

# VILHELM HAMMERSHØI

1864–1916

## 132. *Interior with a Woman Standing*

(*Interiør med stående kvinde*)

Oil on canvas, 26½ x 21½ in. (67.5 x 54.3 cm)

PROVENANCE: Winkel & Magnussen 1918; Bukowski's, Stockholm, Auction 383, 1969, lot 164; Christie's, London 29.3.1990, lot 83; Codan Insurance; Sotheby's London, The Scandinavian Sale, June 2005, lot 167, ill.

EXHIBITED: Scandinavia House, New York, *Danish Paintings from the Golden Age to the Modern Breakthrough, Selections from the Collection of Ambassador John L. Loeb Jr.*, 2013, no. 18.

LITERATURE: Sophus Michaëlis and Alfred Bramsen: *Vilhelm Hammershøi, Kunstneren og hans Værk*, Copenhagen, 1918, no. 358 (described as *Stue*); Robert Egevang (ed.), *Historiske huse på Christianshavn*, Copenhagen, 1993; Susanne Meyer-Abich, *Vilhelm Hammershøi. Das malerische Werk*, Inauguraldissertation, Ruhr-Universität, Bochum, 1995, no. 362; on the motif: Lena Boëthius, Görel Cavalli-Björkman (eds.), *Vilhelm Hammershøi*, Göteborgs konstmuseum, 1999, no. 52; Bente Scavenius and Jens Linde: *Hammerhøis København*, Copenhagen, 2003, p. 94.

After living for some years in Bredgade, the Hammershøi family moved back to Strandgade in the Christianshavn district of Copenhagen, this time to no. 25 on the west side of the street, opposite his former apartment at no. 30. This big house was built in 1738–39 as offices and meeting rooms for Asiatick Kompagni (a trading company doing business with Asia, mostly India and China), and at the end of the 1970s it was restored for the use of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its late baroque facade with dark red bricks and sandstone ornamentation, and its huge mansard roof, are well known from several paintings by Hammershøi from about 1902 (e.g., in Statens Museum for Kunst). The tall windows in the *bel étage* (main floor) where Hammershøi and Ida lived, are characteristically divided in the same way as those on the courtyard side in the old apartment at no. 30. This is seen in the painting *The Four Rooms* from 1914 (Ordrupgaard Collection). In the new apartment the height of the rooms from floor to ceiling was higher, and the light effects thus produced inspired the artist.

During the few years Hammershøi still had left, he painted a series of interiors from this beautiful apartment. This painting shows two rooms linked by a jib door.<sup>1</sup> In the farthest room we can see a closed door, which is beautifully molded, as are the doorframe and the low dadoes in the rooms. In the window niche in the next room, Ida is standing close to a small table, with her back to us. The walls are gray and are adorned with just one small framed picture in each of the rooms. We see only the edge of the jib door, which takes up as little room as possible in this painting.

We know from other Strandgade 25 paintings that there were in reality four rooms opening one upon the other when viewed from where the artist had placed his easel. An example is the Ordrupgaard Collection's *The Four Rooms* from 1914, in which all the doors are open and the old floors, with the broad floorboards, fill much of the painting. Here in the nearest room we see a washstand and mirror, and in the next one a Windsor chair, also familiar from other paintings.

The painting in the Loeb collection is thus a typical example of Hammershøi's interiors, where he varies his simple motifs by changing the furnishings, including the pictures hanging there, and by showing us a sometimes narrow and sometimes broad section of the reality of his home. In the exhibition catalogue



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from Gothenburg 1999, Görel Cavalli-Björkman describes how, during his final years, Hammershøi used a drier color so that the white appears more chalklike than formerly, giving the grayscale “a new resonance” (p. 146).

E.F.

<sup>1</sup>A door made flush with the wall, without moldings.