

Jean Dufy

1888-1964

Place de la Concorde

23 x 28 cm

Jean Dufy was born in Le Havre in 1888, the seventh of eleven children. His father was an accountant in a metallurgy company as well as a talented amateur musician. We have very few visual and artistic tracks of Jean's childhood in Le Havre, of his job as an itinerant clerk for an overseas import business, or of his stint as secretary on the transatlantic liner "La Savoie", which linked Le Havre to New York.



It was nonetheless during this period that the painter cultivated his artistic sensibility by strolling around the Le Havre port and reading Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Rimbaud. He then discovered Matisse, Derain, Marquet, and Picasso at the 1906 Le Havre exposition. Matisse's "Fenêtre ouverte à Collioure", with its dazzling light and violent, boisterous colors, showed Jean Dufy his true calling.

After his military service from 1910 to 1912, Jean moved to Paris and grew acquainted with Derain, Braque, Picasso, and Apollinaire. In his first watercolors, which were shown at the Berthe Weill gallery in 1914, muted tones and somber browns, blues, and reds mingle with the hatching technique he inherited from Cézanne by way of his brother Raoul Dufy.