

LUDVIG FIND

1869–1945

29. *The New Hat*, 1907

(*Den ny hat*)

Oil on canvas, 42½ x 41¾ in. (108 x 106 cm)

Signed and dated lower left: Find 07

PROVENANCE: Niels Lindeskov Hansens Kunstsamlinger; Bruun Rasmussen, Vejle, Auction 59, 1998, lot 44, ill. p. 28 (described as: *Interiør med syende kvinde*).

EXHIBITED: Den Frie Udstilling 1907, Tillæg, no. 224

LITERATURE: Ernst Goldschmidt, *Finds nye Portræt på Den frie Udstilling*, Politiken 20.04. 1907; Merete Bodelsen, *Maleren Ludvig Find*, Copenhagen 1943, p. 49; Elof Riesebye, *Ludvig Find*, in: *Samleren*, Copenhagen 1943, p. 153.

The woman sewing is presumably Ludvig Find's wife, Maren Kirstine (Kirsten), née Clausen, who often sat for him. However, it was not the artist's intention merely to create a portrait. Whereas he had previously worked in a symbolist metaphor in which an involved and decorative play of lines formed part of an integral part of the picture and gave it an extra dimension, here he has been deeply concerned to liberate the colour from the other devices and make it shine like a jewel. The motif does not have a serious underlying meaning. There is no action, let alone an anecdote; it is purely and simply a picture. To produce such works, Find almost always used his own relatives as his models and focused on everyday life in the home. In doing so, he had found his true means of expression.

The inspiration came from Paris, first from the French Impressionists and then the Neo-Impressionists like Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947) and Édouard Vuillard (1868–1940) and from the Japanese woodcuts whose expressive lines appealed to the young Danish artist more than Impressionism's dissolution of contours. In December 1906, Find held a one-man exhibition at Winkel & Magnussen's in which his colourful, French-inspired paintings occasioned surprise but brought success because their effect was one of "festive intensity" as one critic put it.

When the Loeb collection's woman sewing was exhibited in the Free Exhibition (Den Frie Udstilling) the following spring under the title of *Den ny Hat* (*The New Hat*), it was this very painting that was the subject of an independent and very laudatory article in the newspaper *Politiken* by the young artist Ernst Goldschmidt, who had shortly before returned home from a time studying in Paris.

Under the title of "Find's New Portrait" the article began, "For its second hanging, Den Frie Udstilling (The Free Exhibition) has received a new painting by Find, portraying a lady decorating her hat. It is a picture which not only is the best Find has yet painted, but it is in general one of the best things the exhibition has produced this year. . . . A picture such as Find's latest portrait would attract attention anywhere in a major spring exhibition, in any city, even in Paris. . . . Find's picture is radiant with the colours of spring. There is a freshness and grace in the colouring, and the drawing is vibrant and poised. There is an air of pure youth about it. It unites graceful French suppleness and Danish sincérité. . . ." (*Politiken*, 20.04.1907).

S.L.