



PHOTOGRAPHER: **BRYAN R. JOHNSON** (born 1834 New York State; active in Petaluma c. 1863 - c. 1867)

SITTER: **BRYAN R. JOHNSON**, (self portrait)

DATE: between 1864 and 1867

PHOTOGRAPHIC FORMAT: enlarged reprint of original carte de visite

IMPRINT: "From B. R. Johnson's Premium Gallery, Phoenix Block, Petaluma"

PRIVATE COLLECTION

According to Peter Palmquist, the respected scholar and author of the definitive research on the pioneer photographers of the far west, Bryan R. Johnson was a daguerreotypist, ambrotypist and paper photographer who worked in San Francisco, Benicia, Oakland and Petaluma. Johnson advertised his gallery in the Phoenix Block of Petaluma as being outfitted, "in the most splendid style, regardless of expense but for the convenience of doing First Class Work." Additionally, it is known that Johnson traveled from Petaluma to New York to study with the famous, early American photographer, Mathew B. Brady.

Palmquist also described Johnson as a colorful fellow, but Johnson has chosen to portray himself here in a softened, vignetted style and attired in a traditional coat with a high collared shirt and modest tie.

You will find several other portraits by Johnson in the exhibit. Make certain to compare this self portrait to Johnson's portrait of his fellow Petaluman photographer, Giles Pease Kellogg, displayed just opposite.

Paula Freund, 2017