



N.C. Wyeth, Hildegarde Bockius

Title

Untitled (study for Navajo herder in the foothills)

Medium

Pencil on paper

Date

1908

Dimensions

7 1/8 × 6 5/8 in. (18.1 × 16.8 cm)

Accession number

2012.5

Credit Line

Purchased with the Betsy James Wyeth Fund, 2012

Web Description

This is a rare example of a finished drawing for an early painting, hardly any of which are known to exist. Wyeth did pose family members dressed in Native American costume for photography—such photos still exist in the Wyeth Family Archives—but this is the first composition drawing to come to light showing a family member in costume. In the painting (NCW 10, I.260), Wyeth reworked the facial features of the herder, but most of the details in the drawing are transferred exactly. The drawing descended in the Bockius family; the figure has been identified as Hildegarde Bockius (1894-1984), a younger sister of Carolyn Bockius Wyeth. When old enough, she often helped Mrs. N. C. Wyeth with her children and household chores. Letters N. C. Wyeth wrote to his family during October 1908 confirm that Hildegarde stayed with the family on weekends.