the 1770s became de rigueur;257 and the ovalisation of portraits, again popular in the 1760s.258

VI.3 Artists’ inventories

Archival documents such as artists’ posthumous inventories and sale catalogues can provide some information about working practices, particularly of French artists. In addition to completed pastels or work in progress, there can be information about materials, tools, frames or storage. Boxes of pastels were sufficiently valuable to be itemised, and in some cases (e.g. La Tour’s will) bequeathed specifically to pupils or other practitioners. Lay figures or mannequins appeared in other documents.

256 For example, Liotard’s Jean Maritz (J.49.2084), probably made in 1746, while the cordon noir was only reçu in 1758. See also the discussion of Labille-Guiard’s pastel of Gibert (J.44.193).

257 F.-H. Drouais’s Mlle de Verrières (see Baetjer 2019, no. 71) is an example in oil, in pastel, Perronneau’s Mme Legrix (J.582.1522).

258 For an example in oil Boucher’s Mme de Pompadour (Boston); in pastel, Valade’s Mme Pinson de Ménerville (J.74.287).
One of the most interesting examples is the section devoted to “Meubles de peintre” in Charles-Antoine Coypel’s posthumous sale (Paris, 27.III.1753, Lots 492–503). In addition to “Sept Tiroirs remplis de Pastels de meilleurs Fabriques; telles que celles de Moule, Charmeton & autres. Plus, un petit corps d’Armoire, contenant quatre Tiroirs, pareillement remplis de Pastels, lesquels se détailleront lors de la Vente” (lot 502), there was a full suit of armour (“meuble nécessaire à un Peintre, & sur-tout à un Peintre de Portraits”), five mannequins, and several miniature “théâtres” designed to allow the artist to assess the distribution of light on a landscape.

Pierre Simon (5.VI.1710) kept “six boetes de goberges servant à mettre les pastelles estimées 30 sols” and “un corps de tiroir et une grande boete de sapin dans lequel corps de tiroir se sont trouvés des pastelles” (15 livres). Voltaire’s letter to Berger, 3.VII.1738 (cited §IV.13 supra) indicates that La Tour’s studio replica of his portrait was kept unframed; how it were protected is less clear.

VI.4 Equipment: physionotracres &c.

Some artists employed equipment of various types. It was said that, before starting a portrait, Maurice Mouton would measure all the details of his subjects with a wooden compass; but his ultra realist approach inspired ridicule. Towards the end of the eighteenth century there was a wave of interest in various machines intended to produce likenesses automatically. These included the “physionotrace” of Chrétien, Quenedey & al. and Storer’s Royal Accurate Delineator, used by Bateman and others. The devices could produce silhouettes, in cut paper etc., or of course they could be coloured in various media including pastel. Vast numbers of these were produced by artists such as Mrs Harrington, by whom few examples are known (but presumably were similar to the output of Susannah Sledge). Profiles in cut paper had earlier been developed by Nathaniel Bermingham. While many of the products of such devices can be easily spotted because of their formal, rigid nature, they may also have been employed by artists such as James Sharples; more surprisingly, Johann Heinrich Schröder was said by Bruun Neergaard to have done so. It is also possible that pantographic machines were used by copyists to make exact or reduced-scale images, although pastel surfaces made the methodology more complicated (see Copies in Chapter IV above).

VI.5 Rates of production

How long did a pastel take? The evidence indicates the widest possible range. Vast numbers of itinerant pastellists advertised that they could create a pastel in a single session of perhaps half an hour. No doubt the results were of limited accomplishment, and the evidence above indicates that major pastellists required considerably longer. The question relates also to the size of pastellists’ œuvre, and how much has been lost. There is little to suggest that the 4000 pastels which Jean-Baptiste Colson made over 24 years would have required lengthy attention, any more than Rienk Jelgerhuis’s 7763 portraits, but Saint-Michel’s claim to have made over 6000 pastels in a career of nearly 30 years is plausible.259 Although instantly recognisable, fewer than 1% of these have survived. John Saunders’s numbering system provides a more detailed chart of his progress around Britain. There is no reason to doubt the statement on the back of Weyler’s pastel of Bouvyer, an army officer, that it was done in two hours.

Reliable statistics for the survival of pre-1800 pastels are not easy to construct, but some order-of-magnitude estimates may be made from numbers in the Dictionary, the few known worklists left by pastellists and statistical sampling of appearances on the art market. These suggest that the 18,000 images currently catalogued in the Dictionary represent fewer than 3% of the professionally created works of the period, a proportion probably considerably lower than for work in other media.

259 Few if any of Mrs Harrington’s 30,000 likenesses will have been in pastel.
The literature frequently mentions that pastel unlike oil does not require time to dry, so that the work need not be interrupted and requires fewer séances de pose – a particular recommendation to royal and other important sitters overwhelmed with the demands for portraits. But at the other end of the spectrum Archibald Skirving required up to 50 sittings for a portrait. By charging commensurately, he effectively priced himself out of the market. We also have the evidence from his correspondence of how Liotard progressed with the copy he made of his own portrait of the future Mme Necker seated with a book. The original work was delivered to his rooms in the Hofburg by 19 November 1777 and, despite the copying occupying “bien du temps” (and there being few other commissions on this trip). There was no sitter to delay things, and it is clear from his regular reports that he proceeded systematically and had a clear, if over-optimistic, sense of his rate of progress: by 6 January, he had done “nearly half”; a month later, “J’ay fini le haut de la figure, les fruits, la soucoupe, le verre et le vin, la table est presque faite, j’aurai encore à finir le bas de l’habit, la main et le livre.” By 14 February, it was three-quarters done, and would require more than a month to finish. In the event it was not until 9 May 1778 that it was finished, and could be sent to the sitter’s husband; the work was not heard of again.260

VI.6 Studios

In many cases pastellists’ premises doubled as working studios and as showrooms where the finished products were displayed. Daniel Gardner insisted that sitters should not see their portraits until completed, and he had an expanding frame made to fit over his easel, which he fastened with lock and key to prevent their doing so.261

Some pastellists (e.g. Coyel, Hamilton, Liotard, Valade) were also significant collectors of or dealers in old master or other pictures, and their collections may have played a role in the practice of some of these artists. Cotes and Humphry both took expensive houses, tastefully furnished. The little we know of Perronneau’s trip to London suggests that the cost of his house in Suffolk Street may have been exorbitant.

An important description is that of William Hoare of Bath’s studio by the travel writer (and granddaughter of the physician and botanist Richard Richardson) Dorothy Richardson (1748–1819) during her journey262 to Bath in 1770: this lists the pictures in each room, starting with pastels of the artist’s four children in the first room and progressing to another where crayon portraits and fancy pieces alternated with three-quarter length oil portraits.

Fanny Burney also provides an account of her visits to Katherine Read’s studio in 1774 and 1775, with much less detail about the pictures. As with sittings at oil painters’, the social function could be taken to unexpected levels: it was at Read’s that Lady Susan Fox-Strangways took the opportunity of her sitting on Saturday 7.IV.1764 as to elope with the penniless actor William O’Brien.

260 See Jeffares 2015i.

261 According to Williamson 1921, p. 43.

262 This manuscript is included in her copy of the New Bath guide of 1770, and is transcribed in Belsey 1987 (and also the Hoare article in the online Dictionary) who however was unable to trace the author. Marcia Pointon, in Strategies for showing: women, possession, and representation in English visual culture, 1665–1800 (Oxford, 1997, pp. 89–130) included a chapter on Richardson based on the five volumes of travel writing now in the John Rylands Library; but she was unaware of Richardson’s trip to Bath. James Hamilton’s 2017 biography of Gainsborough quoted from the Bath manuscript without identifying the author further than Belsey had done.
ARTISTS WORKING BEFORE 1800 faced a rather different environment than today. In this chapter we review the institutional structure in which pastellists worked and were trained.

The analysis is necessarily national. In many cases portraiture was a protected trade, run by a guild which had rights to approve and award masterships, usually on the basis of approved “masterpieces” completed after apprenticeship and journeyman status. Variants of such a system prevailed in most European countries, often dating back to mediaeval times, but during the eighteenth century they were largely replaced by a different type of institution.

Academies have a far longer history than the Enlightenment with which they are often associated; a full discussion is beyond the scope of this work. Initially these were professional institutions established to put their members onto a higher level (both intellectually and socially) than the old trade guilds which already regulated crafts in most countries (in some cases taking over the control functions of those guilds, and often providing experts qualified to give evidence in legal suits). The conflict between academy and guild was played out in more than one country and in various fora (including the law courts).

Most academies expanded into a training role, establishing schools of drawing and painting with life classes (giving the name of “academy” to nude drawings), examinations and the practice of membership (or reception) by submission of a masterpiece (morceau de réception); traditional apprenticeships had similarly involved the submission of a masterpiece as a requirement of admission to the guild. Academies, to a far greater extent than guilds, were involved in the organisation of public exhibitions, the most important (and often the only) opportunity for professional artists’ work to be seen by the general public.

A number of common themes are found in the organisation and development of academies in Europe. There was a notable geographical proliferation: many new foundations arose, particularly in the later eighteenth century. The election of foreign and visiting members helped the spread through Europe of phenomena such as pastel. Many observed a rigid hierarchy of genres, where history painting was considered more important than portraiture etc.; this was a reflection of their elevated intellectual aspirations. The importance of pastel within the academy also varied enormously. Many academies involved, and sometimes admitted, patrons and amateurs, and a higher proportion of their works were in pastel than those of professional artists. No academy was exclusively devoted to pastel, nor was it anywhere the dominant medium (although it may have been widely used in teaching).

Of course a great deal of teaching took place outside the academies, whether in the form of professional apprenticeships (the opportunities for which were more limited in pastel than in oil, since major artists did not have the same need for the mechanism of a studio) or as lessons given to wealthy amateurs and their children. A number of private schools also emerged, mainly known today from newspaper advertisements many of which will be found referred to in specific artist articles in the Dictionary.

VII.1 The Netherlands and Belgium

In the Low Countries, trade guilds played the dominant role, and continued to do so during the eighteenth century. The Antwerp Sint-Lucasgilde, or Guild of St Luke (the name used in almost all cities, from a fifth century legend that the apostle painted the Virgin Mary), goes back to 1382,

263 There is extensive literature on the subject, with a good overall introduction in the Grove art online. For the specific relevance to pastel, see the individual notes on each city, with some eminent pastellist members, in the file TOPOGRAPHY.

264 A number of painters were honoured with chivalric orders by their sovereigns. Few of these were however pastellists. Whether La Tour declined the order of Saint-Michel is discussed in my Tropes in La Tour biographies.
Prolegomena to Pastels & pastellists

encompassing a number of related trades. In 1663 David Teniers established the Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten van Antwerpen. From 1756 Beschey was dean of the guild, which was disbanded in 1773; he became professor-director of the Academie.

The Sint-Lucasgilde in The Hague existed from the fifteenth century, encompassing a number of related trades as well as fine art. A group of dissatisfied painters established the rival Confrerie Pictura in 1656. In 1682 the Haagsche Teekenacademie was formed as a drawing school; it was later incorporated into the Koninklijke Academie van Beeldende Kunsten, Den Haag.

Ancient guilds existed in Delft, Rotterdam and many other cities. In Haarlem, the Sint-Lucasgilde was founded 1496 and reorganised in 1631. Pieter Teyler's collections formed the nucleus of the Teylers Foundation, the earliest public Dutch art museum, opened in 1784 with Wybrand Hendriks as curator.

Although the Sint-Lucasgilde in Amsterdam dates back to 1579, the first public drawing school was the Stadstekenacademie founded in 1765. Willem Writs (1732–1786), a watch and instrument maker, and a group of friends formed the Amsterdam society Sapientia et Libertate in 1771. Six years later this grew into the Maatschappij Felix Meritis, which moved in 1789 to a building at Keizersgracht 324, a “temple of the Enlightenment”, promoting the arts and sciences. Hodges and Tozelli were among its members.

Utrecht's Sint-Lucasgilde, founded in 1611, included framemakers and dealers as well as painters until in 1644 the Utrechtse schilderscollege was established, encompassing a drawing school.

Apart from its ancient Sint-Lucasgilde, Leiden had a Tekeningenacademie, founded in 1694 and run by the van Mieris family until the 1760s; in 1799 it was transformed into the society Ars Aemula Natura.

The Illustre School te Maastricht ran from 1683 to 1784. Middelburg had an ancient guild, as well as a Middelburgse Teeken Akademie by the 1780s. The Academie Minerva was formed in Groningen in 1798 to teach drawing and other skills.

The Académie libre des beaux-arts de Bruges was founded by a group of painters and amateurs in 1720 and took over the Loge des Bourgeois, a building dating back to the fourteenth century. Joseph van den Kerckhove was first professor, directing the drawing school; but it closed on his death four years later. Mathias de Visch (1702–1765) took over and reopened the academy in 1739, developing the Italianate and French genre styles. The building was burned down in 1755. De Visch died in 1765, and was succeeded by Garemijn who resigned in 1775 after a difference of opinion with his colleagues. He was replaced by Paul Joseph de Cock. Maria Theresia conferred the title “royale” on the Académie, which continued to be supported by Joseph II. and Napoléon.

VII.2 Italy

Italy, in many ways the spiritual home of the cultivated academy, had fewer examples of institutions in continuous existence than might be expected.

The Accademia e compagnia del disegno was founded in Florence in 1563 as a teaching institution; as early as 1706 (on the feast day of S. Luca) it held public exhibitions in which some pastels (by Luti) were shown. Further exhibitions including pastels took place in 1715, 1724, 1729, 1737 and 1767, but they were not regular. The institution was succeeded by the Accademia di belle arti di Firenze in 1784 which had numerous foreign members.

The academy founded in Bologna in 1582 by the Carracci, known as the Accademia delli desiderosi or deli incamminati, was one of the most important teaching institutions in Italy. It became the Accademia Clementina in 1711.
The Accademia di San Luca of Rome was founded in 1593. Simon Vouet was president in 1624. In 1705 Rosalba Carriera was admitted on merit rather than as an academica d'onore, the title normally given to women artists. In 1726 it took over the Accademia del nudo established by the cavaliere Conca around 1706. The Accademia degli arcadi, a literary academy founded 1690, included poets, composers etc.; it held meetings on the Bosco Parrasio on the Janiculum from 1723. Several foreign academies had branches in Rome. The Villa Médicis housed the Académie de France or École royale des beaux-arts à Rome, founded by Colbert in 1667; its directors included Vleughels and Natoire. In 1758 Preciado de La Vega was appointed the first director of the Academia de España en Roma. Luti’s studio included numerous pupils such as Arnulphy. Other prominent teachers included Batoni and Anton von Maron.

The Accademia dei ricoverati was founded in Padua in 1599; Élisabeth-Sophie Chéron was a member in 1699. The Accademia di San Luca of Milan was founded 1620 within the Biblioteca Ambrosiana. The Accademia di Bologna, with its pinacoteca, was founded in 1776 under Giuseppe Parini. An accademia del disegno was founded in Perugia by Stefano di Amadei before 1644. In Turin, the ancient Università dei pittori, scultori e architetti became the Compagnia di San Luca in 1652, and adopted the name of Accademia di belle arti in 1678. In 1778 it was relaunched by Vittorio Amedeo III as the Reale accademia di pittura e scultura with Laurent Pécheux as director and Bernero among the professors; Berger was a pupil. Porporati, a member since 1773, was appointed director of the gallery in 1797.

Carlo Cignani founded an accademia del nudo in Parma c.1681. When the Accademia Clementina was formed in 1706, Cignani was elected principe in absentia for life. The Accademia di belle arti di Parma was founded in 1752; honorary members included Rosalba Bernini, Isabelle de Bourbon-Parme and contessa Maggi. The court painter Baldighi played an important role from 1756; his pupils included Ferrari and Cunningham. The Accademia veronese included Rotari as a member in 1734. The Accademia di belle arti di Naples was founded by Carlos III in 1752 as the Reale accademia del disegno.

The Accademia veneziana, or Veneta publicca accademia di pittura, scultura e architettura, was established in 1756 with Piazzetta as its first president; Nogari was a founder member and president in 1762–63; Pavona beat Canaletto in the competition in 1763. Betti was a member until 1783. Exhibitions took place in the Piazza S. Marco on Ascension day and, more formally, in Campo S. Marco on 16 August. Few pastels are recorded.

VII.3 France – Paris

Throughout France community or craft guilds of painters and sculptors had survived, often from medieval times, and they continued to enjoy legal protection for their monopoly.

In Paris a system of working for the court by brevet (which circumvented the guild monopoly) largely fell into desuetude in the eighteenth century, although it probably still covered the pastellists employed by the Bâtiments du roi and Menus plaisirs: these were effectively government departments geared to producing portraits and miniatures intended as diplomatic gifts etc.

The Académie de Saint-Luc265 was a craft guild with a history dating back to the fourteenth century. Admission was nevertheless closely regulated (so that the irregular admission of Pierre Davesne, q.v., caused considerable disturbance). It enjoyed the patronage of two members of the d’Argenson family, the marquis de Paulmy and the marquis de Voyer, and conducted public exhibitions. The rival Académie royale de peinture was founded in 1648 by Le Brun, who was recteur and

265 The communauté des maîtres peintres et sculpteurs parisiens had existed since before 1391. Its hostilities with the Académie royale commenced in the seventeenth century. In 1705 the Communauté established a school which became known as the Académie de Saint-Luc in 1723. It was exempt from the dixième de l’industrie tax levied on businesses (arrêt du conseil d’état, 27 décembre 1729) until 1741 (c. Corbon 1914). Formal Salon exhibitions only started in 1752 (c. Guiffrey 1915; Walczak 2010).
chancellor; it received a royal warrant in 1655. There were initial discussions about merging the two bodies, but these broke down in 1654 and the académies remained in conflict. Mignard, premier peintre du roi, recteur, chancelier and directeur of the Académie de Saint-Luc, refused to enter his rival Le Brun’s Académie royale. Both bodies held public exhibitions: the salons of the Académie royale were held regularly in the Louvre (where it was housed) from 1737 (that which took place in the Palais-Royal in 1673 appears to have been the first public exhibition anywhere to include a pastel - a female portrait by the now-forgotten Jean Garnier), while the seven salons of the Académie de Saint-Luc were held between 1751 and 1774, shortly before its dissolution (under pressure from the more influential Académie royale) in 1776.

While these salons were held externally at various locations, giving the impression that the Académie de Saint-Luc had only a virtual existence, it did maintain premises (albeit far humbler than the Louvre), in a five-storey building in the Cité, 11 rue du Haut-Moulin, paroisse Sainte-Marie-Madeleine. The thirteenth-century Chapelle de Saint-Luc had originally been dedicated to saint Symphorien (and was built on the ruins of an even earlier chapelle de Sainte-Catherine), but after the abolition of that parish the building was ceded to the guild in 1704; it was refurbished and decorated, adding a painting of saint Luc over the altar. According to the 1776 dissolution inventaire, above the chapel and sacristy, on the second and third floors, were a tribune and some pictures; the bureau was on the fourth floor; a studio for life class was above, fitted with three rows of benches in an amphitheatre. Provision of free life classes was an important part of the function of an académie, and essential for the exemption from the taxe de l’industrie and other exemptions it enjoyed. The property was confiscated by the state in 1790, and sold 4 brumaire an IV; it became a private house until the whole area was demolished to make way for the Hôtel Dieu de la Cité c.1867. Figure 1 shows the chapelle Saint-Luc, clearly marked on the south side at the bend of the rue du Haut-Moulin in the 1754 Plan detaillé de la Cité by abbé Delagrive. Figure 2 shows a photograph taken by Charles Marville just before demolition, looking west along the rue du Haut-Moulin; the chapelle Saint-Luc is just beyond the bend at the end of the road, but the photograph gives an impression of the narrow streets and rather less glamorous environs compared with the Louvre.

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266 Among various accounts of the Académie royale, that of Michel 2012 should be singled out, although it is not designed as a handbook of factual data: that is more the intention of Gudrun Valerius, Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture 1648–1793: Geschichte, Organisation, Mitglieder, 2010 (which is not widely available, and has its own imperfections). Sandt 2019 covers a number of different topics. Tours 2000 is very helpful. The Procès-verbaux and older references, such as Vitet 1861, are of use and are easily consulted online.

267 Nevertheless a receipt from the communauté shows that Vigée Le Brun include for her annual capitation fee of 55 livres 8 sols 4 deniers as late as 1789 (AN F/7/5651/9). In the same file is an admission ticket issued the same year by the Académie de Saint-Luc to visit the Saint Jean Porte-Latine (6 mai): that was the engravers’ exhibition.


