

Step By Step A PASTEL PORTRAIT



A PORTRAIT DEMO BY EMMA RALPH.

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Introduction

Before we begin let me say that it will benefit you much more if you choose your own photo to work along with me rather than using the one here. This is going to give you so much more confidence with future paintings as, remember, I'm not going to be with you for the next one 😊

You also do NOT need the same brand of pastels or paper as I'm using and your color choices will be based on your photo. However, I do suggest that you keep the number of different colors to a minimum.

During the course of this demo, please use your own artistic intuition. Every artist is different and if you "feel" you need to press harder or softer please do so - this demo is just a guide to get you started and familiar with using pastels.

As you will see the young woman in my photo has her eyes down. Don't worry if your model has eyes open as I will be devoting a complete chapter on doing eyes – human and animal.

However, my suggestion is to make sure that the mouth is closed. Teeth and open mouth smiles can be quite difficult, so I'd suggest leaving that until you become more familiar with pastels. Also make it head and shoulders – again I'm trying to keep this as simple as possible just to get you started.

Don't worry about the background in your photo, it's not going to matter as this is going to be perfectly plain.

Not only are we painting a scene, I'm also going to be telling you what preparation and tools you'll need. If you already have a copy of my Step by Step A Pastel Scene, then some of it you will already know, but even so, I suggest you read it all just to refresh.

Lastly, what is demonstrated here is the way that I use pastels when I paint. There are many different techniques when using pastels and each artist has their own way. I am sure that you will also develop your own style.

How to Use This Book.

Before you begin taking out paper and pastels, let me suggest a couple of things.

First and foremost, read through the book a couple of times so as to familiarize yourself with what's going to happen.

Then, having read through each section, make a note of which pastels are going to be used and where. With your own photo, have a good look at what colors you think you will need. For example the sky colors, the grass colors. Some groups of pastels may be used in more than one section, so you will need to make a note of those too.

A good idea is to have some little plastic boxes or dishes in which to put the different groups. If you put some paper towel at the bottom of each box it will give a little protection to your pastels.

If you take the time to set these little groups of pastels aside, this project will go much more smoothly for you.

Please note:

Please be aware that computer screens and printed matter can vary in color and definition from the original.

If you are doing this particular subject then choose your pastels and pastel pencils based on what you feel will suit.

Let us begin

Chapter 1 - Preparation

1. Choosing a photo to work along with me.

Choose a photo that is simple with not too many colors if you can.



I like this one because of the contrast between light and dark. It is the hair that I will be focusing on and not necessarily to make it "look like" the person.

The demo is the head and shoulders of a young woman so choose something similar, e.g. a person or animal.

If choosing an animal try to get smooth hair rather than shaggy.

Next, look for a photo that has good distinctive light and dark areas.

If you do have one similar in darkness to mine, then see if you can get it lightened either do it yourself on the computer or take it to a photo shop. It's good to be able to "see" the definition even if you're not going to be putting it in.



Regardless, it's best to have two of the same photo.

This is my second one brightened.

2. Tools you'll need for this first part:

- The paper -

I'm using:

Reeves Water Color paper

A3 size (297mm x 420mm or 11.69" x 16.54"

300 gms or 95lb

Acid free.

This comes in a pad of 12 sheets and is not expensive.

NOTE: Now that the painting is finished I would not recommend this paper, the weight is good, but the tooth is a bit too much. My recommendation is that you choose a proper pastel paper and maybe not quite so heavy.



- Two photos as discussed above.

- Ruler -

Preferably steel as you'll be using it as an edge to cut the photo.

- Pastel pencil -

You may need two, one light and one dark depending on your photo.

- Craft knife or similar -

Use this along the ruler as it cuts a much truer line than scissors.

3. Measuring:

This is such an important part of any painting. It's a bit like a house painter who makes sure his wall is all properly prepared before he applies the first coat of paint. If you don't get this bit right, it can be disastrous later on. So it pays to take the time and do the fiddly stuff first before you even pick up the pastel.

Start with your two photos.

Let's call them A and B

A = the working one (in my case the lighter one)

B = the good one which will be your painting.

Lay out photo A and, using a ruler or a plain piece of white paper, block off the area you won't be including in your painting....in my case it's the left hand side.

Once you are happy cut that area away using the craft knife and ruler.

Still happy?

Then cut photo B as well.



Photo A



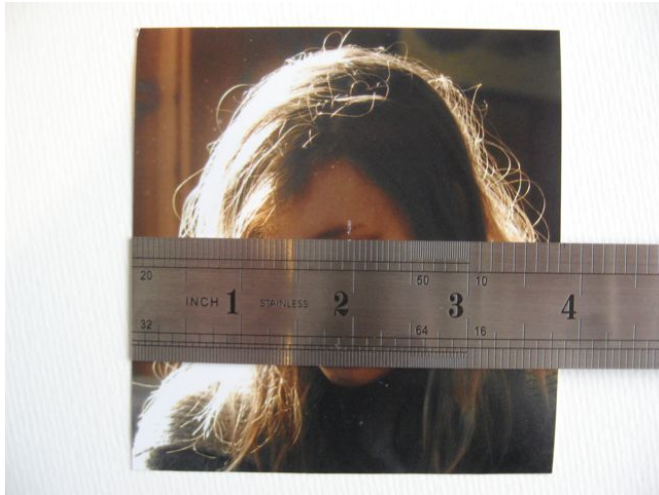
Photo B

Now you have two the same - one to draw on and the other to draw from. You'll see what I mean in a moment.

