Descriptive Summary
Title: La puce
Date (inclusive): 1880? Date from ms. note on verso of rear endpaper.
Collection number: 94/62
Physical Description: 1 album (20 photographic prints) : albumen, 15 x 21 cm (album)
Photographs (12 x 17 cm) are affixed to rectos and versos of leaves of heavy beige stock, bordered in red.
Bound in red cloth covers, with title "La puce" stamped in gold on upper cover; gold moiré silk endpapers; all edges gilt.
Gift of Frederic Thomas Blanchard.
Spec. Coll. copy: in modern beige cloth-covered clamshell box, with spine title "La puce."
Abstract: Album, probably created in France in 1880, of twenty erotic photographs of a young woman inspecting herself for fleas, whose actions are intended primarily to titillate.
Language: Finding aid is written in English.
Language of the Material: Materials are in English.
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact UCLA Library Special Collections for paging information.
Restrictions on Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], La puce (Collection 94/62). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.
UCLA Catalog Record ID
UCLA Catalog Record ID: 4233582
Scope and Content
The first six photographs show the young woman, dressed in long-sleeved Victorian blouse and skirt, seated on a lavishly draped couch beneath a large mirror, in which the viewer can see her reflection. She reads, then falls asleep. The remaining fourteen photos reveal the young woman gradually undressing, presumably to locate the flea ("la puce") that is biting her. First she removes her blouse, then her stockings, finally her skirt. She holds aloft the offending insect in the final photo. See the chapter "Sexual connotations of the flea in word and image" in Georges de la Tour's "Flea-Catcher" and the iconography of the flea-hunt in seventeenth-century baroque art / Crissy Bergeron, available online.
Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Subjects
Fleas --Symbolic aspects --Photographs.
Genres and Forms of Material
Photographic prints.
Photograph albums.
Albumen prints.
Erotica.
Other Index Terms Related to this Collection
Blanchard, Frederic T. (Frederic Thomas), b. 1878, former owner.
Related Material
Part of the Photograph Album Collection (Collection 94), in UCLA Library Special Collections.