

# LET'S PLAY



BY THE GEARHARTS



THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA ANNOUNCES THE  
PUBLICATION OF AN HISTORIC CHILDREN'S BOOK

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In 1929, Pasadena artists and sisters Frances, May and Edna Gearhart created a children's book illustrated with their original linoleum cuts and descriptive verses. It was, however, not published, and the sisters' original set ultimately entered the Cotsen Children's Library at Princeton University. Eighty years later, it is with great pleasure that The Book Club of California announces that it is publishing the first edition of this charming work based on the Princeton portfolio.

Frances Gearhart (1869–1958) became the leading color woodcut artist in California during her lifetime, renowned for her dramatic landscape views of mountains, desert and shore. Her use of saturated color, her sense of composition and her use of outline reflect her interest in Japanese prints. This series of children at play, unique in her oeuvre, combines Gearhart's artistic sensibilities with a subject she knew well from her years of teaching. May Gearhart (1872–1951), a leading practitioner of the color etching, was the Supervisor of Art in the Los Angeles City School system, while Edna Gearhart (1879–1974), who was skilled at drawing, taught art at Los Angeles High School.

During the 1920s, all three sisters worked together in the gallery they maintained next door to their home at the corner of California and Fair Oaks in Pasadena. It was here that they offered their own prints and exhibited the work of leading international printmakers—the Gearharts were at the center of the printmaking world of Southern California.

Although twenty-four of the prints for *Let's Play* were exhibited at the Pasadena Public Library in 1929, the Gearhart sisters never produced the set as a book and it appears here for the first time. *Let's Play* is an unusual production in the annals of printmaking and children's books, a rare collaboration between artists who were also sisters and teachers.



*Let's Play* contains 25 color plates (including one fold-out plate) and 11 verses. An extra, loose print is laid in and is suitable for framing. The *Afterword* is by Victoria Dailey and *A Note on the Gearhart Printing Technique* is by Susan Futterman.

*Let's Play* is being published in a limited edition of 1000 copies. It has been designed by Janine Vigus and printed by Typecraft Wood & Jones of Pasadena, California. The size of the book is 11 ½ × 10 inches.

The price is \$75, plus applicable California sales tax and shipping charges. Please fill out the enclosed order form to place your order, or you may call, fax or email the club.

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ABOVE: *Leap Frog* COVER: *Let's Play* front dust jacket illustration

INSIDE FRONT COVER: *The Doll's Dressmaker*

All images reduced in size