

ANNA ANCHER

1859–1935

149. *Harvest Girl (probably 1903)*

(*Høstpige*)

Oil on canvas. 31¾ x 21 in. (83 x 55 cm)

Signed lower right: A. Ancher 1911.

PROVENANCE: Anton Hansen Auction 179, november 3rd 1931, lot 76, ill.; Anton Hansen Auction 195, November 29th 1932, lot 23; Bruun Rasmussen Vejle Auction 79, November 2001, lot 1045, ill.; Bruun Rasmussen Vejle Auction 111, August 2007, lot 10, ill.; Bruun Rasmussen Auction 905, November 30th 2021, lot 12, ill.; Bruun Rasmussen Auction 906, March 1st 2022, lot 49, ill.

EXHIBITED: *Skagens Kunstudstilling* 1907, no. 5 (described as: *En Høstpige, Brystbillede*); *Foraarsudstillingen*, Charlottenborg 1913, no. 8 (described as: *En Høstpige*); *Skagens Kunstudstilling* 1914, no. 66 (described as: *En Høstpige*); *Skagen i Herning*, Herning Kongrescenter 2002, no. 12

The grounds around the city of Skagen consist almost entirely of sand, but a few areas existed where grain could be grown. Between 1901 and 1905, Anna Ancher painted a series of motifs depicting harvest workers wandering in the corn fields. One of the earliest two oil sketches show five field workers walking towards the right. The other one is a study of a single harvest girl in almost full figure, painted in backlight in tall, bright sunshine (Skagens Museum). It is dated 1901 and must be a preparatory sketch for the fairly large painting *In the time of the Harvest* with three field workers, also dating from 1901, but set in grey weather. That was shown at the Charlottenborg-exhibition in 1909 and was purchased by Maribo Museum, now known as Art Museum Fuglsang.

In 1903 and 1905, Anna resumed working with this motif, this time with the field workers walking towards the left. A half-figure study of a harvest girl, dressed in blue and with a white scarf with small red flowers around her head, is set in bright summer sun. It is dated 1903 and was probably a gift to the royal couple King Christian X and Queen Alexandrine, who kept the painting in their summer residence, Klitgaarden in Skagen, after they took up residence there in 1914. That motif makes a comeback in the harvest painting from 1905 where you see three harvest workers, a man and two women, in the same light as in the aforementioned study. In the foreground, the crops shine golden and in the blue sky, gray-white clouds can be seen. A series of studies of the grain field are presumed to be from the same period, 1901-1905.

Anna painted the same harvest girl in the same position in two other paintings, this time wearing a red blouse. She carries a white scarf in the smallest one, hanging in the south parlor in Ancher's House Museum. This work is by all accounts the one Anna refers to as "Johanne as harvest girl" in a letter from 1906, where the painting was framed. The largest one, now in The Loeb Collection, measures 31.8 inches in height and shows more of the girl than in the other works. She carries a white apron and has the white scarf with the small red flowers around her head. The strange thing is, that it is signed and dated 1911 and was not shown at Charlottenborg before 1913. The three paintings are so similar that it is impossible that the same girl, after eight years, should be so unchanged and wear the exact same scarf. There can hardly be any other explanation than in 1913, the artist choose to exhibit an older work. After 1900 it happened still more often that the dating of the artist is not consistent with the year the painting was actually done.

E.F.



Harvest Girl in Red Blouse (Høstpige i rød bluse (probably 1903).
Oil on canvas mounted on board. 16 x 9¼ in.
(31 x 24 cm). Anchers Hus, Skagens Kunstmuseer



Harvest Girl in Blue Blouse (Høstpige i blå bluse). 1903.
Oil on canvas. 16 x 11 in. (42 x 29 cm)