269 Summarised in Guiffrey 1915, pp. 93f.

270 See Guichard 2002.
The statistics suggest that the less prestigious academy was of greater significance for portraiture and for pastellists, reflecting the more vocational role of its artists. At the Académie royale, portraits made up about a quarter of the pictures exhibited, and about a quarter of the portraits were in pastel – that is, about 7% of the total number of pictures exhibited at these salons throughout the century. At the salons of the Académie de Saint-Luc, however, pastels made up half the portraits, which in turn made up half the pictures shown, so pastels represented a quarter rather than a sixteenth of the output. Both salons were the subject of contemporary journalism, although those in the Louvre attracted a great deal more attention; the number of reports increased vertiginously towards the end of the century. Although these documents have been the subject of a vast amount of academic attention, in relation to portraiture and to pastels in particular the value in most of them lies often in nothing more than a few details (names of sitters, description of medium etc.) omitted from the livrets (commentary is usually trite and stereotyped); nevertheless the pre-1800 EXHIBITIONS file contains a transcription of every passage that has been found relating to pastels, including several not found in modern bibliographies (the coverage of Paris salons in foreign press is often overlooked). Even Diderot is not at his best with pastel.

By the middle of the century, the enthusiasm for pastel led to a reaction by the oil painters who dominated the Académie royale de peinture. At some stage around 1746 decisions were taken to limit the aspirations of the pastellists by requiring *morceaux de réception* to be in oil. These decisions were not minuted in the *Procès-verbaux* at the time; but Gougenot 1749, in a footnote about Alexis Loir (1712–1785), notes that his progression to reception as a pastellist was blocked “parce qu’il y avait été résolu de ne plus recevoir de Peintre en Pastel”. While the footnote was added to the 1749 edition, it plainly expands the remark in the 1748 edition, “Quand de jeunes sujets se présenteront avec de tels talents, l’Académie ne sévira plus sans doute plus contre le Pastel.” That this antipathy was well known is evidenced in a comment by Voltaire in a letter to Lekain (30.VI.1764), probably referring to Lenoir: “vous saurez qu’on ne veut point de portrait en pastel à l’académie; nous pensons tout différemment à Ferney.” The formal existence of these rules is further evidenced by the minute when Loir was finally *reçu*, 27.II.1779, the *Procès-verbaux* explicitly

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271 Out of the 1650 pictures recorded at the seven Salons de Saint-Luc, nearly 400 were pastels. The 22 official Salons under the Ancien Régime included approximately the same number of pastels out of a much larger total of pictures. Nearly 90 pastels were in the 1752 Salon de Saint-Luc alone, while the number of pastels included in each of the official salons never exceeded the 25 shown in 1765. These numbers involve some guesswork, both as to the numbers of pictures included in descriptions such as “plusieurs portraits sous le même numéro” and as to the medium in which some works were executed.

272 Or elsewhere as far as I am aware; Michel 2012 (p. 104) comes to the same conclusion, citing only the indirect mention in Gougenot 1749, p. 120f. For the reduction in the price of portraits imposed by Tournehem in 1747, see below.

273 Michel goes further (*ib. cit.* and pp. 237, 239), suggesting the measure was a ruse to deflect the application of Liotard. This seems improbable as Liotard had only just returned to Paris, and the strictures remained long after he ceased to be a threat, and were presumably in place at the time of Loir’s *agrément* in 2.IV.1746 and that of Perronneau, 27.VIII.1746, when he was set two oils.
adding “sans déroger…aux délibérations précédemment faites relativement au pastel”. The effects of these strictures are evident from the *livrets*. Some artists simply dropped out; others turned to the Académie de Saint-Luc.

Membership of the humberl institution was also significantly larger: the *Annuaire de 1764* listed the protecteur and vice-protecteur, four directeurs, six recteurs (half painters, half sculptors), 36 active and 34 retired professeurs, 821 maîtres (who included artisans, house painters and decorators as well as artists), 11 widows of former directors, 91 widows and 97 “demoiselles” (presumably dependant daughters of deceased members) making up a total community of 1140 names. By 1786, despite the dissolution, another list indicated 239 new maîtres since 1771, 741 previously listed “maîtres, veuves et demoiselles”, 33 specialised maîtres, and “une quarantaine de demoiselles peintres.” In contrast the *Almanach royal* for 1766 listed at the Académie royale 1 protecteur, 7 actual, associate and former directeurs, recteurs; 8 honoraires amateurs and 9 honoraires associés libres; 21 professeurs and associates; 11 conseillers; 47 academicians. Of these only Mme Vien was female.

The Académie de Saint-Luc pursued transgressions with varied levels of enthusiasm. Liotard was obliged to exhibit there during his visit in 1753.274 Louise-Élisabeth Vigée (not yet Mme Vigée Le Brun), the daughter of an adjoint à professeur of the Académie de Saint-Luc, found that setting up as a portraitist was against the law, and in 1774 had to seek the protection of the Académie de Saint-Luc, where she was *reçue* (par mérite) in 1774 on delivery of a morceau de réception. The case of the Mlles Surugue concerned whether minor trades such as illumination were covered by the Académie’s monopoly; Cochin thought it unreasonable to ask people to pay 600 livres for a maîtrise which entitled them to earn only 12 francs a day.275 In 1775, one André-Joseph Salmon (*q.v.*) had his tools and pictures confiscated by an officer of the Châtelet on the application of the Académie de Saint-Luc (that they were licentious may have been an additional spur to action), but succeeded in recovering them when the Académie was suppressed. After this, the need for an outlet for younger artists was filled by a succession of ephemeral salons, among them the salons de la Jeunesse, held in the place Dauphine;276 the salon du Colisée in 1776; and Pahin de La Blancherie’s Salon de la Correspondance with its accompanying *Nouvelles de la république des lettres et des arts.*

For artists in the Académie royale, the greatest privilege was the award of lodgings in the Louvre. There were some 28 of these “Illustres” at any one time, housed underneath the Grande Galerie since the days of Henri IV; but many of the artists singled out for this honour during the reign of Louis XIV were concerned as much with the decorative arts as with the grand history painting that figures more prominently in modern studies of eighteenth century art. Very few pastellists enjoyed this privilege: among them were Coypel, Chardin, La Tour, Silvestre. Vivien was accommodated in the Gobelins, although he made portraits of many of the illustres in 1704.277 The award was made by brevet: La Tour’s was granted 10.III.1745 (see La Tour chronology), filling the place of a deceased valet de chambre-horloger du roi; five years later he was granted a superior set. Loriot was granted no. 7 in 1770, between La Tour, and Montucla, the censeur royal. Despite several

274 See note above concerning the Académie royale’s strictures against admitting pastellists. Liotard’s admission to the Académie de Saint-Luc is not recorded, but *v. infra*. He had competed unsuccessfully for the 1732 prix at the Académie royale, six years after his apprenticeship ended.

275 The terms of membership of the Académie de Saint-Luc were set out in arrêts du Conseil of 3.XI.1767 and 2.II.1768 [ark:/12148/bpt6k1043191c]. The sons and sons-in-law of former directors would henceforward pay 63 livres at reception; sons, sons-in-law and husbands of the widows of maîtres, 153 livres; apprentices, 300 livres; “aspirants”, 403 livres (there were particularly complicated rules also for women, depending on their husband’s status).

276 The origins of the place Dauphine exhibitions go back to the early eighteenth century. However pastellists may have been reluctant to exhibit their work in the open air: the *Mercure de France* noted “on dédaigne d’exposer aux injures de l’air des morceaux précieux en tout genre” (vi.1725, p. 140; cited Sandt 2019, p. 65.

277 See my ESSAY on Thuret for a discussion of the situation in 1704, based on the lists in Germain Brice, *Description nouvelle de la ville de Paris*, 5e éd., 1706, i, pp. 99ff. In the 9e éd., 1752, the lists are found from p. 167on, but are very outdated (Thuret who still appears had died in 1738). Scott 2016 reproduces contemporary plans showing the layout.
applications, both Marigny and d’Angiviller rejected Perronneau’s requests for lodgings in the Louvre. Ducreux was awarded an apartment in 1793, but unable to take possession immediately (see artist article). Labille-Guiard made repeated requests from 1785, but d’Angiviller considered the Louvre an unsuitable place for women (he was particularly opposed to establishing a school for young ladies there); she was in compensation granted a pension of 1000 livres, and eventually (1802) a studio in the Collège des Quatre-Nations.

The role of the Académie changed radically when the doors of the official Salon du Louvre were thrown open to all following the Revolution. The decrees or laws of Allarde and Le Chapelier passed 2. III.1791 and 14. VI.1791 effectively abolished all the monopolies of trade guilds, corporations or communities in all walks of life.

The Académie royale had a strong teaching function, dominated by the École royale des élèves protégés with influential teachers such as Vien; annual prizes were awarded. There were a number of other drawing schools in Paris, among them the École de la rue Montmartre, where Vien taught David, and the École gratuite de dessin founded by Bachelier in 1765. A number of other specialised institutions taught drawing, and trained or employed pastellists: among them were the École des ponts et chaussées (founded 1747, directed by Jean-Rodolphe Perronet until 1794); and the Institution des sourds–muets (founded by the abbé de l’Épée c.1760).

Other institutions connected with pastel included the Manufacture royale des Gobelins (founded under François Ier; Le Brun established an école de modèle vivant, 278 suppressed in 1792) and the Sèvres Manufacture royale de porcelaine employed several pastellists; Bachelier was directeur, while Caton, a porcelain painter, made pastel portraits. At Beauvais, the directeur, Oudry, established an extramural free drawings school for young inhabitants of Beauvais; he published279 a prospectus including a provision which probably reflected broad practices in artistic training:

> Et pour mieux inculquer les principes qui regardent la couleur, ceux des Écoliers qui auront fait des progress bien saillans dans l’Art du Dessin, seront exercés en l’étude de ladite couleur, en travaillant au Pastel & d’après les Tableaux de Sa Majesté.

The title of peintre du roi 280 was used somewhat confusingly. It did not of course mean that the artist had painted the king, from life or otherwise: as d’Arnoult remarks, “Perronneau, peintre du roi, n’a pas peint le roi.” It could be conferred by brevet (the only route before the foundation of the Académie royale, and used also by Nanteuil) as well as by membership (strictly réception rather than agrément) of the Académie royale: so for example Liottard, who prints the qualification in the livret of the salons de Saint-Luc in which he exhibited, presumably derived the right from having been engaged to paint the royal family directly (through the Maison du roi or Bâtiments du roi). As a pupil (alloué, not apprenti) to Masse, 281 he may have been eligible to take advantage of an arrêt du parlement de Paris of 14. V.1664 which permitted pupils of academicians who had completed three years of training to claim maîtrise in any town in France, including Paris. 282 It has been suggested that the abuse of the title was widespread, and that the Académie royale seems to have been a reference to Clément Belle, professeur de dessin des ouvriers et apprentis de la manufactures des Gobelins, appointed in 1763 after the death of Sébastien Le Clerc.

278 According to abbé de Fontenai (Dict. des artistes…, 1776, t. 1, p. 10), “le directeur fait dessiner & peindre au pastel, deux heures par jour, ceux qui sont destinés & attachés à la fabrique de la manufacture. Il est encore permis à tous ceux qui le désirent, d’y aller prendre des leçons.” This may have been a reference to Clément Belle, professeur de dessin des ouvriers et apprentis de la manufactures des Gobelins, appointed in 1763 after the death of Sébastien Le Clerc.


280 That of Premier peintre du roi was however quite specific: a position held by one artist at a time, it conferred nobility on the holder and his descendants.

281 Marandet 2003b mistakenly terms the contract he published as one of apprentissage. For the distinction, see Thillay 2002, pp. 185ff: an “alloué” was typically a compagnon or journeyman who had already served an apprenticeship. A comparison of the contract with that of La Tour, also discovered by Marandet, shows the difference: La Tour was apprenticed aged 15 for six years with a premium payable, Liottard aged 21 for three years with no payment.

282 Vitet 1861, p. 274; see also Antoine Schnapper, “L’Académie: enseignement et distinction des mérites”, in Tours 2000, p. 68. The Procès-verbaux include a number of seventeenth-century cases where the issue of the necessary certificate for this procedure was minuted; the absence of later minutes may indicate that the procedure had fallen away, or no longer required minuting.
have done little to protect it: Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin noted in his memoirs that at the
time of his marriage, in 1751, “Je pris alors le titre de Dessinateur du Roi, que personne ne me
contesta.”283 No doubt in informal contexts abuses occurred; but a search of the documents
indexed in the Minutier central suggests otherwise: the unfamiliar names are largely those of
employees at the Gobelins and similar institutions.284

The Académie royale enforced religious qualifications quite strictly, with a number of expulsions
of protestant artists (some of whom were readmitted on abjuration) in 1681. Otherwise, as the
records of the Académie make clear, the protestant members – Boit, Lundberg, Schmidt, Rouquet
and Roslin – were all admitted by specific royal command.285

VII.4 France – provinces

Outside Paris, institutions were slower to get off the ground, although the guild monopoly still
applied. The local guild of painters in Cambrai jealously guarded theirs, as the pastellist Gossuin
(*q.v.*) discovered in a legal case that hinged on whether pastel was painting or not.

The first regional French institution on the model of the Paris Académie, the académie de peinture
de Lyon was established in 1676 on the initiative of Thomas Blanchet with support from Coysevox.
The Académie des sciences, belles-lettres et arts de Lyon was formed by the merger of two earlier
societies in 1758, and dissolved in 1793. A salon was held in 1786. Members included Barat and
Lonsing. An École royale gratuite de Lyon or École publique de dessin ran between 1756 and 1793
and enjoyed the patronage of Jacques de Flesselles, intendant de Lyon; Nonnotte was its leading
light. Berjon, leader of the Lyon flower painters, taught there.

The Académie de Nîmes, founded in 1682, was primarily devoted to local history, but
commissioned portraits such as that of its secrétaire Séguier made by Barat.

The Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture de Bordeaux was established in 1691 but became
inactive c.1709. A new Académie de peinture, sculpture et architecture civile et navale was
established in 1768, with founder members including Batanchon, the first recteur, and Dambielle;
the amateur Lienau also played a role in establishing the statutes. Exhibitions were held between
1771 and 1787. It received a royal patent in 1779.

The Académie de peinture et de sculpture de Nancy was established in 1702 by Leopold Ier and was
run by Claude Charles until its closure in 1737. It was revived by Stanisław Leszczyński. During
the revolution it was suppressed and its collections transferred to the musée de Nancy.

The Académie de peinture et sculpture de Marseille was established in 1753; its founders included
Kapeller, who was directeur-recteur from 1771, succeeded by Coelers van Wyck. Bachelier became
directeur perpétuel. Associates included Marianne Loir and Arnulphy in 1783. An Académie de
peinture et sculpture was established in Valenciennes in 1782.

Throughout France in the reign of Louis XVI, regional drawing schools proliferated, often with
links to traditional académies. Some of these initiatives started earlier: Bernard Dupuy du Grez
established an École publique de dessin in Toulouse which closed on his death in 1720. MM. Rivalz,
Crozat and Cammas persuaded the capitouls to fund such a school from 1726, turning it into a
perpetual institution in 1738. In 1746 the Société des beaux-arts was established; five years later
this was awarded a royal charter, becoming the Académie royale de peinture, sculpture et
architecture, with 72 members, regular exhibitions and numerous students.

283 The manuscript is reproduced in Goncourt 1880, 1, p. 400; see also Michel 2012, p. 112. In the marriage contract of 6.I.1751 (AN MC CV/1235)
he is indexed simply as dessinateur.

284 Among other examples is that of Henry-Philippe-Bon Coqueret, peintre du cabinet du roi, who is listed as an elector for Versailles as “peintre
du roi” (Journal de Versailles, suppl., R.V.1790).

285 Vitet 1861, *passim.*
The Académie des sciences, belles-lettres et arts de Rouen received letters patent in 1744. It played a less significant role than the École royale, gratuite et académique de dessin, de peinture, de sculpture et d’architecture founded by Descamps on an Enlightenment model, influenced also by the Dublin Society schools; it was officially recognised in 1749, and was responsible for the education of hundreds of artists.

The Académie des belles-lettres, sciences et arts de Dijon was established in 1765; Greuze was among its members. The École de dessin founded by Devosge in 1767 produced numerous pastellists. An école de dessin was established in Aix-en-Provence in 1765 with funds from the duc de Villars; Arnulphy was appointed assistant director. Wyrsch established the École de peinture et de dessin de Besançon under the patronage of M. de Lacoré; courses commenced in 1774. Lenoir succeeded Wyrsch in 1786, the intendant demanding “un artiste de réelle valeur”; however the school was never raised to the level of académie. The school received a new lease of life when Jourdain took over in 1807. A drawing school was established in Clermont-Ferrand by Gault de Saint-Germain; Degeorge studied there from 1793.

An École gratuite de dessin was established in Lille in 1755, closely followed by schools of architecture and mathematics. Watteau de Lille was the best-known teacher; it numbered Dupont-Watteau, Masquelier, Jacquerie and Dusillion among its students. An Académie des arts was established in due course, with a grande salle built in 1766; here annual salons were held between 1773 and 1788. There were strict rules for admission and submitting morceaux de réception (a certain Lemoine, *q.v.*, who exhibited pastels at the salon de Lille in 1773, caused complaint since “il a joui trois ans des prérogatives attachés au Corps des Suppliants, sans pour cela avoir fini son morceau de réception”). An École publique et gratuite de dessin was established in Nantes in 1757, run by Volaire père who gave lessons to “tous ceux qui se présentent, rue de Briard”. Hussard became director in 1791. The École municipale de dessin de Troyes was established in 1773; Batanchon was professeur. Joseph Melling established and directed an école de dessin at Strasbourg in 1776. An École gratuite de dessin was in existence at Saint-Malo by 1789; Peynaud was directeur for some 18 years.

Not all of these ventures prospered. The Société des beaux-arts de Montpellier was formed in 1779 (Villiers was among some thirty associés fondateurs); it arranged exhibitions (in 1779 and 1784) and provided teaching and prizes. The vicomte de Saint-Priest was président and lent a number of pictures to the 1779 salon. Gamelin was appointed directeur in 1780, but soon resigned. Financial difficulties also contributed to its demise in 1787. The École royale-académique de peinture in Poitiers held exhibitions in 1776 and 1777.

Other educational establishments followed. An École académique was established in Reims in 1677. Clermont, dit Ganif taught at the drawing school from 1762. An Académie de dessin was founded in Mons in 1780 but closed in 1794. It was followed by École centrale du département de Jemappes 1797, of which Hallez was named professor in 1796. The first Maison d’éducation de la Légion d’honneur was established in Écouen by Napoléon in 1807 along the lines of Saint-Cyr. Mme Campan was headmistress, with Mme Swagers as drawings teacher. The abbaye de Pentemont included a girls’ school for the nobility; several pupils received lessons from Jean-Baptiste Antoine (*q.v.*).

### VII.5 Switzerland

Calvin established an academy in Geneva in 1559. An École publique de dessin was opened in 1751; Ferrière and Firmin Massot were pupils. The Société des arts was founded in 1776; members included Arlaud-Jurine. Bern had a drawing school since the 1680s, when Joseph Werner established one. Johann Grimm’s drawing school was taken over by Aberli in 1747.
VII.6 Germany

Germany’s political structure of “Kleinstaaterei” meant that practices varied widely across the nation, and often depended on the ruler’s personal enthusiasm for the arts. In the baroque period, painting had been used as part of a political programme of Ansehen und Pracht, particularly by the Wittelsbach family in Bavaria, Köln and Bonn.286 At a far more domestic level, the prolific Bach family of musicians and painters played a major role at the court of Meiningen. Christiane Luise Gräfin zu Solms-Laubach was an amateur pastellist in Laubach; she was a pupil and correspondent of Chodowiecki. But the development of academies as opposed to patronage by princely courts was a different matter.

Among the oldest was the Nürnberg Akademie der bildenden Künste, or Malerakademie, was founded in 1662 and directed by the astronomer Georg Christoph Eimmart, succeeded in 1705 by Johann Daniel Preißler who also founded a Zeichenschule für Handwerkslehrlinge in 1716.

In Berlin, the Academie der Mahler-, Bildhauer- und Architectur-Kunst was founded in 1696; it was renamed the Königlich-Preußische Akademie der Künste und mechanischen Wissenschaften in 1704, and in 1790 became the Königliche Akademie der bildenden Künste und mechanischen Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Romandon was one of its first professors in 1696. Vertue gives an account of it in his notebook.287 Pesne was appointed director in 1722, succeeded by Lesueur in 1756, Rode from 1783 and, from 1797, Chodowiecki; his correspondence is a major source of information about numerous resident and visiting artists in Berlin. But the interest in pastel came quite late: in the mid-1770s Bergius reported only two artists competent in the medium (Bardou and Krüger), and that there were few connoisseurs interested in it (Bardou left for Warsaw at this time). Annual salons along the Paris model were conducted from 1786, and with them a revival of interest in pastel. A Künstler-Vereins zu Berlin existed around 1800; Tangermann was a member.

