



John Frederick Peto

Title

Bowie Knife, Keyed Bugle and Canteen

Medium

Oil on canvas

Date

1890s

Dimensions

40 × 30 in. (101.6 × 76.2 cm)

Accession number

80.3.23

Credit Line

Gift of Amanda K. Berls, 1980

Web Description

Philadelphian John F. Peto studied briefly at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, where he met painter William Michael Harnett, whose work is often mistaken for Peto's own, and vice-versa. Both men favored close-up, informal arrangements of objects symbolizing nineteenth-century masculinity in a trompe l'oeil style that was meant to "fool the eye" into believing the objects were not painted, but real. Peto showed a greater interest in depicting older and more worn objects than Harnett. The torn papers and patched door in this painting show Peto's interest in infusing his still-life paintings with a sense of the passage of time.