

E. Antoinette Hale (American, Contemporary)

The Curtsey, 1996

Oil

Gift of E. Antoinette Hale, 1997.005

Roanoke native Antoinette Hale paints scenes derived from her personal experiences and observations of Southwestern Virginia life. Primarily focusing on the human figure, she connotes it to "seeing the person come to life in front of me." Using photographs taken by herself or occasionally from published sources, she draws grids on the original photograph and transcribes the grid to a canvas, square by square. At some point in this process, Hale begins to disengage from the photographic model, subtly distorting her subjects for compositional unity and psychological effect. *The Curtsey* documents a coming-of-rite known as the Debutante Ball, an annual cotillion held since 1952.

"The Curtsey has special meaning for me because I have such warm memories of my own Debutante Ball and how special it made me feel! Being a deb "back in the day" had such profound meaning because we so looked forward to the gorgeous gowns, the dressing up and the feeling of being treated like a princess - it was the grandest evening! The curtsey was important because it took such patience, balance and practice to make it look effortless yet executed like a graceful lady!

—Anita James Price