Friedrich August II.’s enthusiasm for Carriera led to the formation of one of the great pastel collections in Dresden. The Gemäldegalerie became a fertile teaching ground for pastellists, with numerous copies after Mengs, Liotard etc. A Zeichen- und Malerschule had been established in 1680, one of the earliest in Germany; under August der Starke this became an academy in 1697 (Louis de Silvestre was director from 1726), named in 1764 the Allgemeine Kunst-Academie der Malerey, Bildhauer-Kunst, Kupferstecher- und Baukunst. Exhibitions were held there from 1764 on. An account appeared in the Zeitung für die elegante Welt, 21.VII.1807, of Napoleon’s visit to the Pastellkabinett, where he noted the Mengs Amor and the maréchal de Saxe. The Leipziger Kunstakademie was founded in 1763 with Oeser its main teacher. It held exhibitions annually, from 1764, during the fairs. From 1773 it held joint exhibitions with the Dresden Akademie.

Caroline Luise Markgräfin von Baden-Durlach, a pupil of Liotard, was an enthusiastic and talented amateur; her work was guided by Melling, court painter in Karlsruhe from 1757. Her widower Karl Friedrich von Baden founded a Zeichenakademie in Baden-Baden in 1785, placed her collections (which now form the nucleus of the Kunsthalle) at its disposal; Becker was its director and Hofmaler in the court of Baden. Friedrich der Große’s sister, Wilhemine Markgärfin von Bayreuth, established Bayreuth as a cultural centre, building or reconstructing palaces, theatres and opera houses, as well as founding the university at Erlangen, which started as the Academia Fridericana in 1742. An amateur pastellist herself, she assembled a collection of pastels at Bayreuth by Roslin, Liotard and Hagelgans around 1750. Reuß taught at the Akademie 1756–63.

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286 See ESSAYS/Gerimberghen.

287 Notebook A.y, Walpole Society, 30, 1951–52, p. 164. The reference to learning “a good handling of theire Crayons” for near-beginners is unlikely to signify pastel.
In Augsburg the Kaiserlich Franciscianischen Academie freier Künsten und Wissenschaften published a periodical, *Die reisende und correspondirende Pallas*, from 1755, directed by Johann Daniel Herz von Herzberg.

The Académie de peinture et de sculpture de Cassel (Kassel) was founded in 1777 by the Landgraf Friedrich II. as part of his efforts to establish industry and scholarship after the Seven Years’ War. It held exhibitions from 1778 at lest to 1782.\(^{288}\) J. H. Tischbein taught there; his daughter Amalie, Frau von Apell was made an honorary member in 1780. Böttner was Direktor after 1781. The constitution was probably not untypical of many of these European institutions. Membership was in three categories: full; a second class, reserved for painters who specialize in portraits, landscapes or flower pieces, pastellists, enamellists, engravers – and ladies; and a third class, which included students and members of the public, “[die] geschmackvolle Künste ausüben”. “Liebhaber” were in the first rank, according to the Satzung, but were treated as in the second in reports.

The Kurfürstlich Pfälzische Akademie der Maler-, Bildhauer- und Baukunst was founded in Düsseldorf in 1773 by Carl Theodor. Die Staatliche Zeichenakademie Hanau was established by Wilhelm IX. von Hessen-Kassel in 1772 for the purposes of training gold and silversmiths; Westermayr was a pupil. Peter Anton Verschaffelt was director of the Mannheimer Kunstakademie; pupils included the pastellists Mannlich and Moosbrugger. An academy was founded in Breslau (Wrocław) by Friedrich Wilhelm II. in 1791, with Carl Bach as first rector.

**VII.7 Austria and Eastern Europe**

A private academy was opened in Vienna by Peter Strudel in 1688, and recognised by Leopold I. in 1692. Karl VI reestablished it in 1726 with Jacob van Schuppen as head. A rival Kupferstecherschule was founded by Jakob Matthias Schmutzer 1766. In 1772 Kaunitz merged all the art schools into the “k. k. freye, vereinigte Akademie der bildenden Künste”. Under Joseph II. a system of examination and reception pieces was introduced. Frau Beyer was admitted 1771. Teachers included Füger and Lampi. The Militärakademie was established by Maria Therestia in 1752; Albrecht was Zeichenlehrer c.1785.

Prague’s Akademie für bildende Kunst was established in 1799, with Bergler its first director.

In Warsaw Stanisław August engaged Bacciarelli to head his fine arts programme in 1766. Although plans for an Academy of Fine Arts were not implemented, Bacciarelli established a large workshop at the royal castle.

Russia was slow to follow European artistic trends, its first forays into pastel relying on visiting artists. The Académie des beaux-arts in *St Petersburg* was created in 1757, with a Western outlook. The institution was transformed under Catherine II and her director, Ivan Betskoï; it undertook a teaching role analogous to that of the famous Smolny Institute for Noble Maidens established by Catherine II in 1764. When Stanisław August Poniatowski inspected the school in 1797, the imperial family was presented with works in embroidery, drawing and pastel. The Académie promoted many foreign pastellists: Boucher was made an associé libre honoraire, as was the duquesa de Huéscar before 1766. Torelli was appointed professor in 1762; Lampi taught Borovikovsky there from 1795.

**VII.8 Scandinavia**

The Kungliga akademi för de fria konsterna was established in Stockholm in 1735, under the influence of Tessin. Lundberg became director in 1776; Pasch was professor and director c.1800.

Det Kongelige Danske Akademi for de Skønne Kunster was founded in Copenhagen in 1754: its earliest directors were Nicolai Eigtved (1754), Jacques-François-Joseph Saly 1754–71, and Gustav Pilo 1771–72. Als, Darbes and Hoyer also taught there.

VII.9 Britain

A number of (mostly ephemeral) teaching establishments existed in London from the seventeenth century on. Kneller founded an academy of painting in 1711 at his house in Great Queen Street; Luttrell and Jonathan Richardson Sr were active there, but it ceased to operate soon after moving to St Martin’s Lane in 1720. A second St Martin’s Lane Academy was set up by Hogarth and others in 1735; Hayman and Dandridge were active, and Vanderbank taught Pond there. The Society of Dilettanti was set up in 1732. The Duke of Richmond’s academy (a cast gallery at Richmond House in Whitehall) flourished for about 10 years from 1758. Among more minor establishments, William Burgess’s Maiden Lane academy taught a number of pastellists. William Shipley set up a private academy in 1753 (advertised in the London chronicle, 23.IV.1757), initially based in his house in Craig’s Court, Charing Cross, but from 1756 in Castle Court, Strand. Confusingly in 1754 Shipley also founded the “Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce” (known as the Society of Arts, or, from 1908, the Royal Society of Arts; it was not the Royal Society, nor the Royal Academy of Arts), and used the same rooms for teaching his pupils (but the institutions were separate). The Society offered premiums to pupils from 1755 (Shipley did not serve on the committee awarding these prizes). Premiums and bounties were also awarded for inventions (the former were for competitions, the latter were unsolicited).

A group of artists staged a first public exhibition in the Society’s great room at Denmark Court, the Strand in 1760. The following year, somewhat confusingly, a schism occurred: what became the Free Society of Artists continued in the Strand, holding exhibitions from 1761 to 1783, while the newly established rival Society of Artists of Great Britain commenced its annual exhibitions in Spring Gardens; it became the Incorporated Society of Arts when it received its royal charter in 1765, and was dissolved in 1791.289

The Royal Academy of Arts was founded in 1768; it too held annual exhibitions. Attendance figures show that in 1769 some 14,008 people attended the Royal Academy exhibition, while 14,980 visited the Society of Artists show in Spring Gardens (attendance ranged from 13,000 in 1761 to a high of 22,906 in 1767). By 1780 attendance at the first Royal Academy exhibition in Somerset House was 61,381.290 The Royal Academy Schools were established at the same time, and awarded travelling scholarships.291 Public auctions were initiated by Edward Millington in 1692; Christie’s was established in 1766.

Outside London, there was much less activity than in other parts of Europe. The Edinburgh Trustees’ Academy opened in 1760 with its first director William Delacour; he was succeeded in 1767 by another Frenchman, Pavillon, until 1771. The printsellers Andrew and Robert Foulis established the Foulis Academy of Fine Arts in Glasgow in 1753, with support from Colonel Joseph Yorke and others. The pupils drew in crayons, chalk or ink from casts or prints. The academy closed in 1775. The Society of Encouragement of the Arts, Painting and Design in Liverpool was founded in 1773 by a group of amateurs including William Roscoe; it held exhibitions from 1774.

There was vigorous interest in pastel in Ireland. The Dublin Society for improving Husbandry, Manufactures and other Useful Arts and Sciences was founded in 1731 (it became the Royal

289 There is now an extensive literature on the rival societies and the Royal Academy: see for example Hargraves 2005; Saumarez Smith 2012. A list of the 211 artists who subscribed the Roll Declaration of the Incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain in 1765 is printed in William Sandby, The history of the Royal Academy of Arts..., London, 1862, i, pp. 39f.


291 A list of the pupils from the RA registers was published in Hutchison 1960.
Dublin Society in 1820); one of the founders, Rev. Dr Samuel Madden (1686–1765), instituted a system of annual premiums for painting, sculpture and similar crafts along the lines of those in the academies of Rome and Paris. The Dublin Society school of drawing was first established in George’s Lane, Dublin in the early 1740s along the model of the Académie royale, with the students progressing from copying set drawings to models and life studies. Later, ornamental design, sculpture and architecture were added. Robert West taught drawing from 1744, and was appointed director when, in 1757, the school became more formally organised and relocated to Shaw’s Court off Dame Street. In 1763 he was suspended on account of mental illness, and although reinstated in 1770, he died soon after. Among other teaching establishments Guillaume Bertrand opened a drawing school on Arran Quay, 1765. The Society of Artists in Ireland organised the first public art exhibition in George’s Lane, Dublin, in 1765. Subsequent exhibitions were held annually from the Society’s own rooms, in William Street. A schism occurred in 1774 with the formation of a rival Academy of Artists.  

Despite the evident health of the teaching of drawing in Ireland, Twiss 1776 was able to state with confidence that there were “no other [collections] in the whole island” apart from those of the earls of Charlemont, Ely and Moira, Lady St George and Messrs Stewart and Joseph Henry. Although British colonies such as India offered attractions to travelling pastellists (until the market became saturated), no formal institutions were established except in America. Portraiture was important in Boston in the eighteenth century, but institutions emerged rather late. The Athenaeum was established in 1807. The Columbian Museum was founded by Daniel Bowen in 1795, and displayed waxworks, natural history specimens and curiosities as well as paintings by Robert Edge Pine and others. It was destroyed by fire twice but reopened. In Philadelphia, Du Simitière opened his American Museum of natural history specimens, coins and printed ephemera to the public in 1782; most of the works on paper were acquired by the Library Company of Philadelphia in the auction after his death.

VII.10 Spain and Portugal

Madrid’s Real academia de bellas artes de San Fernando was founded in 1752 following a decree 1744. Gian Domenico Olivieri was the first sculpture director; his daughter was admitted in 1759. Honorary members included the female artists Carrón and Carranque. The duquesa de Osuna’s tertulia, or salon, was an important centre for Enlightenment thinking in Madrid, and in Spanish society noble patronage played an important role. The Real academia de bellas artes de San Carlos de Valencia was formed in 1768 in succession to the Academia de bellas artes de Santa Bárbara. Josefa Mayans was named directoria honoraria in 1776; S.ra Ferrer was appointed Académica de mérito in 1795; López y Portaña was vice-director after 1790, and Planes was paintings director. The Academia real de bellas artes de Lisboa succeeded a drawing school started in 1781; Bartolozzi was director from 1802.

292 See Gilbert 1859, III.
VIII. EARLY EXHIBITIONS, PATRONAGE AND COLLECTIONS

Few illustrations of the original displays of pastels survive. This chapter surveys what we know of those early displays, and covers the quasi-public early royal collections, the arrangements in public exhibitions and what is known of some private collections. Most of the literature (based, for example, on estate inventories, travel journals etc.) suggests that pastel portraits were reserved for the private apartments of owners rather than the state rooms, which may simply reflect the scale of the works as much as any particular decorative taste. Thus Tempeсти’s pastels were grouped together in a dressing room by Vittoria della Rovere in the Villa Poggio Imperiale according to a 1695 inventory. But in a passage we revert to below (Chapter IX), Alan Ramsay, in his fictional *Dialogue on taste*, has his Lord Modish giving pride of place in his drawing room to his pastel by La Tour.

VIII.1 Royal collections

Among the earliest specialised collections of portraits was the celebrated series of artists’ self-portraits which included numerous pastels and works in coloured chalk (e.g. Rosalba, Fratellini, Glain, Cambruzzi, Hamilton; those by Holbein, Nanteuil, Vivien and Liotard are visible in Fig. 1) among a collection mainly of oils. Commenced by Leopoldo de’ Medici in the mid-seventeenth century, uniform frames and sizes and symmetrical hanging were employed in the gallery in the Uffizi devoted to the collection; it is now housed in the Vasari corridor.

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293 Among those relevant to pastel should be mentioned Johann Bernoulli, James Boswell, Johann Georg Keyßler, Joseph-Jérôme Lefrançois de Lalande, Richard Twiss etc.

294 Curiously the amateur pastellist John Norris Hewett (1743–1790) bequeathed four of her best works to be chosen by Mr and Mrs Warde on condition that they were not to be placed in bed chambers.

295 Cited Burns 2007, p. 141, where there is a wider discussion of the question of private apartments.

296 *A dialogue on taste*, 1762, pp. 56f; see FLORILEGIUM.
The great collections such as those in Dresden are known from contemporary verbal descriptions. Sadly there is no surviving view of the famous room in the Dresden gallery housing 157 Carriera pastels against green damask walls; indeed the only known early interior seems to be an anonymous print of the Italian paintings in the interior gallery as they hung in 1830 (up to five deep), although the Cabinet des pastels is clearly marked on the plan in Heinecken’s *Recueil d’estampes d’après les plus célèbres tableaux de la Galerie Royale de Dresde*, 1757 (fig. 2). The effect must have been enhanced by the provision (by 1752) of uniform “Dresden Gallery” frames (*v. §IV.16 supra*). Arriving at Dresden during his tour of Germany in 1750, Jonas Hanway (the passage was copied by Thomas Nugent) noted–

But the greatest delight which his Polish majesty takes, is in a small gallery, all of portraits in crayons; the greatest part are of persons with whom the king was acquainted in his travels, particularly in Italy. Most of those pieces are performed by Signora Rosalba, and are certainly very beautiful. Among these pictures they shew one of a certain Italian lady, who is reported to have wasted the estates of half a dozen English lords, and as many English gentlemen.

Boswell, who was “luxuriously entertained for two hours” in the collection in 1764, noted just that he “saw also a chamber full only of Crayons”. Bianconi’s better informed description note noted in particular that “I pasteli sono tutti d’egual grandezza, come eguali tutti sono le cornice coperte d’oro, ed i lucidi cristalli, che le ricoprino.”

The separation of the pastels from the rest of the collection in Dresden Gemäldegalerie was exceptional. A much smaller group of pastels by Rosalba and others were displayed in the sala dei pastelli at the Ca’ Rezzonico in Venice. The remarkable collection of the amateur pastellist Caroline Luise von Baden, which included numerous pastels, integrated them among other cabinet paintings. The imperial collections in Vienna included a group of pastels by Gabrielle Bertrand-Beyer in the Gelber Salon at the Schönbrunn, although other pastels are in the Miniaturenkabinett, and in the Hofburg. There were also several examples of homogeneous groups of pastels as a decorative scheme, among them the also 18 Pillements in the Blaues Pastellzimmer at Laxenburg (Maria Theresia commissioned a red room two years later, executed by Johann Christian Brand);

*Fig. 2 Galerie royale de Dresde (Heinecken 1757)*

297 A more detailed account is given by Giovanni Ludovico Bianconi, *Elogio storico del cavaliere Anton Raffaele Mengs…*, Milan, 1780, pp. 12ff; see also Henning & Marx 2007.

298 See Karlsruhe 2015, where the inventories are reproduced, and the collections recreated.
elsewhere the Pastellzimmer and adjacent Altes Musikzimmer in the Neues Schlosß, Bayreuth, or the Sompsois group of 11 pastels in the Chinese Palace at Lomonosov. When the Erzherzogin Maria Anna sent a group of seven pastel family portraits to Klagenfurt, she was careful to instruct Baron Herbert to place them in two adjacent rooms on the ground floor.299

When the Dresden Akademie started its exhibitions in 1766, a pastel self-portrait by the dowager Kurfürstin, Maria Antonia Walpurgis, was displayed on an easel in the innermost of the five rooms devoted to the exhibition: the effect was that500

das Auge des Kenners, mit so viel grösserer Theilnehmung auf sich, als es, wenn es die wichtigsten Kunstwerke in diesem Zimmer betrachtet hatte, allemal auf das erste zurück zu gehen, sich gleichsam genöthiget fand.

In the collections of the Académie royale in Paris, for example, this was not the approach. Nicolas Guérin’s Description de l’Académie (Paris, 1715) provides an exact layout of the Académie’s portraits (fig. 3), showing Vivien’s Girardon opposite Antoine Coypel’s 1715 self-portrait (no. 17), placed in an alcove between two large Rigauds in the salle d’assemblée;301 although the recess is partly obscured by two sculptures in Jean-Baptiste Martin’s Assemblée général (Louvre), it appears that both portraits are also partly hidden by Santerre’s Suzanne et les vieillards in the middle, which is tilting forward. A second pastel by Vivien, Robert de Cotte, is no. 9, between Le Fèvre’s portrait of Colbert and a mythological piece by Houasse, again in a recess in the outer, first room. These recesses may have been chosen to minimise light exposure, but, as the piece by the Amateur de Province302 makes clear, the Académie’s location of the Carriera Nymphe, which it received six years after Guérin was published, was less than ideal. His views were ignored, as we can see from Constant Bourgeois’s Exposition des dessins dans la galerie d’Apollon, au V (Louvre, inv. RF 29455; it dates to slightly later than the 1797 scene depicted), where the pastel is clearly visible in full light, fifth from right, second level (fig. 4; beside it, between the pillars, is Vivien’s Robert de Cotte, which remains in its cadre d’origine, while that of the Rosalba was changed later).

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299 Kernbauer & Zahradník 2016, p. 121. The Erzherzogin’s posthumous inventory included some 64 pastels in gilt or part gilt frames, presumably mostly in the Pastellzimmer and adjacent studies; only a dozen or so remain at Klagenfurt.


301 Nicolas Guérin, Description de l’Académie, Paris, 1715. The arrangements are discussed in number of publications, notably by Udolpho van de Sandre, “Note sur les collections de tableaux et leur présentation dans les salles de l’Académie”, in Tours 2000, pp. 69–79 and again in Williams 2015, pp. 120ff. Dezallier d’Argenville’s Description sommaire of 1781 is also useful.

Generally pastels took a far smaller role in the collections (as well as the EXHIBITIONS) of the Académie royale (the inventaire de l’an II included only 13 pastels out of 521 pictures\(^{303}\)) than they did in the Académie de Saint-Luc, where the far smaller collection\(^{304}\) included 14 pastels (by Bernard, Lallié, Lenoir, Liotard, de Lorge, Monperin, Morel, Vigée and Voiriot; curiously a number of pastellists such as Pougin de Saint-Aubin, Glain and Vigée Le Brun were represented in oil.

Similarly in the royal apartments at Versailles, pastels had to vie with oil paintings. In Louis-Jacques Durameau’s 1784 inventory, only nine pastels were included in the rooms whose displays were illustrated: they were all by La Tour, and all of the royal family (fig. 5).

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\(^{303}\) Fontaine 1910, p. 268.

\(^{304}\) Inventaire conducted at dissolution in 1776; see Guiffrey 1915, pp. 9ff.
From an annotated copy of the inventory, we know that the pastels were all in good condition, apart from one of the Dauphins, which was beginning “se moisir”. The measurements were given as 84x52.5 cm, which seems unlikely. There were three portraits of the deceased dauphin, two of Louis XV, and one each of the deceased queen (Marie Leszczyńska), dauphine (Marie-Josèphe), Louix XVI and “Mr” (Monsieur, le comte de Provence). A further 14 anonymous copies (of which three were in pastel) were recorded in the magazine of the Bâtiments du roi at Versailles.

In 1747 Louis XV agreed to send a number of his pictures to Paris for public exhibition in the former apartments of the Queen of Spain (Louise-Elisabeth, Mlle de Montpensier) in the palais de Luxembourg. Arrangements were not completed until 1750, when the collection was opened for two days a week from 14.X.1750 with a catalogue prepared by Jacques Bailly, garde des tableaux du roi. What appears to have been a temporary arrangement became permanent; the catalogue was reissued frequently until 1779, when the gallery was reclaimed for the comte de Provence. It included two pastels by Vivien, in the Salle du Trône, along with highlights of painting from the French school.

