

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

MERZ, Jacob

Buch am Irchel, Zurich 1783 – Vienna 1807
Painter and etcher, based in his native Zurich. From his biography by his friend, the local pastor in Andelfingen, we learn that he was the son of a weaver, inspired to draw by the beauty of the local landscape by the age of 13. In 1797 he was apprenticed to Lips in Zurich to learn engraving for three years, where he made good progress. In 1802 he was sent to the Vienna Akademie, where he studied under Füger and Füssli and perhaps Hubert Maurer (Billwiller engraved a drawing of Maurer by Merz “nach dem Leben”). He died suddenly of a “nervous fever” soon after completing an important plate. A couple of drawings with pastel are known from very early in the nineteenth century. One of his self-portraits (medium unspecified) was engraved by Lips shortly after his death.

Monographic exhibition

Merz 1981. *Jacob Merz 1783–1807*, Sacramento, Crocker Art Museum, 1981. Cat. Seymour Howard

Bibliography

Bénézit; Johann Wilhelm Veith, *Notizen aus der Leben von Jakob Merz, Maler und Kupferstecher*, 1810

Pastels

J5334.101 AUTOPORTRAIT, pstl, grey wash/ppr, 71.8x64.1, 1802 (Joseph and Deborah Goldyne). Exh.: San Francisco 2006, no. 12

J5334.102 Jeune homme, pstl/ppr, 135x73, 1801 (Florence, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti). Exh.: Mantua 2004, repr. φ

