

THE BAYARD AND MARY SHARP GALLERY

The Wyeth Circle

Paintings in this gallery highlight the work of the broader circle of Wyeth family artists. The works of N. C. Wyeth are hung alongside those of his two daughters Henriette and Carolyn, and his grandchildren Jamie Wyeth and Anna B. McCoy. In addition, there are works by artists who studied with the Wyeths, including Peter Hurd, John W. McCoy, and Karl J. Kuerner. Other artists are related to the Wyeths through marriage, such as

Merle James and George A. Weymouth. Exhibited together, these landscapes, portraits, and still lifes reveal the cross-currents of inspiration among the artists.

Even as these artists developed their own styles and specialties, the influences upon one another are apparent in a variety of ways. The simplified geometries preferred by Carolyn Wyeth are visible in the work of Karl J. Kuerner and Jamie Wyeth. Similar approaches to portraiture are evident in the work of husband and wife Peter Hurd and Henriette Wyeth. Among all of the artists, there is evidence of their attention to the lesson passed down

from Howard Pyle to N. C. Wyeth: paint what you know best. Looking around the gallery, we see the growth and development of the Wyeth circle of close friends and family over the last hundred years.

Carolyn Wyeth (1909-1994)

N. C. Wyeth's Barn, 1974

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wyeth, 1985



Carolyn Wyeth received her first artistic training from her father, N. C. Wyeth, in his studio when she was 12 years old. The traditional lessons she received were

passed along to her own students later in life as well as to her nephew Jamie Wyeth, who began studying with her at age 12.

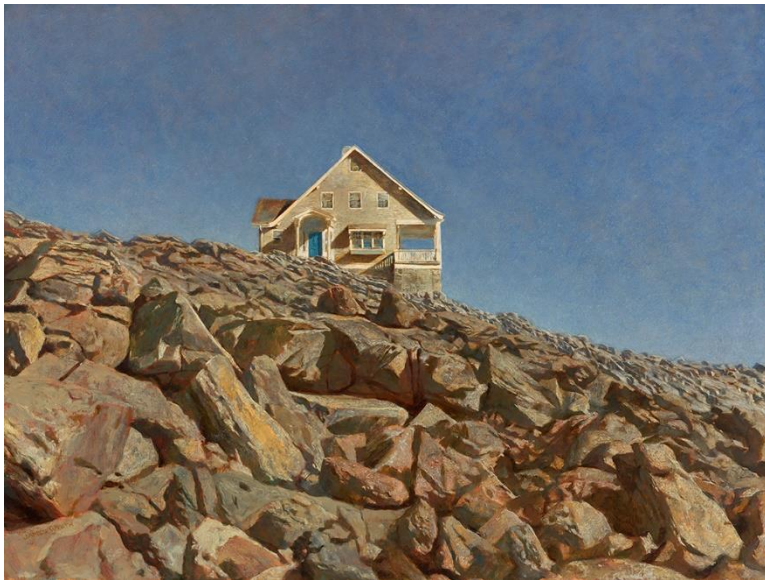
Never driven by the market or a desire to follow trends in the art world, Carolyn Wyeth worked slowly, producing only a handful of paintings each year. She painted for herself and for no one else, even her famous family members.

Jamie Wyeth (b. 1946)

Kent House, 1972

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wyeth, 1985



Jamie Wyeth lives and paints on Monhegan Island in a house built by the artist Rockwell Kent in 1907. Wyeth purchased the property when he was 22

years old, using proceeds from his first solo exhibition. His admiration for Kent is reflected in the dramatic depiction of the structure, which hangs perilously above the sea on a rocky outcrop. Rather than emphasize the precarious placement of the house, Wyeth's perspective depicts the house atop a massive foundation of rock. The clear delineation of land and sky seems inspired by Kent's geometric approach to composing landscapes.

Karl J. Kuerner (b. 1957)

Miss Wyeth, 1981

Acrylic on panel

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wyeth, 1985



Karl J. Kuerner grew up watching Andrew Wyeth paint at the Kuerner family farm for decades and was deeply influenced by Wyeth's emotion and passion for the

land. Taught by Carolyn Wyeth and mentored by Andrew, Kuerner's work is rooted in his own love for the people and landscape of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. In *Miss Wyeth*, Kuerner pictures Carolyn standing on the second floor porch of the N. C. Wyeth House, conveying a sense of contented solitude as she surveys her world from the center of the canvas.

