

Basic Detail Report



Ethiopia

Date

1959

Primary Maker

David Park

Medium

Oil on canvas

Description

Ethiopia, painted toward the end of Park's life, belongs to a group of paintings that depict nude figures against

vaguely composed backgrounds. Because it includes both male and female figures and has a specific title, it is distinguished from similar works of the period that do not – like this – suggest a scenario-of-sorts.

Clearly, the drama unfolds around the girl at the far right, probably posed for by Park's model Flo Allen, who stands in commanding profile along the edge of the composition. Lavishly painted Ethiopia appears to have been inspired by a Renaissance fresco by Piero della Francesca depicting the meeting between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba in the presence of the queen's court, among whom is an Ethiopian girl. Park is the acknowledged leader of the post-World War II San Francisco Bay Area school of painting, which combined the radiant color and light of California with figurative imagery. The first of his group to abandon abstraction and return to figuration, Park preferred to paint from a subject rather than from his imagination. As his work matured, his style grew increasingly expressive, and his imagery was less and less informed by objective reality.

Dimensions

Sight: 51 1/2 x 60 in. (130.8 x 152.4 cm) Framed: 57 x 65 in. (144.8 x 165.1 cm)