Basic Detail Report

The Declaration of the American President

Primary Maker
William Walton

Medium
Gouache on paper

Dimensions
54.6 x 75 cm

Description

William Walton (1909-1994), who painted The Declaration of the American President, worked as a journalist, including for Time and Life magazines, before becoming a fulltime painter. He was a friend of John F. Kennedy and worked on his presidential campaign in 1960. Kennedy appointed him chair of the U.S. Commission on Fine Arts in 1963. This painting was donated by the artist Derek Hill in memory of President Kennedy in 1964, the year following his assassination. While Walton's brushwork was influenced by abstract expressionism, he retains figurative elements. In this work the strong vertical lines of the crowd of men in top-hats are accentuated by the red, white and blue bands, evocative of the American flag.