



Blast Furnace

Date

1946

Primary Maker

Edmund Lewandowski

Medium

Oil on Masonite

Description

This Precisionist painting depicts the upper portion of a steel mill's blast furnace. It was probably inspired by mills Edmund Lewandowski had seen in various Rust Belt cities in Michigan, Indiana, and his home state of Wisconsin; he executed a number of paintings of the subject. Precisionism was an American art movement that celebrated industrial and architectural subjects in a distilled, geometric, hard-edged style. "My overwhelming desire as an artist," Lewandowski stated, "had been to record the beauty of man-made objects and the energy of American industry on canvas." In 1946, after World War II, Lewandowski returned to Milwaukee following his release from military service and began to paint again after a number of years' hiatus. Soon after its creation,

Blast Furnace was included in an exhibition entitled "Six Artists out of Uniform" at the well-known Downtown Gallery in Manhattan, which also included the work of Lewandowski's fellow Precisionist artist Ralston Crawford. Stephen E. Kelly, Class of 1940, purchased Blast Furnace from the Downtown Gallery in September 1946, perhaps after seeing it exhibited. Kelly was a publisher of McCall's magazine and a president of the Hamilton College Alumni Council. He donated the painting to the College in 1963 to augment the holdings of the recently established Root Art Center. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS, 2017) Painting of industrial complex furnace, mostly browns, grays, and silvers.

Dimensions

Overall: 30 × 24 in. (76.2 × 61 cm) Frame: 34 1/2 × 28 3/8 × 1 3/4 in. (87.6 × 72.1 × 4.4 cm)