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## ROSSO FIORENTINO (1494-1542)—

PLATE 53

*An Incantation Scene—Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts (Masson Collection)*  
—Pen and brush in Indian ink; c. 30 × 21 cm.

In the catalogue of the first exhibition of the *Donation Jean Masson* (May, 1927, No. 172) this drawing is attributed to the French engraver, René Boyvin, no doubt by reason of a certain similarity of the facial types with Boyvin's drawings in the same collection for a series of twenty engravings after Rosso of phantastic masked busts (Robert-Dumesnil, 78-81). In point of fact, however, the somewhat timid and impersonal handling of these and other drawings by Boyvin differs not a little from our drawing, which is much more sweeping and masterly in execution. There is every reason to suppose that it is actually the work of the Florentine, Giovanni Battista di Jacopo, called Il Rosso, who, between 1530 and 1540, was plying his craft at Fontainebleau and Paris. Close analogies are offered by another drawing by Rosso in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts (No. 34886) representing *Pandora opening her Box* (Photo Giraudon, 14249). Stylistically the Masson *Incantation Scene* approximates to Rosso's earliest designs for the decorations of the *Galerie François I*, at Fontainebleau, painted between April, 1534, and November, 1536, and to be more exact, it can probably be dated about 1530-35. One of the best of Rosso's extant drawings, it is particularly interesting as showing a distinct influence of northern art in its architecture and other details. Observe, for example, the tree-trunks festooned with hanging moss, one of the favourite motives of the Danube School. Similar features occur in the pictures and woodcuts of Hans Baldung Grien; and in particular his well-known *chiaroscuro* of a *Witches' Gathering* (B. 55) recalls the *Incantation Scene* of Rosso here reproduced. Thus, the same exaggerated attitudes of the figures, the flying hair of the witch and the cloud of smoke issuing from the vessel, are found in both works. It is tempting to suppose that Rosso was acquainted with works of his German fellow-artist, and was to some extent inspired by his example. Incidentally, it is known that Baldung, as well as Dürer, exerted a certain influence on Pontormo.

I may be permitted to add a brief remark on Rosso's drawing of *Christ carrying the Cross*, in the British Museum, which was published in a previous number of this magazine (March, 1927, p. 50) by Dr. A. E. Popp, according to whom it is derived from a composition of Dürer, now known only in copies.

While sharing the view that Dürer did actually influence Rosso and other Florentine mannerists, such as Pontormo, Bandinelli and Bacchiacca, I am unable to endorse the details of Miss Popp's statements. No doubt certain motives were taken over from Dürer's woodcut *Passion sets*, but as to the picture in the Cook Collection, I incline to believe that its formal resemblance with the drawing is the result of parallel, but independent, effort on the part of the two artists. It should be mentioned that the kneeling figure of St. Veronica was adapted (in reverse) by Rosso from Pontormo's fresco of the *Carrying of the Cross* in the Certosa.

KURT KUSENBERG.





ROSSO FIORENTINO  
Incantation Scene. (Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts)