New year, (almost) new projects

It’s been a while since I published a new post on my research notebook. Reason is to be given to the hectic timetable of late. This time was used to bring new projects to life, which I will tell you more about in the following weeks. In the meantime, here are some news and updates. Also, this notebook becomes fully bilingual. You will be able to read my articles in French and English. English articles will be available on PDF files only, to avoid double posts.

A PHD PROJECT
After several months of indecision, meetings and reflexions on the usefulness of entering a PhD program after my Master’s degree, and having heard of so many ghost stories and seedy tales but also advices and pep talks, I decided to go through with my research project about 16th century portrait miniatures. The main reason came with the necessity for my consultant job to have time to research about these artworks and bring new knowledge, and also because researching is what I love most in my job. More informations will be available soon, once the project is approved. I shall officially start my research in Fall 2018, hopefully between Paris and England. It will be based on the research I already started but left unfinished after my Master’s degree.

A DICTIONARY OF RENAISSANCE MINIATURISTS
Linked with my PhD project and the discoveries I made during my Master’s degree, I have started this research with a biographical approach, looking for information about the artists active in Paris and London between circa 1520 and 1620. I don’t know yet how this dictionary will be shaped and implemented in my research but by starting looking for names, it will be easier afterwards to find archives linked with them.
Method

The first step of this dictionary was to read most books about Renaissance portraiture and portrait artists once more, which was a tedious work, and published miniaturists dictionaries. I based my first draft on Blättel's dictionary. A hundred names have been found. However, among all these names, a lot of them are enamelists, others are illuminators and were not known to be « limners ». Thus they have been removed from the second draft list on which I work for the time being. To know more about the difference between limning and illumination, you may read the post on the definition of a miniature on this notebook.

First results

This second draft list brings around 30 artists working in London and/or Paris, that is to say, circa 15 artists in a century in each city. In this list are most famous names: Holbein, Clouet, Hilliard, Olivier, but also artists that are still unknown today: Nicolas Denisot for instance, or Essaye Gondet.

It is also important to note that a lot of portraitists have crossed the Channel with the different embassies that have taken place. They were generally asked to draw the King’s picture, or to take the future spouse’s likeness, like Jean Perréal at Henry VIII’s court for the imminent wedding between the French King Louis XII and Mary Tudor.

CONSULTANCY AND EXPERTISE

Since October 2017, I have developed my activity as an independent consultant, specialized in the Art of portrait miniatures. I remain linked with the art market as expanding my network between Paris and London, and also make my research known to museums and academics through several publications here on this notebook and also with partners as with The Frame Blog.

For several years, while surveying the art market in Paris for several years, I have noticed that ancient portrait miniatures (16th - 17th
century), were generally overlooked and badly sold for lack of information. I hope in the future, thanks to my research and my activity, that more light will be shed on so many of these masterpieces and easily collectible.

For enquiries, please contact me through Twitter or Linkedin.

**Nicholas Hilliard Comprehensive Catalogue: A New Edition**

Finally, following the discussion of my Master’s thesis, I dived once more in the catalogue that I had written with the study. While reading its first pages and archiving my notes, I realized how much it needed a new edition so that it may be more useful to the specialists of this subject and eventually to be officially published as a website.

Unfortunately, these types of projects take a lot of time and fundings which I haven’t found yet. I then decided to start on my own by organizing its meta-data and then shall find a way to publish it, maybe with Omeka. Meanwhile, a new edition of the PDF file will be available by the end of the year, after museums and private collections have given their agreement.

That’d be all for now but please, do contact me for further information.

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