



DELAWARE ART MUSEUM

PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DELAWARE ART MUSEUM PRESENTS GERTRUDE KÄSEBIER'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EIGHT: PORTRAITS FOR PROMOTION

Wilmington, DE (January 25, 2013) – On February 3, 1908, a revolutionary exhibition of paintings opened to great fanfare at Macbeth Galleries in New York. A group of artists known as “the Eight” organized the exhibition to rebel against conservative art critics and the juries at the National Academy of Design. *Gertrude Käsebier's Photographs of the Eight: Portraits for Promotion*, on view at the Delaware Art Museum from February 23, 2013 through July 7, 2013, explores how the Eight—Robert Henri, John Sloan, William Glackens, George Luks, Arthur B. Davies, Everett Shinn, Ernest Lawson, and Maurice Prendergast—used Gertrude Käsebier's portraits and other media to promote themselves and their famous 1908 exhibition.

As part of an aggressive effort to stir up media interest, the Eight hired American photographer, Gertrude Käsebier, to create emotive and atmospheric portraits. Putting faces to the story of their artistic rebellion, Käsebier's photographs were featured in newspapers and magazines with headlines reading: “New York's Art War and the Eight Rebels” and “A Rebellion in Art.” The enthusiastic press coverage was the result of a year-long campaign orchestrated by the artists to promote their work and their bold ideas about modern American art.

“The exhibition of the Eight was a watershed moment in the history of American art,” explains Delaware Art Museum's Curator of American Art Heather Campbell Coyle. “In our archives and collections, the Museum has extraordinary documents—postcards between the artists, exhibition catalogs, press clippings, and a complete set of Käsebier's portrait photographs—that we can present to tell the story.”

This exhibition is mounted in conjunction with a symposium and the exhibition *Gertrude Käsebier: The Complexity of Light and Shade* at the University of Delaware in Newark, DE. The symposium will feature experts on the period, including Coyle, who will speak on “Capturing The Artistic Temperament: Gertrude Käsebier Photographs the Eight.” The Museum will also present a lecture by

University of Delaware Professor Margaret Stetz. For more information, see the “Related Programs” section below.

About Gertrude Käsebier

Gertrude Käsebier (1852–1934) bridged the worlds of fine art photography and commercial portraiture, exhibiting her work in galleries while maintaining a portrait studio on Fifth Avenue in New York. She is considered one of the most influential American photographers of the early 20th century and is known for her powerful images of motherhood and portraits of Native Americans.

Käsebier took up photography in her late thirties while studying portrait painting at the Pratt Institute. She worked with a chemist and a professional photographer to learn the trade and opened a New York studio in 1897. She experimented with different printing techniques and her photographs resembled works of art. Seeking to capture the individuality of each sitter, Käsebier eschewed standard studio props, relying on pose and lighting to convey character. Käsebier also participated in important photography exhibitions at a time when photographers, artists, and critics were arguing for the artistic potential of the medium.

Related Programs

The New Woman in Black and White

Guest Lecture by Margaret D. Stetz, The Mae and Robert Carter Professor of Women’s Studies and Professor of Humanities, University of Delaware

Friday, March 1, 2013 | 6:00 p.m.

Join Professor Stetz at the Delaware Art Museum for a fascinating lecture about Käsebier’s life, work, and participation in a network of “New Women” who used their careers as photographers and journalists to address feminist issues. Free, but registration required at delart.org. *Sponsored by the Tom and Mary Page Evans Fund. Light reception to follow lecture.*

Capturing the Artistic Temperament: Gertrude Käsebier Photographs the Eight

Saturday, March 2, 2013 | 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

As part of a symposium dedicated to the photographer, the University of Delaware will present a lecture by Heather Campbell Coyle, Ph.D., Delaware Art Museum's Curator of American Art. This talk

explores how the Eight leveraged Käsebier's photographs and the media to promote themselves and their 1908 exhibition. Register at 302.831.8037. Free and open to the public.

Organizers and Sponsors

Gertrude Käsebier's Photographs of the Eight: Portraits for Promotion is organized by the Delaware Art Museum and is made possible by the Hallie Tybout Exhibition Fund.

Additional support is provided by grants from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency dedicated to nurturing and supporting the arts in Delaware, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.

About the Delaware Art Museum

The Delaware Art Museum, located at 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806, is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m. Admission fees are charged as follows: Adults (19 – 59) \$12, Seniors (60+) \$10, Students (with valid ID) \$6, Youth (7 – 18) \$6, and Children (6 and under) free. Admission fees are waived every Sunday. For more information, call 302-571-9590 or 866-232-3714 (toll free), or visit the website at delart.org.

Founded in 1912, the Delaware Art Museum is best known for its large collection of works by Wilmington native Howard Pyle and fellow American illustrators; a major collection of British Pre-Raphaelite art; and urban landscapes by John Sloan and his circle. Visitors can also enjoy the outdoor Copeland Sculpture Garden and a number of special exhibitions throughout the year.

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