

## JULIUS EXNER

1825–1910

### 25. *Schoolgirl Reading*, 1901

(*Læsende skolepige*)

Oil on canvas, 15 x 18½ in. (38 x 47 cm)

Signed and dated lower right: Exner 1901

PROVENANCE: The artist's estate auction, Charlottenborg 1911, lot 44; Hansen, Vejle (1911); proprietær (large landowner) Erik Juhl, Dalbygaard (1944–45); Bruun Rasmussen, Auction 552, 1991, lot 410, ill. (described as: *Interiør med lille pige der læser med ryggen vendt mod vinduet*).

EXHIBITED: Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, *Danish Paintings of the Nineteenth Century from the Collection of Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr.*, 1994, no. 5.

LITERATURE: Dorde Hansen in: *Kunst i Privat Eje III*. 1944–45, p. 345 (discussed without indication of dimensions and without illustration); Peter Nisbet, *Danish Paintings of the Nineteenth Century, from the Collection of Ambassador John Loeb, Jr.*, Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1994, p. 10.

Julius Exner is best known for his detailed anecdotal portrayals, often of large numbers of farmers and fishermen in their local costume on the island of Amager to the east of Copenhagen and the small island of Fanø in the North Sea close to the border with Germany. However, as this painting shows, he also mastered delicate studies of individual figures engrossed in their everyday work. The model seems to be the young girl Gudrun, who posed for the portrait from 1905, also in the Loeb collection.

Clear, gentle light from outside the tall window framed with curtains, falls on green potted plants, envelops the tiny figure of a girl, caresses her shiny brown hair and brings out the gilding on the furniture and mouldings.

We are looking at a wealthy middle-class home—perhaps the artist's own. The inspiration from Netherlandish genre painting is plain to see.

S.L.