



John W. McCoy

Title

Seaweed and Seashells

Medium

Watercolor on paper

Date

1958

Dimensions

21 1/2 × 29 3/4 in. (54.6 × 75.6 cm)

Catalogue Number

84.16

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Credit Line

Gift of Peter C. Morse, 1984

Web Description

John W. McCoy received his Bachelors of Fine Arts from Cornell University and studied at the American School in Fontainebleau, France, as well as at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. McCoy credited N.C. Wyeth with being his most inspirational and influential teacher. Starting in 1933, McCoy and Andrew Wyeth took lessons together from the elder Wyeth until the two students found their preferences in subject matter began differing too much for joint sessions to be productive. McCoy became an official member of the Wyeth family in 1935 when he married N.C. Wyeth's daughter Ann. Seaweed and Seashells is one of McCoy's many underwater scenes of costal Maine. The work makes use of McCoy's watercolor and mixed media technique in which the support, a part-fiberglass paper, is soaked in water and then underpainted with an oil-turpentine solution. After scrubbing the paper to remove excess oil, McCoy applied transparent watercolors and overpainted with opaque watercolors. Seaweed and Seashells has a sandy texture in areas in which the watercolor was painted over residue left from the oil-turpentine mixture. The overall effect of this work is as much evocative of the textures, sounds, and smells of the ocean as it is descriptive of a particular underwater scene. Works such as this reflect McCoy's belief that natural things are a microcosm of the larger universe.