"2-Day Color Pencil Seminar" with Mark Menendez

March 16th & 17th, 2026

Day 1 "Portrait Details"

Day 2 "Create Your Own" Color Pencil Portrait

Have you ever wanted to learn how to create realistic portraits? In this preview to the Color Pencil Portrait seminar, we will explore the features of the face. So many of us are intimidated when attempting to draw the head, and even more so in capturing the likeness of the person. Unfortunately, many never try, perhaps because they have never been taught the fundamentals.

In this easy-to-learn *color pencil* seminar, the following fundamentals of drawing the head will be offered: basic shapes and forms of the head; light and shadow; value and tone; the planes of the head; how to render features easily; and the secrets to capturing the likeness and lifelike personality of your subject, plus Mark's "Four Color Process".

You will walk away with new skills and insight that will instill confidence when you "Create Your Own Portrait" the following day.

In day twos Seminar, **YOU** provide a 5x7 or 8x10 photo of someone you cherish, and Mark will help you create a beautiful color pencil portrait. Using skills you learned during the "Portrait Details" class and Mark's easy to understand techniques, you will learn to capture a likeness; with vibrant, dramatic flesh tones; developing the features of the face; creating realistic eyes; and rendering the hair. Underpainting techniques, contrasting values, complimentary hues, dramatic lighting and many other valuable methods will be offered in an easy to understand manner.

Required Materials for Both Days

Instructor will Provide the Art Paper & Instructional Booklet

* STUDENTS BRING A COLOR and a BLACK & WHITE 8X10 PHOTO COPY

Day 1
"Portrait Details"

Day 2
"Create Your Own"
Color Pencil Portrait

Required Materials For Both Days

Prismacolor Pencils

904	Lt. Cerulean Blue	914	Cream
921	Pale Vermillion	926	Carmine Red
927	Light Peach	928	Blush Pink
935	Black	937	Tuscan Red
938	White	939	Peach
941	Light Umber	942	Yellow Ochre
943	Burnt Ochre	944	Terra Cotta
947	Dark Umber	1022	Mediterranean Blue
1080	Beiga Sienna	1092	Nectar
1077	Colorless Blender		

Miscellaneous
Ebony Pencil
18" See-Thru Ruler
6 sheets of *Tracing Paper*
Graphite Transfer Paper
Pencil Sharpener
White Vinyl Eraser
Drawing Board, 11 x 14 or larger
Soft Brush for Pencil Crumbs
Artist's Tape

**Students may use their own photos
or one of ours below.
IF using your own, please see the
PHOTO SUGGESTION SHEET ON
THE FOLLOWING PAGE.**

Choose the best photo for your portrait.

Over the years I have offered instruction in portrait painting in various mediums to thousands of students. Most of the time, due to restrictions in the classroom setting, I encourage students to provide a photograph of the subject. What is amazing is the the poor quality of the photographs that many students choose for their portraits. Of course, in the case of deceased relatives from many decades past, the quality of the photographic reference is limited. However, with all the quality cameras we have available in this age, including cell phones, the poor photos selected by many students is inexcusable. The reasons for their choices have nothing to do with *artistic* choices, but rather *sentimental* ones. They capture a smile or an expression, and consider it "cute" or "darling" or some other reason, but their choices do not provide the best reference for a portrait.

Below, on the left, is an example of the type of poor photograph I frequently encounter. The example on right is preferable:

POOR PHOTO   **EXCELLENT PHOTO**

In the photo on the left, the child is too close to the lens, thus creating proportional distortion. The face reveals the distortion, but the real clue is the tiny arm on the left. The bright light of the flash has created a washed-out face, bright in the middle, dark on the outer contours. This reminds me of a pie, baked in the oven; toasty on the edge, raw in the middle. This offers the poorest sense of form on the face. By the way, check out the lavender hair! Only use a quality photograph. I recommended avoiding faces with broad smiles. The face gets distorted, as the cheeks swell, the lower eyelids raise, and the laugh lines are accentuated, making the child look older. Keeping the child looking his or her age is already a challenge without the laugh lines to deal with. Avoiding the teeth and gums will save you much distress.

