

The Manger



Portrait of Eulabee Dix



The Manger, ca. 1899

Portrait of Eulabee Dix, ca. 1907

## Is It Art?

**Gertrude Käsebier (1852–1934)** was a founding member of the Photo-Secession movement. This group promoted the idea of photography as an art form, not simply a mechanical process or pastime for amateurs as some critics claimed.

## Take a closer look

Käsebier is typically classified as a Pictorialist because she sought to make her photographs resemble paintings, drawings, and etchings. She used soft focus, backlighting, and direct manipulation of the negative to mimic brushwork in a painting.

## Something to talk about

At the turn of the 20th century, people considered photography either an objective representation of reality or the photographer's subjective depiction of the world. By today's standards, how would you characterize photography?

## Who knew?

Käsebier was among the leading portrait photographers of her day, earning praise and prosperity with portrayals of society and art-world luminaries like painter Eulabee Dix. She also achieved financial success: *The Manger* sold for \$100 in 1899—the highest price paid for a photograph to date.

Gertrude Käsebier, *The Manger*, ca. 1899; Platinum print; 7 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of the Holladay Foundation

Gertrude Käsebier, *Portrait of Eulabee Dix*, ca. 1907; Platinum print; 7 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 6 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Joan B. Gaines

