



Inv. no. B 312

VILHELM HAMMERSHØI (1864–1916)
SITTING ROOM. STUDY IN SUNLIGHT, 1906
OIL ON CANVAS

55 X 47 CM

The Copenhagen district of Christianshavn proved to be of great importance for Vilhelm Hammershøi's artistic development: it was here that interior scenes became the central motif in his art, and here he created some of his most enduringly famous works.

Hammershøi got to live at two different addresses in Christianshavn: at Strandgade 30 from 1898 to 1908 and at Strandgade 25 in the years 1913 to 1916. The David Collection contains exclusively works depicting views from Strandgade 30 - this work as well as B 307 and B 309.

Sitting Room. Study in Sunlight was painted in one of the smaller living rooms in the northeast wing of Hammershøi's flat. The tall, narrow window faces the courtyard beyond, and the closed door leads out to the exterior gallery that connected the two wings of the house. Hammershøi has carefully staged his chosen subject, emptying the

room of furniture and objects and of any human presence. Everything has been pared away, leaving the room in its clearest, purest form and allowing the artist to direct his attention to what interests him: the light falling in through the window, creating oscillating optic effects on the floor, walls, panelling and door.

The window is a recurring motif in nineteenth-century Northern European art, acting as a metaphor for, among other things, a yearning to see other places and for thresholds between outside and inside, the near and the faraway. In *Sitting Room. Study in Sunlight*, the window is shut, and it seems impossible to open, as Hammershøi has omitted to paint in any fittings. The window also does not offer any clear view of a world outside; everything is blurred and indefinable.

Published in:

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