

Demonstration

May 3, 2021

Dino Massaroni - Portrait in Pastels



What a difference a year makes. Last March, **Dino Massaroni** did a 'live' portrait in oil demo for Euclid Art in the Fellowship Hall at the church...our last 'live' demo before covid hit! We've learned a lot since then about virtual communications. This year we asked Dino back to do a demonstration on Zoom...his first Zoom experience, successfully hosted by EAA. On **Monday, May 3**, there were 24 people who joined in the Zoom demo to watch Dino demonstrate "**Portrait in Pastels**". Sandie even joined us from Scotland...it was midnight there!

Dino's passion is painting portraits mostly in oil and occasionally in pastels. He likes pastels because it's both a painting and drawing medium. "You can come back in a week or two and add color; it's malleable to paint back into to adjust color, plus you get a broad range of tonality." He is also known for his landscapes and still life in oil, pastel and charcoal.

Dino selected an image of a young girl wearing a hat as his photo reference for the evening's demo. He started with a medium toned paper, called Canson Mi-Teintes (*sanded pastel paper with a micro-abrasive surface texture. It retains pastel pigments which allows for multiple layers.*) The paper has two textures and Dino prefers the side with the 'smoother' surface. Dino started by blocking in the subject, drawing in dark brown to outline the composition. Giving us a quick overview...next, he'll draw the larger patterns of shadows & light, letting the paper suffice as a background color as he starts. Then, he'll move to much smaller shapes, i.e., the eyes and mouth and will work on refining them. He used a full set of pastels, arranged in a special tray/palette in the same configuration as his oil palette. "I know where my colors are, like a piano player who knows what key to reach for next."



Working at arms length from this canvas, he broadly established the initial shape and added some tone. "There is no substitution for practicing drawing", he said while we watched him sketch her arm and hand on the paper. He questioned whether to add the hand, as it needs to be addressed carefully and takes more time to develop. "Work broadly at first...it's tempting to get specific.



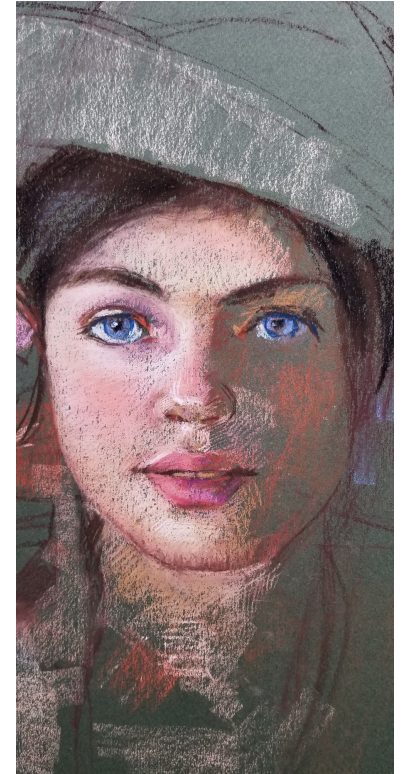
Drawing is more than defining the boundary of things; control the shape by applying passages of shapes with color." Using the pointed edge and broad side of the pastel stick, he continued to draw while painting. "As long as the tonal value is correct, it's convincing." To develop the shadow areas on the face, he used both a chocolate and middle brown, then built up the light passages using ivory. He explained that pressure on the stick of pastel to the surface determines the intensity on the paper. He continued to detail the right eye and lips as we watched.

"It's easier to explain how colors are mixed in oil versus pastels," he quipped. After all, he has up to 530 pastel colors in his drawers! He used the crosshatched method to create the mixture on the

paper. Crosshatching uses strokes of color in one direction and then another. He can mix up to 6 to 10 colors to get the results he wants. Little granules of pigment roll around to create color mixture. "Never use smudging to mix colors... it not effective!"



The subtle adjustments he made to the portrait made it come alive. "I become so enthralled in the process of where I'm at in creating the image, I lose track of time!" And, we were running out of time for the evening. The end result was a stunning, although unfinished portrait of a young girl seen in the reference. With the boundary lines still visible at this point in time, we could see all the stages or steps he used to create this portrait...a pastel lesson on canvas. He offered the portrait for sale to anyone interested. Contact Dino at DinoStudio@aol.com.



Here's a few more Dino tips:

- He learned this in art school . . . "It is tempting to have colors become very neutral. Select a color that is strong and introduce it into passages of color. A bed of color absorbs strong color that then enlivens the area."
- He never uses fixative on his pastels. He had a bad experience. Calls it "like rain on a dusty road; creates pockmarks."
- Pastel will withstand a lot of vertical pressure, just don't move paper laterally over the surface.
- The best way to get pastels framed is with two, three, or even four mats, to keep the glass away from the surface.