

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



The White Horse

John Constable (British, 1776–1837)

Date 1819

Medium Oil on canvas

Dimensions 51 3/4 × 74 1/8 in. (131.4 × 188.3 cm)

Credit Line Purchased by The Frick Collection, 1943

Accession Number 1943.1.147

Currently On View

First Floor, Room 16, East Gallery

Commentary The painting depicts a tow-horse being ferried across the river Stour in Suffolk, just below Flatford Lock at a point where the tow-path switched banks. Constable, who described the scene as "as placid representation of a serene, grey morning, summer," went on in later years to comment: "There are generally in the life of an artist perhaps one, two or three pictures, on which hang more than usual interest-- this is mine." The painting was well received when it was shown at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1819, and it was purchased by Constable's friend Archdeacon John Fisher. Constable bought back the painting in 1829 and kept it the rest of his life. There is a full-scale oil sketch for The White Horse in the National Gallery of Art, Washington. Source: Art in The Frick Collection: Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative Arts, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996.

Collection History Archdeacon Fisher, purchased from the artist in 1819 for £100. Bought back by Constable in 1830. Constable sale May 15-16, 1838, London, Lot 77, Sold for £157 10s to Morton. L. Archer Burton, Woodlands, Hampshire. Burton Archer-Burton sale, March 31, 1855, Christie's, Lot 99, sold for £630 to Hodgson. Richard Hemming, London. His sale, April 28, 1894, Christie's, Lot 84, sold for £6,510 to Agnew. J. Pierpont Morgan (1894). Knoedler, Frick, 1943. Source: Paintings in The Frick Collection: American, British, Dutch, Flemish and German. Volume I. New York: The Frick Collection, 1968.