

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

## Online edition

### STOUPAN, Bernard-Augustin

Lausanne 1701–1775

Also Bernhard; Stupan or Stupanus; celebrated pastel-maker of Lausanne. He was also professor of mathematics and a Ratsherr in Lausanne, and he was related to the celebrated mathematician Jacob Bernoulli. A Benjamin Stoupan also appears in various sources. Bernard Stoupan's sister was married to a merchant called Isoot, and they provided bonds for the apprenticeship to a watchmaking and jewellery business of a certain Jean-Baptiste Michod, presumably a brother of Stoupan's nephew François Michod (*q.v.*), who continued the pastel business from Vevey (as did Helmholdt, *q.v.*).

Stoupan's pastels were celebrated from the middle of the century. When, fresh from her lessons with Liotard, Caroline Luise von Hessen-Darmstadt (later Markgräfin von Baden, *q.v.*) sought the best pastels, she was directed to those of Stupan, and was sent a shade card with about a hundred tints (Henning letter of 2.VIII.1746; *v. TREATISES*). By 1770 had achieved “un haut degré de perfection (éclat de couleurs)”. The chevalier de Boufflers (*q.v.*) noted in 1764 that Lausanne “est connu dans toute l'Europe par ses bons pastels”; his editor noted “on peut s'adresser pour les avoir, ou à M. Stoupan lui-même, ou à M. François Grasset libraire à Lausanne.” Stoupan's pastels were “recommended for the best in Europe” according to a 1766 receipt from Bonhote (*q.v.*), who supplied them in London. When Charles Pache, who may have been a student, submitted his pastels to the Society of Arts in London in 1772 they were found indistinguishable from Stoupan's (although some of the experts preferred Morland's, but they were difficult to obtain commercially). The Swiss pastels were criticized for being dry and friable, and “would not admit of one colour being laid on another without some part falling off”; the white would soon turn black, while the black was prone to mildew. That said, the Lausanne crayons were esteemed in England more than any other, and “are now the only pastels made use of by the best artists in Paris.” Some of the green shades were particularly prized, as artists such as Cotes had been unable to replicate them himself.

Bonvoisin and Phelippeaux (*qq.v.*) supplied them in Paris, and they were advertised in the *Avant-Coureur* (1762, p. 491; 1769, p. 85; 1771, p. 503; 1773, pp. 435f). In the *Almanach général des marchands, négocians et commerçans de la France et de l'Europe* for 1772 (Paris, Valade), the entry for Lausanne (p. 166) noted—

*Pastels*. Excellents pour les portraits.

Le grand assortiment en deux boîtes de 24 nuances qui forment 152 crayons, 64 liv. de France.

Demi-assortiment de 77 crayons, 27 liv.

Pastels pour dames, propres à peindre en petit les fleurs, figures & paysages, 100 crayons, 44 liv.

*Marchands de pastels*, MM.

STOUPAN, (Bernard), FRANÇOIS GRASSET & comp.

Libraires & Imprimeurs.

This announcement appeared in the *Frankfurter Frag- und Anzeigungs-Nachrichten*, 20.XII.1776 and other dates:

Es sind von dem so bekandt als berühmten Pastell Farben Fabriquanten, Herrn B. A. Stupanus in

Lausanne, verschiedene Assortiments darer feinsten Pastell Farben allhier angelant, davon die grösseren Assortiments 9. Laubthaler, die feineren aber 5. Laubthaler, vier genommen zu stehen kommen, und können die darzu Lustragende, bey Ausgeber dieses vernehmen, bey weme solche zu finden sind.

Reifenstein (*q.v.*) reported to Caroline Luise von Baden (.v.1761) that he had seen a pastel by Handmann fixed with the process invented by Stoupan, involving an atomised mixture of strong vinegar and egg white; he also indicated that Stoupan learned his techniques from the apothecary Wilhelm Otto Struve. Sulzer (1798, III, p. 719) mentions “Herr Stupan, von Geburt ein Basler, der sich in Lausanne aufhält, wird schon längstens für den besten Zubereiter dieser Farben behalten”. “Personne n'a jusqu'ici pu atteindre le brun de Stoupan”, wrote Guthrie.

### Bibliography

Georges-Antoine Bridel, *Les Pastels de Lausanne*, 1944; Burns 2007, p. 20; Chaperon 1788; Gombaud & Sauvage 2016; William Guthrie, *Nouvelle géographie universelle*, Paris, 1802, III, p. 244; Marcel Francillon, “Notes sur la famille Stoupan bourgeoise de Lausanne”, *Der schweizer Familienforscher*, 1947, pp. 115ff; Lauts 1977; Ratouis de Limay 1946, p. 138; Reuter 2015; *Revue historique vaudoise*, 1943, p. 171; *Revue historique vaudoise*, 1985, p. 68; R&L; Sauvage 2015; Society of Arts, minutes, 1772; Struve 1772 (*v. TREATISES*)