



PHOTOGRAPHER: **GEORGE ROSS**, (1832 Edinburgh, Scotland - 1893 Petaluma, California; active in Petaluma 1862-1893)

SITTER: "Oval Bust Portrait of a Young Woman With an Elaborate Coiffure and Simple Choker"

DATE: late 1860's to early 1870's

PHOTOGRAPHIC FORMAT: enlarged reprint of original carte de visite

IMPRINT: "From Geo. Ross' [sic] Photographic Gallery, Main St., Petaluma, Cal."

PRIVATE COLLECTION

This oval-shaped, bust portrait has been dated between the late 1860's and early 1870's. It bears on its reverse side one of Ross's earliest imprints, and although it is an early example of his work, it illustrates his skills as a fine photographer. The soft lighting, demure lowered gaze and intimate, oval crop create a lovely, feminine portrait.

This unidentified, petite, young woman is dressed in a pale gown with slightly dropped shoulders, and her front-buttoned, fitted bodice is topped with a lace collar. The sitter's narrow, black, ribbon choker is highlighted with a small, gold, bow-shaped brooch, and her elaborate coiffure with its full brow and back curls is restrained at her crown with a dark, shiny bow. Curiously, there is something in her alluring charm and slightly disheveled hair that evoke today's Gothic, Steampunk aesthetic.

Paula Freund, 2017