

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

MAISTRE, Xavier de

Chambéry 1763 – St Petersburg 1852

An officier in the Sardinian service, he was the brother of the right-wing political philosopher Joseph de Maistre, whom he joined in exile in Russia during the Revolution. He is known for his writings (notably the *Voyage autour de ma chambre*, 1790), and for some landscape paintings of Russia and Italy. As an impoverished émigré in St Petersburg he is said (Haumant) to have given lessons in pastel before being given a position by Admiral Chichagov. However Berthier suggests that he set up an art school teaching oil painting, but he also mentions that de Maistre brought his pastels to the salons of the Pushkin family, to depict Nadezhda Osipovna Hannibal, granddaughter of Peter the Great's black servant. Both references seem to be after 1800, and the well-known image of the poet's mother by de Maistre is a miniature on ivory.

Xavier de Maistre signed a number of his writings as X or Ximenès, and was presumably the citoyen Ximenèz who contributed verses entitled Le Portrait ressemblant to the *Almanach des muses* (an V).

Bibliography

Bénézit; Alfred Berthier, *Xavier de Maistre*, Lyon, 1918; Émile Haumant, *La Culture française en Russie (1700–1900)*, Paris, 1913, pp. 190, 193