Carolyn Wyeth (1909-1994)

Up from the Woods, 1974

Oil on canvas

Purchased with Museum funds, 1984



The second child of Wyeth family of artists, Carolyn Wyeth was the last of the family members to live in the N. C. Wyeth House, which she paints here from an

unusual point of view. From a vantage point nestled deep in the woods below her home, the house is only partly revealed. Her style is strikingly modern, often glossing over details and choosing off-kilter compositions, and in many ways reflective of her eccentric personality. She valued solitude and spent most of her career painting scenes reflecting her homes in Pennsylvania and Maine as well as their close surroundings.

John W. McCoy (1910-1989)

Silent Fields, 1959

Tempera on Masonite panel

Gift of Harold S. Schutt, Jr., 1981



Beginning as a student of N. C. Wyeth, John W. McCoy deepened his relationship with the Wyeth family through his friendship with Andrew Wyeth and his marriage to Andrew's sister Ann. He

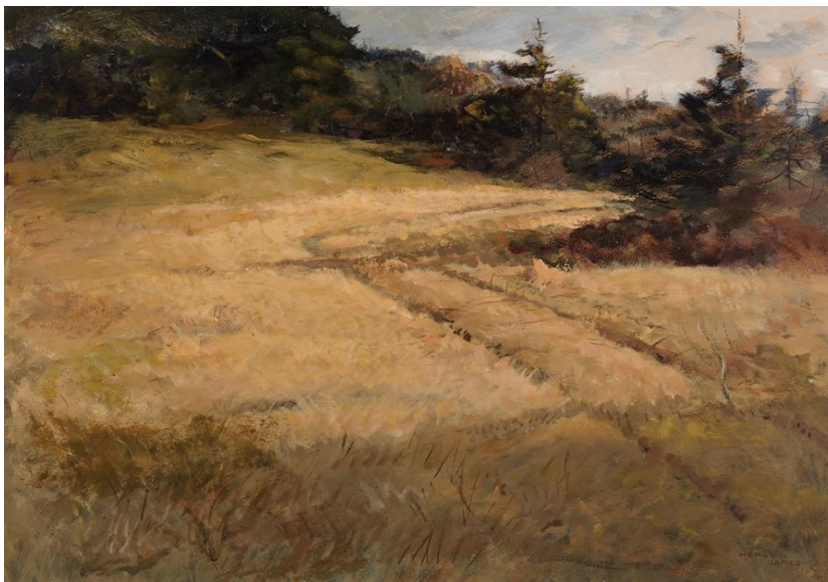
continued painting in the Brandywine tradition, highlighting the people and places of the region, while teaching at the Pennsylvania Academy from 1946 until 1961. In this snow-covered scene, McCoy explores the natural and man-made elements of the landscape. Trees and grasses blend with fence posts and utility poles. As the title suggests, the setting is quiet, but the downed barbed wire fence in the foreground implies this property has been neglected and may not buzz with life again in the spring.

Merle James (1890-1963)

Logging Road, ca. 1960

Oil on board

Gift of Anna B. McCoy in honor of Betsy
James Wyeth, 2020



Betsy James Wyeth lived her life in
artistic families. Her father, Merle James,
was a talented painter, and her sister
Gwendolyn developed into an accomplished

watercolorist. After studying art at Syracuse University, Merle James settled his family in a community called Roycroft, in East Aurora, New York, that became a center of the American Arts & Crafts movement. His home studio became a gathering place for the local artists. It was at the James family's summer home in Cushing, Maine, that Andrew Wyeth first met his future wife, Betsy, in 1939. James often painted scenes of Cushing, as in this loosely brushed landscape.

Carolyn Wyeth (1909-1994)

A Stand of Fir Trees, n.d.