More typical of the use of pastels was George III’s picture hang at Buckingham House c.1776 (fig. 6). Here the few pastels in the royal collection were gathered into the king’s bed chamber, where they hung together with a religious painting by Filippo Lauri and a landscape by an unknown Mr Deane. The pastels were by Liotard (2, 3, Princess and Prince of Wales), Cotes (4, Queen Charlotte and the Princess Royal), and Carriera (6, 7, Spring and Winter); curiously they were all placed over doors or at higher level than the oil paintings.

VIII.2 Public exhibitions

Few pastels can be made out among the sketches made of the Paris salons (famously those of the indefatigable Gabriel de Saint-Aubin) or the exhibitions of the Royal Academy (known for example from the print by Martini) during the eighteenth century, but they were evidently displayed among the oil paintings of similar sizes. Thus for example the critic in the Journal encyclopédique discussing Mme Roslin’s portrait of Pigalle in the 1771 salon noted that “Il se soutient de pair avec les portraits à l’huile, au milieu desquels il est placé.” Among the few exceptions should be mentioned Saint-Aubin’s tiny image of La Tour’s pastel of Louis-Joseph-Xavier, duc de Bourgogne from the Salon de 1761, no. 47 (fig. 7). The sketch on his copy of the salon livret, repeated slightly larger on the title page, is the only clue we have as to the pastel’s appearance, although insufficient to make out exactly what he holds. Of similar documentary value is the Martini print of the Royal Academy 1787, where no. 158, Hugh Douglas Hamilton’s lost “portrait of two ladies” (Countess Cowper, and her sister, Miss Gore) can be rendered legible with the aid of photo-editing software (fig. 8).

It excited salon critiques from Sireul, the abbé Gougenot and two anonymous authors; see EXHIBITIONS; Robert W. Berger, Public access to art in Paris, University Park, Pennsylvania, 1999, p. 218f.

Russell 1987, fig. 53 and commentary.
One of the differences between the salons at the Louvre and the exhibitions at the Royal Academy was discussed by the Gentleman in Paris writing in the *Morning chronicle* (19.IX.1783): “Here the light comes not from the top, as at Somerset House, but through large windows on one side of the room; so that some of the paintings are obscured.” The problem was of long standing: La Tour’s Mme de Pompadour exhibited in 1755 was initially placed so as to reflect light in its glass, and had to be moved overnight.\(^{307}\) Five years after the *Morning chronicle* review, d’Angiviller submitted a memoir to the king (2.XI.1788) proposing top lighting, recognising that the current arrangement provoked “une veritable murmure public sur l’impossibilité de voir la très majeure partie des tableaux.”\(^{308}\) The project was implemented the following year, and considered a great success; but later (14–15.XII.17789) the top light was damaged in a storm and the old windows reopened.

Public auctions were also an opportunity to see pastels, and some of these were recorded by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, and in some cases again provide the only evidence of the appearance of certain pastels.

The role of public exhibitions, and the contemporary critical response to them, has been the subject of extensive academic research. Given artists’ frequent recourse to the formula “plusieurs portraits sous le même numéro” in the livrets (whether to protect the identity of some sitters, or to permit last minute changes of selection), these critiques are often the only source of information about which pictures were included; while the published sources have been virtually fully mined, unpublished documents continue to yield further information.\(^{309}\) Apart from the obvious effects on the reputation of artists and the prices they were able to command, there were some less obvious results: for example, the struggling Mrs Noel attempted to enlist Farington’s support for her work to be shown at the Royal Academy in 1804 because of its importance for her teaching: “her scholars judged of her ability in the Art from that circumstance”.

**VIII.3 Private collections**

In contrast to the relatively sparse hang in George III’s bed chamber, and perhaps with considerable imaginative licence, we have the Roman picture gallery of Cardinal Silvio Valenti Gonzaga (1690–1756), shown in a 1749 painting by Giovanni Paolo Panini (now in the Wadsworth

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\(^{307}\) See Sandt 2019, p. 214.  
\(^{308}\) See Sandt 2019, pp. 180f.  
\(^{309}\) Mme de Graffigny’s correspondence in particular revealed new facts about La Tour’s exhibits, discussed in Jeffares, “La Tour and Mme de Graffigny”, neiljeffares.wordpress.com/2017/03/19/la-tour-and-mme-de-graffigny/, 2017.
Prolegomena to *Pastels & pastellists*

Atheneum), where it is just possible to make out the set of Carriera’s *Four Continents* (lower right) which appear to be the only pastels included (fig. 9).

![Fig. 9 G. P. Panini, Gonzaga collection, 1749 (Wadsworth Atheneum), with detail showing Rosalba Four Continents](image)

Other invaluable records of display practices include the remarkably meticulous record of the private collection of Jean de Jullienne assembled by his cousin and heir Jean-François de Montullé, made c.1756 and including a list of the 367 pictures in the collection with floor plan and elevations of each of the walls (now in the Morgan Library, inv. 1966-8). Figure 10 shows one wall of the *Cabinet de M. sur la Cour*, in which six pastels (three by Carriera, two by Jeanne Natoire and one by Alexis Loir) are arranged around a landscape by Salvator Rosa.\(^{310}\) Again it is clear that one of the leading connoisseurs of his day saw no difficulty in mixing media any more than genre or size.

![Fig. 10 Pastels in the Jullienne collection c.1756](image)

Pastels could also be displayed more discreetly: the Duke of Leinster hung the 28 small oval portraits by Hamilton above the bookcases in his study at Carton.\(^{311}\)

We return to the great private collections of later periods in Chapter XII.

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\(^{310}\) The album has been studied with specific reference to the pastels by Andreas Henning, in London 2011, and by Tillerot 2010; see also *Collectors*.

\(^{311}\) See FitzGerald 1936, fig. 8.
IX. THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF PASTEL PORTRAITS

WHY DID PASTEL REACH ITS apogee in eighteenth century France? Why did some sitters choose to be portrayed in pastel rather than oil? Why did it all come to such an abrupt end with the Revolution? The answers to these questions, explored in this chapter, lead us in particular to see the special relevance of this medium to the portraiture of specific social classes such as the magistrature\(^{312}\) (as can be seen from a perusal of the livrets for the Paris exhibitions during the eighteenth century) and why representation in this recently fashionable genre (in preference to traditional portraiture) became de rigueur for the intellectual élite, for many Enlightenment personalities and for newly ennobled financiers. Discussion of such themes requires some awareness of the broader rôle of portraiture.\(^{313}\)

IX.1 The objectives of portraiture before photography

Most of us are drawn to art – in whatever genre, portraiture, history painting or still life – because it provides us with a unique form of inner experience. Ezra Pound’s concept,\(^{314}\) “An ‘Image’ is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time”, applies equally to portraiture as to poetry. Freud’s doctrine of “affective contagion”, which allows artists to share their intense feelings with others (and is close to Leo Tolstoy’s concept of real art as a mental union of perceiver and artist),\(^{315}\) inspired Roland Barthes\(^{316}\) to describe the process of “induction”:

Le corps qui va être aimé est, à l’avance, cerné, manié par l’objectif, soumis à une sorte d’effet zoom, qui le rapproche, le grossit et amène le sujet à y coller le nez: n’est-il pas l’objet scintillant qu’une main habile fait miroiter devant moi et qui va m’hypnotiser, me capturer?

That skill, of representation that stops you in your tracks and compels attention, is the essence of good portraiture: as true today as it was in the eighteenth century.

As with all portrait painters before the invention of photography they were unburdened by the existential questions of representation: obtaining a good likeness was unselfconsciously a clear and specific target – indeed disputes about their success filled the Châtelet\(^{317}\) and are a rich source of information about obscure painters who had fallen out with their clients and better established ones called in to provide expert testimony. (The conventional phrase “capturing a likeness” distracts from a more serious, Barthesian point: in a successful portrait, it is the sitter who captures the viewer.) Alan Ramsay, in his fictional Dialogue on taste, picks up the verisimilitude of portraiture which his character Colonel Freeman equates to the naturalness in the eyes of the unsophisticated:\(^{318}\)

I have reason to be convinced by a thousand experiments, that the leading principle of criticism in poetry and painting, and that of all the learned principles which is the most unexceptionably true, is known to the lowest and most illiterate of people. Your Lordship has only to hide yourself behind the screen in your drawing-room, and order Mrs. Hannah to bring in one of your tenant’s daughters, and I will venture to lay a wager that she shall be struck with your picture by La Tour, and no less with the view of your seat by Lambert, and shall, fifty to one, express her approbation by saying, they are vastly natural.

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\(^{312}\) See Jeffares 2017s for a discussion of pastel portraits of parlementaires.

\(^{313}\) This section is not of course intended to provide a full history of the social function of portraiture in all media or epochs.

\(^{314}\) Poetry, I, March 1913, p. 6.

\(^{315}\) See, for example, Peta Mitchell, Contagious metaphor, London, 2012, passim. It is only one step to move from contagion between perceiver and artist to that with the sitter in a portrait.

\(^{316}\) Roland Barthes, Fragments d’un discours amoureux, 1977, p. 163.


\(^{318}\) A dialogue on taste, 1762, pp. 56f; see FLORILEGEUM.
A fairly sophisticated analysis can also be found in Louis Tocqué’s lecture given to the Académie royale in 1750.\(^{319}\) Eschewing the idealisations of earlier generations of portraitists, Tocqué recommended scrupulous realism: “ne vous écartez jamais des formes, si désavantageuses qu’elles soient; la beauté du pinceau peut leur prêter des graces.” But to do this one must use a broad touche, “hardie et nourrie”, to capture fleeting expressions, not the minute treatment, “cette sorte de fini, miserable fruit d’un travail où l’intelligence et le goût n’ont aucune part.” To modern eyes of course all eighteenth century portraits are dominated by conventions: conventions of composition and of accessories (less central, and so less hackneyed, with simple pastel busts than in the official portraits d’apparat almost always executed in oil), as well as technical conventions of just how paint or pastel is applied to the support to create those representations.

IX.2 Demographics – sitters

Many of those portrayed, particularly in pastel, did not come from the old, established nobility but rather from new orders. The Dictionary covers (across all countries) somewhat more than 13,000 named sitters, of whom some 56% are male. Based on a sample of the records, the breakdown of social status was as follows:\(^{320}\)

- Statesmen, politicians, courtiers: 45%
- Diplomats: 2%
- Administrators, financiers: 8%
- Lawyers: 3%
- Merchants, industry: 2%
- Military and naval: 14%
- Religion and church: 6%
- Science, medicine: 3%
- Visual arts: 7%
- Architects: 1%
- Theatre, music: 4%
- Writers: 4%
- Tradesmen, peasants, servants: 1%

A slightly different breakdown can be made of the 400 or so named sitters exhibited in the Paris salons (Louvre and Saint-Luc) between 1704 and 1789:

- Royalty: 11%
- Church: 5%
- Military: 17%
- Magistrates: 7%
- Finance: 8%
- Diplomats: 1%
- Visual arts: 31%
- Architects: 3%
- Performing artists: 11%
- Writers, scientists etc: 6%

While it is no surprise that many of the sitters in the portraits by the major eighteenth century pastellists were wealthy (peasants might figure in a genre picture, but did not commission portraits), a more subtle social classification emerges from a careful study. As with all portraiture before 1800, the majority of subjects are those from the upper ranks of society (mostly noble or royal), while among the bourgeoisie, only the intelligentsia and arts are well represented.

IX.3 Demographics – pastellists

The online edition of the Dictionary now includes more than 2500 articles on pastellists. With all reservations as to the difficulties of analysing imperfect and inconsistent records of this kind, some salient demographics emerge from the data. For the purposes of this analysis, the artists were divided into significant (artists for whom a minimum of 10 records or 4 images are known); minor (known pastellists with a smaller known œuvre); amateur; and unverified (artists who may have worked in pastel according to unverifiable sources). A small group of articles contain anonymous pastel copies of works by artists who did not work in pastel; these are omitted below. Of the remaining 2057 pastellists (analysed as in 2010), some 11% were significant, 66% minor, 14% amateur and 10% unverified. Of the minor artists, fewer than half can be credited with any work that can be located today or is known from a photograph.

Of the 224 significant artists, 37 are known from a pastel œuvre of more than 50 photographic images; 38 from between 21 and 50 images; 54 from 11–20; and the remaining 95 from 10 or fewer images. The breakdown between schools, across all levels, was as follows:


\(^{320}\) Care is required in interpreting such data, which are subject to bias of various types (for example, the wife of a ruler will usually be a courtier, while that of an industrialist is often unclassified).
American, Canadian: 3%; English: 15%; Scottish: 1%; Irish: 3%; Dutch: 6%; Flemish: 2%; French: 32%; Swiss: 2%; German: 17%; Austrian, Hungarian, Central European, Baltic and Polish: 3%; Scandinavian: 2%; Russian: 1%; Italian: 11%; Spanish: 1%.

These figures include significant variations of levels between schools. For example, a disproportionate number of the Russian and Spanish records are of amateurs (43% and 32% against an overall 14%).

Twenty-two pastellists (1%) were royal (no doubt including a number of artists receiving extensive help from their tutors), while 74 were noble (ignoring honours bestowed for artistic achievement). Eleven were monks or nuns; at least ten (and probably many more) were freemasons; five were deaf-mutes.

The Dictionary has entries for nearly 500 female pastellists: thus the medium arguably represents a particularly fruitful line of enquiry for the study of women artists in the eighteenth century. This arises partly because the barriers to entry were lower for media like pastel or miniature compared with oil painting, where successful practitioners usually ran large studios (particularly history painting), requiring the support of assistants and apprentices necessitating legal contracts often restricted to males. While some 17% of the pastellists were female overall, the figure varies significantly in the subgroups. Many were the sisters or daughters of artists, but in almost every case their brothers or fathers were better (or at least better known) artists. Women made up less than 10% of the significant artists, while accounting for 45% of amateurs. They represented half the recorded Spanish artists but only an eighth of the Dutch and just over a fifth of the English and French schools. There are of course inevitable biases in the data, reflecting varied cultural traditions — for example, in relation to the admission and recording of honorary members in academies (particularly in Spain, the appointment of noble or royal amateur ladies was a strategy for securing patronage). It is also notable that no woman seems to have made a career as an itinerant pastellist, the route that supported so many minor as well as major pastellists (including Liotard and Perronneau).

IX.4 The pastel in the Ancien Régime

Although the word “pastel” occurs nowhere in the voluminous Mémoires of the duc de Saint-Simon, it is there that we should turn to understand the forces that led to its popularity and to answer the questions that have puzzled art historians. Contrary to popular belief, the social hierarchies in Ancien Régime France were far more fluid than in other countries during the Enlightenment. The hierarchies of the day were shifting away from a system based rigidly on lineage — a system which Saint-Simon was already defending in a rearguard action at the beginning of the century, but which had already taken irreversible damage from the policies introduced by Louis XIV in response to the Fronde. The king’s determination to prevent the highest ranks of the nobility from acquiring again the power to challenge the monarchy led him to transfer responsibility for the administration to other social groupings. Wealth ceased to be the preserve of the traditional noblesse de race. Of course many of these rois, civil servants and financiers were able to use their wealth to gain some admittance to noble society, but — as Saint-Simon succinctly put it — “les rois font des anoblis, mais non des nobles”; and these new men continued to be regarded with distaste as not really gentilhommes.

What was required was not merely a warrant from the king, but to live like the real nobility — even perhaps more like the nobles than the nobles themselves. Some parts of society were less rigid: under the influence of the Régent, for example, the fashionable world of music and the Opéra, as

321 Among many excellent studies of these phenomena, see Roland Mousnier’s Les Institutions de France sous la monarchie absolue, 1598–1789, Paris, 1974.

322 This mechanism of purchase of ennobling offices was widely referred to as “savonnette à vilain” — soap to wash away the filth of base birth.

323 Écrits inédits, p. 393.
well as the various salons famous throughout the eighteenth century for their exaltation of *esprit*, were more open to those with wealth, wit or creative genius: the cult of the étoile (a curious form of meritocracy) was well under way three hundred years ago. Ancien Régime France conferred the greatest respect on those who achieved distinction in the arts and sciences. Writers and philosophers – members of an international république des lettres – musicians, actors and actresses all belonged to an élite for which the only admission ticket was intellectual or artistic distinction. This social ambiguity was explained by the marquis de Luchet in his description of Mme Vigée Le Brun, under the pseudonym Charites:

Son état la place dans une des classes de la société, son talent la place dans une plus élevée, ses goûts & ses complaisances la portent plus haut encore. Elle est bien par-tout, puisqu'elle est par-tout sous les auspices du talent & de la gaieté.

A letter which appeared on the manuscript market some years ago expresses perfectly the symbiosis between artist and sitter which is at the heart of this chapter: written by Valade in 1776 to Jean de Sénac, fermier général and lecteur du roi (brother of the better-known Sénac de Meilhan, but himself a noted art collector whose posthumous sale in Paris included several pastels):

Les artistes ont en cela d’avantageux qu’ils doivent à leurs talents la faveur d’être familiers avec les Rois ainsi que les plus grands seigneurs, ensuite Messieurs les Financiers; ils savent toujours les approcher avec le respect qui leur est dû, plus ils ont de goût et plus ils nous considèrent: c’est là qui nous tient lieu de fortune.

In this emerging social structure in which the wealthiest were hungry to demonstrate not only their wealth, but their taste, it was essential in doing so that they not become the butt of Molièresque *bourgeois gentilhomme* humour. This meant espousing the most fashionable and sophisticated form of portraiture available: one which demonstrated that they were ahead of, not merely apeing, the old nobility – or, in Paul Hazard’s memorable phrase, that they were thinking like Voltaire, not like Bossuet. And it was Voltaire who commissioned the then virtually unknown La Tour to portray him in pastel in 1735.

What better way to display one’s espousal of the Enlightenment than to have one’s own portrait executed in the most fashionable medium (which had the added advantage of requiring shorter and fewer poses de séances)? And without derogation one could take the further step of exhibiting the result publicly – at the salons of the Académie royale de peinture, failing which the Académie de Saint-Luc would do.

It was a corollary of these objectives that the portraits themselves had to be above reproach. It took that famous observer of the animal kingdom, the comte de Buffon, to note that “le style est l’homme même”, if one’s self was on display, the competition for the best presentation of it was intense. It was to meet these demands that the portraitists of this era had to develop a level of skill, of breathtaking craftsmanship, finish and sophistication that ensured that their clients’ displays would not lead to ridicule however absurd their clients’ titles (which Proust likened to vagrants’ fantasies derived from the names of railway stations where they slept) or however recent the money that paid for these commissions.

The need for pastels to be glazed, and the expense of glass at the time when each sheet had to be blown into a cylinder, then cut and flattened by hand, resulted in ensembles of complicated workmanship of considerable physical fragility. That sense of vulnerability itself contributed to a

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326 For the La Tour portrait of Voltaire, see Cabezas 2009.
327 Roughly this point – in relation to the interest of the new patrons in sponsoring and acquiring paintings, although not specifically either to portraits or pastels – is made in Thomas Crow’s *The intelligence of art*, Chapel Hill, 1999, p. 80.
328 The words appear in the abbé Pierre’s 1896 edition of “Sur le Style”, discours de réception, Académie française, 25 août 1753 – but not in the official text issued by the Académie itself (although they are a convenient summary of his point).
sense of preciousness. Diderot’s biblical rebuke to his friend La Tour, “Memento, homo, quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris”, 329 can be read today on various levels. 330

IX.5 Vivien and Carriera

Pastel had of course been available for portraiture since the middle of the previous century, pioneered by the genius of Robert Nanteuil who used the medium for portraits intended to be engraved to accompany academic theses. It had been taken to unprecedented heights by Joseph Vivien, who extended the range of colour and format which (together with the technical development of large sheets of glass) allowed the medium to offer a direct challenge to oil painting. In 1699, the newly ennobled Samuel Bernard turned to Vivien for a very sophisticated commemoration (pastel, musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen) of this rite of passage: one which subtly avoided the trappings of wealth and power and presented instead a psychological inquiry (with almost Jansenist severity) into his strength of personality. But arguably Bernard was too far ahead of this in his time. Vivien’s extraordinary talent was appreciated particularly in an inner circle of practising artists: among grand patrons, his support came from Max Emanuel, Kurfürst von Bayern, 331 and from his brother-in-law, the Grand Dauphin, whose circle at Meudon was, as Saint-Simon explains, not particularly fashionable.

