

L. A. RING

1854–1933

103. *By the Village Pond at Baldersbrønde*, 1911

(*Ved gadekæret i Baldersbrønde*)

Oil on canvas, 19²/₃ x 24³/₄ in. (50 x 63 cm)

Signed and dated lower right: L.A. Ring 1911

PROVENANCE: Provst J.S. Therschilsen (1911); Bruun Rasmussen, Auction 558, 1991, lot 75, ill. p. 76.

EXHIBITED: Charlottenborg, 1911, no. 410; Malmø, Sweden, *The Baltic Exhibition*, 1914, no. 2533; Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, *Danish Paintings of the Nineteenth Century from the Collection of Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr.*, 1994, no. 23.

LITERATURE: H. Chr. Christensen, *Fortegnelse over Malerier og Studier af L.A. Ring 1880–1910*, 1910 (Tillæg 1922) no. 678; Peter Hertz, *Maleren L.A. Ring*, Copenhagen 1934, p. 349, ill. (described as: *Ved Gadekæret, Husene spejler sig, Baldersbrønde*); Peter Nisbet, *Danish Paintings of the Nineteenth Century from the Collection of Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr.*, Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1994.

Twenty-four years have passed since the artist painted what must be assumed to be a symbol of himself as a boy on his way towards his roots in the village of Ring (Loeb collection, *Road with Boy*). Now his brother and mother are both dead; his paintings are selling; he has travelled in France and Italy, and since 1896 he has been happily married and become the father of three children.

But restlessness and melancholy still mark him and often make an impression on his work. He sees and paints the world around him with photographic precision and almost corrosive clarity, along with an idiosyncratic, apparently clumsy compositional technique that almost always turns out to add an extra enigmatic dimension to his works.

An example is this street scene from the village of Baldersbrønde near Hedehusene to the west of Copenhagen, where he moved with his family in 1902. It is an icy cold day in early spring. There is no sign of any living being. The viewer's gaze is drawn centrifugally into the picture via the muddy road, straight behind the thatched, whitewashed farm building and is then taken diagonally upwards towards the clouds. The light is glaring; a sapphire sky is reflected in the village pond and takes the farm with it.

S.L.