

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

RUSSEL, James

London c.1720 – near Radicofani 1763

The son of a clergyman and teacher at Westminster, Russel went to Italy to study painting but spent much of his time as an antiquary. His *Letters from a young painter abroad to his friends in England*, published anonymously from 1748, are of considerable interest. They record (letter to his sister, C.R., 1.v.1741) his admiration for a miniature by Rosalba exhibited at the St Luke's day exhibition in Rome, and noting also that she had drawn the portrait of his friend George Pitt which he thought would serve as an example to his female correspondent "of what your sex is capable". Writing to the same correspondent on 20.vii.1743, Russel advised "that you would chiefly studie Heads as big as the life, drawing them in crayons". No evidence is known that demonstrates that the author followed this precept.

Bibliography

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