What I'm going to show you now is my version of a "grid", which helps me to position the subject on the paper, as well as get the proportions right. If you have another way you do this, then that's fine go ahead and do so, but have a read of this anyway you may be able to combine yours and my ideas.

Take photo A and measure with your ruler horizontally about where you think is $\frac{1}{2}$ way down. Using a pastel pencil make a mark at the $\frac{1}{2}$ way point.

Now, using that point as a guide place the ruler vertically and find the $\frac{1}{2}$ way point - mark it. This 2nd mark is the middle of the photo (rub out the 1st mark).



Now measure from the middle dot to the top, find the middle of that and mark it. Do the same from the middle dot down. Then draw a line but make sure you can still see those marks.



Now you're going to create two more lines.

Again start with the horizontal line only this time you'll measure from the middle line out to the edge on one side and the same on the other. Get your dots placed then draw a vertical line.

You end up with 3 lines and 9 dots or marks. This is your measure or grid. You can make it more if you like, but I find it's perfectly fine. We're only using this for the sketch.



Note I've had to use the darker color pastel pencil on the far left. You can turn these lines into pen lines if you like the pastel does tend to rub off photos very easily.

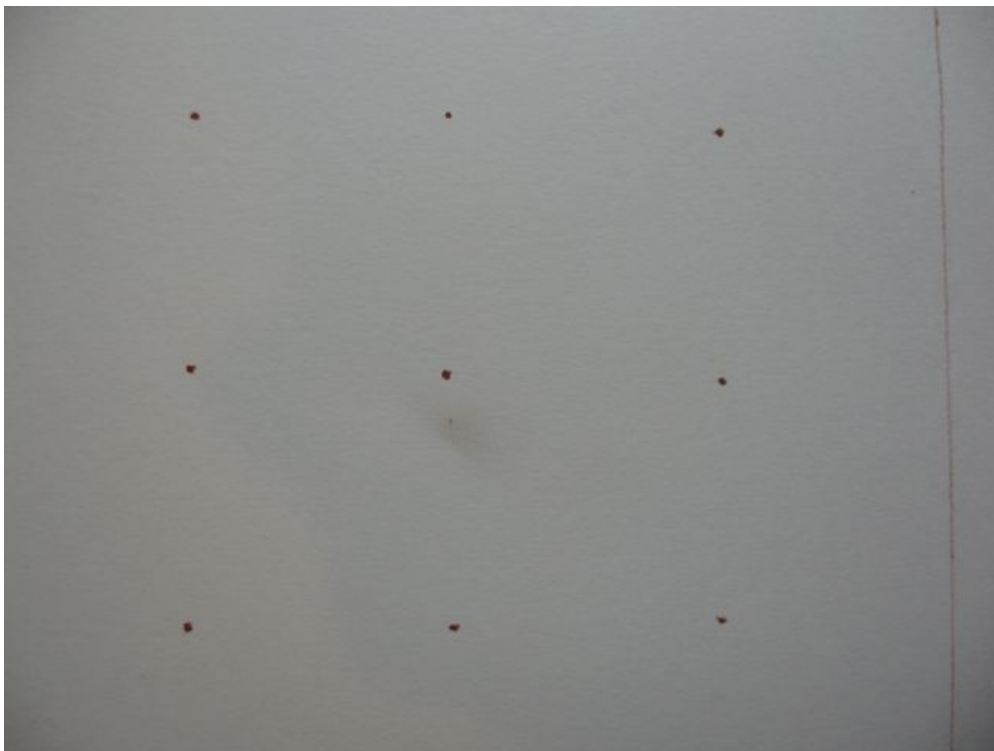
4. The paper.

Before you start putting in the grid you need to mark a border or margin. The border area is used for framing and a real must because you don't want to lose any of your painting.

In my case my photo is not quite square so I started with a top line and a bottom line and make a rough estimate with the sides. You're going to have to trust your artistic "eye", but it won't really matter as the sides or top/bottom can be adjusted later.

Again use a pastel pencil and make it a fairly light one in a similar tone to that which you will be using.

Measure exactly as you did with the photo - only this time do NOT put in the lines - just put in the dots and make them as faint as possible. *(Mine are dark only so you can see them in the photo).*



