



HAWTHORNE
Fine Art

HENRY SIDDONS MOWBRAY (1858-1928)

Wife of The Artist, Amelia Mowbray, with Son, George

Oil on canvas

18 x 13 inches

Signed and dated 1909, upper right

PROVENANCE: Amelia Mowbray, by descent.

The painter and muralist Henry Siddons Mowbray (also known as Harry Siddons Mowbray, or simply H. Siddons Mowbray) was born Henry Siddons in Alexandria, Egypt to British parents. Orphaned within the first five years of his life, he was adopted by a maternal aunt and her husband, George Mowbray, and moved with them to North Adams, Massachusetts.

In 1877, at the age of nineteen, Mowbray met the acquaintance of the landscapist and genre painter Alfred Cornelius Howland (1838-1909), who was living in the neighboring Williamstown, Massachusetts. Howland took Mowbray on as a student until, a year later, Mowbray departed for Paris to study under the French portrait painter Léon Joseph Florentin Bonnat (1833-1922). Mowbray lived in France for the next seven years, befriending such artists as fellow American Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (1863-1930) and exhibiting at the Paris Salon of 1880.

Mowbray left France in 1885 to return to America, where he established two studios: one in New York City, the other in the Berkshires. In 1886 he became a member of the Society of American Artists. Two years later, in 1888, Mowbray exhibited a piece at the National Academy of Design, where he received the Clark Prize. In 1891, he was accepted into the Academy as a full member.

Mowbray received his first mural commission in 1892, and went on to paint such venues as the Appellate Court House and the University Club, as well as for wealthy patrons such as F. W. Vanderbilt and J. P. Morgan. He taught at the Art Students League up until 1901, after which he was appointed to the National Commission of Fine Arts. Mowbray held this position up until his death in 1928.

Mowbray, like many of his American contemporaries trained in Paris, conveyed an impressionistic style saturated with elements of Neo-Classicism; this is most evident in his highly allegorical scenes of harems



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and mythological subjects the dominate much of his oeuvre. The present portrait, however, holds none of this imagined allegory. Rather, *Wife of The Artist, Amelia Mowbray, with Son, George* is a sentimental scene of the familial bond not just that of a mother and her son, but also of the father as invisible participant—the painter looking on. Mowbray’s evocative brushstrokes and a restrained, dark palette work together to create an intimate scene with all the same irresistibility of his other, more fantastical work.