

Fritz von Uhde, *Children's Nursery* (1889)

Abstract

The cult of a childhood unblemished by work and family conflict was fostered by writers and artists before, during, and after the Bismarckian era. Here, artist Fritz von Uhde (1848–1911), known primarily for his Naturalist renderings of religious subjects, offers a view into a lively, colorful children's nursery, where three young girls play and knit, supervised by their mother. In terms of both subject and treatment, this painting differs from many of Uhde's other works. Captured in a joyful palette of pinks, purples, and yellows, this contemporary interior is illuminated by the dazzling sunlight that floods the canvas. The exaggeratedly elevated, oblique perspective brings the promise of unobtrusiveness, inviting the viewer to glimpse into the children's world, unbeknownst to them. In various respects, *Children's Nursery* reflects the preoccupation of Germany's younger painters with everyday life in the city, as well as their corresponding decision to break with the darker, stiffer paintings of the "old" academy. In this enterprise, which combined the styles of naturalism and Impressionism, Uhde was joined by Max Liebermann, with whom he had close contact.

Source



Source: Fritz von Uhde, *Die Kinderstube* [*Children's Nursery*]. Oil painting (1889). Original: Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle. Photo: Elke Walford.

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