

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

JOLLAIN, Jean-René, dit Nicolas-René

Paris 1732–17.x.1802

Prolific history and religious painter; pupil at the école de l'Académie royale under Pierre; medals in 1747, 1748; 2^e prix de Rome 1754; *agréré* 1765, *reçu* 1773; garde du Musée du roi 1788. Details of his état civil are elusive if searched for “Nicolas-René” and incorrectly given in standard reference sources (all give his death as in 1804) until published here in 2024. Even sources as early as the Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie royale give his forenames as Nicolas-René at his agrément and réception (1765, 1773). Only in the Brevet de commissaire du Muséum, issued 1.x.1792, is he named correctly as Jean-René (and awarded a stipend of 2000 livres p.a.; he already had lodgings in the Louvre). He was surely the Jean-René Jollain living in the Louvre (previously rue des Poulies), aged 63 when his carte de sûreté was issued on 24.IV.1793 (having arrived in – presumably returned to – Paris in 1761).

He was the son, not of Nicolas-René Jollain the elder (recorded as a peintre du roi in 1698 at the baptism of his daughter by his wife Christine Benoist), but of Pierre Jollain, a tapissier, and Genevieve-Jacqueline Bailleul (confirmed in a vente, meuble, AN MC/ET/VII/335, 9.IX.1761, no doubt on his return to Paris). He died on 26 vendémiaire an XI [17.x.1802], aged 70, described as a “peintre d'histoire age de 70 ans”, born in Paris. His inventaire après décès was taken 25.x.1802 (AN MC/XXIV/1092). He married Marie-Charlotte-François Danisy, daughter of an avocat in Paris, in Paris, Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, 10.v.1784 (by contract of 28.IV.1784, AN MC/ET/XCI/1219; witnesses included Simon-Bernard Lenoir); her IAD was dated 17.I.1803 at the same étude.

A handful of portraits are known from engravings. Hitherto no pastel has been attributed to Jollain, but in 2024 his name was suggested as author of a tête de jeune fille, [19.6726](#).

He does not seem to be closely related to another history painter, Pierre Jollain (1715–1773), who was awarded the 2^e prix de peinture in 1743; he married a Jeanne-Louise-Thérèse du Portail in 1744, and was probably the exhibitor at the salons de Saint-Luc 1751–62, listed as a professor there in 1763, rue Thérèse, butte Saint-Roch; earlier, 1738–45, he lived in the rue de Verneuil.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Besançon 2022; Jeffares 2017a; Lesur & Aaron 2008; Ottawa 2003; Sanchez 2004; A. Tuetey & J. Guiffrey, *La Commission du muséum...*, 1909, p. 26ff