

Basic Detail Report

**Title**

Abstraction (Military Symbols)

Artist

Marsden Hartley

Date

1914-5

Dimensions

Painting: 39 1/4 × 32 in. (99.7 × 81.3 cm) Frame: 42 × 34 3/8 × 1 5/8 in. (106.7 × 87.3 × 4.1 cm)

Medium

oil on canvas

Classifications

Paintings

Credit Line

Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey

Object number

1980.1013

Published References

Art in America, February, 1980, p. 24, color repr.

Haskell, Barbara, *Marsden Hartley*, New York City, Whitney Museum of American Art, 1980, no. 33, repr. p. 50, pl. 20.

Jones, Alan and Laura de Coppet, *The Art Dealers*, New York, 1984, p. 71, repr.

Ketner, Joseph D., *A Gallery of Modern Art at Washington University in St. Louis*, 1994, repr. p. 152.

The Toledo Museum of Art, *Toledo Treasures*, Toledo, 1995, p. 157, repr. (col.).

Greenough, Sarah, ed., *Modern Art and America: Alfred Stieglitz and His New York Galleries*, Washington, National Gallery of Art, 2001, repr. (col.) pl. 76, p. 243.

Toledo Museum of Art, *Toledo Museum of Art Masterworks*, Toledo, 2009, p. 302, repr. (col.).

Scholz, Dieter, ed., *Marsden Hartley: the German Paintings, 1913-1915*, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2014, repr. (col.) p. 92 (German edition: repr. on p. 93).

Ussing Seeberg, Mathias, et. al, *Marsden Hartley: The Earth is All I Know of Wonder* Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark , 2019, repr. (col.) p. 32, cat. no. 26.

Exhibition History

New York, New York City, Gallery 29, 1916

New York, New York City, Whitney Museum of American Art, *Marsden Hartley*, June 10, 1980-March 15, 1981.

New York, IBM Gallery of Science and Art, *American Paintings from the Toledo Museum of Art*, 1986.

New York, Washburn Gallery, *15th Anniversary*, 1986, no. 6.

Minneapolis, U. of Minn., Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum; Chicago, Terra Museum of American Art; Miami, The Art Museum at Florida International University; *Dictated by Life*, 1995, no. 1.

Washington DC, National Gallery of Art, *Modern Art and America: Alfred Stieglitz and His New York Galleries* , Jan. 28-Apr. 22, 2001.

Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *Marsden Hartley: the German Paintings, 1913-1915*, Aug. 3–Nov. 30, 2014.

Denmark, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, *Marsden Hartley*, September 19, 2019-January 19, 2020.

Comparative References

See also Robinson, William H., "Marsden Hartley's *Military*," *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*, vol. 76, no. 1, Jan. 1989, pp. 2-26.

Collections

Paintings

Label Text

Living in Berlin in 1913–15, American artist Marsden Hartley experienced the militaristic pageantry and spectacle of the outbreak of World War I, aspects for which he claimed to have a childish wonderment. However, he was also confronted with the sober reality of war when his 24-year-old love, Prussian lieutenant Karl Von Freyburg, died in battle in 1914, and a dear friend, Von Freyburg's cousin, was seriously wounded. *Abstraction (Military Symbols)* is part of a 14-painting series that Hartley produced in 1914–15 dedicated to these men. He expressed his emotions in the paintings by using a personal

vocabulary of symbols. Hartley simplifies and distorts the banners, flags, and emblems to create powerful, decorative patterns and dynamic, pulsating rhythms that convey his intense response to such military displays.

On View

Toledo Museum of Art (2445 Monroe Street), Gallery, 03