Oil on canvas

The Andrew and Betsy Wyeth Collection



For most of her life, Carolyn Wyeth traveled with her family to Port Clyde, Maine, each summer. For her father, N. C. Wyeth, summers were a respite from his commissioned work, when he could focus

on personal paintings. For his artist children, Maine provided a change of scenery for their landscape paintings. In this work, Carolyn Wyeth explores the organic shapes of the trees and wheat-colored grasses with soft brushwork. The foreground tree is set off against the others with a glowing halo, an effect sometimes seen in paintings by her nephew and student Jamie Wyeth.

John W. McCoy (1910-1989)

Dooryard, White Cosmos, 1967

Tempera on Masonite panel

Gift of Harold S. Schutt, Jr., 1981



John W. McCoy studied art at Cornell University and at the American School in Fontainebleau, France, but 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 to differ too much for joint sessions to be productive. In 1935, McCoy married N. C. Wyeth's daughter and composer Ann, becoming a member of the extended family of Wyeth artists. *Dooryard, White Cosmos* is exemplary of McCoy's style and techniques, a pensive and somewhat gloomy composition creating a sense of contemplation.

Jamie Wyeth (b. 1946)

Wolfbane, 1984

Mixed media on paper

Purchased with Museum funds, 1984



In *Wolfbane* Jamie Wyeth creates a metaphorical portrait of Phyllis Wyeth by depicting inanimate objects associated with her. The glowing hat perched on the back

of the chair appears to float in a darkened room, while the strong horizontal and vertical lines of the hat, chair and door provide stability to the image. Jamie Wyeth combines media including watercolor pigments, charcoal, india ink, and acrylic varnish to create the richly textured background.

Henriette Wyeth (1907-1997)

Untitled (Mask of Beethoven), ca. 1918

Charcoal on paper

Bequest of Carolyn Wyeth, 1996



This drawing by Henriette Wyeth demonstrates the type of work the children of N. C. Wyeth might have made when they began studying with their father. Drawn when she was still a child, the subject is a

plaster cast made from life of Ludwig van Beethoven, which still hangs in her father's studio today. The prop was likely used by N. C. Wyeth to complete his painting *Beethoven and Nature* commissioned by Steinway and Sons in 1917. Henriette's sister Carolyn also made a drawing of this cast a few years later. A bust of Beethoven is featured in the N. C. Wyeth House living room, and Andrew Wyeth's studio contained many recordings of his work, confirming the family's respect for the composer.

Henriette Wyeth (1907-1997)

Venus Comb, 1973

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wyeth, 1985



Like all of her artist family members, Henriette Wyeth engaged in still-life painting throughout her life. In this particularly delicate work, executed well into her career, she depicts three natural

objects: a whelk shell at left, a Venus comb murex shell at center, and a snowdrop flower at right. By 1973, when this work was painted, Wyeth and her husband Peter Hurd had moved to New Mexico, far from the rest of her family in Pennsylvania and Maine. Just as Wyeth herself was, all three of the objects depicted are far from their native homes—strangers to the desert landscape of the American Southwest.

N. C. Wyeth (1882-1945)

Self-portrait with Palette, ca. 1909-1912

Oil on canvas

The Andrew and Betsy Wyeth Collection



This self-portrait by N. C. Wyeth was hung in the artist's studio in the years after it was completed. Set against an inky background, the artist poses with his palette and brushes. His raised chin and

furrowed brow suggest the artist is scrutinizing his subject—which, in this case, is himself. The details of the face and eyeglasses at the center of the canvas are much more finely rendered than the outlying parts, especially the artist's hand, which is so close to the picture plane.