Thus, although Vivien had provided all the necessary artistic ingredients, the great vogue for pastel only took hold a few years later, when the Venetian pastellist Rosalba Carriera made her famous trip to Paris in 1720–21 and carried off the prizes, not by superior talent, but by winning over important patrons all the way up to the new king. No further technical developments were required: but there is no more striking example in the history of art of a medium becoming fashionable so suddenly. The call was made for French artists to emulate her – for reasons perfectly articulated sixty years before by the founder of French opera, Pierre Perrin, in the dedication to Colbert of his Recueil de paroles de musique: 332

En vérité Monseigneur, j’ose vous dire qu’il y va de la gloire du Roy et de la France de ne pas souffrir qu’une Nation, par tout ailleurs victorieuse, soit vaincüe par les étrangers en la connaissance de ces deux Beaux-Arts, la Poesie et la Musique.

One of the immediate responses was by the painter Jean-Baptiste Van Loo, who, as Dandré-Barton explained, 333 presented to the Académie in 1722, along with a history painting—

aussi les portraits de Mme de Prie et de Sabran qui lui avoient déjà fait dans le public, un honneur infini, autant par la variété, la ressemblance, l’ars qui règnent, que par la multitude des copies qui en furent répandues. Ces ouvrages au pastel étoient au pair des plus beaux que nous connours alors en France dans ce genre. Nous voyons avec plaisir combien ce talent s’est perfectionné de nos jours. Preuve bien sensible, que le progrès du génie sont illimités et que la France se charge du soin d’en donner l’exemple à l’Univers et à la posterité!

Van Loo however quickly reverted to oil, leaving the scene to others – most notably to arguably the greatest pastellist of all time, Maurice-Quentin de La Tour. Not long after his portrait of

329 Genesis 3:19 (echoed in Milton, Paradise lost, 3:208), cited Salon de 1767 in relation to La Tour, but Diderot also used the phrase in the “Entretien entre d’Alembert et Diderot”, Œuvres complètes de Diderot, Paris, 1875, II, pp. 105–21; it was popularised in secondary sources (e.g. Ratouis de Limay 1946, p.13f; Dayot 1904) deriving from Dréolle de Nodon’s Éloge. See also Ecclesiastes 12:6–8: “antequam rumpatur funis argenteus et recurrat vitta aurea et conteratur hydria s uper fontem et confringatur rota super cisternam/et revertatur pulvis in terram suam unde erat et spiritus redeat ad Deum qui dedit illum/vanitas vanitatum dixit Ecclesiastes omnia vanitas.”

330 In view of the hazards posed to pastels by vibration ([v. Chapter V]), Diderot might have been interested in “promession”, an alternative to burial or cremation in which human remains are disposed of by ultrasonic destruction of the freeze-dried corpse.

331 Probably acting under the guidance of the prince de Grimberghen, brother of the famous connoisseur Mme de Verrue. Max Emanuel’s Wittelsbach relatives also patronised Vivien, but insisted he work in oil, a medium in which his talent was far less exceptional than in pastel. See Neil Jeffares, “Between France and Bavaria: Louis-Joseph d’Albert de Luynes, prince de Grimberghen”, The court historian, XVII/1, 2012, pp. 61–85.


333 In his éloge delivered in 1753; reprinted in the catalogue Nice 2000, pp. 29–39.
Prolegomena to *Pastels & pastellists*

Voltaire, La Tour was commissioned by Gabriel Bernard de Rieux, son of the famous financier who himself was the son of a minor painter, to produce a portrait in pastel that is surely one of the marvels of western art of any age. Here was no suggestion that the président had overstepped his social position: the quality and sophistication of the picture simply disarmed any such criticism.

Thus, at least in France, the story of the *dix-huitième* pastel is the pursuit of the exquisite, a concept which (as Guillaume Glorieux has argued) was legitimised by Bernard Mandeville’s *Fable of the Bees*, whose publication in France in 1740 was taken as a justification for a short century’s display of conspicuous consumption, of the *douceur de vivre* or the plain obscene displays of *luxe insolent* that brought about a revolution. And for exactly the same reason the appetite for pastel vanished with that cataclysm. As a very practical consideration in times of war, miniatures were a much more portable form of portraiture. The Revolution brought about a return to a classicism that was better served by the Davidian style of history painting than by the essentially roccoco texture of pastel which was more suited to the *douceur de vivre* of the Ancien Régime than to the austerities of the Empire.

IX.6 England

In England, different themes governed the evolution of interest in pastel. In the first half of the century, the dominant influence was the aristocratic Grand Tour with its compulsory visit to Venice to be portrayed by Carriera. The legacy of those trips rarely extended beyond the portraits themselves or a set of the *Four Seasons*, if not from Carriera herself perhaps from one of her British imitators such as Arthur Pond. Much later Hugh Douglas Hamilton’s clients in Rome were drawn from a new generation of British Grand Tourists. Networks such as the Society of Dilettanti or the Divan Club allowed patronage to be disseminated.

Other artists developed what we would now call franchises with particular social groups. Apart from William Hoare, whose Bath practice in some ways offered a similar leisure product, Francis Cotes was the only serious British portraitist working in pastel by mid century: anti-French feeling with the outbreak of the Seven Years War reinforced a prejudice against pastel from Reynolds and others, and prevented the development of the phenomenon in the way that happened in France. Hostility was not new: in 1742 George Vertue recorded:

> Crayon painting…looking pleasant and covered with a glass large Gold Frames was much commended for the novelty – and the painters finding it much easier in the execution than Oil Colour readily came into it…But all this is the depravity of skill, and lowness of Art by which means the unskilful are deceivd – and pay for their Ignorance…the want of Ambition in Art thus shows its declining State. Small pains and great gains, is this darling modish study.

This affected not only domestic pastellists but also visitors: Liotard made a great impact in his first British trip 1753–54, but was less successful on his return in 1773, while Perronneau’s trip in 1761, just a year after the Battle of Quiberon Bay, was disastrous.

Sir Joshua Reynolds’s disapproval is well known (his comments on Liotard are repeated everywhere); Benjamin West’s attitude is discussed at some length in the *Dictionary s.v. Copley: the young American artist, still in Boston (1766), was advised by his London correspondent that

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334 For more about this pastel, see my essay www.pastellists.com/Essays/LaTour_Rieux.pdf and the sources cited there.

335 The président de Rieux is now in Los Angeles, but the potency of its magic ability to confer nobility has not been lost (see below).


337 In his *Discours sur les sciences & les arts* (for the Académie de Dijon, Geneva, 1750, p. 37), Rousseau noted that “D'autres maux pires encore suivent les Lettres & les Arts. Tel est le luxe, né comme eux de l'oisiveté & de la vanité des hommes. Le luxe va rarement sans les sciences & les arts, & jamais ils ne vont sans lui.”

338 *Notebooks* III, XXII, pp. 109f.

339 See for examples Liotard 2015 *passim*.
Sir Joshua Reynolds “condemns your working either in Crayons or Water Colours”, words which “are confirmed by the publick Voice”. West advised Copley “and make it a rule to Paint in that way [in oil] as much as Possible, for Oil Painting has the superiority over all other Painting.” Copley responded to West on 12.XI.1766: “I shall be glad when you write next you will be more explicit on the article of Crayons, and why You disprove the use of them, for I think my best portraits done that way.” West did not agree; and while Copley continued for some time to admire the effect of pastel, his own antagonism was later evident when John Raphael Smith’s admission to the Royal Academy was discussed in 1802: Copley opposed his candidacy on the grounds that “Crayon painting was not to be admitted into the Class of Painting”. This, according to Farington (Diary, 1.XI.1802), “caused a laugh”, since pastels by Cotes and Russell were hanging in the meeting room.

Pasquin similarly felt no inhibitions in dismissing pastel: he attacked Humphry for turning to “crayon painting, which is a facile pursuit, which no eminent genius will practice willingly”,340 while reviewing a pastel exhibited by John Russell in 1794, “Crayon painting at best, is but an unworthy pursuit, and in the prosecution of which a vigorous mind would feel impatient and disdainful.”341

IX.7 Other social networks

At least in terms of a surviving œuvre, John Russell was the most prolific pastellist of the eighteenth century, with some 600 works known today. Overwhelmingly they come from families connected with the Methodist movement.342 This seems to be an isolated example: religion was no longer a powerful engine in artistic society of many countries in Enlightenment Europe.

In addition to the development of academies discussed above (Chapter VII), other learned societies grew up throughout Europe which encouraged scientific curiosity or “ emulation”, and in many cases portraiture resulted. The growth of freemasonry toward the end of the eighteenth century was particularly notable, and many pastellists are known to have been masons or the wives or children of masons (and probably a good many more whose membership has not yet come to light). Among these were major names such as La Tour and Perronneau, as well as dozens of minor figures.

340 Pasquin 1796c, p. 121.
342 Among the numerous sources cited in the Russell article, see in particular Matthews 2005.
X. NON-PORTRAIT SUBJECTS

The overwhelming majority of the pastels in the Dictionary are portraits, no doubt as a result of the unique suitability of this medium for the depiction of human flesh. But a number of artists have used pastel in other genres, which are indexed in SUBJECTS. (This is not an index of attributes which appear within portraits; they may be located with a keyword search on the Dictionary site.) This chapter is no more than a link to that file.

The broad categories include allegorical and mythological (where the influence of Carriera survived throughout the eighteenth century); religious (popular in Spain and Italy, and often the subject of choice for amateurs to present to the academies in those countries); history and literary subjects are usually single figures (as pastel does not lend itself to large narrative scenes); theatrical scenes, much favoured in The Netherlands (Troost). The use of pastel for landscape was limited by the difficulty of obtaining stable greens. (When Russell exhibited a View of Guildford in 1790, the critic noted that it confirmed their “opinion, that crayons are not adapted to landscape”.) Pastels were also very widely used for making copies of old master paintings: no doubt many of these were undertaken for educational purposes.

Sometimes the boundary between portraiture and genre is obscure. The index of SUBJECTS does not include portraits of identifiable subjects depicted in historiated guise in the vocabulary popularised by artists including Nattier, Hubert Drouais or Lundberg. Writing in 1748, the abbé Gougenot commented (prematurely) on the vanishing of this genre:

On s’étoit, il y a quelque temps, imaginé y répandre plus de dignité & de variété, en donnant des habillements historiques ou Pastoraux aux objets que l’on avoit à peindre; mais on est présentement revenu de ce mauvais goût. [note de l’auteur: On en est redevable à M. de la Tour, qui le premier s’est fait une regle de peindre ses Portraits avec les habits ordinaires.] En effet outre que ces déguisemens faisoient tort à la ressemblance, ou du moins empêchoient qu’on ne la faisit au premier coup d’œil, quelque parfaite qu’elle fût en elle-même; les Portraits étant faits pour rester dans les familles comme des monuments précieux, ils y doivent perpétuer la mémoire, non-seulement des personnes qu’ils représentent, mais encore des habillemen du temps.

No doubt the popularity of such pictures, and of Carriera’s mythological goddesses, was the opportunity to depict naked flesh. According to one author (West 2004, p. 60):

In the hands of talented artists like Jean-Étienne Liotard the soft tones of pastel could mimic the texture of flesh and enhance the immediacy of the portrait image. Because they rendered the person both lifelike and seemingly touchable, miniatures and pastels potentially had an erotic or fetishistic quality and were collected obsessively.

West 2015 goes further, interpreting the expression of lustful feelings in “the most explicit letter” from one correspondent as going beyond the formulaic and social, citing Jean Baudrillard in support. The letters were however written to an elderly, pious spinster of famously plain appearance (“molto brutta”, the Emperor Karl VI is reported as saying: Zanetti 1781). While there were numerous licentious miniatures (and a good many gouaches and prints), very few pastels were explicitly pornographic (those of André-Joseph Salmon being a notable exception). Indeed, given pastel’s suitability for depicting flesh, it is curious that there are hardly any nudes or académies. A partial explanation lies in the prudery at the official salons, remarked by Pahin de La Blancherie (Nouvelles de la république des lettres et des arts, 28.xii.1779, p. 61).
XI. PRICES AND PAYMENT

A NUMBER OF MODERN SOURCES suggest that pastel’s popularity was due to its being cheaper than oil painting. This chapter explores what we know of the charges pastellists made for their work when they were originally commissioned, and attempts to give some indication of what those sums might represent today.

Of course minor pastellists would charge less than established oil painters; and all artists adjusted their prices to the format selected, so that a pastel head would be cheaper than an oil portrait en pied. But examples from Perronneau to Boze and Vigée Le Brun where pastel and oil versions of the same portrait were supplied do not indicate that pastels were cheaper, even when the additional cost of glass was excluded. Moreover, the best pastellists were known to be expensive. In a letter of 7.IX.1749, Daniel Wray wrote to his friend Philip Yorke to advise him on things to be done in Paris, mentioning the sculptor Bouchardon and adding:

Call in too at Chardin’s, who paints little pieces of common-life, and upon Liotard (but he is the Colonel’s painter), admirable in crayons. All one praise we allow these artists; but we believe, when you have heard their Prices you will be able to convince people that Oram and Scot and Pond are not extravagantly paid.

Several weeks later Wray added: “Give me leave to correct a mistake in my last letter. The Crayonnist whom I meant to commend (from Hogarth’s testimony) is La Tour. I confounded him with Liotard the Miniature-painter.”

Most of the price data come from auction records, and details of prices paid on primary commissions is sporadic (few pastellists’ account books have survived). Estate inventories in France often included pastels without values, as “portraits de famille, pour mémoire”. Advertisements carrying prices were usually placed by itinerant artists (a great many will be found throughout the Dictionary).

It is almost meaningless to compare prices during the eighteenth century with those of today: currency exchange rates and inflation introduce powerful distortions into the statistics. Even for long periods in the eighteenth century, when rates were relatively stable, there were large cost of living differences between London and the Continent. But for broad illustration, the UK retail price inflation rate from mid-eighteenth century to 2015 is about 200; between 1796 and 1914, the factor is closer to 100. Before 1914, £1 was roughly equal to FFr25 or $4.50.

During the eighteenth century by far the highest price recorded was probably the 48,000 livres demanded, but not received, by La Tour for his portrait of Mme de Pompadour. Adjusting this using these principles to 2015£ values equates to only £362,000. Apart from this example, very few eighteenth century records indicate prices exceeding say 1200 livres (2015£: £10,000), a level reported for a number of other artists from Carriera and Mengs to Boze. But these are still significantly short of the 100 louis d’or (2015£: £19,000) Nanteuil famously received for his pastel of Louis XIV in the mid-seventeenth century.

Ashfield charged as much as £10 (2015£: £2000) for his small heads in the 1670s; Luttrell, thought to have been his pupil, priced his pastels (according to the hand-bill issued for his 1710 raffle) at a mere 15s. each, “well fitted up with Frames and Glasses fit for Closets”.

343 British Library, Add. Ms 35401, f.121 v.
344 See also the letter to Yorke from his wife cited in the Liotard article.
345 Among those for whom records survive are Carriera, Pond, Lion and Boze.
346 These figures are based on prices paid in local currencies, exchanged into sterling at the contemporary rate, and adjusted for inflation using a retail prices index (note that this does not produce the same number as inflating in the local currency before exchange). More detailed rates than those in this sentence are used in the computations underlying the numbers quoted (the Bank of England publishes inflation figures from 1750; the literature on historic exchange rates is vast, and our data are taken from various sources). Adjusting for inflation in luxury goods or in the cost of building a stately home would of course produce far higher numbers.
Carriera’s prices ranged from 10 zecchini to a typical 22 for Lord Portland in 1727 (2015£: £2150). Sometimes she would charge more – 40–50 zecchini, but throw in a Jeune tyrolienne with the customer’s own portrait; repetitions in various sizes were also often supplied at the same time. Feldmarschall von der Schulenburg paid 100 zecchini for his portrait alone in 1738. Typically she would add say 3 zecchini for a gilt frame. Sets of the Four Seasons were more expensive – about 200 zecchini. The set supplied to Clemens August von Bayern were bought by Jullienne in the 1760s for 4000 livres.

Arthur Pond’s accounts provide a wealth of detail of his prices, as well as the cost and charges he made for supplying frames and glass. Typically for pastels he charged between 5 and 10 guineas, with a further 1½ to 3½ guineas for frame and glass (Mrs Harrison’s portrait in 1737 was put in an architrave frame and glass for only 1 guinea, while the French ambassador Lestevenon was fitted with a black frame and glass for only 8s.). In one case, for a Nottingham client, he added an additional 10s. for packing. George Vertue noted that Hoare charged 5 gns for a pastel, or 8 gns framed and glazed in 1738; much later a set of four of his fancy pictures were invoiced to Lady Ailesbury for 60 gns including frames and glass.

In 1768, the year in which he helped found the Royal Academy, Cotes charged 25 guineas (2015£: £4000) for a head in pastel (and a further three guineas for an Italian burnished frame, and £1 5s. for the glass), and for oils, 20 guineas for a head, 40 for a half-length and 80 for a full-length portrait. And while the extra work involved in painting a full-length oil might seem to be reflected in the price, the use of assistants for painting landscapes and drapery presumably provided an early form of financial leverage to increase an artist’s commercial return – which was why Cotes probably shifted to oils despite being more comfortable in pastel. Similarly the far less talented but socially successful Katherine Read was charging £20 for single figures by 1772; three years later her prices were 30 guineas for single figures and 150 guineas for a full length in oils.

At the height of his career, Russell charged 30 guineas (2015£: £4000) for a “head” (i.e. his commonest bust-length, 61x46 cm), and as much as £150 for large full-length groups (the 1797 account for the portrait of Mrs Jeans and her children was for 75 gns, with a further £12/9/- for the frame and glass, by Benjamin Charpentier) – Reynolds charged very similar prices. In 1788 Gardner charged Mrs Marton 20 gns plus 2½ gns for frame and 3½ gns for glass. Skirving however charged exceptionally high prices of up to 100 gns, linked to the need for up to 50 sittings.

Typically for French pastels the best records are from the Bâtiments du roi (the accounts published by Engerand 1901 provide a useful source of information, although they are not complete), and include both major figures and minor copyists or portraitists working from existing iconography. An important benchmark for portrait prices was established in a letter of 13.V.1747 (probably to Lépicié) in which Tournehem announced a change in the price structure for paintings, lowering those for portraits: “Je n’entends payer dorénavant les portraits en grands et les plus riches que 4.000 livres, ceux jusqu’aux genoux 2.500 livres, et ceux en buste 1.500 livres.”347 La Tour returned to the subject with his letter to Marigny of 1.VIII.1763. Roslin’s 15.VI.1767 invoice for his portraits of the deceased dauphin and of Madame Victoire made in 1765 reveals that he charge 2000 livres for a large scale oil of Louis, with two bust length pastels, one “fini d’après nature” each at 1000 livres (2015£: £8500); while both oil and pastel versions of his sister cost 1000 livres; the five frames, with glass for the three pastels, came to an additional 900 livres.

The typical prices for pastels were perhaps 300 livres (2015£: £2500). Coypel typically charged 300 livres (2015£: £2500), but was paid 600 livres for an allegorical La France recevant dans ses bras M. le duc de Bourgogne commissioned by the queen in 1752. But Frey was paid 720 livres for pastels of each of Mesdames Adélaïde, Louise, Sophie and Victoire in 1764. Boze’s account books confirm similar numbers: 300–400 livres for routine portraits, somewhat more for royal commissions, of

347 Cited Jean Locquin, La Peinture d’histoire en France de 1747 à 1785, 1912, p. 6.
which the highest was 1200 livres for the comtesses d’Artois et de Provence (1785). Repetitions would of course be for lower numbers, e.g. 360 livres.

Perronneau was paid only 144 livres for principe di Ardore in 1749; by 1752 however he was paid 600 livres for a pastel of the princesse de Condé.

La Tour of course could command more. The pastel of Prince Charles Edward Stuart shown in 1748 received 1200 livres; repetitions were then made. Marigny commissioned a pastel of the future Louis XVI in 1762 for 2400 livres. But even non-royal portraits were expensive: the Bâtiments du roi 1744–47 recorded payments of 1500 livres each for the chevalier de Montaigu and the duc d’Ayen.

Lion’s accounts for his trip to Vienna in the 1760s reveal an unusual commission for the Kaiserin’s private apartments of 20 landscapes in pastel, for an amount of 4100 florins (2015 £: £50,000). Most of the portraits listed without description were probably in pastel, and generally range in price between 200 and 400 florins.

Liotard’s receipt for the Belle Chocolatière reveals a price of 120 zecchini – about 864 livres, in 1745 (2015 £: £12,000). He had already received 54 zecchini for the three pastels and a miniature of the Stuart family (perhaps 100 livres each). Liotard was commissioned by Augusta, Princess of Wales to make a series of pastels of the royal family (now in Windsor); a receipted memorandum, dated 15.VIII.1755, shows that four of these pastels, inclusive of frames and glass, cost 108 guineas (2015 £: £5000 each).348

Mengs received 100 louis d’or (2015 £: £19,000) for the two allegorical pastels commissioned by the marquis de Croismare in 1754.

