

## ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER

The photography of Elfie Huntington typically “focuses on people in real-life situations,” says curator Cary Stevens Jones in her exhibit catalog, *A Woman's View: The Photography of Elfie Huntington (1868-1949)*, sponsored by the Utah Women's History Association and toured by the Utah Arts Council from 1988-93. Three important elements, “geography or sense of place, autobiography, and metaphor,” converge in Huntington's work “to form a powerful, personal vision,” says Jones. Huntington “photographed community rituals, picnics, parades, men going to war, July Fourth celebrations, sleigh riding, and harvesting. She also portrayed [Springville, Utah's] darker side—drunks collapsed in the streets, fights breaking out, and preachers rolling into town in boxcars to warn sinners of impending doom.” Although she was deaf because of meningitis, Huntington refused to be considered handicapped. “She was a complex woman with the capability and courage to confront defects in society and in herself...who in her intensity to describe the fringe of society gave us many unsettling visual experiences. She intended to go beyond surface appearances, to expose the illusions of youth, of harmony, of well-being, of innocence by looking straight ahead with the camera.” Jones says Huntington's work is separated from “the purely historical or geographical photographs that dominate nineteenth-century photography” because of its deliberate use of metaphor. “She saw Springville as a stage,” says Jones, “from which to make larger comments about life...In her driving quest to evoke, suggest, and communicate complex thoughts and feelings, she established herself as one of the most creative and innovative photographers of her time.”

*Dialogue* is pleased to present the work of Elfie Huntington in this issue and expresses gratitude to Cary Stevens Jones, Director of Hippodrome Galleries at FHP Healthcare in Salt Lake City, Utah, for her efforts in preserving and promoting the work of this exceptional artist and for giving *Dialogue* permission to reproduce these images and statements from her catalog. (See original work in Huntington-Bagley Collection, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.)

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