

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

POURVOYEUR, Jean-Baptiste

fl. Paris 1762–83

Pourvoyeur, or Le Pourvoyeur, was a portraitist in oil and pastel, known from a notice in the *L'Avant-Coureur*, 1768:

M. le *Pourvoyeur*, peintre de l'Académie de S. Luc, qui peint en Pastel, a trouvé, après plusieurs essais, le secret de le fixer. Son pastel préparé se conserve très bien, ne craint point l'humidité, & peut être transporté facilement sans que l'on ait lieu d'appréhender qu'il tombe en poussière, défaut des pastels ordinaires. M. le Pourvoyeur offre d'en faire la preuve. Il demeure à Paris, rue des Bourdonnois, au grand Monarque, chez un Tapissier.

He is evidently the Jean-Baptiste Pourvoyeur, peintre de l'Académie de Saint-Luc, who, with his wife, Catherine-Françoise Gaillard, was witness to the marriage of a neighbour in the rue Bourdonnois, Charlotte Lemoine, daughter of a maître menuisier, to a Louis-Gabriel Vailland, marchand de soie (25.III.1762; AN MC XCVIII/554). His father was a maître de pension, long established in Troyes.

It is notable that Pourvoyeur, in his advertisement, should mention the Académie de Saint-Luc, as, in 1763, he was party to the legal case which ultimately contributed to the demise of that institution. Pourvoyeur, an élève protégé of Claude-François Desportes at the Académie royale, had relied upon an ancient privilege accorded to apprentices of artists housed in the Louvre to become masters without the normal requirements and fees imposed by the guild. He was sued by the maîtres-peintres de l'Académie de Saint-Luc for infringing their monopoly. He initially lost at the Châtelet in 1762, but on appeal, the artists resident in the Louvre, mostly painters of the Académie royale de peinture, seeing their own position under threat, came to his rescue (they had written to Marigny in .VI.1761 without result; *v.* La Tour documentation file). Cochin enlisted the help of the avocat-général Séguier to secure victory, and Pourvoyeur ultimately received 300 livres in damages. Cochin celebrated this in his famous *Allégorie de la Justice protégeant les Arts*, engraved by Demarteau in 1764, and dedicated to Séguier. At the time the judgement was delivered by the parlement de Paris (20.VIII.1763, also in La Tour documentation), Pourvoyeur was living and working in the rue Feydeau. It was alleged that he had previously absented himself from his master to two years, spent at Auxerre; and that he had not received any lessons from Desportes, who was an animal painter.

At the time of his advertisement, and from the same address, Pourvoyeur purchased an annuity ("constitution de rentes annuelles de 100 livres", 7.VII.1768, AN MC LIV 929) On 17.X. and 31.XII.1772, he received the sum of 60 livres from the estate of the abbé de Bailleul (XCVIII/600); he was then living in rue de la Tabletterie. By 28.IV.1773, when he was reimbursed the sum of 2600 livres by the garde du trésor royal for unspecified reasons (presumably connected with the litigation), he was living in the rue de l'Eguillerie. "M. Pourvoyeur, rue d'Enfer, près le caffè" was

listed as a *maître à dessiner* in the *Almanach des peintres*, 1776, p. 154.

A notice appeared in the *Mercure de France* in 1779 in which a 16-year-old miniaturist, "qui excelle dans le genre du portrait en miniature", offered his services, noting that "Il demeure chez M. Pourvoyeur, son père (qui est aussi Artiste pour le portrait dans le genre de l'huile & du pastel), the address by then being "rue Saint-Hyacinthe, la première porte cochère à droite en entrant par la place Saint-Michel, à Paris." This son, François-Catherine Pourvoyeur, was recorded later in several documents; in 1784 at Poissy he married a Catherine Jouan. A sister, Élisabeth-Françoise, married Antoine-Étienne Mille, an avocat who died in 1787.

The engraver Jean-Baptiste-François-Catherine (1784–1851) Pourvoyeur who exhibited at the salon from 1831 was probably a grandson. François Pourvoyeur is usually credited with a small oval engraving of La Tour's portrait of Voltaire.

So far only one pastel by Pourvoyeur père has come to light; it is consistent in style with a print after a lost portrait which may also have been in pastel. A pastel, apparently signed Lourvoyeur (and included in Jeffares 2006 under that name), is evidently by the same hand. **Bibliography**

L'Avant-Coureur, 1768, p. 759; *Mercure de France*, 25.VI.1779, p. 312; J.-J. Guiffrey, *Nouvelles archives de l'art français*, 1873, pp. 12–13, 47–60; J.-J. Guiffrey, "François Gentil, sculpteur troyen", *Nouvelles archives de l'art français*, 1876, pp. 127–28; Wildenstein 1966, p. 124

Pastels

J.6004.101 Nicolas-Benoît MOREAU, pstl, 58x45, inscr. *verso* "peint par POURVOYEUR le 1^{er} novembre 1783" (Paris, Drouot, Rieunier & de Muizon, 30.X.2013, Lot 259 n.r., est. €500) φ



J.6004.103 Charles NOBLET (1715–1769), compositeur, organiste et claveciniste. de l'Académie royale de musique de 1737 à 1768, m/u ~grav.



J.6004.106 Femme à mi-corps tenant un chien sur ses genoux, pstl, 55x45.8, sd "Lourvoyeur 1776" (Paris, Christie's, 8.VII.2004, Lot 96 repr., est. €200–300). Leit.: Jeffares 2006, as by Lourvoyeur φ



Photo courtesy Christie's