



James Welling

Title

Sycamore

Medium

Archival inkjet print on rag paper

Date

2010

Dimensions

42 × 28 in. (106.7 × 71.1 cm)

Accession number

2016.2

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Credit Line

Gift of Prince and Princess de Chimay, 2016

Web Description

American painter Andrew Wyeth's life and work, in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, and Cushing, Maine, have been the sites of intensive investigation by artist and teacher James Welling. Realist, regional painting may seem like a surprising inspiration for Welling, a contemporary artist who has pioneered, since the 1970s, hybrid "post-studio" art practices that blur the traditional grounds of painting, sculpture, and photography. Some of Welling's photographs re-actualize Wyeth's paintings and meticulously restage well-known compositions without their respective protagonists, while others convey only an atmospheric memory of the motifs and stories that underlie Wyeth's life and work. A part of a five-year series that is known as Welling's Wyeth portfolio, Sycamore connects directly with another work in Brandywine's collection: Andrew Wyeth's Pennsylvania Landscape (1941). Welling located the exact aged sycamore tree on the Brandywine Battlefield that Wyeth made the centerpiece of his painting over half a century earlier. Far from merely documenting, however, Welling utilizes various strategies of postproduction, including digital manipulation and the layering of composite photographs, akin to Wyeth's own liberal manipulation of form and use of psychological symbolism. Of the series, Welling remarks, "I'm making a new work in the act of 'translating' the work of another artist."