

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

HIGHMORE, Joseph

London 1692 – Canterbury 1780

Prolific history painter and portraitist in varied styles. Trained as a lawyer, he also learned to paint by attending the Queen Street Academy rather than through formal apprenticeship. He was taken up by Kneller and Thornhill. He became active as a portrait painter from 1715. In 1724 he moved to Lincoln's Inn Fields. He travelled to The Netherlands, Flanders and Germany in 1732, and two years later spent some weeks in Paris. He exhibited at the Free Society and the Society of Artists in 1760 and 1761. Although mentioned in passing as a pastellist (Sée 1919a), only a few unsigned pastels have hitherto been ascribed; one is reattributed to Pond (*q.v.*) since it seems to show a francophile elegance characteristic of Pond's work; the others may well be by Pond too (Sée's attributions in the New York 1927 sale were often fanciful). An unsigned pastel in the British Museum (the traditional suggestion of Highmore is retained here only tentatively) has attracted unconvincing attributions to several artists not known to have worked in pastel; its compositional and technical limitations are not inconsistent with the possibility of an artist who tried the medium only once.

Monographic exhibitions

Highmore 2017: *Basic instincts: love, passion and violence in the art of Joseph Highmore*, London, Foundling Museum, 29.IX.2017 – 7.I.2018. Cat. Jacqueline Riding

Bibliography

Bénézit; Sée 1919a; Waterhouse 1981; Wright 2006

Pastels

J.3916.101 ?Mrs Eldred Launcelot LEE, née Isabella Gough (1691–1767), in white dress and pink bonnet, seated in a landscape, pstl/ppr, 59.6x44.5, c.1740–50 (British Museum 1977,1210.12. John Postle Heseltine; London, Sotheby's, 27.V.1935, Lot 49, 22 gns; Henry Reitlinger; Peter Howard-Thompson, Coton Hall, Alveley; London, Sotheby's, 17.XI.1976, Lot 42; Jocelyn Field Fine Art; acqu. 1977). Exh.: London 1978, no. 21, as by Highmore; Wolverhampton 2000; Edinburgh 2008, attr. Highmore, other attr. to Devis and Wills suggested. Proposed identification based on Highmore pnt., 1736 (Wolverhampton)φαδσ



J.3916.103 Lady SINCLAIR in dress with white lace collar, pstl/ppr, 60x44.5 (Sir Tollemache Sinclair; Martin Colnaghi; New York, Anderson Galleries, 20–21.I.1927, Lot 74 n.r., \$50)

J.3916.104 Lady in white silk dress trimmed with fur, a rose in the front of her square décolleté dress, black hair, blue ribbon and pearl ornament, pstl/ppr, 60x44.5 (Xavier Haas, Paris; New York, Anderson Galleries, 20–21.I.1927, Lot 73 n.r., \$75)

Lady in a white satin dress (Horton Court, Gloucestershire. Salon Bollag, Zurich. London, Bonhams, 8.XI.2005, Lot 19 repr.). Exch.: Paris 1919a, no. 124, as Highmore [v. Pond]

J.3916.106 Gentleman in a blue silk coat; & pendant: J.3916.107 lady in a white dress, pstl/ppr, 59x44 (Leeds, Bonhams, 14.VI.2005, Lot 91 repr., est. £1800–2500, £5000) [?attr.; cf. Pond]φα

