



## Portrait Study (The Artist's Wife Ida)

### Date

1905

### Primary Maker

Augustus Edwin John

### Medium

Oil on canvas

### Dimensions

Framed: 82 x 72.5 x 7.5 cm 61.3 x 51.2 cm

### Description

Ida Nettleship (1877-1907) was Augustus John's first wife. He met her at the Slade school of art and they married in 1900. However, early in 1903 he met Dorelia (Dorothy)

McNeill. During the next couple of years, Ida, Dorelia and Augustus, with their multiplying children, set up a complex ménage à trois in Paris. They also lived together on their return to England. Always passionately interested in the Romany way of life, for many years John travelled, together with his wife Ida, his mistress Dorelia McNeill and children from both women, around the countryside in a gypsy caravan. When Ida died in 1907 Augustus continued to travel and live with Dorelia - all the while managing to keep a mistress or two in close company. The vibrant brushwork and the composition reveal John's debts to Frans Hals and Edouard Manet. It is probable that Ida is here portrayed in the guise of a gypsy. Her sensuous beauty is much in evidence. MC