

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

SHERWIN, John Keyse

East Dean bpt 27.v.1751 – London 24.ix.1790
Engraver and draughtsman. Sherwin was the son of Francis Sherwin, a wood-cutter employed in the shipping industry; there is no certain connection with Thomas Keyse (*q.v.*). After following his father's occupation, he was sent to London at the age of 17 to study with John Astley and then Bartolozzi, from whose Golden Square address he exhibited drawings in chalk and crayons at the Royal Academy. He was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools on 7.xii.1770, "aged 19 last May", as an engraver. He was one of four students awarded a silver medal for drawing academy figures at the Royal Academy Schools on 10.xii.1771, and the following year he received a gold medal. A drawing entitled "The joys of life", exhibited at the Royal Academy, is described as "in black and red chalk, and a mixture of colour with crayon, similar to those of Bartolozzi", and it may be that the two items listed below are similar. The *Morning chronicle*, 11.iv.1783 reported, under the heading "Mrs Siddons", that "Sherwin's name is to be added to the list of painters, to whom this very fashionable actress is now sitting. Sherwin's is merely a head in crayons; yet though least, it is far from the last, of this number of portraits." With premises in St James's Street, in 1785 he was appointed engraver to the king in succession to Woollett. He was said to have been an intemperate gambler, and died in poverty.

Bibliography

Alexander 2021; *Arnold's magazine of the fine arts*, IV, 1832, pp.9–10; Grove; Sée 1911; Waterhouse 1981; Wright 2006

Critiques

"Dilettante", "Remarks on the principal Performances now exhibiting at the Royal Academy", *Public advertiser*, 3.v.1774:

282. Charity after Guido, a Drawing with Chalks and Crayons, .by Mr Sherwin.

Is copied with great Neatness and Delicacy, and the Characters are well preserved.

Pastels

J.676.101 Mary ASSHETON (1758–1832), ∞ 1808
Grosvenor Perfect, pstl, 21x17, sd *verso* 1776
(PC) φ

J.676.102 Mrs William SIDDONS, née Sarah Kemble (1755–1831), actress, pstl, 1783

J.676.103 Charity, a/r Guido [Reni], chlk, crayons,
Royal Academy 1774, no. 282

J.676.104 Young lady in a fancy dress, chlk,
crayons, Royal Academy 1774, no. 283

J.676.105 Noli me tangere, crayons, Society of
Artists 1778, no. 205