5. Now you're ready to sketch.

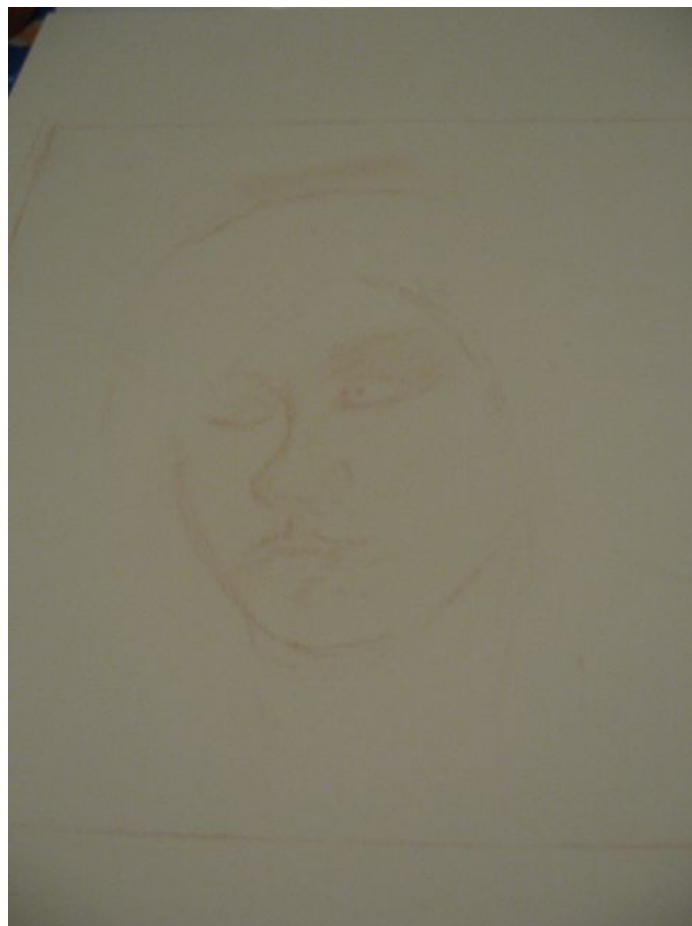
Again use a light shade pastel pencil and, using the "grid" on the photo as a guide, start to lightly sketch your subject beginning with where the dots are.

Don't worry about any detail you just want to mark in the major points, e.g. rough outline, eyes, nose, mouth chin.

You can see in the photo below that my center dot is still there – right on the eyelid!

There's no problem if you make a mistake, just rub lightly with your finger to "blur" it and start again you can see mine is not perfect!

Please DON'T use an eraser. This can cause the tooth of the paper to weaken and the pastel won't adhere properly....in other words, it is likely to be noticeable in the end painting.



End of Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 - Tools For Painting

In this "getting ready" part there are some things you are going to need. Not many, but things that will help.

1. Pastels

In this demo I'm using Mungyo 12 set Earth Tone along with extra white pastels. Have a look at your photo and determine what colors you will need - make sure you do have enough white pastel as this is the most used color of all. You will need something for your dark areas which could be black, dark blue or dark brown etc - it will all depend on the colors in the photo.



2. Pastel pencils

You won't need many of these. Again check your photo - are there any really fine areas e.g. hair or whiskers? What about around the eyes? See if you're going to need any special colors other than black and white.

3. The Paper

As discussed in the previous chapter. You'll also need to have a "spare" piece of paper by your side. You will use this to "test" colors and it's important that this piece is the same tint color as the piece you are going to be working on.

There is one other thing I want to mention here about the paper. Choose a pastel paper as it has a good "tooth" which is needed to grab the pastel. With the method I'm going to teach here you will need a heavier weight paper so go for around 65 lb or 130 gsm.

Also if you're getting pastel paper check by feeling that the texture is not sandpaper type You will be doing a lot of "smudging" and "blending" with your fingers and the sandpaper variety will take the skin off!!!! and cut through gloves.

4. Tortillons or Paper Stumps.



The small or finer pointed ones are really good for getting into the parts that are too small for your finger. They are used more to "press" the pastel in as well as to "blend" but done with gentle pressure.

A bit of sandpaper comes in handy (medium grade) just to "clean" the stumps. However, the sandpaper can't be used with the home-made variety.

If you don't have commercial paper stumps - don't worry, at the end of this chapter I'll show you how to make your own.

5. Surface.

You'll need a surface to paint on regardless of whether you have an easel or not. So a board is good. If you're using the table and the paper is from a pad, then keep the paper in the pad and put the pad on the table (you won't need a board). If you're using an easel or just one piece of paper, then you will need a board and some tape or clips to fix the paper to the board.

When working on a table I lay a shower curtain over it works well to protect it.

6. Plastic Sheet.

You can get these from a print/photocopy shop. They are often used as a cover when binding, e.g. documents, and are quite stiff. They can be clear or colored, makes no difference. Exceptionally good to place carefully on top of an area of the painting you've done so you can then "lean" on it in order to work on another area.

I use this frequently more towards the end of the painting when I see parts that need adjusting. You can lift it straight off and the pastel hasn't shifted.

7. Disposable gloves.

You don't have to use them and I didn't at the beginning of my pastel painting adventure, but now I really like them. There are a couple of reasons.

- Pastels can be toxic and because the dust is so fine it can be absorbed into the skin.
- The oil/sweat from the fingers can be detrimental to the painting.
- Keeps the hands clean and makes the washing of hands much quicker. Also, quick to take off if the phone rings or I need to "drop and go".

I do have two or three gloves on the go at the same time, switching as I change colors (especially dark to light or vice-versa),
And, I always put in extra talc.



Shopping List

- Pastels
- Pastel pencils - black and white and any other colors you may need.
- Paper – Your choice.
- Tortillons or Paper stumps - about 4 of the finer sized ones (suggest you can get a mixture of medium to fine you'll soon get to know which size you like).
- Board - if necessary.
- Shower curtain or other washable table cover. If using a stand alone easel the shower curtain is also a great cover for the floor under it.
- 2 Plastic sheets from print shop.
- 2 packets Disposable gloves - I use the "Disposable Vinyl Gloves, pre-powdered and latex free" – optional.
- Talc - if getting the gloves.

