



Peter Hurd, Mina Curtiss

Title

Portrait of Mina Curtiss

Medium

Egg tempera

Date

1939

Dimensions

25 1/2 × 30 in. (64.8 × 76.2 cm)

Catalogue Number

88.9

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Credit Line

Anonymous Gift, 1988

Web Description

Her head set against the sky, her body set against the earth, the coloring of her face and clothing reflecting the landscape around her, Mina Curtiss (1896-1985) appears to be perfectly matched to her Southwestern surroundings. Curtiss, however, was raised on the East Coast where she earned degrees from Smith College and Columbia University and worked for the cause of women's suffrage in Washington, DC. By the time she sat for this portrait by Peter Hurd, she had been married (and widowed the following year), taught English at Smith College for more than a decade, and wrote scripts with Orson Welles and John Houseman. Her brother the ballet impresario Lincoln Kirstein was a friend of the Wyeth family and perhaps connected his sister to Hurd, who was then living in New Mexico with his wife, the artist Henriette Wyeth.