

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

## Online edition

### DESRAIS, Claude-Louis

Paris 1746–1816

Engraver and draughtsman. He was the son of Louis-André Desrais, peintre de l'Académie de Saint-Luc, and Nicole-Marie Pitoin, who married secondly Pierre Fixon, sculpteur du roi, and thirdly (in 1789, the year before her death) Jacques Thierry, docteur en médecine. Claude-Louis was married to a Marie-Sophie Félix.

He appeared at the salons de la Jeunesse from 1768, exhibiting drawings of religious subjects which showed "l'effet, l'invention, de la facilité" (1768). Two years later he was criticised for poor finish, but in 1771 his bistre drawing of the martyrdom of saint Laurent was praised. He was still exhibiting wash drawings in 1799, when he described himself as a pupil of Casanova. In the same year he signed (as "peintre dessinateur") the petition to have Vigée Le Brun removed from the list of émigrés. He was listed as a peintre-artiste et dessinateur in the *Almanach du commerce de Paris* in 1811, rue du Paon-Saint-André, 4. Evidently however he earned his living making drawings for Esnaults & Rappilly's fashion plates and small portrait engravings; a good many of these survive (a group of eleven small heads of ladies in the d'Abernon sale, 1929), but so far only two signed pastels have emerged.

#### Bibliography

Bénézit; Sanchez 2004

#### Pastels

J.2718.101 Garçon jouant de la flûte; & pendant:  
J.2718.102 jeune fille au chapeau, pstl, 40x32 ov.,  
s ←/↘ "Desrais" (Miles Barton 2011) φ

J.2718.105 Deux jeunes filles, en robe bleue; &  
pendant: J.2718.106 en robe rose, pstl, 40x30  
(Miles Barton 2012). Attr. φα