Besides the obvious objections sited in the POOR PHOTO, the greatest benefit of the EXCELLENT PHOTO is the *lighting*, which offers a superior representation of the **FORM**.

Photo Suggestion Sheet
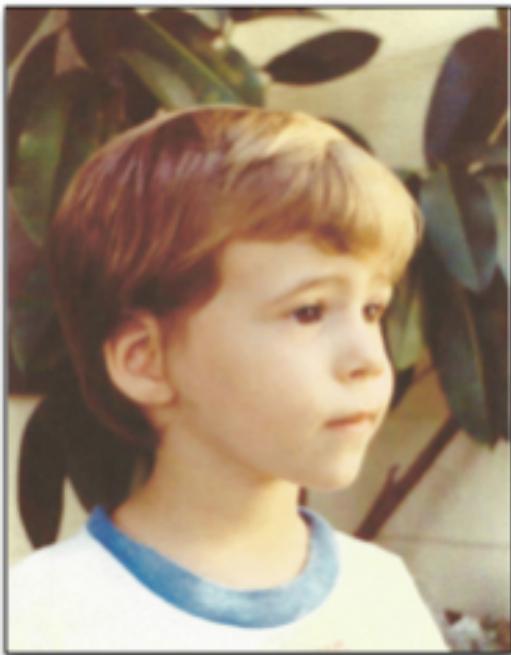
Original Photo Reference
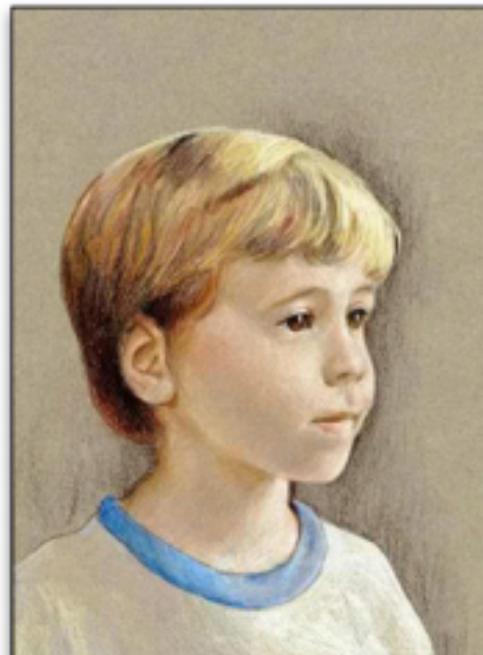
Completed Color Pencil

1) *Only use a quality photograph. The best photos are those taken with natural light, perhaps from a window.* Photos taken in direct sunlight are tricky as well, since the contrasts can be too harsh. Avoid using a flash, as it will create lighting that is straight on. The flash flattens out the form, and destroys the subtleties of the features, especially the jaw.

2) *Avoid a straight-on mug-shot. A 3/4 view of the face as shown in the example above is best.* Mugs-shots are not only flat and uninteresting, but they lack the beautiful sense of form that the 3/4 view offers, with a full range of values from light to dark. *Profiles* rarely offer much character.

3) *Big smiles should be avoided as well. The expression does not have to be serious but no broad smiles, please!* The face gets distorted, as the cheeks swell, the lower eyelids raise, and the laugh lines are accentuated, making the child look older. Keeping the child looking his or her age is already a challenge without the laugh lines to deal with. Avoid teeth and gums.

4) *Please do not try to use a tiny snapshot.* You need to be able to see what you're drawing. The proper size to use is at least an 8" x 10" color print or a computer print, with the head about 6"to 6.5" from crown to chin.

5) *If you are using a cherished or rare photo, put it in a plastic page protector. Better safe than sorry.* We are not responsible for any damage or loss of your photo, so a copy or several copies is preferable. *A color and a B&W is best.*