

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

MARTIN, David

Anstruther, Fife 1.IV.1737 – Edinburgh
30.XII.1798

Portrait painter and engraver, mainly of his own work. A pupil of Allan Ramsay c.1752, he followed him to Rome 1755–57, and remained his assistant and copyist during the 1760s. He made some mezzotints at this time. He won premiums for chalk drawings at the Society of Artists in 1759 and 1761, exhibited there and became its treasurer in 1773. He returned to Edinburgh around 1783, and was appointed Portrait Painter to the Prince of Wales in Scotland.

According to Sée, Martin's elegant pastels, often with elaborate costumes, are said to have been influenced by Ramsay and Drouais; the compositions of his more numerous oils are distinctively elongated. However only one pastel is known today, from a poor photograph suggesting some similarity with the style of Katherine Read.

A sale in Edinburgh (at his house, 4 St James's Square 14.I.1799 & seq., just weeks after his death) of his books, pictures and wide-ranging collections (of ethnographic, numismatic and other curiosities) included a number of works in "crayons", some "by the First Masters" (including a General Officer on vellum and two fruit pictures): see English sch.

Bibliography

Alexander 2021; Grove; Sée 1911; Waterhouse 1981; Wright 2006

Pastels

J.5186.101 Andrew AGNEW (a.1769–1792), son of Sir Stair Agnew, 6th Bt, in a blue coat and cream waistcoat, pstl, 44.5x37 ([?Mrs Robert Hathorn Stewart, née Isabella Agnew, the sitter's half-sister]; desc.: Susanna Mary McTaggart-Stewart, Baroness Borthwick, Duchess of Grafton (1878–1961); desc.; Castle Howard, Sotheby's, 12.XI.1991, Lot 528 repr., est. £500–800, £1210) ϕ

