

Basic Detail Report



Mural Design for Portico at the Empire Exhibition

Date

1924

Primary Maker

Frank Charles Medworth RBA

Medium

Oil on canvas

Description

Oil painting on canvas design for a large mural planned for the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, 1924. This large painted canvas is over 4 metres long and almost 2 metres high. It is a design for a mural intended for the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley in 1924. Medworth's long, horizontal canvas depicts men labouring at a ship building yard, most likely in the Surrey Docks at Rotherhithe, Southwark. The work being executed is called framing - the process of constructing the skeletal structure of a ship or barge. Medworth's powerful, almost symmetrical composition is reminiscent of renaissance Christian imagery and elevates the humble shipbuilder to a position of social and industrial reverence. Ship building was perhaps the single major industry in Rotherhithe for over four centuries, from the Elizabethan era until the early twentieth century. A number of commercial docks continued to operate until their closure during the 1970s. Because of the nature of the subject depicted, it is likely that the mural was destined for a portico or pavilion in the Palace of Engineering, a significant part to the British Empire exhibition. It is currently unknown whether this exact design was accepted. Benjamin Angwin - October 2014

Dimensions

Object/Work: 414 x 179 mm