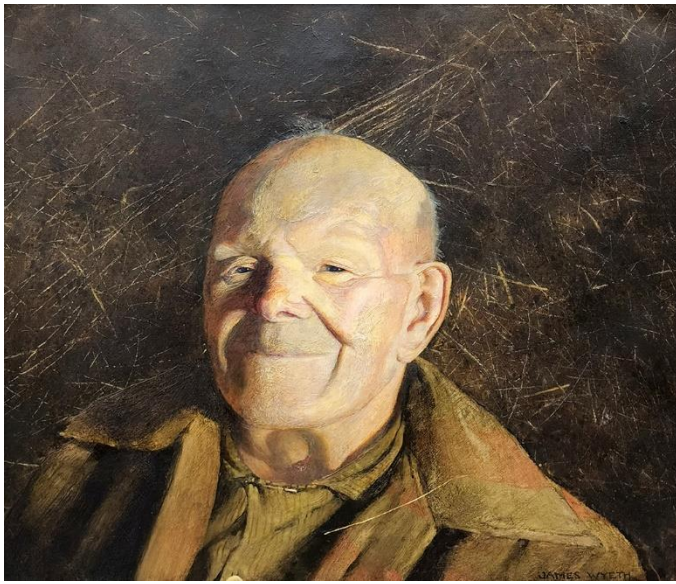
Emphasizing the head over the hand, the portrait suggests the mental labor involved in the act of making a painting.

Jamie Wyeth (b. 1946)

Halloween, 1964

Oil on canvas

Private collection



A teenaged Jamie Wyeth painted this portrait of a farmer in Waldoboro, Maine, he knew as Mr. Borneman. As a precocious 12-year-old artist, Wyeth had already painted *Borneman's Barn* (1958) and

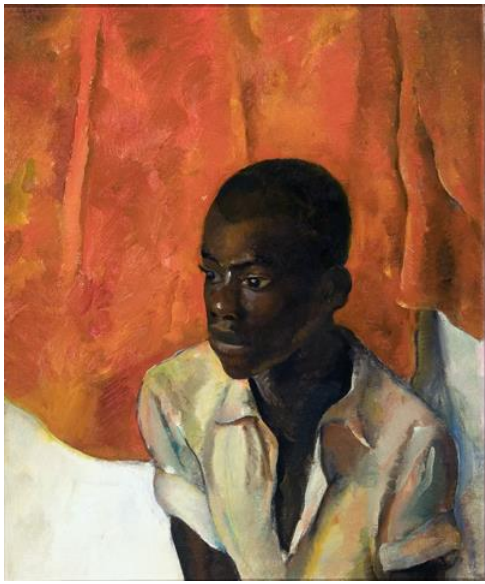
returned to capture the farmer himself.
Wyeth recollects that the farmer's round head and twinkling mischievous eyes made him look like a glowing jack-o-lantern, which explains the title, *Halloween*.

Carolyn Wyeth (1909-1994)

Portrait of David Lawrence, ca. 1933

Oil on canvas

The Andrew and Betsy Wyeth Collection



Born in the same year as his childhood playmate Andrew Wyeth, David Lawrence lived a short distance from the Wyeths on Bullock Road in Chadds Ford. As a boy, he and Andrew raided N. C. Wyeth's studio,

using the elder Wyeth's props and costumes to create their own make-believe worlds of soldiers at war or Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest. Spending time with the Wyeths, it is perhaps expected that he would appear in several of their paintings. He served as a model for N. C. Wyeth (along with young Andrew in *Portrait of a Dog*, 1933), for Carolyn Wyeth, and later for Andrew (*Black Hunter*, 1938).

N. C. Wyeth (1882-1945)

Portrait of a Dog, 1933

Oil on canvas

Bequest of Carolyn Wyeth, 1996



This clever painting is a portrait within a portrait, a combination of figures—human and canine—seen from various angles.

Young Andrew Wyeth, then fifteen-years-old, takes pencil in hand to render a

portrait of the Wyeth family dog, Lupe. Andrew's friend David Lawrence holds Lupe in place, while she turns her best side to the artist. In this painting, N.C. Wyeth provides two portraits of the dog: the painted version with head in three-quarter view and the drawn version that Andrew captures in profile.

Carolyn Wyeth (1909-1994)

Portrait of Frederick Rabottini, ca. 1939-1940

Oil on canvas

Gift of the estate of Joann Del Borrello in
loving memory of Luigi and Maria Rabottini,
and their children Anna, Filomena,
Frederick, Edith, and Francis, 2016



Carolyn Wyeth likely did not know,
when she painted the teen-aged Frederick

Rabottini, that her portrait would soon memorialize his young life. At an early age, Rabottini was diagnosed with a kidney-related illness and, though his face is a mask of serenity with classical features, other details of the painting seem to suggest all is not well. Rabottini's clothing looks to be too large for his frame. Wyeth emphasized the draping of the shirt across the chest and arms by using a strong light source that created deep shadows.