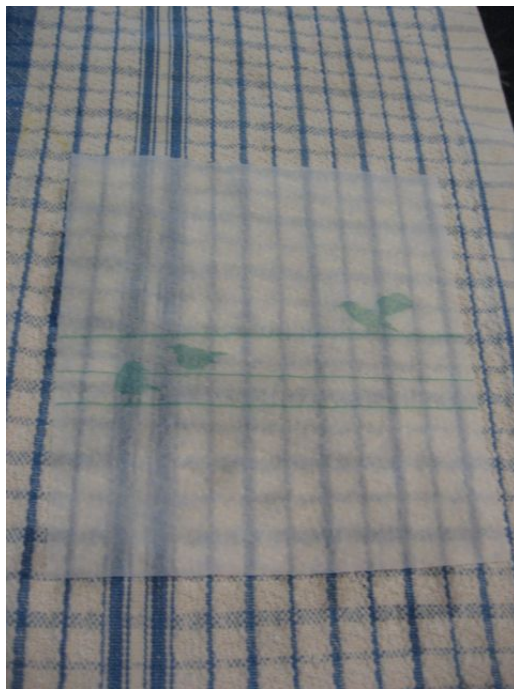
Making Your Own Tortillon/Paper Stump.

Equipment:

Makes one

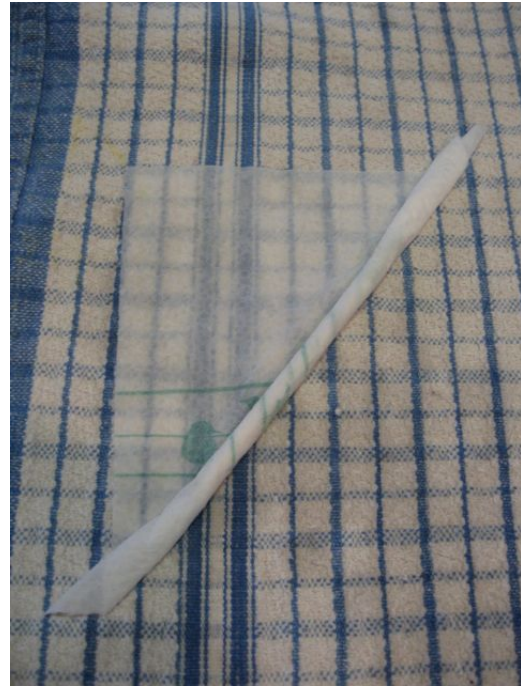
One sheet of paper towel.
One toothpick
Saucer of water
Dry tea towel
Scissors

1. Cut the paper towel into quarters.
2. Take one quarter piece and wet it by laying it into the saucer of water.
3. Carefully place onto the tea towel.



4. Fold the tea towel over the top of the paper and press gently so it absorbs some of the water.

5. Place the toothpick on the corner and start to slowly roll.



6. When all rolled feel where the end of the toothpick is and cut just above it on the diagonal both sides to create a point.



7. Squeeze, pinch and roll to form a more closed point.

8. Allow to dry completely before using.



End of Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 - Are you Ready to Paint?

So, by now you should have in front of you your paper with the sketch all done. Your good photo right there as well as your measured photo for reference.

Before we actually put the pastel onto the paper, there's one more thing I want you to do (you don't have to if it fazes you too much). I want you to snap each pastel in half. Whoa I can hear you say - break my pastels?

Well, the reason is simple....more so if your paper is less than 500 cm or 20 inches.



1. It's so you can use the side of the pastel if you need to.

and

2. It won't snap when you put some pressure on.

also

3. It will fit in your fingers better.

Note: If you are using the ½ sticks (usually come in sets), then you won't have to break them - it's for full size sticks only. You should end up with two sticks around an inch or so long. If the full sticks are shorter than 2 ½" or 6 ½cm then you probably won't need to do this.

Now we're going to start with the background....or at least a little bit of it. This is just so you can get some pastel onto the paper and start to feel o.k. with it.

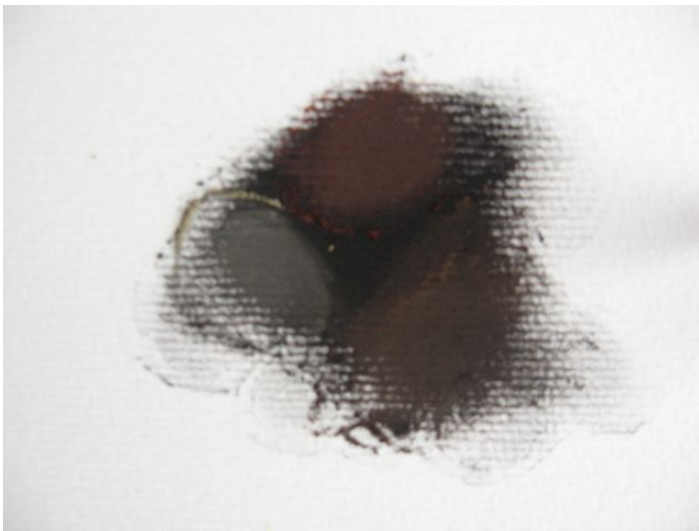
I want you to take a look at your subject and pick out a color that you think is going to suit. I'm going to start with black, but I will be adding another color or even two. Normally with pastel painting we start with the darker colors then go to the lightest. If your subject is light, then choose a dark color, if your subject is dark then maybe a light color.

The first thing to do is **use your spare piece of paper** you have got it there beside you haven't you? This is the last bit of preparation.....



I've laid down one layer of black, smudged it in, then added another layer and smudged that in to. You need two layers to get the depth of color.

