



HAWTHORNE Fine Art

LAURA WOODWARD (1834-1926)

Home in the Wilderness, 1877

Oil on panel

10 ½ x 8 ¼ inches

Signed lower left

Laura Woodward, a New Jersey native, once shared a New York studio building with the Hart siblings, as well as pioneering female painters such as Eliza Pratt Greatorex (1819-1897), Sara Bascom Gilbert and Hannah Jane Blauvelt. While Woodward would ultimately become well-known for her mid- to late-career *plein air* paintings of the undeveloped Florida wilderness, her success in doing so was predicated on the reputation she forged among the ranks of the male-dominated Hudson River School during the 1870s and 1880s.

Painted in 1877, while she was still living in New York City, Woodward's *Home in the Wilderness* is an example of her early work. Most likely painted in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, the rustic cottage at the composition's center implies a sentimental narrative about the bucolic simplicity of frontier life. Woodward's fine attention to detail in the rendering of wood and foliage is indicative of her typical fresh air studies, and is an exercise in the representation of nature's sensory abundance.

Woodward exhibited annually at the National Academy of Design, the Brooklyn Art Association, the Pennsylvania Academy of Design, and the Boston Art Club. She also participated in Expositions, including Louisville (1873-75, 1878, 1885), Cincinnati (1874), Chicago (1875, 1878), and Philadelphia (1876), in addition to numerous galleries.