Dear Portraiture Student,

Thank you for signing up! This is going to be a great class.

A few important things to go over before class. Because there is an assignment you must bring to the first class, <u>please</u> take the time to read this now. You will need the time to come prepared for the class.

1. This is a class in making a portrait. Consequently, you will need to bring several portrait-worthy images of the person you wish to draw. Please use the remaining weeks and days available before class to think hard about whom you want to draw, and prepare printed images following the guidelines below.

    I recommend choosing someone whom you deem worthy of immortalizing in a portrait.   You can choose yourself (for a self-portrait) or choose a parent, a relative, a close friend, a roommate, whomever. In my experience, the best portraits happen when you choose someone you know well, and someone you care about. Those emotions will come through in your portrait whether you plan for it or not. It's the magic of portraits.

2. You will need to bring to the first class 3-6 different photos of your chosen subject. Here are some guidelines that will help you choose them:
    -   Your photos can be old photos or new ones you took very recently. I've seen terrific results both ways.
    -   In your photo, the higher the resolution of the image, the better. iPhone images, for example, are perfect as long as your subject is not too far away from the camera (i.e., more than five or six feet.) Faces are tricky enough without battling fuzziness.

    -   All your photos should have been taken <u>without a flash</u> if at all possible. Shadows across faces are great.
    -   Photos in which your subject has a big smile are a bit more complex and good results a bit harder to achieve. (Ever see a Rembrandt portrait with a big smile?) However, if you have no choice, we'll make it work, and the results will still be great.

3. Your photos should be printed out on separate pieces of white paper, in black and white or in color. Images should be printed big enough to see details, ideally around 5" X 7" or even larger if possible. Using an inkjet or laser printer is perfect.

    Using a digital screen on an iPad, iPhone, or other device to display your photos is <u>not</u> recommended. Drawing a portrait is hard enough without trying to do it with one hand held up in the air, motionless. And then there's the problem of batteries.

    In class, you and I will go through all your photos to choose one for your portrait. In the process, I hope you'll learn a bit about I how I choose poses for my portraits, and the issues that come up.

    In the end, if you can't make up your mind about which person to draw, or what images to choose, feel free to prepare two or even three sets of photos of the same or different subjects and bring everything -- all your images -- to class. Deciding which ones will work best can be a very instructive process for both of us.

4. Wear comfortable clothes and, above all, comfortable shoes to class. We will be standing for a long time, and being comfortable is important. We use totally non-toxic non-staining materials, so clean-up will be easy; nevertheless, you are certain to get some harmless charcoal dust on whatever you wear, so a light cashmere sweater is not recommended. Bringing a water bottle (and maybe a small snack) would be a good idea. Earphones for music are OK too, but prepared to be interrupted now and then.

I am looking forward to seeing you there!

Steve Coit