

Basic Detail Report



Psyche Gathering the Fleece of the Rams of the Sun

Date

1752

Primary Maker

Charles-Joseph Natoire

Medium

Oil on canvas

Description

This is an oil on canvas painting depicting Psyche gathering the fleece for Venus, or Psyche gathering the fleece of the Rams of the Sun. The scene represents an episode from Jean de La Fontaine's 1669 pastoral novel, *The Loves of Cupid and Psyche*. The center foreground is Psyche as a shepherdess in flowing and somewhat rumpled garments collecting wool from the brambles. Collecting the wool, or fleece of the Ram of the Sun, is seen as nearly impossible, and it is the second task Venus has asked Psyche to complete to avoid destruction. The background is pastoral: clouds, hills, trees, shepherds and rams fill the canvas. Two swans, who helped Psyche across the river, face each other in the middle of the canvas. On the left, a nymph in billowing clothes distracts the shepherd while Psyche gathers the wool. The left foreground shows a detail of a green plant. In the foreground at right, a ram peers out at the face of the viewer.

Dimensions

Overall, Support: 37 1/2 x 50 1/2 in. (95.3 x 128.3 cm) Overall, Frame: 49 1/4 x 61 1/4 in. (125.1 x 155.6 cm)