

## BERTHA WEGMANN

1847–1926

### 125. *Interior with a Bunch of Wildflowers, Tyrol, c. 1882*

(*Interiør med en markbuket, Tyrol*)

Oil on canvas, 35<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 41<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> in. (91 x 105 cm)

PROVENANCE: Kunsthallen, Auction 29.4.1947, lot 34, ill. p. 12; Bruun Rasmussen, Auction 679, 2000, lot 285, 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. 36.

The motif is reminiscent of one of the artist's main works, *Fra en kunstners kvistkammer* (*From an Artist's Attic Room*), from 1882, and the dating must be assumed to be close to that. Here, too, there is great play on the contrast between the interior and the cheering view out toward the open countryside. The radiant, fresh bunch of flowers is likewise similar to the one found in the portrait of the painter Jeanna Bauck, dated Paris 1881 (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm). So we must assume that it was painted during the happy period that Bertha Wegmann spent in France becoming acquainted with the new ideas in painting.

With the arrangement of letters, the photograph, the beautiful bunch of wildflowers, and the glass of milk, the artist tells us at once about the place and the person who has settled in the room, which must be Bertha Wegmann herself, as one of the letters on the table clearly bears her name on the envelope. The interior is consequently not merely a portrayal of reality but a story of absence, about her own personage. As a result of her training over many years, Bertha Wegmann was naturally familiar with older European painting. The emblematic still life was especially popular in 17th-century Netherlandish painting, and this work can be interpreted as a modern variant.

Bertha Wegmann's oeuvre has still been so little researched that it is impossible to identify this painting in exhibitions or auction catalogues, although it bears a label from the Charlottenborg exhibition.

E.F.