Smudge by using a medium pressure and small circles.

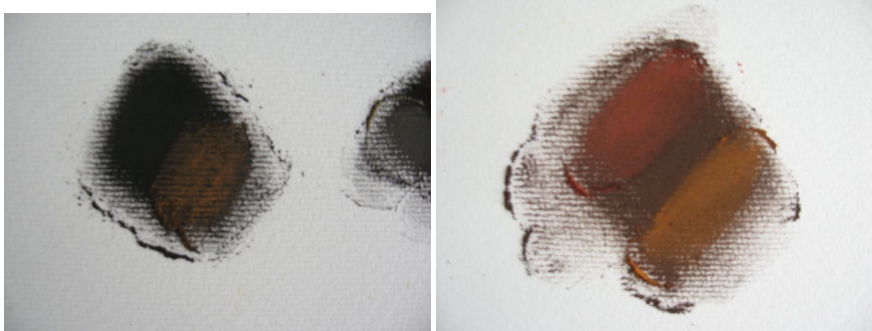


Next I put the colors I think will work – a reddish brown, pale yellow and brown.

Mmmmm, not sure at this stage so will try again.

In the next two photos you'll see I've done another black base and used an orange.

Finally I used a dark brown as the base, with the red and orange.



Have decided on black base and will use the red.

If you've got this far without touching the sketch, congratulations, you'll thank me later for all this preparation work.



Pastel artists work differently and you will probably find that you will eventually work out which way you like to work. I work my paintings from top left, across and down as a general rule, however, I will chop and change depending on what I want to achieve. That way I can control the dust a little better.

NOTE:

In this demonstration I'm working on a table, not the easel, as this is usually the way most beginners work. I have a rag cloth to wipe the tip of the pastel (lightly) between use and I have a sheet of newspaper to tap the dust onto...this can then be folded up and disposed of.

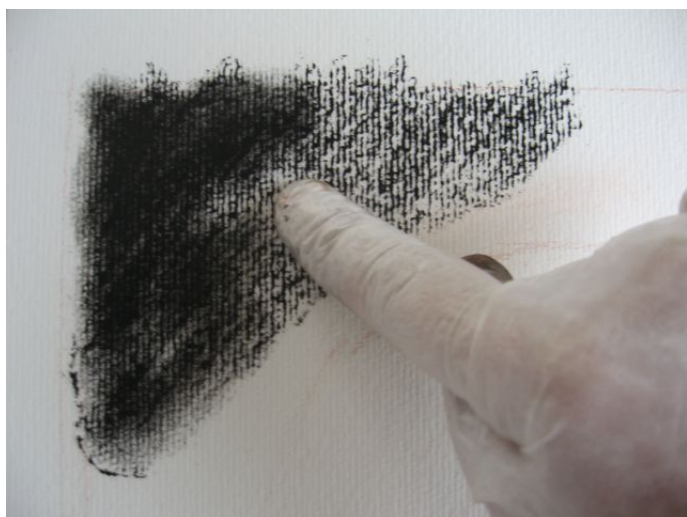


SO HERE WE GO!!!

Step one



I begin in the top left corner and, as with the sample I've just done, I've put the pastel down using side to side strokes and the top edge of the pastel...the pressure is medium.



I've smudged that in using the circular motion which I'm doing here in this photo.



Then I repeated the same area with the black again. This gives the depth of color and ensures good coverage over the tooth.

Step two

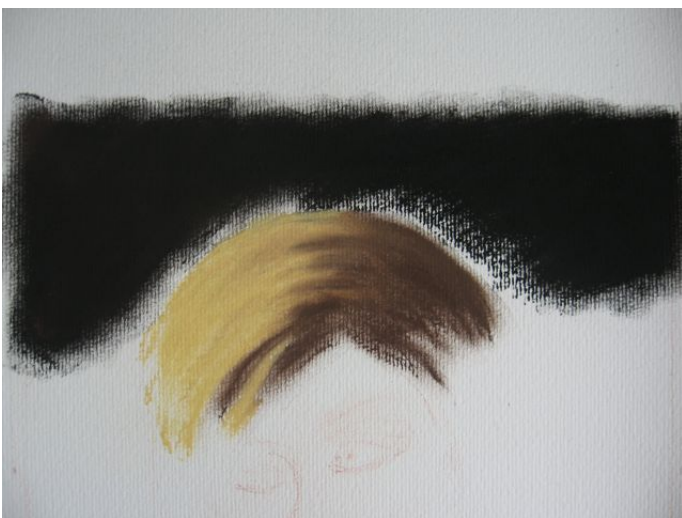


Before taking the black to the edge of the head I've laid down a dark brown on the right and my yellow base on the left, following the photo for approximates of where they go. This is only one layer at this stage, but it is smudged in.



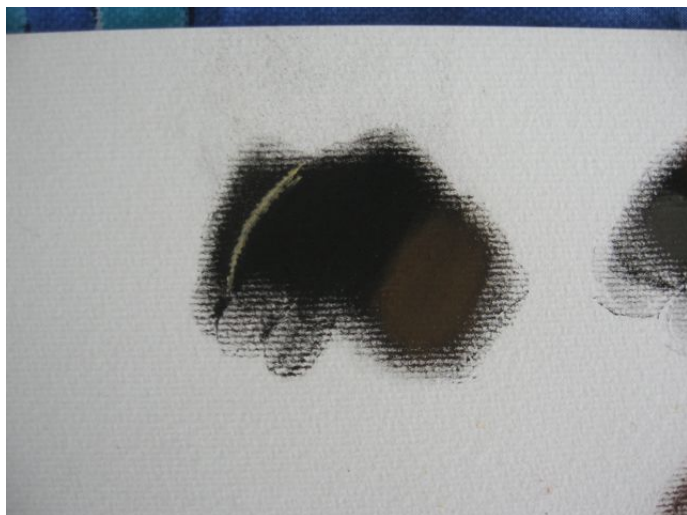
Now I'm adding in the red color to the base.

