

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

GOUNOD, François-Louis

Paris 1758–1823

The son of a fourbisseur du roi (a supplier of swords), Nicolas-François Gounod (1712–1795), the artist was born in the galeries du Louvre (where his father and grandfather had lodgings since 1730) on 26.III.1758. He was a pupil of Lépicié, whose portrait of his 10-year-old protégé was in the Gounod family collection. He competed for prizes at the Académie royale from 1778, winning first prize in 1779 and taking the prix d'expression three times (1782, for L'Étonnement, 1783, for La Surprise mêlée de joie, and 1785, La Contemplation). He left for Rome in 1788, with the following introduction from d'Angiviller to Ménageot:

Le sr Gounod, qui cultive depuis plusieurs années la peinture et qui a gagné plusieurs prix d'expression étant sur le point de partir pour Rome, m'a paru mériter un encouragement particulier et, d'autant plus, que chargé d'un père infirme depuis bien des années, il sacrifie tout pour le soutenir et le reste de sa famille. J'ai donc jugé à propos de lui accorder la pension du Roi à l'Académie de Rome, où il sera comme surnuméraire mais, d'ailleurs, jouissant de tous les avantages des autres pensionnaires.

His examiners were generally favourable, Ménageot reporting on 15.IX.1790 that “La figure du sr Gounod est d'un joli ensemble, d'un dessin très fin et d'une couleur agréable, quoiqu'un peu blanche. Elle est beaucoup mieux que celle de l'année dernière, mais il a besoin de beaucoup peindre et surtout de composer.” After a trip to Naples with the architect Jean-Baptiste-Louis Le Faivre, Gounod returned to Paris in 1792, where he ultimately became professeur de dessin à l'École des pages du roi.

Writing of a striking pastel in the Louvre, Ratouis de Limay (in a long entry) praised “la fermeté de son modelé, l'harmonie et la finesse de son coloris, l'intensité de l'expression”; traditionally described (based on an illegible inscription) as of “M^r de Wailly, ...général”, it could be of Vincent de Wailly, receveur général des impositions d'Amiens. It does not much resemble the Vincent caricature of the grammarian Noël-François de Wailly or the Pajou bust of his brother the architect Charles de Wailly (although pastels of both brothers, attributed to La Tour, were offered by their descendant to the Louvre in 1920).

Gounod exhibited numerous portraits in unspecified media in the Salons from 1799 to 1822, and is known to have practised in oil, engraving and lithography as well as pastel, but only a handful of works are known in the latter medium. In 1799, when he signed the petition to have Vigée Le Brun's name removed from the list of émigrés, he was described as a peintre d'histoire. In 1805 the artists with lodgings in the Louvre were expelled, and in compensation he received a pension of Fr500 (his subject Benjamin Duvivier received Fr900: *v.* Nocq 1911, p. 112). On 24.XI.1806 in Rouen he married Victoire Le Machois; it seems that his health declined over the following two years. The composer Charles Gounod (1818–1893) reports that his father had been considered one of the most talented draughtsmen of his

generation, but he lacked energy and had difficulty finishing his portraits.

Gounod's posthumous sale, in 1824, included two Chardin pastels from the Silvestre collection, as well as 23 pastels (of which 10 glazed) and 36 chalk drawings, some mixed with pastel (8 glazed), supposedly by La Tour; and another 6 chalk studies with pastel by Charles Le Brun. The unattributed lot 13 is presumably his own work. Lot 15 was a life-size female mannequin, dressed in a *tricot de soie*, by M. Gallois, while Lot 16 included boîtes de pastels as well as other artist's materials. He is described on the title page as “Peintre, ancien Pensionnaire de l'École de France à Rome, Dessinateur du Cabinet de Feu S. A. R. Mgr le Duc de Berry, et Maître à dessiner de MM. les Pages du Roi”; the catalogue has a useful biographical note.

Bibliography

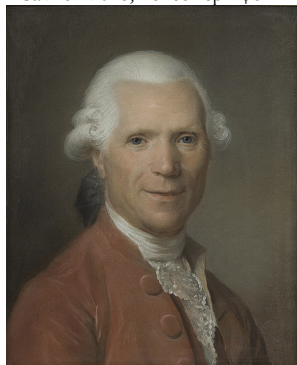
Bellier de La Chavignerie & Auvray; Chardin 1979; Duvivier 1861; Gounod 1896; Lassus Saint-Geniès 1963; Anatole de Montaiglon, notice bibliographique, in Renouvier 1863; Paris 1957a; Jacques-Gabriel Prod'homme & Arthur Dandelot, *Gounod (1818–1893): sa vie et ses œuvres*, Paris, 1911; Ratouis de Limay 1929d; Ratouis de Limay 1929e; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Sanchez 2004; Vente p.m., Paris, hôtel de Bullion, 23.II.1824

