

Basic Detail Report



Menagerie

Date

early 20th century

Primary Maker

Dorothy Shakespeare

Medium

Pencil and watercolor

Description

This large watercolor mural was created by Dorothy Shakespeare, one of the few women artists associated with the Vorticists, an avant-garde movement that emerged in Britain just before World War I. Titled *Menagerie*, the artwork is a remarkable example of Shakespeare's subsequent artistic development. Trained as a landscape artist by her father and inspired by the simplified forms and colors of proto-Renaissance paintings in Italy, as well as the work of Vorticists Wyndham Lewis and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Shakespeare forged her own artistic path with elements drawn from all facets of her life. She is nearly always discussed in relation to her husband, the influential and infamous American poet Ezra Pound, Class of 1905. Their lives were intertwined starting with their early courtship in 1909, moving from London to Paris and finally to Italy in 1924. *Menagerie's* architectural elements and its light, warm palette suggest an Italian influence, while Shakespeare's longstanding affinity for feline subjects is evident and they frequently appear in her artwork. The mural's majestic birds and big cats are remarkably similar to those found in some of the studies that the artist made at the zoo in Rome.

Dimensions

Overall: 26 1/4 in. × 76 in. (66.7 × 193 cm)