Similarly, his loose trousers are held fast with a belt that appears to cinch at his waist, revealing his narrow form.

Henriette Wyeth (1907-1997)

Portrait of Mrs. N. C. Wyeth, 1929

Oil on canvas

Bequest of Carolyn Wyeth, 1996



Henriette Wyeth's talents as an artist were recognized as early as age sixteen, when she began painting family members and receiving portrait commissions from prominent residents throughout the region.

In this bold, beautifully designed depiction of her mother, Wyeth demonstrates her adoption of a modern decorative approach as well as her desire to express a connection with her subject. The artist lavishes attention on the textiles and floral background, particularly focusing on the silk turquoise lining of the fur coat that covers her mother's chair. Mrs. Wyeth's serious expression contrasts the exuberant color and textures, suggesting her mother's grounding role within the family dynamic.

N. C. Wyeth (1882-1945)

Portrait of Henriette Wyeth, 1922

Oil on canvas

Bequest of Carolyn Wyeth, 1996



While N. C. Wyeth did several formal portraits as commissions, for his liveliest portraits he used his family as models. This is fifteen-year-old Henriette Wyeth, with a fanciful floral background and a book held

casually in her lap, speaking to her interests in floral painting and reading. The portrait later appeared on the cover of *The Ladies Home Journal* (November 1924), where the editor remarked: "Of all the artists we know of, Wyeth is one of the most liberally supplied with models in his own family. A beautiful wife and four [sic] beautiful children, the children ranging in age from five to fifteen, all very different in type, would seem to be the ideal for a painter's household."

Henriette Wyeth (1907-1997)

Portrait of Catharine Skelly (Mrs. Joseph A. Wheelock), 1938

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Wheelock, 1974



Henriette Wyeth specialized in portraiture and received numerous commissions from prominent residents of Pennsylvania and Delaware before her

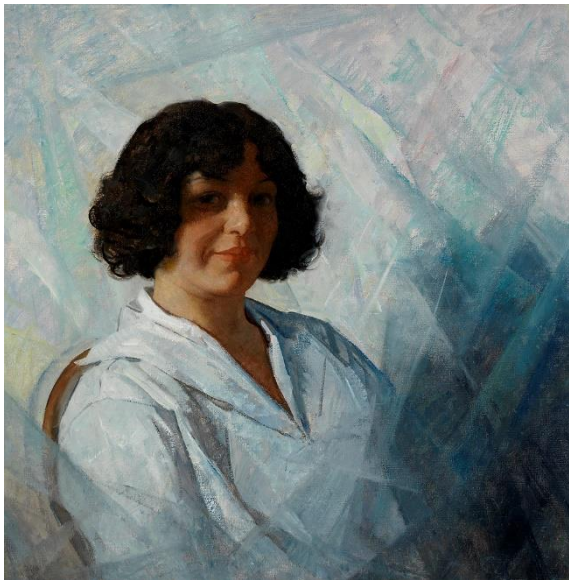
move to New Mexico. Catharine Skelly (1916–1985) grew up in Wilmington, settling in nearby Greenville after her marriage to Joseph A. Wheelock. She and her two sisters sat for Wyeth in the 1930s. Posing the model against a richly patterned backdrop, Wyeth created a striking composition with a limited color palette that focuses attention on the subject's composed and confident expression.

N. C. Wyeth (1882-1945)

Portrait of Carolyn Wyeth, 1925

Oil on canvas

Bequest of Carolyn Wyeth, 1996



A teenaged Carolyn Wyeth, the second child of N. C. Wyeth and Carolyn Bockius Wyeth, captures the viewers' attention in this portrait by her father. The portrait, perhaps like Carolyn herself, is a study of

contrasts: the brilliantly white collar beneath the shadowed face, the sharply prismatic background versus the soft curls of her hair, and the bright light to the left, juxtaposed with the disconcerting dark foreground at the right. Like her older sister, Henriette, and her brother, Andrew, Carolyn was a painter and the last of the family to live in the N. C. Wyeth House.

