

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

EISENBERG, Friedrich Wilhelm, baron Reis d'

Weimar c.1700 – ?c.1770

Although Gabburri gives his names as Giovanni Cristiano barone di Eisenberg, he is no doubt referring to the Direttore e primo Cavalierizzo dell'Accademia di Pisa, Friedrich Wilhelm von Reis Eisenberg – neither his name nor dates seem to be known precisely, and even the encyclopaedic Schrader admits “über seine Lebensverhältnisse habe ich nur wenig auffinden können.” An aristocrat from Saxe-Weimar, he served throughout Europe as master of horse, managing riding schools for the courts of Saxe-Weimar, Vienna (where he assisted in the coronation of Karl VI. and founded the Spanish Riding School), Naples, London and Tuscany (where he was appointed director of the riding academy by Francesco III in 1739). He wrote and illustrated several important publications, including the *Description du manège moderne dans sa perfection*, London 1727, and *Dictionnaire des termes du manège moderne*, 1747. Gabburri says that Eisenberg, who was “dotato di virtù e di gentilezza”, “fatto per suo diporto a pastelli egregiamente bene un libro intero ben grande di cavalli di razze diverse”; this was illustrated with engravings by Bernard Picart. However a group of 55 drawings by Eisenberg, commissioned by Henry, 10th Earl of Pembroke and still at Wilton House, are in gouache rather than pastel. Eisenberg gave an oil self-portrait to the Earl at some time between 1754 and 1765; Sir Joshua Reynolds charged 15s. for relining it.

Bibliography

Basile Baudez, “Un Français au pays du cheval: Vallin de La Mothe et Wilton House, 1755”, *Livraisons d'histoire de l'architecture*, 6, 2003. pp. 9–27; Gabburri, *Vite di pittori*, p. 1394-III-C191V; Reynolds 1986, p. 68; G. W. Schrader, *Biographisch-literarisches Lexicon der Thierärzte...*, Stuttgart, 1863, p. 117; Dorian Williams, ed., *The classical riding master: the Wilton House collection*, 1979