



Portrait of a Woman

Date

c. 1930s

Primary Maker

Dorothy Wilding

Medium

Chlorobromide print on tissue and card mount

Description

This bromide print on tissue features a woman resting her chin on her left hand, framed by large flowers to one side. The photographer, Dorothy Wilding, was an exceptionally successful British portraitist. After an apprenticeship with the Bond Street photographer Marian Neilson, Wilding opened her own photography studio in London in 1914. She was the first woman to be appointed as an Official Royal Photographer, for the 1937 coronation of George VI and his wife Elizabeth. Wilding photographed many aristocratic and cultural figures of the day, including Queen Elizabeth II, Princess Margaret, Somerset Maugham, Yehudi Menuhin, Harry Belafonte, and Noël Coward. A 1935 portrait of Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor, features a

very similar composition to the Wellin's portrait of an unidentified woman. In both images, the sitter rests her arms on a ledge that can just be seen at the bottom edge of the frame, and is accompanied by a vertically-oriented spray of flowers. Wilding often used high key lighting and placed her subjects against clean white backgrounds, as seen in these portraits. The photographer published her autobiography, 'In Pursuit of Perfection,' in 1958, and her surviving archives, which include over two thousand prints, are held at the National Portrait Gallery in London.

Dimensions

Image: 7 5/8 x 7 7/16 in. (19.4 x 18.9 cm) Sheet: 9 5/8 x 8 3/8 in. (24.5 x 21.3 cm)