



Inv. no. B 319

VILHELM HAMMERSHØI (1864–1916)  
NUDE FEMALE MODEL, 1910  
OIL ON CANVAS

172 X 96.5 CM

In the period 1909 to 1910, Vilhelm Hammershøi created two monumental nudes, one being *Standing Female Nude*<sup>1</sup>, the other *Nude Female Model*. These are some of the few occasions on which he has painted a life-sized, free-standing, naked female figure, placing her in a space with a very different feel than the private living rooms at Strandgade 30. Even though several factors are believed to have influenced genesis of the works,<sup>2</sup> it is difficult to provide a definitive, all-encompassing explanation for the two nudes' subject matter, overall feel and the fact that the artist kept both until his death.

It is particularly noteworthy that *Nude Female Model* is very carefully finished. Hammershøi has used his distinctive greyscale palette, and the many small brushstrokes create a richly varied surface that makes the painting, especially the background, pulsate with life.

The female body is not depicted in the sensuous way found in

Hammershøi's early nudes.<sup>3</sup> Quite the contrary. Hammershøi has created an oddly dispassionate, closely observing, sober depiction of a female body that is brightly illuminated and pulled to the front of the picture plane. It is not the nudity as such, but rather the frontality, the life-size format and the far from gentle representation of the body that makes the work seem intimidating in its severe objectivity.

Hammershøi died at the age of 51 in 1916. In October that same year, an auction of his estate was held, including twenty-five paintings. Here, C.L. David acquired *Nude Female Model*, which was the first work by Hammershøi added to David's collection of Danish Early Modern Art, which now numbers fourteen works by the artist.

<sup>1</sup> For example Vilhelm Hammershøi, *Nude Female Model*, 1883, SMK, inv.no. KMS8612 and Vilhelm Hammershøi, *Seated Female Nude*, 1889, SMK, inv.no. KMS3766.

<sup>2</sup> See Poul Vad: *Hammershøi. Værk og liv*, Copenhagen 2003, 5th ed., pp. 338–347.

<sup>3</sup> Vilhelm Hammershøi, *Standing Female Nude*, 1909-10, SMK, inv.no. KMS3359.

Published in:

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Erik Zahle: "Billedkunst" in *C.L. Davids Samling. Nogle Studier*, [1], København 1948, pp. 207, 255-256;  
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