

## KURT TRAMPEDACH

1943–2013

### 119. *Jonas, the Artist's Son*, 1982

(*Jonas, kunstnerens søn*)

Watercolor, 59½ x 49½ in. (151 x 126 cm)

Signed and dated on right side: Trampedach 82

PROVENANCE: Galerie Asbæk, Copenhagen, 1983.

EXHIBITED: The American Scandinavian Society of New York at Privatbanken Gallery, *Selections of Contemporary Danish Art*, 1989, no. 1.

Almost the whole of Kurt Trampedach's oeuvre is based on the presentation of figures, usually of an autobiographical nature. Throughout his life he has used his own body and his own face as the starting point for his art, and at a very early stage in his production two elements emerged in his creative idiom that constantly reappear in his works: one is the withdrawn Giacometti-inspired figure striding across the surface of the picture from edge to edge as though on his way away from the framed universe; the second is the reluctance of the figures portrayed to remain where they have been placed, an element in their psyches that makes them rebel by—for instance—extending a hand out across the edge of the picture. Or they might materialize in groups as living beings dressed in ordinary clothes and surrounded by furniture and everyday implements of reality. Or by virtue of pastose layers of plaster and paint, they might be leaning imploringly from the walls as though in an attempt to liberate themselves from the material of which they are made.

Something similar is found in this poetic pictorial account of Jonas, the artist's son, which rather than being only a portrait of a delicate, long-haired boy in jeans and sneakers may possibly also be the father's recollection of himself as a child, still with the dreams and indeterminate longings of childhood intact. This large, beautiful watercolor is provided with a painted frame on either side and at the top, but the bottom is open. The boy is seen in profile, as are many of Trampedach's earlier walking figures, but he is standing quite still—almost silhouetted against a light background that is both uniformly flat and also rather like a piece of thin material that barely hides the view of an infinite universe.

The boy is on the borderline between the space of the picture and reality, possibly mature enough to fly, ready to plunge into the unknown but standing hesitantly with hands in his sweater pockets, jacket thrust out in back, almost like the wings of a fledgling bird. There is something both demonic and innocent about the little chap, and perhaps also something hopeful—for he has his life before him.

S.L.