But at the other end of the scale, the pages of the Dictionary are filled with advertisements from minor figures charging derisory sums for their no doubt inferior work: Mrs Adams, for example, advertising “Likenesses of grown People and Children in Crayons”, for 7s. each, Frame and Glass included, or “if painted on vellum, 8s.” (1778; 2015 £: £40). Anspach’s prices for his characteristic small oval portraits were £7 glazed and framed, £5 unframed (2015 £: £80).

Hugh Douglas Hamilton, a far more accomplished pastellist, started with prices as low as 6 guineas in the 1760s (2015 £: £1000); entries in the Duke of Montagu’s expenses book show that he paid 7½ gns for a portrait and frame in 1771 and again the following year.

Thomas Lawrence started his career in Bath, producing small oval pastel heads for a guinea each. His initial pricing strategies are revealed in his 1787 letter349 to Mary Hartley’s mother:

I must now acquaint you, Madam, with the motives which induced me to make the addition in my price. When I had the honour of being first known to you, four guineas was the sum I had received for nearly a year; some little time before I left Bath, it was raised to five. When I arrived in town, I was advised by my family and friends, to make a distinction between those portraits, where only the head was seen, and those in which the arms were introduced; which advice I the more readily took, from knowing my expenses to be rather heavy, the lodging I am now in, being three guineas the week; but more particularly from this reason – the necessary time to be bestowed on the finishing of crayons, (which I attempted,) was such that from proof I found my receipts were more when I painted for two guineas and a half, than they were when I had five. At the same time that I inform Miss Hartley of this, I must blame my own imprudence, in not making myself acquainted with the prices of the painters here, as it is my wish ever to be clear from the charge of presumption, which I fear I have incurred.

I am much honoured and obliged in the Duchess Dowager of Beaufort, and Mrs. M. Townshend, interesting themselves in my behalf, and Madam, if (it) should be your advice, and your concurrence should attend it, the lowering my price shall immediately be done, with the greatest readiness and pleasure.

348 Royal Archives Add. Ms 55448; reported Millar 1963, p. 190 and (independently) R&L, p. 432. The amount is given incorrectly (as 180 guineas, by transposition) in New Haven 2017 and inexplicably as 18 guineas each without frame or glass in Liotard 2015.

349 Letter to Mrs M. Harley, 26.VI.1787: see Warner 1830, p. 472f.
Among other pricing anomalies, in the 1730s Goupy’s copies were valued more highly than his original works. The Prince of Wales paid 50 guineas (2015£: £11,000) for a Bacchus and Ariadne in 1738, while John Hedges obtained portraits of two ladies for 16 guineas. The Earl of Oxford paid 50 guineas for a repetition of the Belisarius in the Royal Collection.

However valuable the social relationships between artists and their patrons (explored in Chapter VIII above) must have been, the question of collecting payment was often difficult for artists at all levels: La Tour’s Pompadour is an extreme example, but numerous law cases heard in the Châtelet suggest similar difficulties. The lack of resemblance often cited by customers as grounds for repudiation may well have been a pretext in many instances.

A letter from Ozias Humphry to Lady Mulgrave of 16.X.1779, prompted by a dispute over payment which dogged his career, explains that it was the custom to ask for half payment for a portrait on commencement, citing this as the practice of Reynolds, Cotes, West, Zoffany, Stubbs and Peters, and assures her that the price asked was the same as that paid by Lord Craven.

It is easier to understand the difficulties for portraitists collecting payment during the French revolution. Boze successfully took legal action (at the Tribunal du 6e arrondissement, 22.V.1792) against the émigré comte de Provence for non-payment of 6000 livres for his portrait en pied (a similar action against M. & Mme Darragon for 1200 livres for two portraits of Mme Darragon was heard on 22.IV.1792, while one against the maréchal de Castries on 26.IX.1792 failed when the defendant produced a receipt showing that the 60 louis had already been paid.

All of these numbers adjusted for inflation to today’s prices are vastly lower than what the best examples have achieved in the secondary market (see Chapter XIII below).

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350 Wildenstein 1921 is the main source of these reports which, when they refer to pastels, are mentioned in the relevant artist article.
XII. COLLECTING AND CRITICAL FORTUNES POST 1800

The social factors that led to the enormous popularity of pastel in Ancien Régime France led even more abruptly to its decline, with the Revolution. In Britain too interest in the medium evaporated with the death of John Russell in 1805. Only in provincial Germany, which had been late to the game, did interest continue in a seamless transition from rococo to Biedermeier. As a mainstream medium for leading artists, pastel disappeared until its rediscovery, as a completely different material, by the Impressionists. That story is beyond the scope of this work.

There is however a quite different narrative which we pick up in this chapter: that of how collecting interest in the eighteenth century pastel revived much later, particularly in the Belle Époque, only to wane again by the end of the First World War. On a very broad level this may be seen as following trends in wealth inequality. 351

XII.1 Collectors

To understand this phenomenon a broader investigation of collecting is required. There are detailed notes on some 1250 of the most important collectors on the Pastels & pastellists website. Just over fifty amassed more than a dozen pastels. Among them were important royal collectors such as Friedrich August (I. and II.), the duc d’Orléans, Caroline Luise von Baden, Charles de Lorraine and Clemens August. The great French eighteenth century collectors included Blondel de Gagny, Crozat, Jullienne, Lempereur, Livois, Mariette, Marigny, Paignon Dijonval, Proli, Tallard and Vassal de Saint-Hubert (Tessin formed much of his collection in Paris), as well as artists and amateurs such as Coypel, Ducreux, Grimod, Lemoine, Natoire, Saint-Non. Mention should also be made of dealers such as Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Le Brun; there are contemporary descriptions and illustrations that show his hôtel constructed between the rue de Cléry and the rue du Gros-Chenet as a multi-purpose exhibition space for a major collection rather than a stock room: “une galerie propre à recevoir une collection de tableaux précieux et autres objets d’art que je rassemblais depuis vingt ans”. 352 In England Bessborough and Fawkener were known for their Liotard holdings, while Walpole and Dawkins had mixed groups.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, French collectors again dominated: Decourcelle, Doucet, Ganay, Goncourt, Groult, Houssaye, La Béraudière, Lapérier, Marcille, Petit de Meurville, Piot, Rothschild and Veil-Picard all formed important collections, while in England Coates, Colonel Johnston, Rotch, Thursby-Pelham and Wellesley are less well known. Antiquaires, or collector–dealers, such as Kraemer, Stettiner, Wertheimer and Wildenstein should also be noted.

What is to be said of those who collect pastels? “C’est un curieux; il a beaucoup de pastels chez lui.” 353 It is clear that, even by 1694 when the first edition of the Académie française’s Dictionnaire appeared, there was a recognition of something special about a collection of pastels, and that such a collection could evidence that its possessor was a “curieux”. A curieux is “celui qui prend plaisir à faire amas de choses curieuses & rares; ou celui qui a une grande connaissance de ces sortes de choses”, while adjectivally, curieux defines one “qui a beaucoup d’envie & de soin d’apprendre, de

351 Books such as Thomas Piketty’s Le Capital au XXIe siècle, 2014 provide valuable data with which to make a comparison with the price data analysed below. The significance of any correlation is a different question.

352 Le Brun’s introduction to the Raymond sale, 1811; see Darius A. Spieth, Revolutionary Paris and the market for Netherlandish art, Leiden, 2018, p. 147.

353 This example also appears under the head-word Pastel in each of the editions of Le Dictionnaire de l’Académie française from the first (1694) to the fifth (1798); “C’est un curieux”, but not the remainder of the sentence, is dropped subsequently. Although it sounds like a citation rather than an exemple forgé, I have been unable to identify any source. There is however a curious parallel with a speech by Madame Merle in Henry James’s The portrait of a lady (1881; p. 225 in the London 1968 ed. by Leon Edel), instancing what might be said to define Ralph Touchett: “He’s very cultivated,’ they say: ‘he has a very pretty collection of old snuff-boxes.’”
voir, de posséder des choses nouvelles, rares, excellentes &c.” When Liotard announced his presence in the Public advertiser in London, his notice was addressed To the Curious.354

There are hints of mental pathologies in this language which are amplified in the many studies that have been made of collecting in general. Curiously, despite suggestions that collectors specifically acquired pastels obsessively or fetishistically, few of these collections were devoted to pastels exclusively or even dominantly: Yves Cartier de Fontobbia and three living cases are the only private collections devoted (almost) exclusively to pastel that come to mind; the obsession seems to have been with collecting rather than with the medium. If anything is to be learned by studying those who have collected pastels, it is surely that the range of motives, the breadth of other interests, the mixture of genres, the manner in which they have acquired money, and even the level of affluence they have required to pursue their interest, simply cannot be reduced to any single theme.

While private collections, particularly in Ancien Régime France, have been the subject of much academic research; and some of the critical tools – Lugt’s extraordinary survey of marques de collections, or the study of the special mounts which Mariette prepared for his drawings – are not relevant to framed pastels. Nevertheless some conclusions can be drawn about collecting and prices in the broader social context discussed below.

XII.2 The rediscovery of the dix-huitième

It is important to note that the revival of interest in eighteenth century art, which today we associate with the Goncourt brothers, was a more complicated phenomenon than it may at first seem. In particular pastel was not always included, and the way the fashion took hold was not the same in England say as in France.

An excellent account of the establishment view of eighteenth century French art may be found in the various essays in the proceedings of a 2008 colloquium entitled Delicious decadence – the rediscovery of French eighteenth-century painting in the nineteenth century.355 It is perhaps not insignificant however that the volume contains virtually no mention of pastel, although many of the collectors discussed did include pastel among their interests. A revealing passage356 arises in an essay on Thoré-Bürger’s rehabilitation of Watteau, Chardin and even Fragonard on the basis of their thick, vigorous brushwork, anticipating Impressionism; for him and his left-wing Republican views, finish, and presumably the aesthetic of pastel, would have been anathema. However the rediscovery involved connoisseurs and collectors who approached the subject from a range of different directions. A number of those in France, among whom the Goncourt brothers are the best known, were interested in pastel to varying degrees.

There is no doubt that a key role in the reevaluation of eighteenth century pastel was played by the collection in the Louvre, which has always been dominated by La Tour. Originally a few pastels were interspersed with other pictures in the Grand galerie, but an arrangement which persisted into the twentieth century (see fig. 7 below) seems to have been in place from the reorganisation of 1834, the Grande salle des pastels being no. 14 of the salles des dessins, on the first floor of the northern side of the Cour carrée.358 Enthusiastic descriptions by Arsène Houssaye (1849), Sainte-

354 11 January 1754.
355 Christoph Vogtherr, Monica Preti & Guillaume Faroult, eds., Delicious decadence – the rediscovery of French eighteenth-century painting in the nineteenth century, Farnham, 2014. Of particular relevance to the present discussion are the essays by Frances Suzman Jowell, Humphrey Wine and Stephen Duffy.
356 Frances Suzman Jowell, “‘Ah! que c’est français!’ Thoré-Bürger and eighteenth century French art”, op. cit., pp. 71–86, p. 84.
357 See Salmon 2018, p. 36 (and Jeffares 2018g for further comments on pastels in the Louvre). For other accounts of the hang of pastels in the Louvre at earlier stages, see Guérin 1715 and Dezallier d’Argenville 1781. Although Reiset 1869 provides the name of some of the artists whose pastels hung in various rooms, only O’Shea 1874 gives specific pastels for each.
358 The position is now occupied by room 52 of the Napoléon III apartments.
Beuve (1852), Champfleury (1853), Julien de La Rochenoire (1853), Théophile Gautier (1855) and the Goncourts (1867) emphasised the dominance of La Tour and Mme de Pompadour in particular (although La Rochenoire thought Rosalba’s jeune fille au singe even better). Gautier also discussed the recent decorations by M. Desnuelles, praising his good taste in subordinating his ornamentation to the pictures, “et de n’employer que des nuances adoucies, des tons passés, des ors rouges, verts ou fauves, de façon à ne pas étendre ce qu’il devait faire valoir.”

The Goncourts’ own collection contained a small number of examples of which the most important was a pastel they bought at Drouot as by La Tour but which they thought was by the other pastellist – Perronneau – whom they regarded as working in the manner of the English school. In a revealing passage in Reynaldo Hahn’s diary, after a visit “au Louvre avec Marcel” to see the pastels of Chardin and La Tour, he records an encounter with Edmond de Goncourt after dinner chez Alphonse Daudet–

Sur le canapé, Goncourt me parle longuement de peinture. … Je lui raconte ma visite au Louvre, le questionne sur les pastellistes. Il admire surtout Perronneau, le place très au-dessus des deux autres et le considère comme le peintre de l’école anglaise, “bien que personne ne s’en soit jamais aperçu”, ajoute-t-il avec un petit ricanement. Il n’a aucune envie de voyager, de voir des pays.

(As Guillaume Apollinaire noted, “il n’y a pas de comparaison à établir entre les pastellistes anglais du XVIIIe siècle et les pastellistes français de la même époque.”) Curiously although the Goncourts included essays on Chardin and La Tour in their L’Art du XVIIIe siècle, they wrote only a short passage on Perronneau (in the La Tour article), in which they correctly identified M. Groult’s boy by Perronneau: “rien d’aussi franchement charmant”.

Among the numerous great collectors of pastels of this era, Camille Groult and Jacques Doucet stand out. The watercolours made by Karbowski in 1905 to record the celebrated collection of Jacques Doucet in the rue Spontini (later broken up at auction in 1912) show us the famous couturier’s approach; as figs. 1 and 2 reveal, pastels by La Tour were again hung with paintings by Chardin and Reynolds.

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359 Gautier 1855, p. 70.
360 It is in fact by Vigée Le Brun: see ESSAYS, Beaumon.
361 Notes. Journal d’un musicien, Paris, 1933, pp. 19ff, 26 November 1895. See FLORILEGIUM. Hahn and Proust did not see any Perronneau pastel during their visit, nor did Proust mention Perronneau in his unpublished article on “Chardin and Rembrandt” which he wrote at that time. It was not until after the opening of the Cent pastels exhibition in 1908 that Perronneau’s name appeared in Proust’s novel – in Le Côté de Guermantes, at which he was at work at the time.
362 L’Intransigeant, 8.IV.1911, p. 1. See FLORILEGIUM.
363 Now in the Art Institute of Chicago, inv. 1995.283, once identified as l’enfant Lemoyne.
While in many respects the approach taken by the other legendary collector of that era, Camille Groult, was rather different, he too had no difficulty juxtaposing pastels, oils and drawings of disparate sizes hung at different levels (fig. 3 shows oils, pastels and préparations by Perronneau and La Tour in the central hall in the hôtel de l'avenue Malakoff, from the supplement to *L'Illustration*, 19.1.1908).
For the retailer Gabriel Cognacq, his personal collection (“les joyaux de sa galerie”) was displayed (fig. 4) at the Samaritaine de Luxe to “attirer la clientele” as one contemporary article noted,\footnote{L’Opinion, journal de la semaine, 24.X.1925, p. 25.} contrasting the approach of this (unnamed) “collectionneur notoire, directeur d’un magasin de nouveautés du boulevard des Capucines” with that of the New York department store, Wanamakers, which had just opened an aeroplane section: “autre pays, autres méthodes.”

This was the period when the major revival in interest in pastel took place, epitomised by the public exhibitions of 1908 (Cent pastels) and 1927, both of which were recorded in various photographs (figs. 5, 6).
A similar approach to display was found in French museums of the day. The Louvre, for example, displayed its La Tour pastels two deep in this photograph (fig. 7) published\(^\text{367}\) in 1919:

\[^{367}\text{Arsène Alexandre, “Pour que le Louvre soit parfait”, La Renaissance de l’art français…, 1.1919, p. 239. I am grateful to Ólafur Þorvaldsson for signalling this image (Twitter, 14.1.2017).}\]
XII.3 Britain

There are other, sometimes insidious, reasons for the present neglect of pastel, particularly in Britain. The great eighteenth century English collectors (and their legacies in the various museums and stately homes in Britain) assembled Poussin and Claude, but virtually no eighteenth century French artists. While Paris had the collections in the Louvre, there was (and remains to this day) no great public collection in Britain to stimulate interest in pastel. In the nineteenth century, the English painter Benjamin Robert Haydon expressed a common view by decrying pastel, along with watercolour and coach-painting, as the three poisons of art. Collectors in Britain showed little interest until the late nineteenth century.

Lord Hertford, who formed his collection in mid-nineteenth century Paris, shared the taste of those critics like Thoré-Bürger who were just waking up to the merits of Watteau but unable to make the leap to Perronneau. So it is no accident that there are no pastels in the Wallace Collection. Critics at the time of the opening of the Wallace Collection in 1900 were aware of this: thus Claude Phillips—

The idea still sticks that the French art of this time is mainly naughty, artificial, and decorative; that it may be admired, but with a certain contempt and a turning away of the shoulder, with a certain reservation of one’s better self for better things.

But here it has apparently found no favour. We must still, outside the Louvre and France generally, look for Chardin at Potsdam and Berlin, in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg, and in the little gallery of Carlsruhe, which contains a splendid series of his fruit and still-life pieces. Again we have nothing by the great pastelliste Maurice Quentin de la Tour, or by Perronneau; nothing by Pesne, or Tocqué, or Roslin.

The moral reaction to the conspicuous consumption of that period was widely entrenched, and the second wave of enthusiasm led to a possibly even stronger rejection of the perceived superficiality and frivolity of the rococo, particularly in Anglo-Saxon circles, and especially in the main centres of the teaching of art history. Combined with the genuine concerns about the conservation of pastels, museums throughout the world have eschewed pastel, with very few exceptions.

XII.4 Germany

While Germany accounted for few of the major pastel collections made after 1800, it is notable that a significant number of the Nazi era seizures, for example by the Einsatzschtab Reichsleiter Rosenberg for the Führermuseum in Linz, were of eighteenth century pastels: La Tour and Perronneau dominated the lists which also included works by John Russell, Louis Vigée and his daughter, broadly corresponding with the tastes of the great Paris exhibitions of 1908 and 1927.

XII.5 America

American railroad barons and property tycoons – who themselves it may be said turned to art to wash away the taint of their fortunes – founded museums that, during the last century, acquired the major works of Western art that European museums were no longer able to buy. Most bought the safe but largely predictable portraits by Gainsborough and Nattier that grace their walls. But,
particularly in the last decades, American museums have increasingly turned their attention to pastel in contrast to almost all European institutions that continue to neglect this field.

To see a representative collection of French eighteenth century pastels outside France (the main collections are those of the Louvre, Saint-Quentin, Orléans) one must go to the United States (the Getty, the Met, the National Gallery of Art or Chicago).

**XII.6 Display today**

Today however the challenges presented by pastels (in terms of conservation as well as aesthetics) often lead to approaches to hanging and display beyond those of Groult or Doucet. The leading collections in the world (see MUSEUMS) usually group their pastels together, avoiding competition with oil paintings, allowing the softer medium to speak more clearly and, on a practical level, permitting control of light levels. The historical problems of lighting in eighteenth century exhibitions – whether through windows or top lighting – and the resulting reflections were mentioned in are discussed in §VIII.2 supra. The exhibition of the pastels from Saint-Quentin in the Louvre in 1922 (among the Collection Chauchard) was an occasion for lighting improvements (principally in the selection of dark or neutral colours for different surfaces, with natural light passing through prismatic glass in windows obscured up to c.2 metres) developed by the museum in Whanagui, New Zealand: these “revealed fresh beauties to those who had previously seen them in the ill-lighted rooms,” although only after overcoming the initial impression that a salon had been transformed into a salle d'étude, if not an operating theatre. During the twentieth century the availability of electric lighting resulted in new approaches to lighting in museums, permitting further such transgressions.

Until recently the Louvre continued to display pastels in the Couloir des poules (figs. 8, 9) in isolation from the paintings and drawings in the collection; various wall colours were attempted.

In 2018 the major exhibition of the Louvre pastels took place in the temporary galleries in the Rotonde Sully. Wall colour and hang did not meet with universal approval (fig. 9).

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372 Fleury 1922b; *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1923, p. 258.

At Orléans the Cabinet des pastels also included some sculpture (fig. 10); the 2018 arrangement replaced the somewhat austere wall colour with a brighter look that seems more sympathetic than that chosen for the Paris 2018 exhibition.

