

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

MARIA FEDOROVNA, née Sophia Dorothea Augusta Louisa von Württemberg

Szczecin 1759 – St Petersburg 1828

In 1776 the German princess became the second wife of the future Tsar Paul I, and was renamed Мария Федоровна. Known for espousing the cause of female education, she was also an amateur pastellist, medallist, gem cutter and cameo engraver. A flower picture and a seascape in the manner of Joseph Vernet are both described as in pastel, although they may use gouache. She is surely the unnamed grand duchesse (her mother-in-law Catherine the Great did not die until 1796) referred to as the author of two pastels of flower subjects in the Hermitage reported in Fortia de Piles's 1796 travel guide. Another source (Weiner) says that all the daughters of Paul I loved to draw in pencil and pastel; all that remains were some copies in pastel of old master pictures. Several dozen of her works, in various media, were included in a 1799 inventory of Gatchina.

Bibliography

Alphonse-Toussaint-Joseph-André-Marie-Marseille de Fortia de Piles, *Voyage de deux Français en Allemagne, Danemarck, Suède, Russie et Pologne*, Paris, 1796, III, p. 20 n.r.; Перова 2006, p. 49; П. Вейнер, “Убранство гатчинского дворца”, *Старые годы*, 1914

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Pastels

J.5144.101 Nature morte, pstl, 60x47, 1787 (St Petersburg, GRM). Lit.: Cat. GRM 1998, I, no. 303 ф



J.5144.103 Südliche Küstenlandschaft, pstl/ppr, 41x62, sd “Marie fait à Pawlowsk le 9 juin 1789” (Berlin, Leo Spik, 2–4.XII.2010, Lot 261 repr., est. €2500) ф



J.5144.105 Deux dessins de fleurs, pstl (Salon, galerie de tableaux, Hermitage, 1796)