

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER

(Paris, 1703 - Paris, 1770)

Mascaron

red chalk

230 x 175 mm

This red chalk drawing of a mascaron - an ornamental architectural feature with zoomorphic or anthropomorphic facial features – exemplifies many of the characteristics commonly associated with mid-18th century French Rococo. The grotesque face is surmounted with a shell, whilst a decorative ribbon runs through both earlobes and the mouth. The glance, downwards to the left, is typically mischievous and evades the viewer's eye contact. The image is playful in character and is in fact a pictorial representation of the very term 'Rococo', combining *rocaille* (rock) and *coquille* (shell).

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