

J. L. JENSEN  
1800–1856

57. *Strawberries and Flowers*, 1841

(*Jordbær og roser*)

Oil on panel, 12 x 15 in. (30.4 x 38 cm)

Signed lower right: I.L. Jensen 1841

PROVENANCE: Queen Caroline Amalie; the queen's estate auction in Amalienborg, 24 April 1882, lot 84 (described as *En Skaal med Jordbær og en Bouket Roser*); Miss. F. Treschow (1882); Viola Hedemann; Helge Harth.

It might be imagined that this quite small picture was commissioned as a present from a suitor. There is in a glass vase a bouquet combining pink cabbage roses, lilies of the valley, and auriculas, radiating the gentleness that is so characteristic of Jensen. The flat dish of strawberries on fresh leaves provides a fine dissonance in color. The strawberries, like the rose, represent the desire for love, whereas the lily of the valley and the auricula both symbolize childish innocence and a receptive mind.

A painting of the same nature, bearing the same date, and similarly painted on board, was also sold in the auction of the dowager Queen Caroline Amalie's effects. It bore the title *A Bowl of Strawberries and a Bouquet of Roses*, 1841. The measurements, however, are not the same (8¾ x 12 inches or c. 22,3 x 30 cm). The picture similar to that in the Loeb collection was also sold to Miss F. Treschow. Jensen exhibited four fruit and flower pieces at Charlottenborg in 1841. In 1842, in a somewhat larger picture, Jensen painted strawberries alone, placed in a Greek kylix.

In 1846, one of the most important Copenhagen daily newspapers, *Flyve Posten*, contained the following comment on Jensen: "This artist excels in verisimilitude and brilliance in his colors, an elegant and skilled use of the brush, and taste in combining and arranging the objects portrayed; indeed Jensen even knows how to introduce poetry into this realm."

M. T.

*The following flowers and fruits can be seen in the painting:*

*Rosa centifolia*, "Major" L. pre-1563, "cabbage rose"; *Convallaria majalis*, "Lily of the valley"; blue, five-petaled flowers (myosotis?) (forget-me-not?); *Primula hybrida*, "auricula"; *Fragaria hybrida*, "Strawberry."

T. T.