



Rossetti's Portraits

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- A magnificent but approachable introduction to the riches and strangeness of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's art

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, poet, painter, aesthete, founder member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, was one of the most influential British artists to have lived. His extraordinary and obsessive vision was fuelled by the tortured love he felt for three muses: the tragic Lizzy Siddal, into whose coffin Rossetti cast the only manuscript of his poems (only to have her exhumed and the volume retrieved years later); the earthy former sex worker Fanny Cornforth; and Jane Burden, the statuesque wife of his friend William Morris. During the whole of his life Rossetti returned to the three faces, sometimes combining them, in his bid to encapsulate the nature of woman. The portraits he made range from rapid, vivid sketches to careful drawings and fully worked out allegorical paintings. Few artists have so relentlessly followed a particular vision; it is not surprising that Rossetti's haunting and sensual paintings were admired by the Symbolists and Picasso alike.

With two essays by the leading scholar of Rossetti, Christopher Newall, and Holburne curator Sylvie Broussine, richly illustrated with 75 images including ravishing details in full page and spreads, this is a magnificent but approachable introduction to the riches and strangeness of Rossetti's art.

Sylvie Broussine is Assistant Curator at the Holburne Museum. She is a former Art Fund Curatorial Trainee at the National Gallery where she specialised in 17th-century Spanish painting. At the Holburne she has contributed to such exhibitions as *Grayson Perry: The Pre-Therapy Years*, *Édouard Vuillard: The Poetry of the Everyday* and *Thomas Lawrence: Coming of Age*.

Christopher Newall is a freelance art historian, exhibition curator, lecturer and tour leader. He specialises in the field of 19th and 20th-century British art, with emphasis on the career and influence of John Ruskin, Pre-Raphaelitism, and landscape painting.

