

Le Brun, A Blend of Styles

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Élisabeth-Louise Vigée-Le Brun was a French painter of the eighteenth century who is considered by many art critics to exhibit a style that could be best classified as neoclassical although due to the delicacy and naturalism found in many of her works some critics would also consider her style to be romantic as well. It could be argued that Le Brun is a blend of both given that although her works display a high level of polish some also contain romantic flare to them as well.

The *Portrait of Marie Antoinette* painted by Le Brun in 1783 would be a good starting point for the argument that Le Brun is artist that paints with a blend of neo-classical and romantic elements as opposed to being solely of the neo-classical style. This painting was one of many portraits of nobility that was painted by Le Brun during her lifetime, and displays the high level of polish typically found in the classic style, but the way Le Brun brings notice to Marie

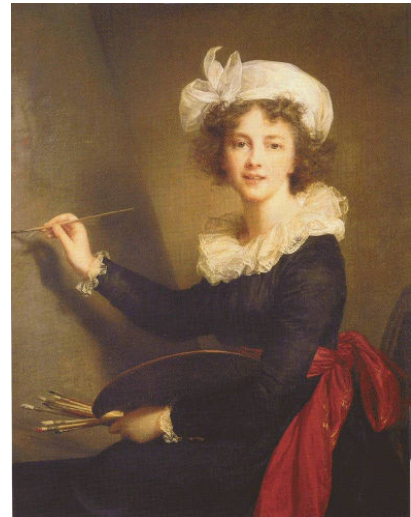


Antoinette, 1783, features and facial expression is not consistent with the classical style at all. Le Brun was a favorite artist of the queen and this painting seems to capture the fact the Le Brun was fond of her patron.

Le Brun's portrait of her brother, *Étienne Vigée* (*brother of the artist*) painted in 1773, does not appear to be as polished as some of her other works that are of the neo-classical style, yet it still retains a level of polish characteristic of the neo-classical style. The painting does

appear to be somewhat more romantic than her other works of nobility however as the expression on her brother's face really stands out through her use of color and the way she manipulates space.

Le Brun's painting *Self-portrait*, 1790 could possibly be considered a good blend of both neo-classical and romantic styles as the painting appears to almost capture Le Brun's look when she was in her teens, while she painted. The *Self-portrait* is also highly polished, but the depiction of Le Brun's is clearly the most vibrant element to the painting.



Although many will consider Le Brun's style primarily neo-classical I feel that she is more a blend of both neo-classical and romantic. Le Brun's works exhibits a high degree of polish consistent with the neo-classical style, yet they also display facial expressions and colors in a manner that is not entirely consistent with the neo-classical style and is more consistent with a romantic style making her style a blend of both.

References

First reference

www.wikipedia.org, July 22, 2007

Second reference

http://www.bookrags.com/%C3%89lisabeth-Louise_Vig%C3%A9_Le_Brun, July 22,
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