

Basic Detail Report



Frankie and Johnny

Date

1936

Primary Maker

Thomas Hart Benton

Medium

lithograph

Description

The 20th century American muralist and painter, Thomas Hart Benton, illustrates, the song, "Frankie and Johnny." The folk ballad, which dates back as far as 1888 or earlier, has numerous versions. The song was published in 1912. The subject matter probably appealed to Benton because of his interest in portraying ordinary people and recreating scenes from American culture. In the lithograph, Benton depicts the scene of the ballad when Frankie shoots her man "cause he done her wrong." It is a crime caused by jealousy and unfaithfulness. Frankie has gone and found Johnny drinking with another woman. They argue and when Johnny returns to the other woman's table, Frankie shoots him three times.

Dimensions

Sight: 17 x 22 3/4 in. (43.2 x 57.8 cm) Sheet: 20 1/2 x 24 1/8 in. (52.1 x 61.3 cm)