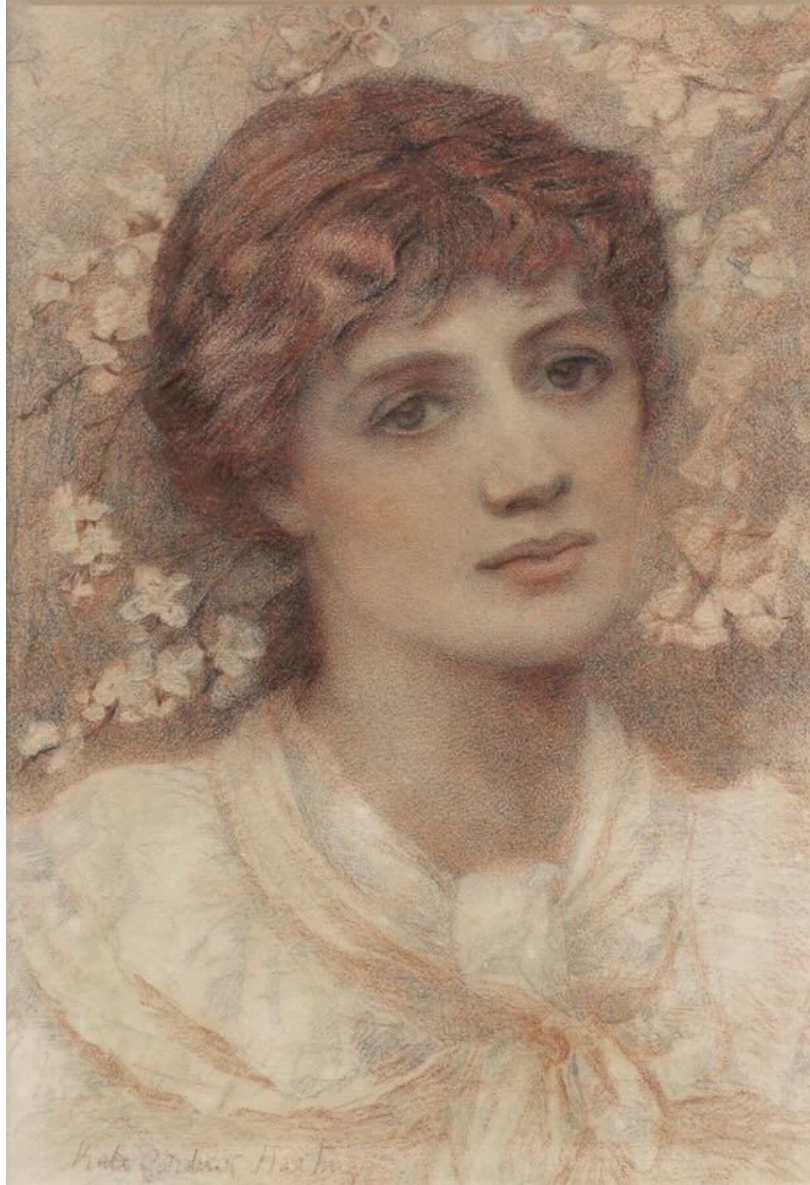


Kate Gardiner Hastings



SOLD

Portrait of Ellen Terry as Ophelia

Reference: 10816

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

Dimensions:

Height: 46.70 cm / 18³/₈ in

Width: 36.90 cm / 14¹/₂ in

Signed I.I.: Kate Gardiner Hastings, red and black chalk

46.7 x 36.9 cm.; 18 ½ x 14 ½ inches

Ellen Terry (1847 - 1928) is portrayed against a background of blossom. Her hair is pinned behind and she wears a blouse with a frilled collar and a knotted scarf. The background, costume and pose bear a strong resemblance to other portraits of Terry as Ophelia.

The famous actress was born in Coventry in actors' lodgings, where her parents were on tour, and she started acting as a child. She married the much older artist, George Frederick Watts in 1864, but they separated within a year. He painted her in many guises, including as Ophelia and Joan of Arc. Terry became known as the Painters' Actress and was painted and photographed by Julia Margaret Cameron, John Singer Sargent and Aubrey Beardsley, amongst many others.

Terry and the architect and designer Edward William Godwin (1833-1886) had two children, Edith Craig and Edward Gordon Craig. She returned to the stage in 1872 to establish herself as a leading actress with the Bancroft's and John Hare's company. In 1878, Terry joined Henry Irving's company at the Lyceum Theatre as its leading lady, playing Ophelia opposite Irving's Hamlet. Her acting career became increasingly successful with tours of America and ventures into theatre ownership and management. In 1907, Ellen Terry married her third husband, the American actor James Carew (1876-1938) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, whom she first met at the Royal Court and with whom she toured America in George Bernard Shaw's *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*. She graduated successfully to film and continued her career after the First World War on both stage and screen.

In later life she continued to act, but also produced plays, lectured and wrote. Terry moved in artistic and literary circles, and her friends included Henry James, George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde. Her great-nephew was the actor, Sir John Gielgud (1904-2000).

Born in London in 1837, as Katherine Carr, Kate Gardiner Hastings received her artistic education at the Slade School in London. From 1871 - 1876 she studied with John Poynter and upon the completion of her studies, in 1877, she married Alfred Gardiner Hastings. For the next few years she exhibited regularly showing her work at the Dudley Gallery and the Walker Gallery.

The artist drew a series of portraits of Terry's family circa 1890 which are now part of the National Trust Collection and held at Terry's former home, Smallhythe Place in Kent (NT/SMA/D/20, 21, 22, and 23). These portray Benjamin and Sarah Terry, (the actress's mother and father) and her children Edith, the theatre director and activist and Edward Gordon Craig, the theatre designer. The pastel of Sarah Terry (1817-1892) was exhibited at the Summer Exhibition of 1890 at New Gallery, London.

Another red chalk portrait of the actress as Ophelia in *Hamlet* c. 1878 by the artist is in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum (S.1484-2014).