

Elizabeth Siddal Seated at an Easel
By Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1828-82
Graphite, about 1854



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Elizabeth or 'Lizzie' Siddal became associated with the Pre-Raphaelite circle of artists in about 1849. She modelled for a

number of their paintings, most famously Sir John Millais' *Ophelia* in 1851, now in Tate Britain's collection.

In this sensitive portrait, Siddal is shown working at an easel, using a mahlstick to steady her hand. Rossetti has captured her features with a soft and delicate line, and, in contrast, has used heavier hatched lines to describe the rougher textures of the dress material. Closer observation reveals evidence of reworking, especially around Siddal's profile, where the paper is slightly scuffed.

Siddal became Rossetti's muse and eventually his wife. She was tutored by Rossetti and was an artist and poet in her own right. Plagued by ill health, Siddal tragically died in 1862 from an overdose of laudanum.

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