Debates may remain about whether to mix different national schools or periods: American museums tend to take a broader approach than those in Europe. At the Getty, different schools and periods are mixed (fig. 11).
The approach to temporary exhibitions is also variable, particularly as regards the choice of directional or ambient light. In 2015 for example, the Liotard exhibition in Edinburgh (Scottish National Gallery) took place against walls of an ultra-deep violet colour with theatrical LED lighting (fig. 12). This is increasingly popular with designers, and has the merit of reducing overall light levels for conservation; but the effect of raking light on pastels can be unfortunate in revealing surface imperfections. (With great care, and the right space, directional spots can be used to great effect, as in the London 2017 exhibition where Rosalba’s *Four Seasons* were lit from ceiling mounted spots at an angle of c.45°, slightly to one side, avoiding both viewers’ shadows and condition issues.) In contrast, the Karoline Luise exhibition showed a number of pastels in a conventionally toplit gallery against sage-green walls (fig. 13).

As noted above, wall colour can be extremely important, and some favourites with designers are often unsatisfactory (mid-blues, which can be very flattering for old master drawings, are often highly unsatisfactory with French eighteenth century pastels). At the Perronneau retrospective in Orléans in 2017 (fig. 14), an enfilade used a sequence of pastel colours to demarcate different zones in what might otherwise have been a disorienting sequence; the images found on social media found these colours peculiarly difficult to capture accurately.

What many of these shows have confirmed is the importance of condition, and the manifold problems in the surviving œuvre of all eighteenth century pastellists. However strong a pastel may have originally been, in any calculus of wall power today it is the product (not the sum) of quality and condition that matters.

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374 Some of these points are discussed in my post https://neiljeffares.wordpress.com/2015/01/26/whats-wrong-with-art-exhibitions/.
XIII. PRICES POST 1800

Much of the discussion about collecting and taste in the period after 1800 can be found reflected in the prices achieved by pastels. This chapter picks up the investigation of artist’s prices started in Chapter XI, but considers the secondary market for the resale of pastels. For the most part the public data are derived from auction sales. In assessing their significance it should be noted that they are subject to the same distortions arising from fluctuating exchange rates and inflation as discussed above in relation to eighteenth century prices, exacerbated by two world wars and several periods of hyperinflation (e.g. when the new franc was introduced in 1960).375

Prices for pastels collapsed at the end of the eighteenth century and only really revived with the second wave of interest towards the end of the nineteenth century. One should note that in the field of old master drawings, many sheets by Michelangelo, each of which would now be priced in millions, sold for a few hundred pounds in the late nineteenth century. But the prices of paintings of similar pre-eminence to pastels seem to have moved significantly faster.

The prices for pastels in early nineteenth century sales were extraordinarily low. After the death of La Tour’s brother in 1807 it proved practically impossible to sell his pastels at auction376 over the next few years: Rousseau was said to have been bought in at 3 francs against an estimate of 150 francs (2015£: 500). At the Silvestre sale in 1811, the pendant pastels of Chardin and his wife, now the jewels in the Louvre collection, together reached just 24 francs.

Even by the middle of the century prices remained depressed for pastels. The Perronneau 1746 man known as the marquis d’Aubais was sold in the Laurent Laperlier sale (Paris, 11–13.IV.1867) for Fr48 (2015£: 500); it was subsequently sold in the Marius Paulme sale (Paris, 13–15.V.1929) for Fr70,000 (2015£: 156,000). The three La Tour pastels in the 1867 Laperlier sale reached sums between 200 and 225 francs, while the oils did better (a Prud’hon Andromaque from 1817 reached 11,000 francs; the twenty Chardins canvases had a mixed fate, reaching sums between 250 and 8850 francs).377

The first real signs of revival in prices were in the Mme Denain sale (Paris, 6–7.IV.1893), where La Tour’s Mlle Sallé reached Fr18,000 (2015£: 81,000). Four years later Mme Rouillé achieved Fr31,550 (2015£: 148,000), reaching Fr365,000 (2015£: £665,000) in the Bardac sale in 1920 and Fr1 million (2015£: £2.1 million) in 1926. La Tour’s value was already well known by 1896, when General Pitt-Rivers asked for information about prices of a pastel attributed to him; he was told “this is very valuable because De la Tour is quoted very well in Paris – about a thousand pounds.”378

As noted above other La Tour pastels achieved high relative prices at the same time. The splendid La Tour Duval de l’Épinoy was not immediately recognised when it was originally sold locally in Beaumont-la-Ronce, 26–28.IV.1903, Fr5210; but it was acquired soon after by Jacques Doucet for Fr120,000. In the Doucet sale in 1912, it sold for Fr600,000 (2015£: £2.5 million), double the estimate, and reported at the time as the highest price ever paid for a pastel. (Its subsequent purchase by Calouste Gulbenkian was for an even higher sum.379) Writing in the Burlington magazine, Robert Dell, its first editor, revealed typically British fury:

375 The classic study analysing art market prices is Reitlinger 1961; the literature is now exceptionally large.
376 See Deoille de Nodon, pp. 119–20; Brière 1932a etc.
377 The prices were reported in La Chronique des arts, 21, 28.IV.1867, pp. 122, 129.
378 By M. Cavini, of 24 King Street, St James’s, enclosed with letter of Sir Thomas Grove, 11.X.1896. The pastel from the Pitt-Rivers collection may in fact have been the Perronneau once identified as of M. Miron.
379 See Essays, Duval where we estimate that the apportioned 1943 purchase price equates to some £4 million in 2015 value.
Is it in accordance with common sense that a masterpiece by Fragonard [le songe du mendiant] should fetch 137,500 francs, and a masterpiece by Latour, who can hardly be counted the equal of Fragonard, 660,000? The truth is that prices have no sort of relation to artistic value.

Prices relative to other pictures reached a zenith in the first quarter of the twentieth century, when works by La Tour fetched prices comparable with canvases of Fragonard or Watteau, and in excess of fine paintings by Rembrandt or Chardin.380

Another spectacular price was the £48,000 (Fr1.2 million at the time, 2015£: £2.4 million) agreed by Nathan Wildenstein with the Greek shipowner Nicolas Ambatielos for La Tour’s président de Rieux in 1919 (Clemenceau saw it earlier that year, and said “c’est le plus beau pastel que j’aie vu…il devrait rester en France”); however, Ambatielos became bankrupt before payment was made, and the picture returned to Wildenstein where it remained until Maurice de Rothschild bought it for an undisclosed sum in 1930. It was sold to the Getty in 1994, also for an undisclosed sum.

By 1959 at the Chrysler-Foy sale one of the La Tour préparations sold for $11,000 (2015£: £81,000).

At the same time as the early interest in La Tour, prices of English pastels also took off. Lawrence’s pastel of Mrs Boucherett with two of her children, which took him all of three weeks to complete, achieved 1000 gns (2015£: £122,000) in the Angerstein sale at Christie’s, 4.VII.1896; this was reported as the highest price ever paid at auction for a pastel. It was soon exceeded by Russell’s Persian Sibyl, for which Charles Wertheimer paid 1100 gns (Christie’s, 1.VII.1899; 2015£: £133,000). Many transactions were not in the saleroom: another Russell, the Agar family, was bought by one dealer from the family for £150, and resold to Asher Wertheimer for £1500 – figures only revealed by a 1913 court case between two of the three intermediaries concerning unpaid commission.381 The 1908 sale of the Gardner portrait of Lady Fawkener for 1250 gns (2015£: £140,000) brought the artist out of obscurity. These prices were not sustained, and it was not until 1993 that a British pastel reached a level equivalent to six figures today. Since then Hugh Douglas Hamilton and chalk drawings by Gainsborough and Wright of Derby have become popular.

Perhaps the most surprising performer has been Liotard. Although known for high prices when he was working, his masterpiece, Le petit déjeuner des Mlle Lavergne, sold in 1801 for £89 (2015£: £6600); in 1835 for £31 (2015£: £3500); in 1916 for £1260 (2015£: £114,000); and in 1918 for £1450 (2015£: £89,000). No other Liotard reached that level until the 1986 purchase by the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston for a reported SwFr 2 million (2015£: £2,144,000). Thereafter some 16 Liots have sold for over £100,000, dominating the tables by number and value (although a Gainsborough coloured chalk drawing currently heads the individual highest price in money of the day: the $2.3 million paid in 2013 equates to 2015£: £1.6 million). Liotard’s market value coincides with the burgeoning literature devoted to him.

380 The appendix in Gimpel 1963 includes paintings such as Fragonard’s Le Billet doux (Fr420,000 at the Cronier sale in 1905; 2015£: £1.8 million), $250,000 in 1919 (2015£: £2.8 million); Watteau’s Deux cousines (Fr220,000 in 1918; 2015£: £538,000); and Rembrandt’s Titus ($40,000 in 1919; 2015£: £446,000).

381 Dyson Lister v. N. S. White, reported in Yorkshire post, 26.XI.1913, p. 9.
XIV. HISTORICO-GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

The Activity Table includes (in a format that can be sorted by date, school etc.) details of pastellists with a known œuvre of four or more pastels; it consists of approximately 275 artists from more than a dozen national schools (just over a third are French). Of these 44 pastellists left more than 50 pastels each. They are a small subset of the total number of artists included in the Dictionary, numbering some 2643 artists. In this chapter we attempt to put these pastellists and the relationships between them (of training or influence) in an historical and geographical context, without repeating the material discussed in the other chapters of these Prolegomena. The brief comments are expanded in the relevant artist articles which are too numerous to be indicated.

XIV.1 Origins – Italy

It is often said that the story of pastel begins with Rosalba Carriera’s trip to Paris in 1720, but this is of course nonsense. Drawings in coloured chalks have a long and distinguished history, going back at least to the end of the fifteenth century. Leonardo da Vinci’s famous 1499 portrait of Isabella d’Este (now in the Louvre) was executed in coloured chalks on cardboard, and the inclusion of the yellow (which may or may not have been pastel or just a naturally occurring ochre) with the more conventional black and red chalks is often said to have been inspired by the arrival in the Milanese court of the French artist Jehan de Paris (Jean Perréal, c.1455–1530), who had travelled there with Louis XII. This tradition of two- or three-chalk drawings heightened with pastel flourished particularly in France with the work of Jean Clouet (c.1485–1541) and the Dumonstier family, of whom Daniel (1574–1646) was perhaps the most gifted, while his son Nicolas (1612–1667) was the first painter to be reçu (received as a member) by the Académie royale as a “peintre en pastel”, in 1663.

In Italy pastel seems to have grown up in different schools. In Venice, Jacopo Bassano (c.1510–1592) and Federico Barocci (c.1535–1612) developed a distinctive style in pastel studies on blue paper designed to capture the key elements of an intended composition in oil. Barocci in particular used coloured chalks with an unprecedented directness and naturalism, and achieved a range of tonality and sfumato, through stumping, that belonged more to painting than draughtsmanship as conventionally understood. These works were referred to as pastels by his biographer Bellori (1672). Giovanni di San Giovanni (1592–1636), and in turn Volteranno (1611–1690), worked with

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382 As at August 2015. The vast majority of entries in the Dictionary concern artists whose involvement with pastel was less significant: for some an extensive œuvre in the medium has been lost, but most were simply artists who preferred other media or whose achievement was so modest that their works were not preserved. Numerous entries refer to artists reported as working in pastel, but who in all probability made only chalk drawings.

383 Perhaps first in Desmaze 1854, p. 9: “L’art du pastel était déjà inventé; faut-il l’attribuer à l’Allemand Alexandre Thiel où à l’Italienne Rosalba? C’est une fille d’Italie au gracieux nom, qui inventa un art destiné surtout à reproduire la finesse des traits féminins.” The reference to Thiele arose in a note at Lot 111 in the sale of baron Heineckens (Paris, 12.XII.1757), and seems then to have been picked up in Duchesne 1801 (copied by Millin 1806), who reported that the inventor of pastel was not known; “les uns l’attribuent à Thiele, né à Erfurt en 1685, et mort en 1752; et d’autres à mademoiselle Heid, née à Danzic en 1668, et morte en 1753.” Paillot de Montabert 1829 copies this as “Les Allemands prétendent cependant que ce fut Alex. Thiele qui, l’an 1685, en fut l’inventeur. D’autres attribuent cette invention à Mlle Heid, née à Danzic en 1688, et morte en 1753.”

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386 For the early development of pastel and the technical aspects mentioned here, see Chapter IV and the sources cited there.
media such as portraits in fresco on tiles, and it is possible that experiments with mixing chalks and fillers led to the development of soft pastel, with its ability to colour broad areas rather than simply make lines for drawing. The specific relevance of pastel to portraiture also began to emerge around this time, the quality of softer, subtly coloured pastel being seen as a more accurate depiction of sitters’ faces than the hard chalks favoured by the school of Clouet (Turquet de Mayerne’s 1620 treatise refers to “crayons de toutes couleurs principalement pour visages”, while listing numerous binders and bases that extend the range of textures available). Other techniques, such as stumping, came into use at this stage.

Barocci’s techniques were taken up in the eighteenth century by the Florentine Benedetto Luti (1666–1724), who worked in Rome and produced independent head studies using delicate and luminous pastel (reds, yellows and blues predominating) with subtly modelled shadows and sophisticated lighting; it was from these that Rosalba Carriera’s art grew.

XIV.2 France – Nanteuil, Vaillant

Among the French school in the seventeenth century, Robert Nanteuil (c.1623–1678) is a key transitional figure in his use of the medium for finished portrait drawings (many of which were also intended for engraving). In 1658 he was “dessinateur et graveur ordinaire du roi”. Nanteuil’s tonality is limited and subdued, possibly because of his focus on the engraving. He was secretive about his techniques for the fabrication of pastels even to his student Domenico Tempesti, who nevertheless provided a description of Nanteuil’s working methods which anticipated those of La Tour in the following century. Concentrating on extracting the character and esprit of his subjects, Nanteuil employed witty conversation to animate their faces – as important a tool as observation. The enormously influential Charles Le Brun (1619–1690) used pastel in formal drawings of Louis XIV, as well as in more finished portraits such as the pendants of Israel Silvestre and his wife, while also using pastel to heighten his numerous chalk drawings. At the same time, the Vaillant brothers (religious émigrés from Lille, their family moved to Amsterdam) followed a similar development to Nanteuil: it is probably no accident that Nanteuil commenced the use of pastel after he had met Wallerant Vaillant (1623–1677) in Paris c.1659. Vaillant had attended the coronation of Kaiser Leopold I. in Frankfurt in 1658, where he met Prince Rupert from whom he is said to have learned the recipe for pastel, involving the addition of kaolin to mineral pigments, as well as the technique of mezzotint engraving. Bernard Vaillant (1632–1698) used pastel more systematically than his brother, pushing the art so far that his works are often confused with those of Nanteuil. The third quarter of the seventeenth century was also a crucial period for the development of a wider range of colours. Many of these were already available to Wallerant Vaillant; his decision to employ a very limited range was possibly due more to aesthetic predilection (the debate between colour and line was at its height) than technical availability: Christiaan Huygens purchased 54 crayons from Lely’s supplier in 1662.

XIV.3 England in the seventeenth century

Nanteuil’s influence may have helped create a pastel school in England, as the engraver William Faithorne (1616–1691) studied with him in Paris when exiled during the Civil War. Sir Peter Lely is normally credited with founding the English seventeenth century school, although his drawings mainly had touches of pastel, and it was his pupil John Greenhill (1649–1676), followed by Edmund Ashfield (1640–1679) and his pupil Edward Luttrell (c.1650–1737), who used the medium more extensively. Connections between pastel and engraving were significant (see Chapter IV).

XIV.4 France in the early eighteenth century

The tradition of using pastel to enhance chalk drawings was continued into the eighteenth century by artists such as Antoine Coypel (1661–1722), who brought a sense of informality and intimacy
into his studies of children, and François Lemoyne (1688–1737), whose few pastel studies include the miraculous Tête d’Hébé (British Museum). His pupil François Boucher (1703–1770) remained essentially a draughtsman rather than a pastellist in terms of the orientation of this Dictionary, although it is not always possible to make this distinction in records from old sale catalogues, and it would be a great mistake to overlook the handful of real pastels which he did make.

There is one sense in which the turn of the eighteenth century marked a departure, namely the technological development that allowed the production of large sheets of flat glass (see §IV.15). These permitted pastels to be made in a grand format that offered a serious alternative to portraits in oil. The real inventor of the pastel portrait – conceived as a final painting in chalk – was Joseph Vivien (1657–1734). Vivien studied under Le Brun, but we know few if any of the pupil’s works from that period, and cannot easily explain the evolution from what was essentially a graphic art under Le Brun to the fully developed colourism of the mature Vivien from the early 1700s. His numerous baroque portraits (he sent two dozen to the 1704 Salon alone) remain unsurpassed in technical achievement.

As is argued in Chapter IX, despite Vivien’s technical mastery, pastel only caught the public imagination a few years later, for social reasons, during the 1720–21 trip to Paris of Rosalba Carriera (1673–1757). She produced small head and shoulders portraits, even smaller “têtes de jeunes femmes” and sets of allegorical themes. The key elements of her art were colour (achieved through delicate harmonies of browns and greys, pinks, blues and whites), and grace, essentially the sfumato effect of stumping, achieved probably by rubbing the chalk onto the paper with the fingers. A narrow repertoire of compositional tricks, stock props such as flowers in the hair and faintly mythological déshabillé, and a predominance of female subjects for these historiated works (although her clientele for Grand Tour portraits were almost all male) all confirm the narrow confines of her ambition, and it must be admitted that her portraits rarely reveal any great level of draughtsmanship – as the Goncourts observed, her art was based on giving her portraits “un souffle de ressemblance dans une fleur de couleur.” But her immediacy is such that one feels that the pastel she used to depict her subjects’ faces is the very same powder they would have used as make-up (indeed this may have been literally true). Her sfumato is certainly a very different result from the polish which Vivien gave his works in his attempt to recreate the finish of oil paint, although both techniques set out to conceal the natural hatchings of chalk strokes which became the hallmark of other pastellists.

Some of the interest in Carriera today is no doubt due to her gender. Many and complicated reasons affected the ability of women to succeed as artists; but it is worth noting that pastel (and miniature) offered greater opportunities than oil painting, particularly of large history pictures, which typically required the support of an organised studio normally reserved for men with mainstream careers in the art machine. Indeed links between pastel and miniature have been close since Holbein: as early as 1648 Norgate noted that an artist practising one was likely to do both; while the Almanachs des peintres of late eighteenth century Paris are filled with examples.

Despite the polarity between the art of Vivien and that of Carriera (and the social factors responsible in France for the latter’s meteoric success, discussed in Chapter IX above), the influence of both is apparent in the work of the Swede Gustav Lundberg (1695–1786), who came to France in 1717. Lundberg was converted to pastel by Carriera on her 1720 trip, and was also undoubtedly influenced by Vivien; when Vivien died in 1734, La Tour had not started and Lundberg filled a vacuum. His own work is both uneven and varied: over his long career he

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386 The rôle of make-up in painting was first noted by Roger de Piles, and its self-referential possibilities have been the subject of recent scholarly attention (see Hyde 2000 and Burns 2002). A pastel realisation of such an image is of course the ultimate self-referential achievement.
387 By abbé Le Brun, not (as is frequently reported) Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Le Brun.
produced works in many different styles, which, together with the endless variants and studio repetitions, makes establishing his œuvre a challenge – particularly for the works he did in Paris, where he remained into the 1740s. He even taught Stanisław Leszczyński, a proficient amateur pastellist. Other royal practitioners included Louis XIII, who executed pastels under the eye of Simon Vouet; the regent, Philippe, duc d’Orléans, who was taught by Jacques-Antoine Arlaud, and gave him a “testé peinte en pastel”; Carriera’s pupil, Elisabetta (Isabella) Farnese; Anna van Oranje (and two of her sisters); Marie-Antoinette and her more talented sister, Maria Christine; and Friedrich der Große. Liotard’s pupil Caroline Luise von Baden was an altogether more serious artist, with a technical accomplishment beyond that of many professional artists.

Charles Coypel (1694–1752) must be considered one of the most original pastellists operating in France in the second quarter of the century. His own enthusiasm for the theatre is not only reflected in the subject matter of some of his works, but also accounts for the somewhat histrionic poses he chooses, as well as for the visual devices such as the trompe-l’œil stone openings he favoured. The religious theme of some of his work, in response to the piety of his patron Marie Leszczyńska, is also unusual in pastel portraiture in France (though less so in Spain or Italy).

Jean-Marc Nattier (1685–1766) was possibly the most fashionable portraitist working in Paris in the middle of the century. Although he is almost always thought of as an oil painter, he also executed pastels during a period of around ten years from the mid 1740s, but of these, only a dozen or so are known. In these, Nattier emulates Vivien’s smoothness to obtain stunning technical effects; dynamic poses and strong, warm colours allow him to achieve a level of psychological penetration as profound as in any of his oils.

