

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

GAMELIN, Jacques

Carcassonne 1738–1803

Gamelin was intended to carry on the family business in cloth manufacture. He was sent to Toulouse at the age of 18 to keep accounts for the baron de Puymaurin, but this enlightened amateur recognised Gamelin's artistic talent: he was enrolled at the Académie de Toulouse, studying with Rivalz for five years. By 1761 he had moved to Paris, where he was a pupil at the Académie royale under Deshayes. Gamelin competed for the Prix de Rome unsuccessfully in 1763 and 1764 but nevertheless travelled to Rome with support from Puymaurin. Here he became a professor at the Accademia di San Luca in 1771, and was named painter to Clement XIV. The same year he married Giulia Tridis, not a Venetian aristocrat as an early biographer fancied but the impecunious sister-in-law of the musician with whom Gamelin lodged. The inheritance of his father's substantial fortune permitted him to publish an elaborate anatomical treatise in 1779, but it was disastrous commercially. The following year he established a drawing school at Montpellier. Soon after he moved to Narbonne where he lived until 1796, when he was made professeur de dessin at the École centrale de l'Aude at Carcassonne.

He was mainly known as a history painter, in particular of battles. A sketch of a figure and a single landscape are the only pastels known so far. However he also worked in mixed media in a technique described in the 1784 livret at the salon de Toulouse 1784 as "dessin demi pastel", a mixture of ink, wash, gouache and pastel; several further examples are known. In 1772 he experimented with a painting "sur marbre par pénétration et au feu", while in 1779 his picture in the Flemish manner was "peint sur bois...avec des couleurs préparées d'une nouvelle manière, invention de cet artiste".

Monographic exhibitions

Gamelin 1979: *Jacques Gamelin 1738–1803*, Paris, Joseph Hahn, 36 rue de Berri, 16.v.–30.vi.1979. Cat. Olivier Michel & Gabriel Sarraute

Gamelin 1999: *Gamelin et les peintres de son temps*, Carcassonne, musée des Beaux-Arts, 1999. Cat. M.-N. Maynard & O. Michel

Gamelin 2003: *Gamelin, peintre de batailles (1738–1803)*, Carcassonne, musée des Beaux-Arts, 2003. Cat. O. Michel

Bibliography

Cambridge 1999; Carcassonne 1990; Rémy Casals & Daniel Fabre, *Les Audois, dictionnaire biographique*, Carcassonne, 1990; Grove; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Paris 2005b; Pillement 2011; Sanchez 2004; Toulouse 1987, pp. 153ff

Pastels

J.3364.101 Étienne-Marie DENISSE (c.1792–) à neuf ans, pstl, 40x27, s v "Gamelin", d r "A", r "9" [i.e. An 9], inscr. verso "Peint dans une heure de temps par Gamelin celebre peintre d'histoire" (Carcassonne, mBA, inv. 910.3.610. Don Jean Denisse 1938). Lit.: Cat. musée 2002, no. 197 repr. φ



J.3364.103 Femme tenant un enfant, dessin demi pastel, Salon de Toulouse 1784, no. 54 (Lucas cadet 1784)

J.3364.104 J.3364.105 Deux chocs de cavalerie, plume, lavis, gch., aquarelle, pstl/ppr bl., 29x42, s/sd 1786 (PC 1979). Exh.: Gamelin 1979, no. 26/27 φ



J.3364.108 Les coupeurs de bois, pstl/ppr, 49x52, sd (Paris, Blanchet & Joron-Derem, 17.III.2000, Lot 14 repr., est. Fr20–25,000, b/i) φ