

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

MULNIER, Jean-Baptiste-Ferdinand

Nancy 22.v.1757 – Nantes 23.iv.1836

The miniaturist joined the école de l'Académie royale in Paris in 1775, under the protection of Brenet. He then appeared in Saint-Domingue where he advertised in *Les Affiches américaines* on 2.ii.1779 (p. 45):

Le Sieur *Mulnier*, Peintre de l'Académie Royale, a l'honneur de prévenir le Public qu'il peint le Portrait à l'huile, au pastel & en miniature; il peint aussi les chiffres & allégories en cheveux sur les bracelets & tabatières. Il prie Mrs le Habitans & dames de la plaine qui voudront se faire peindre chez eux, de vouloir bien l'avertir huit jours d'avance. Sa demeure est rue du Cimetière, à côté de M. *Gauche*, Apothicaire, faisant le coin de la rue du Bac.

His talents were appreciated, as unusually some *Vers adressés en compliment au Sieur MULNIER, Peintre du Roi, sur le tableau en miniature, représentant M. & Madame DE VINCENT & leurs enfans* appeared in the *Affiches*, 13.iii.1782 (p. 104). He is no doubt the “Moulnier, Peintre du roi” advertising in the *Affiches* in 1783. He married a Creole widow, Marie-Françoise-Anne Renaud, and their son, the miniaturist Étienne Ferdinand Mulnier (1783–1854), was born in Cap-Français. (He was married in Paris, 8.xi.1836, when both his parents were dead.) On 24.xii.1783, he announced his departure for France in three months, but before leaving would spend a month each in Saint-Marc, Port-au-Prince and the Cayes. On 21.vii.1786, describing himself as a négociant, a Jean-Baptiste-Ferdinand Mulnier (the artist or an exact homonym) proposed unsuccessfully to the authorities in Versailles a bureau de confiance for Saint-Domingue which would provide letters of credit to négociants (AN d'Outre-mer, COL E 318). After the slave revolt in 1791 he returned to France and settled in Nantes. At the marriage of his daughter Marie-Marguerite-Constance, in Nantes on 7.iv.1813, he was described as a “maître de dessin”.

There is no evidence of any work in pastel.

Bibliography

Lemoine-Bouchard; Sanchez 2004