



N.C. Wyeth

Title

Apotheosis of Franklin, presentation painting

Medium

Oil on canvas

Date

1925

Dimensions

49 3/8 × 24 5/8 in. (125.4 × 62.5 cm)

Catalogue Number

84.22

Credit Line

Gift of American Savings Bank, 1984

Web Description

The artist presented this painting to the directors of the Franklin Savings Bank to win their approval for a mural destined for one of their main New York offices. In Wyeth's words, "The central figure of this group represents the benign and mature figure of Benjamin Franklin. About him are his great contemporaries, men who worked with him and through him for the building of this Nation. Lifting above them, out of the fullness of autumn foliage, looms the familiar belfry of Independence Hall in Philadelphia--

symbol of Liberty." It is likely that the bank directors suggested the subject, seeing the figure of Franklin as a link between the stability of the nation and the institution. To transfer the design from the presentation painting to the mural canvas, Wyeth had two lantern slides made from the presentation painting, one of the bottom half of the image and one of the top half of the image (Brandywine River Museum, NCWS. 95.1825.13 and .14). He then projected each slide onto to a 15 x 15 foot piece of canvas, which would yield a 30 x 15 foot mural once installed in place.