Henriette Wyeth (1907-1997)

Peter Hurd in a Landscape, 1972

Oil on canvas

Purchased with the Museum Volunteers'
Fund, 1997



In 1929, Henriette Wyeth married the artist Peter Hurd and they eventually moved to his native New Mexico to paint and raise a family. Known as a portraitist,

Henriette also painted landscapes and floral still lifes. Here she connects her husband to the Southwestern landscape that figured prominently in his art. She depicts him against the broad desert and low mountains, emphasizing his monumentality in the landscape. The play of cool and warm tones in his figure is repeated in the hills and unifies the painting. Known as an active, energetic man, Hurd's expression nonetheless exudes steadiness and self-assurance.

Peter Hurd (1904-1984)

Portrait of Mina Curtiss, 1939

Egg Tempera

Anonymous Gift, 1988



Her head set against the sky, her body set against the earth, the coloring of her face and clothing reflecting the landscape around her, Mina Curtiss (1896-1985) appears to be perfectly matched to her

Southwestern surroundings. Curtiss, however, was raised on the East Coast where she earned degrees from Smith College and Columbia University and worked for the cause of women's suffrage in Washington, DC.

By the time she sat for this portrait by Peter Hurd, she had been married (and widowed the following year), taught English at Smith College for more than a decade, and wrote scripts with Orson Welles and John Houseman. Her brother the ballet impresario Lincoln Kirstein was a friend of the Wyeth family and perhaps connected his sister to Hurd, who was then living in

New Mexico with his wife, the artist
Henriette Wyeth.

Jamie Wyeth (b. 1946)

Giuliana and the Sunflowers, 1987

Oil on board

Purchased with Museum funds, 1987



In this ominous painting, a woman and young girl walk through a stand of wilting sunflowers. Hand in hand, mother and daughter appear to have different reactions to the landscape. The mother, based on

local resident Laurie Haskell-Degrazia, glances cautiously around the scene as the heads of the sunflowers seem to bow to the duo. Holding tight to her mother's hand, Giuliana steps out ahead and pulls her mother along. The intensely glowing and striated clouds, a feature of several of Jamie Wyeth's landscapes, add to the air of mystery in this painting.

John W. McCoy (1910-1989)

Tom Clark, ca. 1950

Tempera on panel

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wyeth, 1970



Thomas "Tom" Clark (1876-1962) was a farmer and resident of Chadds Ford who worked on several local farms and as a landscaper on other properties in the area. From the 1950s until his death in 1962,

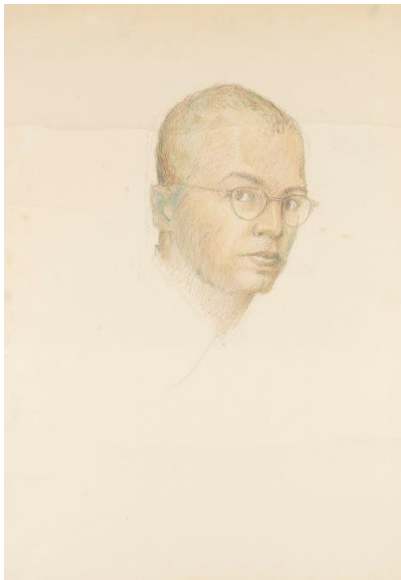
Clark was the subject of paintings by both John McCoy and his brother-in-law Andrew Wyeth. In this tranquil, pastoral view, Clark is depicted in front of Craigs Mill Run, not far from the Museum, where the McCoy residence was located. McCoy composed this portrait to suggest the affinities between Clark and the land on which he worked by visually rhyming Clark's shoulder and the bend in the creek. Clark's eyes are placed on the horizon line, and his cap continues the curve of the distant trees and hills.

George A. Weymouth (1936-2016)

Self-portrait, n. d.

Pencil and watercolor on paper

Gift of Wendell Fenton, 2008



In this self-portrait, the young artist George A. Weymouth captures a contemplative likeness. Executed in watercolor and pencil, the subtle coloring and shading of the portrait is delicately

balanced by the artist's generous use of negative space. Weymouth's intense gaze addresses the viewer directly, holding our attention by eliminating any background distractions. Mentored by his close friend Andrew Wyeth, Weymouth adopted tempera painting, which he learned from Wyeth and Peter Hurd. He married Wyeth's niece, the artist Anna Brelsford McCoy, in 1961.

