

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

TILSON, Henry

Yorkshire 1659 – London 1695

Portraitist in oil and pastel. The son of Nathaniel Tilson and grandson of Bishop Henry Tilson (1576–1655), he became a pupil of Sir Peter Lely. He travelled to Paris, Venice and Rome in the 1680s with Michael Dahl (*q.v.*). After his return to London, he shot himself while depressed as a result of a passion for a Mrs Green, “a woman of great wealth & Interest...[who] recommended Mr Tilson every where and procured him a deal of business” but who it seems did not reciprocate his love.

Vertue noted his “particular genius for Crayons, in which he perform’d admirably well, after the pictures of Correggio, Titian and the Caracci.” Apart from these pastel copies, very few portrait drawings have been traced. They show the artist using pastel more in the manner of Ashfield than of Lely. Woodward describes the 1683 sheet in the British Museum as “rather lifeless”.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Buckeridge 1754; Croft-Murray & Hulton 1960; Füssli 1826; Oxford DNB; Waterhouse 1988; Woodward 1951, p. 35; Wright 2006

Portraits in various media

J.7162.101 Gian Lorenzo BERNINI (1598–1680), architect and sculptor, crayons (Kingsweston 1695). Lit.: Waterhouse 1988, n.r.

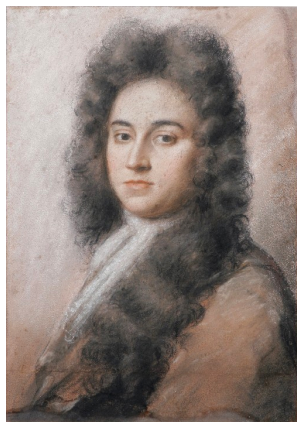
J.7162.102 Francesco Giuseppe BORRI (1627–1695), alchemist, crayons, sd *verso* “Ritratto di Cavalieri Borri/October 29th 1687/Henry Tilson di [?Londra] fecit Roma in Castello Sant’Angelo”, 1687 (Kingsweston 1695. J. W. Hansteen, Oslo, 1941. London, Sotheby’s, 19.VII.1973, Lot 90, £650. Haslemere, John Nicholson, 23.V.2013, Lot 2218 repr., est. £1500–2000; Banbury, Holloway’s, 10.XII.2013, Lot 306 repr., est. £1500–2000). Lit.: Croft-Murray & Hulton 1960, p. 480 n.r.; Waterhouse 1988, n.r. φ



J.7162.104 Thomas TURNER, Esq., crayons (Dr Barry Delany, L.350; London, Sotheby’s, 5.VII.1872, Lot 134). Lit.: Croft-Murray & Hulton 1960, p. 481 n.r.

J.7162.105 Young man, pstl/ppr, 25.4x20.6 (San Marino, Huntington Library, Sir Bruce Ingram Collection, inv. 63.52.71). Attr.; cf. Ashfield

J.7162.106 Gentleman in wig, pstl, 25x17 (Colnaghi. Dorchester, Duke’s, 29.IX.2011, Lot 55 repr., attr., est. £200–400) φα



J.7162.108 Lady, bl. chlk, crayons/ppr, 26.8x20, sd “HT 1683” (British Museum 1934.0710.3. Charles Henry Collins Baker; acqu. 1934 with H. L. Florence fund). Lit.: Woodward 1951, n.r.; Croft-Murray & Hulton 1960, no. 1, pl. 262 φ



J.7162.11 Lady, pstl/ppr, 25.6x19.9 (British Museum 1955.0315.3. Mrs C. Stuart Bunning; acqu. 1955). Lit.: Croft-Murray & Hulton 1960, no. 2, pl. 263 φα