Maurice-Quentin de La Tour (1704–1788) was known as an eccentric and wit as well as a genius, and stories abound concerning his exorbitant fees, his impatience if kept waiting and his repartee with Louis XV – all of which reflect his sense of the importance of the great artist in society which would shock no one today. In terms of sheer technical bravura, it is difficult to envisage anything to match the enormous pastels of the président de Rieux or of Mme de Pompadour. The former, exhibited in the Salon of 1741, stunned the critics with its achievement: this was, after all, “just” a pastel, but the miracle planted La Tour firmly centre stage, where he was to remain for nearly forty years, with an inexhaustible stream of commissions from the royal family, the old nobility, the noblesse de robe and the nouveaux riches financiers – not to mention the artists and intellectuals he numbered among his friends, and among whom he was perhaps at his best as a portraitist. This virtuosity was not achieved without struggle: La Tour was a precursor of the tortured artist of the nineteenth century, agonising over endless préparations in which he attempted to capture the soul of his sitter, and continuing to work for decades on portraits that did not satisfy him, often to their detriment. That quest for perfection may have developed into the madness which took over the last years of his life. La Tour left a body of work (by no means all, but a reasonable proportion, of the 990 entries in Wildenstein’s catalogue are his) which, through the range of its subjects and the skill of its execution, dominates the field. Unsurprisingly a large number of these works are self-portraits. His fame throughout Europe was enormous.

XIV.5 France in the mid eighteenth century

By the middle of the century, the pastel was fully in vogue in Paris – for the critic La Font de Saint-Yenne, it had become an excessively fashionable craze. Such was the enthusiasm for the new medium that a rearguard action was fought by the oil painters who dominated the Académie royale de peinture, and by around 1746 decisions were taken to limit the aspirations of the pastellists by requiring morceaux de réception to be in oil (see Chapter VII). This increased the importance of the rival Académie de Saint-Luc.

The salons of both institutions were filled with pastels by petits-maîtres such as Hubert Drouais (1699–1767; a prolific pastellist, whose works were never signed and are almost all now lost – or
at least miscatalogued: we have uncovered a small group which seem to be by him); Allais (whose first names have until recently been uncertain, but whose remaining works include a number of worthy portraits); Pierre Bernard (1704–1777, a colourist from Marseille, undeservedly neglected); Louis Vigée (1715–1767, an artist whose work comes up much more often than most in the salerooms, no doubt reflecting the lustre of his daughter; while lacking her undoubted genius, his portraits display a rococo elegance). Léon-Pascal Glain (1723–1789) is an excellent example of an artist who can so easily be dismissed; among his surviving signed works are several quite dreadful examples – as well as the portrait of Lady Grimston, which is as pretty as any work from the bigger names. Ratouis de Limay placed the portraitist Simon-Bernard Lenoir (1729–1791) at the forefront of neglected pastellists of the eighteenth century; associated with the Académie de Saint-Luc for many years, he produced numerous portraits of subjects drawn from the aristocracy, the theatre and the intellectual bourgeoisie. But among the livrets we find several other prolific pastellists of whom practically nothing survives: Pougin de Saint-Aubin exhibited nearly sixty pastels, almost all lost (save for a couple of dozen we have rescued); Vialy (two dozen), Barrère, Davesne and Lefèvre (more than a dozen each). Of some of these, we have tantalising clues in the form of engravings which in some cases have allowed us to propose authors for certain anonymous works.

Other pastellists, such as Chevalier and Mérelle, were known to have made copies after artists such as Boucher, Liotard and Nattier. The question of copies is a significant issue in the Dictionary, and the mechanisms for making them in the eighteenth century is discussed in Chapter IV. Sometimes we have autograph replicas made by artists to satisfy the needs of their clients to provide copies to their friends and relatives. Perhaps workshops existed in some cases, although we suspect that this was never on the scale of those of painters such as Rigaud. Artists also copied other masters’ work (often from another age, with Rembrandt one of the most popular sources for pastellists from Chardin to Hoin), partly to learn, and partly to pay homage. The tricky subject of fakes and pastiches also arises, particularly with Carriera and Boucher: these range from slavish replicas to independent works of art in a genre (see Chapter IV).

A host of more minor figures worked for the Menus plaisirs du roi, effectively a government department dedicated to producing portraits and miniatures for the royal palaces and as gifts to courtiers and ambassadors. Some of these, such as Jean-Martial Frédou (1710–1795), also did original works of merit in addition to the endless repetitions of royal iconography for which they were employed. Many of these artists worked both in pastel and in miniature, and large numbers of artists advertised their skills in both forms – particularly in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when miniature was in its ascendancy. Miniaturists such as Hall, Sicardi and Dumont all made pastels; of these, only Hall’s œuvre in pastel is beginning to be understood.

The two major figures of the middle of the century – in France at least – were of course La Tour and Perronneau. With this pair, Jean Valade (1709–1787) exhibited the most pastels in the Salons from 1751 to 1769. Diderot dismissed him with a typically succinct piece of art criticism: “rien”. But Valade’s work has great charm and a sense of colour that capture the social aspirations of many of his clients, the nouveaux riches and newly ennobled financiers who acquired their titles through the purchase of obscure offices. Even when his work is not signed, his distinctive style is easily identified, which is rare among pastellists.

The works of Jean-Baptiste Perronneau (c.1716–1783) share this merit of being instantly recognisable. His portraits show an advanced sense of colour, deconstructing his palette with bold strokes like the use of green shadows on faces which anticipate the impressionists’ work of a hundred years later – he was, for Albert Besnard, “un moderne égaré chez les anciens”. His failure to hold his own against the mercurial La Tour despite skills which many consider superior reflects to some extent the social structure of the Ancien Régime; his talents were better received among...
the bourgeois clientèle of Bordeaux, Orléans and Amsterdam. Almost all his sitters show a Watteau-esque melancholy which may not have been popular with sitters; but it is more difficult to explain the widespread neglect today of a figure Edmond de Goncourt placed “très au-dessus de [La Tour et Chardin]”. Endless peregrination through Europe (Daniel Roche called him a “gyrovague”) was a not untypical fate for pastellists, and by no means only the incompetents: Bernard, Lion, Loir and Vivien spent long periods outside Paris. The market for portraiture was not large, and few provincial towns could provide the steady stream of clients required for permanent residence.

XIV.6 Other European pastellists: Northern schools

A similar fate befell the Swiss artist Jean-Étienne Liotard (1702–1789) although in his case it is easier to understand. A short period in Paris was less successful than his journeys to the Levant and to The Netherlands, and he met with hostility from the French establishment. His huge natural talent never quite overcame some of the limitations of the autodidact – although he did excite the jealousy of established artists such as Sir Joshua Reynolds (v. supra). But at the same time his distinctive personal style – noticeable in the unique lighting of all his pictures – developed in a way that would not have been possible in the tightly disciplined studios of the French masters. Liotard’s reputation today is as high as anyone’s – indeed his pastels consistently fetch far more than any others at auction; and he is one of the very few pastellists to whom monographic exhibitions have been devoted. In his old age – he continued to use pastels into his 80s – he turned to still life, and the perspective in some of these bizarre pastels anticipates the works of the cubists 150 years later. Liotard must have inspired artists such as Petiot and Piot, who portrayed the Swiss bourgeoisie with competence and occasional brilliance, while their compatriot Bolomey shows a more international flavour derived from his travels to Paris and The Netherlands. An earlier figure in the Swiss school whose work should not be ignored was Handmann, while Guillibaud also produced worthy portraits. The alpine landscapes of Mme Vigée Le Brun (v. infra) fall strictly into the nineteenth century but serve to indicate the breadth of her art.

A similar level of individuality to that of Liotard is found in the extraordinary work of Lorenzo Tiepolo (1736–1776), a member of the Italian family of artists. In addition to some portraits, during his stay in Spain he executed a group of pastel genre scenes that are almost Caravagesque in intensity and mystery. As with Carriera’s trip to Paris half a century previously, Tiepolo sparked an interest in pastel in Madrid, and a number of, mainly amateur, artists produced work in pastel.

Another giant who operated outside France was Anton Raphael Mengs (1728–1779). The pastels he made at the start of his career in Dresden indicate a prodigious talent as a pastellist, which was never fully developed as he switched to oil painting. But his influence is no doubt apparent in the enormous number of German pastellists in the second half of the century. The numerous autonomous states, each with its own court and royal family, led to a proliferation of portraiture, most of which is frankly dreadful. A typical example was the court of Saxe-Meiningen, where Gottfried Friedrich Bach, a relative of the composer, combined the roles of musician and painter to the court. His son Johann Philipp is supposed to have left 985 pastel portraits of members of the various courts he served. The Tischbein family included a number of active pastellists, and several figures with the name of Bardou left pastels in the courts of Warsaw, Berlin and St Petersburg. The outstanding figure in Warsaw was however the Frenchman Louis Marteau (c.1710–1804); the gifted Alexander Kucharski (1741–1819) worked mainly in Paris. The Italian Pietro Rotari (1707–1762) similarly pursued a peripatetic career, working in Venice, Rome, Vienna, Dresden and St Petersburg, where his endless young women picked up a genre left off by Carriera.

389 According to Reynaldo Hahn’s account of a conversation with him in 1895: Reynaldo Hahn, Notes. Journal d’un musicien, Paris, Plon, 1933, pp. 19ff

390 See Jeffares 2015e.
Russia itself produced few pastellists of note, but welcomed visitors, including G. Fr. Schmidt (1712–1775) as well as the French miniaturist Sompsois; Loir and Perronneau are also believed to have visited, while much later the legacy of Vigée Le Brun’s emigration is more tangible.

The Low Countries have a long tradition in pastel, dating back to the Vaillant brothers. The series of portraits of delegates to the conference at Cambrai in 1725 by Birochon is of some interest, not least because at one stage they were thought to be early works by La Tour. Later portraitists in pastel included Octs, Izaak Schmidt and Bolomey, as well as Cornelis Troost (1696–1750), who made a striking series of pastels illustrating theatrical scenes. Charles Howard Hodges (1764–1837), who had emigrated from England, made some fine portraits in Amsterdam at the turn of the century. Earlier, a number of important pastellists made visits to The Netherlands, among them Liotard, Perronneau, Darbes and Glain. The Belgian Pierre-Joseph Lion (1729–1809) exemplifies the peripatetic career of the pastellist: he left his native Dinant to train in Paris in the 1750s, moving to Vienna in the 1760s and returning to Belgium after a stay in London; his pastels have caught attention in each location but the œuvre as a whole has not hitherto been studied. Lion and Liotard both also visited Vienna, as did Rotari and Ducreux, and, later, Tischbein and Vigée Le Brun. Vienna seems to have depended on these international visitors; few domestic pastellists are known.

XIV.7 England in the mid eighteenth century

The other major school in Europe was that in England, which was influenced less by France than by Italy (which is to say by the legacy of Carriera, as no real school had developed beyond her). Arthur Pond (1701–1758) and George Knapton (1697–1778) both travelled to Italy; their return, respectively in 1727 and 1732, led to a resurgence of pastel in eighteenth century England. As in France, this was not universally welcomed amongst other artists (see Chapter IX).

While pastellists such as William Hoare of Bath (1707–1792) enjoyed a limited success among their clientele, Knapton’s pupil Francis Cotes (1726–1770) took the medium to a higher level; some of his pastels rival work being done in France by the middle of the century, although he never quite achieved the bravura of La Tour. Artists such as Katherine Read (1723–1778) chose to go to Paris to study with La Tour (although this training is not immediately evident from her known portraits), while other figures who worked in England included visitors such as Lion, Liotard and Perronneau.

XIV.8 France in the late eighteenth century

The death of Louis XV in 1774 marked the end of an era in France in artistic as well as historical terms. The careers of both Perronneau and La Tour were drawing to a close. Among the pastellists influenced by La Tour who should have continued his work, Suzanne Giroust, Mme Roslin (1734–1772) was one of the most talented. She was to become one of only a handful of women admitted to the Académie until the Revolution (their number was limited to four), but she died tragically young. Her husband Alexander Roslin (1718–1793) produced some early pastels in Bayreuth, as well as some much finer examples when he later occasionally returned to the medium.

One of the giants of the outgoing generation of painters was Jean-Siméon Chardin (1699–1779), the magician of the still life. For reasons which may have to do with an allergy to oil paint, he took up pastels in the last years of his life, and left a handful of some of the greatest portraits ever painted in any medium: works which belong with other autumnal fruit of ageing genius, from Rembrandt’s self-portraits to Beethoven’s late quartets. This was the opposite trajectory to Liotard, who turned to still life in his last years after a lifetime of portraiture.

Outside Paris, pastels flourished in the various regional Salons that were established during the third quarter of the century (see Chapter VII). Often, as at Dijon, these were associated with the new écoles gratuites de dessin, and the lists of exhibitors at the Dijon salons consisted of pupils of the dominant figure Devosge. Of these, only Claude Hoin (1750–1817) achieved prominence, probably as a result of his subsequent Paris training, even though he returned to his native city. In
contrast, the prolific pastellist C. Noël from Lille never achieved widespread recognition, and
despite being signed his works have largely been lost. The Salons in Toulouse were also remarkable
for the number of pastellists recorded, even though almost all their work is now lost.

Joseph Ducreux (1735–1802) has a claim to being more than just La Tour’s pupil. Like his master
he was obsessed by discovering the inner soul of his sitters – in many cases, his own, since self-
portraits represent a substantial part of his œuvre. He also studied oil painting with Greuze, and
from an early age his records show how active he was in painting leading members of French
society. The development between his portraits of the young Marie-Antoinette, which he made on
a trip to Vienna in 1769, and his later portraits of Revolutionary figures encapsulates the change
of mood between the third and fourth quarters of the century.

The artist Joseph Boze (1744–1826) is best known for his brilliant self-portrait (in the Louvre),
and for his images of the royal family, the many repetitions of which are recorded in his account
books. He was never a member of the Académie royale, and when he finally exhibited at the open
salons after the Revolution, his portraits were much criticised for their cool tones and dryness –
attacks from which his career never fully recovered. Throughout the century the criticism of public
exhibitions (particularly those in the Louvre) played a key role in artistic life. In Paris, the presiding
figure was of course Diderot, whose views could make or break an artist’s career; but other critics,
usually writing anonymously in the various journals, were often influential and today are of interest
not least because they sometimes provide the only clue as to the identity of works shown at the
Salons. We have included as much of the criticism as appears to relate to pastels in Appendix B,
together with the livrets of the salons.

Élisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun (1755–1842) was an artist of huge talent as well as being an
effective self-publicist. Her skills as a pastellist are less well known than her numerous canvases.
But the range of her work in pastel is extraordinary, extending from the feminine grace of the
duchesse de Guiche to the Perronneau-esque handling of colour in the portrait of Montbarrey
(Versailles). Her pastel of Beaujon once belonged to the Goncourts: they thought it was by
Perronneau, and likened his work to that of Reynolds and the English school.

An important female artist of the period, and the strongest rival to Mme Vigée Le Brun, was
Adélaïde Labille-Guérard (1749–1803); they both joined the Académie in 1783. Her father ran the
fashion house of Labille, where Mme du Barry started her career as an assistant; the artist married
a M. Guérard at an early age, and signed thereafter Labille f[wemme] Guérard, although she separated
from him almost immediately. When the Revolution introduced divorce, she married the painter
Vincent, with whom she had lived for years. Labille-Guérard studied with La Tour for five years,
and herself taught a number of pupils, all female. Unlike Vigée Le Brun, Labille-Guérard stayed in
France during the Revolution, and painted many of the leading Revolutionary figures (such as
Robespierre) as well as aristocrats (such as the comte de Provence). Among her pupils, Gabrielle
Capet (1761–1818), who lived with Labille-Guérard and Vincent, stands out as almost a lone figure
at the start of the nineteenth century, excepting perhaps the dijonnais Hoin. The pastels of Pierre-
Paul Prud’hon (1758–1823) divide into the portraits he did for a short period in the 1790s and the
impressionistic studies using pastel which look forward to the nineteenth century.

XIV.9 Europe in the late eighteenth century

By this stage the great age of the pastel portrait in France was drawing to a close for the reasons
discussed in Chapter IX. Outside France the demise of pastel was less sharply marked: in Germany
and elsewhere, a continuous tradition led into the nineteenth century, and figures such as the Dane
Jens Juel cannot be ignored as minor. In the last decade of the century, the leading German

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391 Two other important Danish artists had used pastel earlier in the century: Als and Hoyer. Darbes was probably the most influential pastellist
working in Copenhagen in the 1770s.
pastellist was undoubtedly Johann Heinrich Schröder (1757–1812), whose influence was enormous. Johann Friedrich August Darbes (1747–1810) was also very gifted, and the versatility of his work reflects his international career (he worked in Denmark, Russia, Poland and The Netherlands as well as in Germany). Daniel Caffe, working in Leipzig, produced pastels that belong to the nineteenth century in their bourgeois, Biedermeier feel. Becker, Dryander, Schwartz and Lauer also left important work, including iconic images of Königin Luise of Prussia. The Berlin Akademie started regular exhibitions, modelled on the Louvre salons, from 1786; the livrets indicated the breadth of interest in pastel in Germany, and the range of works from simple portraits and conversation pieces to copies of old masters. Few of these works have survived.

XIV.10 England in the late eighteenth century

In England the last quarter of the century was dominated by two quite different artists, Russell and Gardner. Daniel Gardner (1750–1805) remained an isolated figure, developing an idiosyncratic style; it is not even clear whether he can properly be described as a pastellist (although some of the earliest works may have been drawn exclusively in that medium). By scraping pastel sticks to a powder which he mixed with alcohol Gardner recreated gouache, and his works look much more like gouache than pastel. The mixture of media he developed was taken up by British artists from Downman to Peter Romney, George Chinnery and John James Masquerier, and continued seamlessly into the nineteenth century, in contrast to the fairly precise end to the purer tradition practised in France. When the exhibition of English pastellists took place in Paris in 1911, a great many of the exhibits seem in fact to have been gouaches or watercolours heightened with pastel, and while these do not properly belong in this work, some are included to avoid confusion (a particular problem given the number of erroneous attributions prevalent at the time).

In John Russell (1744–1806) England found its true genius in the medium. To Russell belongs (by some way) credit for the largest number of surviving pastels (we have collected nearly 500 images, significantly more than the numbers for each of the next most prolific pastellists Carriera, La Tour and Liotard). Russell’s strong religious convictions and intellectual curiosity mark him out from most of the artists of the day: although they shared the same telescope maker (Peter Dolland), Russell’s lifetime obsession with astronomy was considerably more profound than La Tour’s dabbling. Using pigments with a far higher level of saturation than before, he achieved a depth of colour associated previously only with oil painting. He combined this with expert stumping to give a vaporous look derived ultimately from Carriera. After him the school died out; there was perhaps little more to be done. Sir Thomas Lawrence commenced his career as a teenage pastellist, but abandoned the medium early on advice; Ozias Humphry, a gifted miniaturist, took it up after his sight was compromised, but met with less success than he felt he deserved. The prolific John Raphael Smith should also be mentioned.

XIV.11 The Dublin school

The Italian rather than the French influence is also evident in the work of some of the Irish school, whose development is chiefly due to the Paris-trained Robert West, director of the Dublin Society’s art school, established in the mid-1740s (Chapter VII). Among the Irish pastellists he trained or influenced were his son Francis Robert West, Thomas Hickey, the Healys, Watson, Pope, George Lawrence and Forrest, a number of whom worked in grisaille (a soft black chalk or charcoal often referred to as pastel, but possibly not pastel at all). By far his most important pupil was Hugh Douglas Hamilton (1740–1808). Charming though his small oval portraits can be, it his full-length portraits of his clients as Grand Tourists in Rome that show his considerable talent to best advantage. As well as Anna Tonelli, it seems likely that he influenced the Scottish artist Archibald

392 The influence of French culture on Germany at the time is illustrated by the schizophrenic spelling in the livrets of the Berlin Academie/Akademie, where Pastell and Pastel are both used.
Skirving who spent eight years in Rome, leaving a handful of strikingly original pastels, but who remained an isolated figure; no significant Scottish school of pastellists was established.

**XIV.12 America**

The outstanding American artist (in pastel and oil) was John Copley (1738–1815), who moved to London in 1774 and remained there – but gave up pastel on the advice of Reynolds and Benjamin West (for the reasons set out in Chapter VIII). Other figures active in America include the early émigrée French pastellist Henrietta Johnston (whose minor talent has received disproportionate attention), and a number of other pioneers of whom Benjamin Blyth is perhaps the best known; numerous portraits of sea captains are to be found in the smaller New England museums and no doubt private collections. Later, several members of the Sharples family were responsible for huge numbers of portraits. Two other prolific pastellists in the USA were Saint-Mémin and Gerrit Schipper, but they worked mainly in the nineteenth century. There was a small Canadian school with Dulongpré and others. Apart from Copley these pastellists are of little interest outside America, where however their works are actively collected, fetch high prices and have been the subject of detailed scientific investigation not applied to works of far greater aesthetic achievement.