LEARN HOW TO PAINT PORTRAITS IN WATERCOLOR

Spring 2016
4 Saturdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm
On Campus

Instructor: Tricia Reichert

Description of the Program

This four week class will teach you how to use the medium of watercolor to paint loose, impressionistic portrait sketches and also more developed finished portraits of your favorite people. You will begin with how to draw the face for painting, how to achieve a likeness and how much detail to include in the drawing. Next you will find out how to mix and use the skin tone colors and how to paint all of the features, including the hair in watercolor. Finally to complete your paintings, you will learn different ways to paint the clothing and backgrounds.

Objectives:

By the end of this course you should know
◆ How to choose the materials for painting portraits in watercolor
◆ How to make the initial drawing needed for your portraits, including how to look for proportions, angles and shapes that make up your particular subject’s face
◆ How to recognize the ‘tonal values,’ (lights and darks), in the colors needed to make your subject look three dimensional and then how to paint them.
◆ How to mix and paint the skin tones
◆ How to paint convincing facial features.
◆ How to depict clothing and background elements in watercolor
◆ How to paint the ‘whole picture’ from the beginning.
◆ Where to find more information about painting portraits with this media

Session Synopsis

Session 1

1. What do we need to consider when painting faces? E.g. When working from photographs – the requirements for the source materials for the best pictures. The format of the painting, size, colors, composition and cropping, tonal values, ………and a few more things….
2. You will find out how to approach the initial drawing for the painting and especially how to measure proportions and understand angles.
3. Making the drawing by overlapping tracing paper is one way to start…………
4. Another approach is to grid the photograph of the subject and then to transfer the information to the watercolor paper.
5. Introduction to the medium of watercolor. How to mix the paint, apply washes, paint details and soften edges.

Session 2

1. More information about how to use watercolor. How to correct areas and lift out paint.
2. Mixing skin tone colors and where to use them in the painting.
3. The importance of painting the whole picture at once and not focusing too soon on any of the individual parts will be explained.
4. Now we can start to focus in on individual features and you will learn how to paint, eyes, noses, ears, teeth and hair etc. for your particular subjects.

5. Sketching in watercolor to get a feel for how the face is constructed.

**Session 3**

1. You will see that if you have the tonal values in the correct places in your paintings that this stage will be quite easy.
2. How to keep the painting fresh and not look overworked. The order of painting will be discussed in this session – this is particularly important in watercolor as major changes are difficult to achieve later on in the painting.
3. More sketches of faces and features.
4. When is enough, enough? How much detail to include in your painting (and why) will also be discussed.

**Session 4**

1. Clothing and backgrounds will be addressed in this session.
2. How much detail to include in this part of the painting and how to choose which colors to use in the clothing and the backgrounds will be demonstrated and discussed.

**NOTES**

A few suggestions……..

1. As we work through this painting process together in class you can start one or two more paintings at home on your own and bring them to class for help.
2. Try making small studies on watercolor paper of areas in your painting that you are finding the most difficult, for example, skin tones, eye shapes and colors, cast shadows, ear shapes, teeth and mouth colors and values, hair, clothing textures, etc.
3. Practice drawing the different shapes that you see in your particular subject by measuring and checking proportions and angles throughout the face and body. The more you do this with different subjects, the easier the initial drawing will become.