Because the light is falling from back left across my subject I am going to "lighten" the left side of the background. As you can see, I start with laying down a bit of the red, blend that in then add a bit more.



You may not be able to see it in the photo as I've not lightened it too much, but chances are I'll lighten it further later down the track and may even bring in another color....it's "wait and see" time. But I'm happy so far.

Step three



Just to make sure the strands of hair are going to work o.k. on the black background I've used my spare paper to test.

Using the same yellow base I put a stroke across the black and did it again over the top of the first one.

NOT smudged.....great it works.

Now that I know everything works I make sure I'm correct with where the bulk of the hair is sitting and I do this how?..... you guessed it - measuring.



Step four

Now I'm ready to bring the black around the top left of the head.



I start by laying down the pastel using the edge of the stick to go around the head.



I've smudged that in but not right to the yellow. I've added a bit of the red and smudged again.



Now I take my finger in a clean glove, lay it on the top and in **one stroke** with a fairly firm pressure, run it along the edge of the black and yellow. If I need to do it again I change to a clean finger.



There we are so far....and the black dot near the bottom of the photo???

That's my glove after doing one swipe. Now, you can see that it's so much easier to just remove the glove than to have to wash that off my fingers!!!

The next chapter we'll be working on the hair.

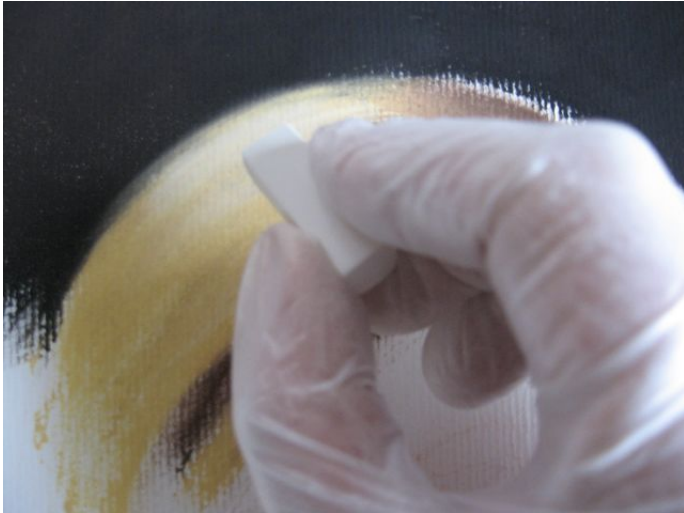
End of Chapter 3

Chapter 4 - Refining the Hair

I am now going to continue with the hair, however, I'm not going to worry too much about the right side. I am right handed so work from left to right, therefore the left side can be done a bit later on.

I want to get the top and some of the left side done before I start on the face.

Step one



Starting with white pastel I lay it down using a medium to heavier stroke (this will depend on your paper as well, so you may like to do a test first).

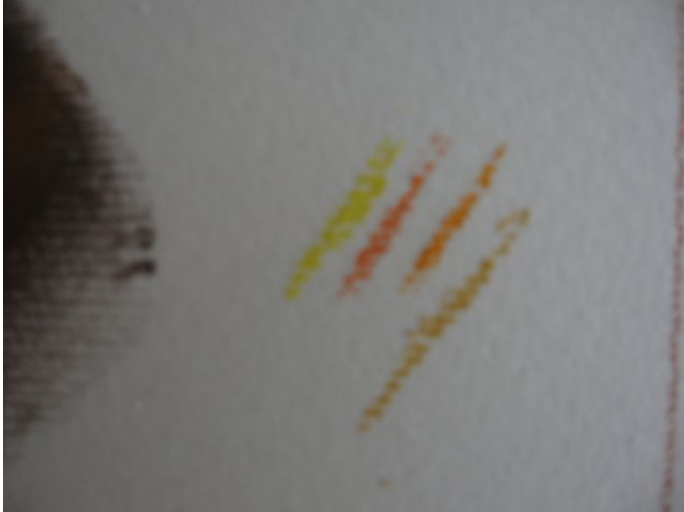
As I'm laying it down I'm tapping off the excess dust onto my newspaper.

The smudging this time is with very light strokes and mostly going just one way.



To get the edge smoothed I've used my paper stump. It's a bit hard to explain how but I'll try....it's more of a press and light stroke one way rather than a back and forth motion. Again test on your spare sheet.