Pastels

J.3546.101 André-Gaspard-Parfait, comte de BIZEMONT Prunelé (1752–1837), chevalier de Saint-Louis et de Saint-Lazare, chef d'escadron au régiment du Maine, adjoint au maire d'Orléans, dessinateur amateur, m/u, XIX^e

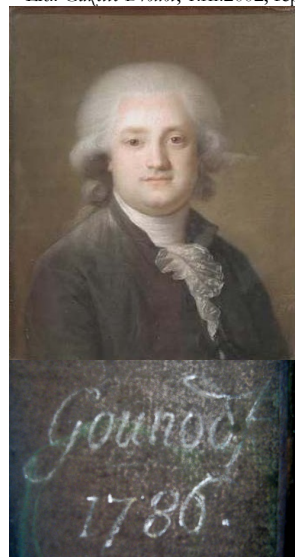
~grav. pour Émile Davoust, *Le Comte de Bizemont, artiste-amateur orléanais, son œuvre et ses collections*, Orléans, 1891

J.3546.103 Pierre-Simon-Benjamin DUVIVIER (1730–1819), graveur général des monnaies, pstl/ppr bl., 46.5x37.9, s “Gounod”, 1789 (Louvre inv. RF 12008. Desc.: famille; acqu. Henry Nocq (1868–1944); Paris, Drouot, 2.III.1929, Lot 133, part). Exh.: Paris 1933d, no. 184; Paris 1949, no. 67; Versailles 1955, no. 301; Paris, 1957a, no. 31; Paris 2018. Lit.: Henry Nocq, *Les Duvivier...*, Paris, 1911, repr.; Ratouis de Limay 1929d; G. Rouchès, “Un pastel de J.-L.-F. Gounod”, *Bulletin des musées de France*, 1929/4, pp. 68f repr.; Bouchot-Saupique 1930, no. 30; Monnier 1972, no. 55; Salmon 2018, no. 65 repr. φσ



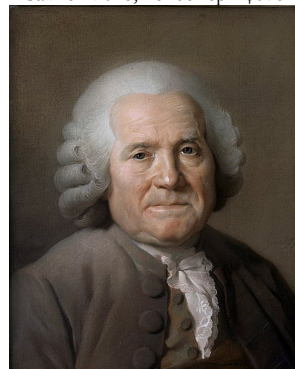
J.3546.105 ~cop. Lequien, pstl (Paris, musée de la Monnaie)

J.3546.106 M. LE PICARD (1757–1819), secrétaire général du ministère de la justice, pstl, 55x46, sd “Gounodf/1786” (Dijon, Vrégille-Bizouard, 16.XI.2002, Lot 105, est. €2–3000). Lit.: *Gazette Drouot*, 1.XI.2002, repr. φ



J.3546.109 L'oncle de MONTAIGLON, sd “Gounod fec. 1784” (A. de Montaiglon)

J.3546.11 M. de WAILLY [?Noël-François, abbé De Wailly (1724–1801), grammairien et lexicographe français, ou Vincent de Wailly (1728–1815), receveur général des impositions d'Amiens, de l'Académie d'Amiens a.1751], pstl, 45.8x37.5, sd → “Gounod f/1786”, inscr. verso “M^r de Wailly...?... général” (Louvre inv. RF 29894. Desc.: petite-fille de l'artiste Mme Pierre de Lassus Saint-Geniès, née Jeanne Gounod (1863–1946), 3 Boulevard du Roi, Versailles; baron J. de Lassus Saint-Geniès; acqu. 1951). Exh.: Paris 1955, no. 19; Paris 2018. Lit.: Ratouis de Limay 1929d; Ratouis de Limay 1946, pl. LX/91; Monnier 1972, no. 54; Salmon 2018, no. 66 repr. φδσ



J.3546.112 Sujets de prix: études de figures et de portraits, m/u (l'artiste; Paris, hôtel de Bullion, Regnault-Delalande, 23.II.1824 & seq., Lot 5, as by Gounod)

J.3546.113 Portraits d'hommes et de femmes, études de têtes et de draperies, 30 pastels, 1 glazed, 4 more framed (l'artiste; Paris, hôtel de

Bullion, Regnault-Delalande, 23.II.1824 & seq., Lot 13, in 3 lots, artist not specified)

J.3546.114 La Contemplation, pierre noire, craie, 47.4x39.1, concours de la Tête d'expression, 1785 (Paris, ENSBA, inv. EBA 4381, 1946). Lit.: Ratouis de Limay 1946, as Mater dolorosa

J.3546.115 Enfant, pstl (Paris art market, 1940s)