BANSI, Anna Barbara, Mme Nannoni

Fläsch 1777 – Paris 1863

The daughter of a poor Swiss pastor, Heinrich Bansi, she was adopted at the age of six by the Zurich philanthropist Johann Caspar Schweizer, who brought her to Paris in 1786. She is described as ill-behaved and deceitful, and was left at school in Paris when Schweizer departed for America in 1794, failing also to inherit his wealth. Ingres encountered Anna Bansi in the studio of David, and again in Rome where she had moved a few years before he did. His chalk drawing of her (datable to c.1797 from the hot-air balloon in the background) is in the Louvre. The subject of her only known pastel, the violinist Baillot, was also drawn by Ingres. (From the black and white photograph it is unclear whether the work has been correctly described; it may in fact be a black chalk drawing.) An intimate letter to baron Gérard written from the Villa Médicis in 1805 is signed "Anna Bansi" although she is more usually referred to as Barbara or Babette. She is also supposed to have had an affair with Joseph-Benoît Suvée, director of the Villa Médicis. In 1808 she married the physician Lorenzo Nannoni. In 1814, two years after his death, she returned to Paris; she exhibited an oil Vierge at the salon that year (no. 1412, as Mme Nannoni, née Bansi, rue du Doyenné, n. 3). She was later appointed maîtresse de dessin at the schools of Saint-Denis and Sainte-Clotilde. In 1832 she donated two pastels by Labille-Guiard (Bachelier and Vincent) to the Louvre (although she is omitted from Donateurs 1989).

Bibliography

Bénézit; *Lettres adressées au baron François Gérard*, Paris, 1888, I, pp. 245–55; Hans Naef, *Die Bildniszeichnungen von J.-A.D. Ingres*, Bern, 1977, I, pp. 89–97

Pastels

J.1238.101 Pierre-Marie-François-de-Sales BAILLOT (1771–1842), violiniste, compositeur, pstl (Daniel Lainé 1977). Lit.: *Recherches sur la musique française classique*, XVII–XVIII, 1978, p. 126 repr. φ