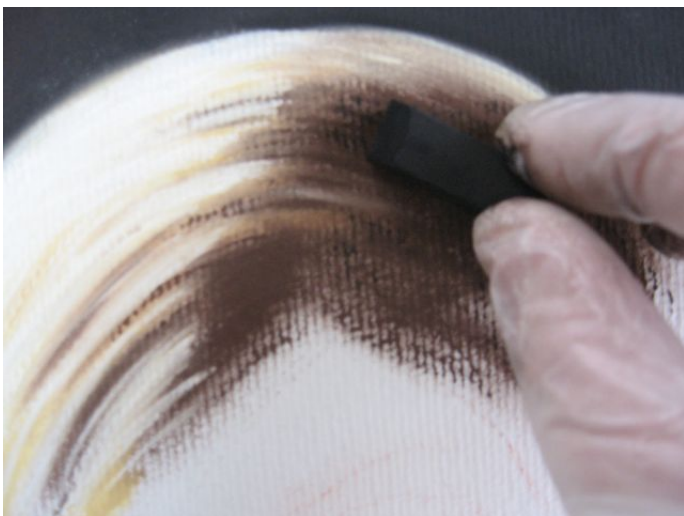
Step two



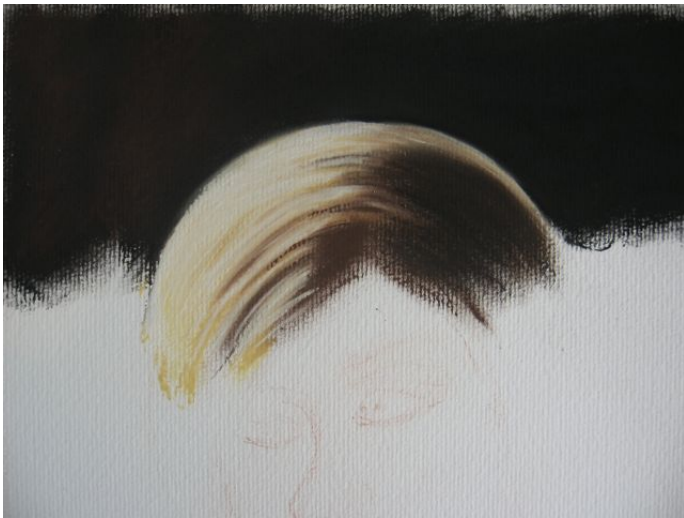
As there are some differences in depth of color in the shadows on the left, I use my spare sheet to pick the color I want to use.



I now want to lighten the background a bit more on the left side and so again I start to build up the lighter color. However, I may go even lighter later on.

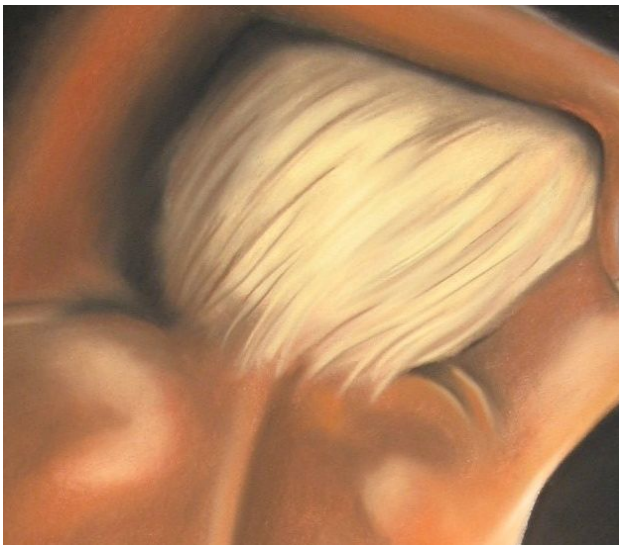


On the right side I want to darken and I'm going to use black. I have laid the pastel on the side and made a few light strokes...this is where the broken pastel works well.



I keep adding the black gently until I get the depth of darkness that I want.

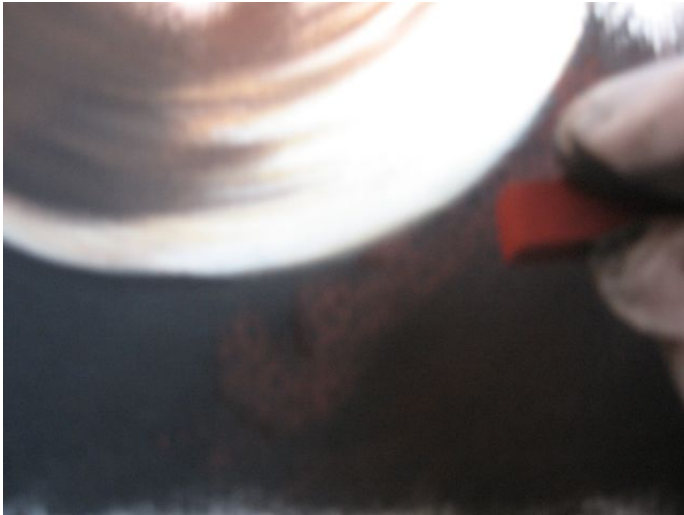
When doing hair, you don't have to put in each strand. This particular photo is good because it has blocks of color, but most photos will have the hair a lot more detailed. So, if your photo is detailed, you still can do blocks of color and get the same effect.



Here is an example from another painting I did where the hair was very detailed, but I blocked it.

At this point I want to tell you that this painting I'm doing is not going to be an exact copy of the photo – if you want to have an exact copy, then keep the photo and don't worry about doing a painting. Painting is all about your interpretation of your subject.

