

Basic Detail Report



A Family in Dusk Bay, New Zealand

Date

1784-1786

Primary Maker

Artist Unknown

Medium

engraving

Description

Cook landed at Dusky Sound, New Zealand in March of 1773 after months of sailing throughout the Antarctic Circle during which his two ships, the Resolution and the Discovery, had become separated and most of his crew had begun to experience the effects of scurvy. He had visited New Zealand during his first voyage, but had been met with significant hostility and resistance from the native Maori. At Dusky Sound, however, Cook encountered a small Maori family, likely members of the nomadic Ngati Mamoe tribe, who were more accepting of the Europeans. Hodges sketched the Maori family at Dusky Sound and, upon his return to England, painted additional scenes depicting Maori figures against sublime, tropical landscapes and sunsets. In Hogg's engraving, a Maori man sits in the foreground to the right while women and children lounge behind him in their verdant natural surroundings. Some attention has been paid to ethnographic detail in the spear the man holds and the club attached to his belt, but his facial features are more European, as are those of the women and children. With their dreamy expressions and classical figures, the Maori family epitomizes the romantic view of the noble savage and a neoclassical interest in figural simplicity and grace.

Dimensions

Sheet: 9 3/4 x 14 1/4 in. (24.8 x 36.2 cm)