

VISPRÉ, Victor

Besançon 1727 – London p.1780

The elder brother of F.-X. Vispré (*q.v.*), early records confuse their careers. It was probably Victor who advertised in the *Affiches, annonces et avis divers* in 1755 as “Vispré, de Besançon, peint d’après nature sur des miroirs de toilette et sur autres glaces des fleurs, des fruits et des oiseaux...toutes sortes d’ornements chinois”. He (or perhaps his brother) also published *Le Moyen de devenir peintre en trois heures, et d’exécuter au pinceau des ouvrages des plus grands maîtres, sans avoir appris le dessin* (1755; repr. 1756; review in the *Mercur*, .XII.1755, pp. 142f), where his address was given as “rue Pavée, près la Comédie Italienne vis-à-vis la rue Françoisé, dans la maison du Chapelier” (p. 131). The difference in the addresses indicated to Geysant & Heymer that the author of *Le Moyen...* was François-Xavier, but the subject matter suggest otherwise.

Victor was received as a master in the guild of painters at The Hague in 1762. He seems to have retained some connection with The Netherlands, as he appears in a lengthy dialogue on glass painting which appeared in the Ghent *Nieuwen almanach* in 1777. He was in London from 1763, and was probably the “Vesperies, a foreigner...occasionally employed to paint fruits and flowers” by Allan Ramsay in the early 1760s (Cunningham 1859, IV, p. 37). He exhibited at the Free Society from 1763 to 1778 and at the Royal Academy 1770–72 (eight fruit pieces, all in oil upon glass; sent from Mr Augiband [Angibaud]’s, St Martin’s Lane). An advertisement in the *Public advertiser* on 31.III.1773 offered to dispose “on moderate terms” his “pictures representing Fruit, painted in Oil on Glass”, the artist being soon to leave England; admission 1s. to the show at the Dolphin, James Street, Covent Garden. He travelled to Dublin with his brother in 1776, staying there until 17.III.1780 when his wife Elisabeth Fischer or Fisher died, aged 29.

His works may well be confused with his brother’s; those listed in the London exhibitions all seem to have been painted on glass. He may be the author of two fruit pieces in this medium recorded in the cabinet of Blondel de Gagny. As for the Vispré “pastel” of peaches from the Marigny collection (and pendant to a “pastel” by Portail), neither artist nor medium can now be determined.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Edwards 1808, p. 160; Geysant & Heymer 2009; Geysant & Heymer 2013; Hébert 1766, I, pp. 36–81; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Strickland 1913; “Van het schhilderen op glas”, *Nieuwen almanach der konst-schilders, vermissers, vergulders en marmelaers*, 1772, pp. 188–228

Pastels

J.7632.101 Une jatte de pêches, un verre de vin, dessin (Mme de Pompadour, inv. p.m., item 1257; Marigny, inv. p.m., item 712, 24 livres with another). Lit.: Gordon 2003, p. 123, as pastel