

VERONESE SCHOOL 16th Century

Mars, Venus and Cupid

Pen and brown ink and wash, with touches of grey wash and white heightening, over a slight underdrawing in black chalk, on light blue paper faded to brown.

362 x 217 mm. (14 1/4 x 8 1/2 in.)

Watermark: A ladder inscribed in a pointed oval and surmounted by a Latin cross (Briquet 5930; Lucca 1560, Fabriano 1538).

This interesting drawing, approaching in style the draughtsmanship of the Veronese artist Paolo Farinati (1524-1606), appears to be the work of an unidentified artist working in or around Verona in the 16th century.

However, an alternative attribution to Pier Francesco Mola (1612-1666) was tentatively suggested for this drawing in 1999 by Richard Cocke, who compared the drawing stylistically to a Saint John the Baptist in the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm. He further noted that the landscape background is similar to that in a view of Coldrerio in the British Museum.

Relatively little is known of the 18th century Scottish barrister and collector John McGouan (or MacGowan), who died in Edinburgh in 1803. A founder member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, his collection of prints and drawings was sold and dispersed at two posthumous auctions in London in 1803 and 1804.

Exhibitions

London, Colnaghi, Old Master and 19th Century Drawings, 1999-2000, no.11; Stanford University, Cantor Center for Visual Arts, Classic Taste: Drawings and Decorative Arts from the Collection of Horace Brock, March-May 2000.