Anna B. McCoy (b. 1940)

Portrait of Isabelle Reilly, ca. 1990

Watercolor and pencil on paper

Gift of Joe and Liz Reilly, 2021



Anna B. McCoy is the elder daughter of John W. McCoy and Ann Wyeth McCoy, and granddaughter of N. C. Wyeth. She studied art with her aunt Carolyn Wyeth as well as at Bennett College. Her portrait of Isabelle

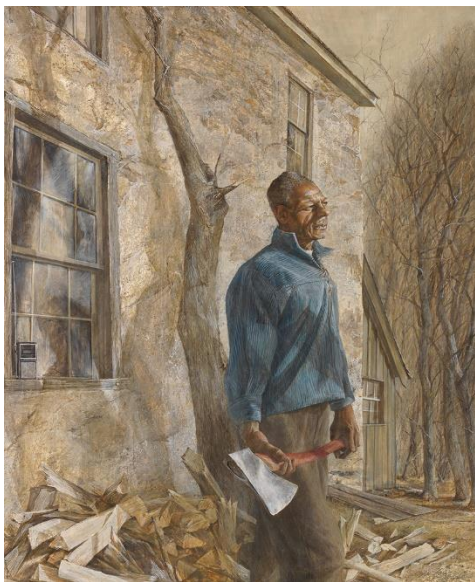
Reilly, a local resident and a long-time volunteer at the Brandywine River Museum of Art, captures the transitory effects of light on the sitter's detailed features and hair, while most of the rest of the composition is left unfinished. McCoy combines watercolor and pencil to create an intimate, informal portrait, communicating a sense of the sitter's intelligence and warmth.

George A. Weymouth (1936-2016)

Eleven O'Clock News, 1966

Egg tempera on Renaissance panel

Purchased with funds provided by Richard
M. Scaife, 1986



There is an atmosphere of unease and mystery, evoked by George A. Weymouth through the intense expression of the man at the center of this painting—Robert

Wright—and through the ominous shadows that fall across his sweater and against the wall and window. The title, *Eleven O’Clock News*, is the only hint at the subject matter, directing our attention to the small transistor radio on the windowsill. Wright appears to have heard some news that has caused him to stop his work suddenly and listen intently. Wright lived with his wife, Phyllis, in Wilmington, Delaware, and was a handyman for the artist and other members of the Weymouth family for many years.

N. C. Wyeth (1882-1945)

In a Dream I Meet General Washington,
1930

Oil on canvas

Purchased with funds given in memory of
George T. Weymouth, 1991



In 1930, while standing atop a scaffold
to complete a mural of George Washington
for a bank in Trenton, New Jersey, N.C.

Wyeth lost his balance and almost fell 30 feet to the marble floor. The scary incident resulted in a dream that haunted him until he committed his vision to canvas. In the dream, Washington stops, in the midst of the Battle of Brandywine (1777), to talk to the artist, palette in hand. British and Continental soldiers march across the canvas, and the young Andrew Wyeth appears in the lower left of the canvas, drawing the battle. It is an intensely personal painting, born of Wyeth's love of the historically rich Chadds Ford landscape.

George A. Weymouth (1936-2016)

August, 1974

Tempera on panel

Gift of George A. Weymouth and McCoy
duPont Weymouth in honor of Mr. and Mrs.
George T. Weymouth, 2017



In preparation for this work, George A.
Weymouth made extensive pencil drawings

and watercolor studies of native grasses and Queen Anne's lace around his farm located along the Brandywine. The final painting, completed in the studio, captures the hazy atmosphere of a late summer day. The painting's unusual perspective provides views of both the ground and the distant hills. Weymouth's sensitive attention to the natural landscape expresses his intense feelings for the land and his ongoing commitment to land preservation in the Brandywine Valley. Weymouth said of the land: "I live it. I love the feeling of the land – the atmosphere, the smell of it."