



ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

1941, OIL ON CANVAS

Louis Bouche's mural series, *Activities of the Department of Justice*, illustrates how the principles of law and justice are upheld by the Department. While the social benefits of the Department's functions are portrayed, the negative aspects of society that require the involvement of the Department are also represented.

Peaceful Activities of the Department of Justice draws on representations of economics, technology, and the law to show the Department's positive influence on contemporary American life. The panel's vignettes refer to laws established during the late 1800s and early 1900s: the Radio Act (1927), the Safety Appliance Act (1893), the National Banking Act (1864), the Pure Food and Drug Act (1906), and the Meat Inspection Act (1906).

In contrast, *Violent Activities of the Department of Justice* is comprised of scenes illustrating the need for the enforcement of justice, such as crimes on Indian reservations and racketeering. To further juxtapose the varied activities of the Department, Bouche paired a depiction of the peaceful arrival of an immigrant family with the arrest of a criminal.

Secondary panels link the principles of law and justice with symbols of education and knowledge, further expounding on the mural series' overall theme of establishing and maintaining a just society.

LOUIS BOUCHE

Louis Bouche (1896–1969) was born in New York City, but spent much of his adolescence in Paris, where he began his formal training in art. Upon returning to New York in 1915, Bouche spent a year studying at the Art Students League. Bouche's work can be found in the collections of a number of museums, including the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, both in New York City, as well as in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. Bouche also completed murals for the U.S. Department of the Interior, the U.S. Post Office in Ellenville, New York, and the Pennsylvania Railroad.

