



ANDREW WYETH (1917-2009)

Binoculars

Signed lower right, "Andrew Wyeth"
watercolor and dry brush on paper
21 x 29 in. (30 3/4 x 38 3/4 x 2 in.)
1981

11481

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, Canada

EXHIBITION:

Vancouver, Canada, The Art Emporium, "Andrew Wyeth: Recent Works," October 4-18, 1977.

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An artist who pursued his own course when the rest of the art world was consumed with modernism and abstraction, Wyeth is considered among the preeminent representational painters of the 20th century. Born in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, Wyeth drew his subject matter from the world around him: the interiors and exteriors of the stone buildings, mills, and farms of the Brandywine River countryside, and in the summers, the clapboard houses and stark landscape of the Maine coast. After his father died in a 1945 automobile accident, Wyeth began to incorporate people into his pictures, most notably Christina Olson, and later Siri Erickson, of Cushing, Maine, and his Chadds Ford neighbors Karl and Anna Kuerner and Helga Testorf. The first visual artist to appear on the cover of Time magazine, Wyeth was also the first living American-born artist to be given an exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Wyeth's naturalistic style is marked by strong editing combined with remarkable execution of details. While relying on keen visual observation, he pared down the elements of a composition to their most essential, giving his works an abstracted quality and imbuing them with a sense of quietude and stillness. The egg tempera medium (which he came to prefer to oil after first experimenting with it in the early 1940s) lent itself to the precise detailing required to create his subtle textural effects, since it dries quickly and translucent layers can be built up over one another. Wyeth also painted extensively in watercolor in works of more spontaneous execution, as well as in the drybrush technique (where most water is removed from the watercolor medium), sometimes combining the two.

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