



Inv. no. B 325

PETER HANSEN (1868–1928)  
NURSING MOTHER, 1907  
OIL ON CANVAS

44 X 31 CM

Peter Hansen has captured an intimate moment in which a mother is engrossed in nursing her infant child, who is lying on her lap. The mother's eyes are lowered, her attention focused entirely on the baby, which in turn has its eyes closed, helping the breastfeeding along with one hand. The image exudes a sense of gentle intimacy and safety, and one clearly feels the special bonding experience between mother and child during nursing.

The nursing mother is Peter Hansen's wife, Elise Neckelmann (1862–1948). She met Peter Hansen in 1889 when he was commissioned to paint the portraits of her two daughters, Elisabeth and Marie.<sup>1</sup> Elise was married at the time but fell in love with the artist, who was six years her junior. After a difficult divorce, Elise and Peter Hansen got married in October 1898. The couple moved to Faaborg, and together they had two daughters, Elena Italia (nicknamed Bimse) and Anna Margrethe (known as Grete). It is the latter daughter

who is portrayed as an infant in *Nursing Mother*.

Peter Hansen regularly portrayed his family, often in situations or moments where he clearly proclaims his happiness or the great love he held for his wife and the four daughters. As such, *Nursing Mother* not only describes an intimate situation between mother and child. It also shows an artist observing his family with great affection, as husband and father.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Hansen, *Portraits of Two Little Girls. The Artist's Stepdaughters, 1889, Ordrupgaard.*

Published in:

Karl Schou: *Maleren Peter Hansen 1868-1928*, København 1938, pp. 104 and 188;

Erik Zahle: "Billedkunst" in *C.L. Davids Samling. Nogle Studier*, [1], København 1948, pp. 210, 258-259;

Grete Zahle: *Peter Hansen 1868-1928*, Faaborg Museum, Faaborg 1993, cat.no. 66, p. 21;

Susanne Thestrup Truelsen in Kjeld von Folsach and Nana Lund (eds.): *Dansk kunst i Davids Samling – fra Philipsen til Saxbo*, Davids Samling, København 1995, cat.no. 54, pp. 136-137;

Andrea Rygg Karberg, Maren Bramsen and Oskar Skovgaard Væver (eds.): *Historier om mødre*, Nivaagaard Malerisamling, Nivå 2020, p. 107;