

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

FERRIÈRE, François

Geneva 11.VII.1752 – Morges 25.XII.1839

Miniaturist and portraitist in oil; he also engraved and painted landscapes, trompe l'œil and genre pictures in oil and gouache. The son of a watchmaker from Besançon who had settled in Geneva, he was a pupil at the école publique de dessin in Geneva together with his friend Louis-Ami Arlaud-Jurine (*q.v.*); the latter was a pupil of Liotard, and it is not implausible that Ferrière would at least have seen some of the master's work.

From 1764 he trained under Vien in Paris at the same time as Saint-Ours and Sablet. By 1770 he had returned to Geneva, where he was later married to the daughter of a watchmaker. In 1775 he was engaged to restore the portraits at the Bibliothèque publique. The following year the Société pour l'encouragement des arts was founded, and Ferrière and Arlaud soon joined. Later he taught at the École de dessin run by the Société. He exhibited a few works at the first salon in 1789.

Following the Revolutionary unrest, Ferrière decided to emigrate to London at the end of 1792, joining his friend Jean-Jacques Chalon. He was in London 1793–1804, mixing mainly with other émigré artists. He was later joined by other members of his family, his aunt becoming governess to the future Lady Palmerston. His innovative oil miniatures were well received at the Royal Academy and, like Danloux, he was particularly successful with the Scottish aristocracy in Edinburgh. A financial misfortune compelled him to sell his London house, and he travelled to St Petersburg in 1804. He would remain in Russia until 1816 when he returned to London, remaining there until 1822 and again exhibiting at the Royal Academy. In 1822 he settled definitively in Geneva.

Ferrière's use of pastel was very infrequent: when Crosnier published his review in 1903, he was completely unaware of any example, even in coloured chalk, and he issued a short correction the following year. Ferrière's skill as a miniaturist makes it particularly unfortunate that few images of the handful of recorded pastels are available. While the Swiss pastels show the influence of Liotard, the English examples reflect the influence of Danloux, and range widely in scale.

Bibliography

Lucien Boissonnas, "François Ferrière et quelques miniaturistes genevois...", *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte*, XLVII, 1990, p. 147ff; Jules Crosnier, "François Ferrière, peintre", *Nos anciens et leurs oeuvres*, III, 1903, pp. 7–44; IV, 1904, pp. 81–84; X, 1910, pp. 45–47; Edinburgh 2008; Gaechtgens & Lugand 1988, p. 337; Graves 1905; Hofstetter 2008; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Pappé & al. 2008

Pastels

J.314.101 Le baron de L., pstl, 31x24 ov. (Zurich, Galerie Koller, 20.V.1977, Lot 5117 n.r., SwFr1100)

J.314.102 Jacob VERNET [(1698–1789), pasteur], pstl, sd ← "Ferriere 1777" (Mme Charles de Marniac 1904). Lit.: Crosnier 1904, p. 83 repr. φ



J.314.104 Herr, pstl/ppr (Zurich, Koller, 26.III.2004, Lot 6503 n.r., est. SwFr2–3000, b/i; Zurich, Koller, 26.III.2004, Lot 6449 n.r., est. SwFr1200–1800, SwFr1000)

J.314.105 Young girl in white dress, blue sash, gathering fruit, with her dog in a landscape, pstl, 68.5x56, sd 1795 (London, Phillips, 18.II.1974, Lot 73 n.r., £320. Bern, Dobiaschofsky, 8.V.1996, Lot 573, SwFr5000. PC 2009) φ



J.314.107 Homme; & pendant: J.314.108 Femme inconnue, pstl, 70x60 ov., sd √ "F Ferriere pinxt/1783" (Mme Charles de Marniac 1904). Lit.: Crosnier 1904, p. 83 n.r./repr. φ



J.314.11 Garçon en habit bleu; & pendant:

J.314.111 jeune fille, en robe blanche, chapeau noir, au ruban rose, pstl/pchm, ov., sd "F. Ferriere/p' 1794" (UK PC c.1970; desc.: London, Bonhams Knightsbridge, 27.IV.2016, Lot 264 repr., est. £4–6000; London, Bonhams Knightsbridge, 20.VII.2016, Lot 125 repr., est. £2–3000) φσ

