

Portrait of a Girl

By William Henry Hunt, 1790-1864

Graphite, black chalk, bodycolour, and scraping out, about 1830



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Hunt is best known for his colourful still lifes and charming portraits of children and country people. They appealed to the

romantic ideals of middle-class collectors who wanted an escape from the grime and poverty of industrial Victorian England.

Due to a disability from birth, Hunt worked mainly indoors. He welcomed visitors from all backgrounds to his home, drawing and painting them in the comfort of his studio.

This unidentified little girl is one of a number of portraits he made of black children. Hunt has beautifully captured her delicate features using a stippling technique. The tiny dots of white bodycolour in the eyes heighten her gaze as she stares out inquisitively at the viewer.

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