Step three



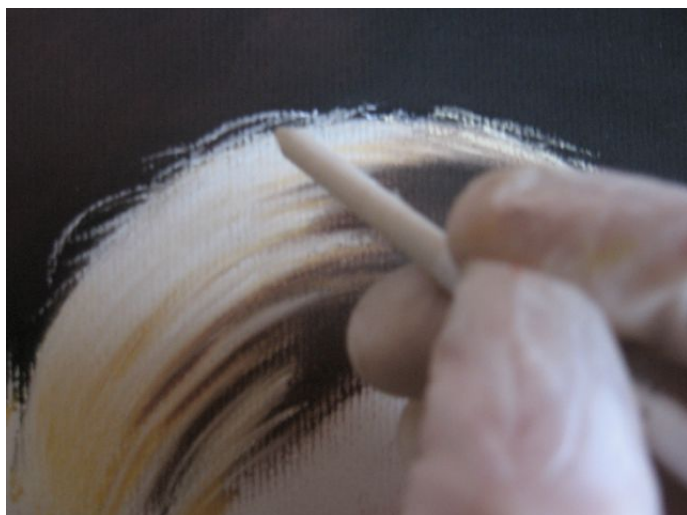
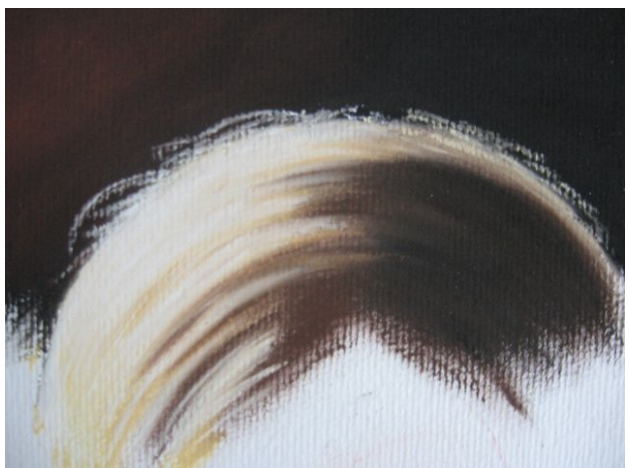
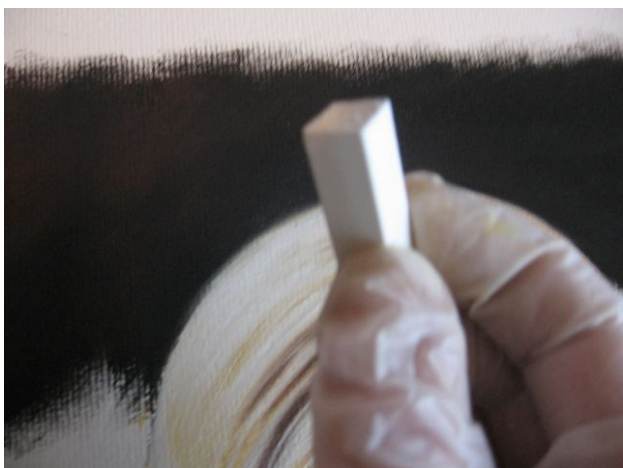
Once I am happy with how the hair is looking and before I start with the strands I want to bring the lighter part of the background to the curve on the head. I do this by turning my page upside-down and again, smoothing the pastel down in one continuous stroke with a clean gloved finger.

To put in those “fly away” strands of hair I use the other piece of the broken pastel – it has a much sharper edge. Have your rag next to you because **after each stroke you need to wipe it to clean it** otherwise you will get muddy color.

It is one stroke, wipe, another stroke and continue like this until you have the hair where you want it.

It is done with firm pressure, (now this is where your pastel could break). Test it out first on your spare paper.

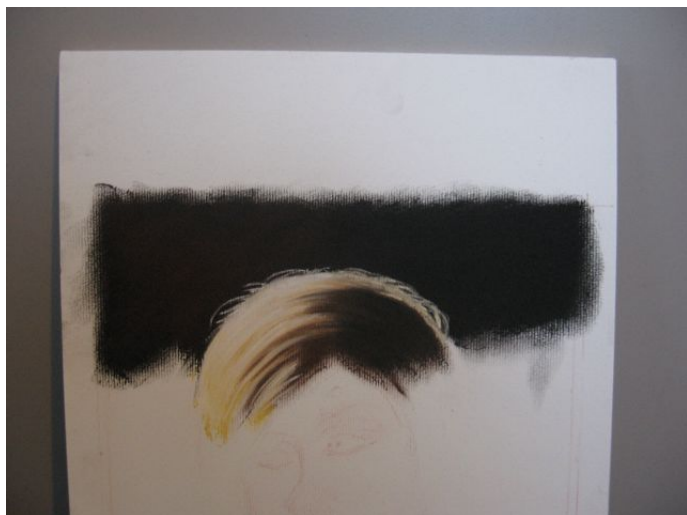
Don't worry if it is too thick...we can fix that.



Now I'm going to use the thinnest of my paper stumps and, rather than use it on the actual strand of hair, I'm going to use it on the black and sort of “draw” down each side of the strand.

I then add more hairs and use the stump and continue to do this until I'm happy with the result.

Step four



It's at this stage I put the painting against a wall and stand back to have a look. Is it light enough? Do the strands of hair look right? If you go back to the original photo you'll see that I'm not pedantic about getting all those strands of hair – what I want to achieve is the illusion.

Sometimes less is better. The human eye is an amazing thing when looking at a painting as it will “fill in the blanks”.

I'm now happy with how it's coming along, I may come back later, but for now the next step is to do the face.



End of Chapter 4

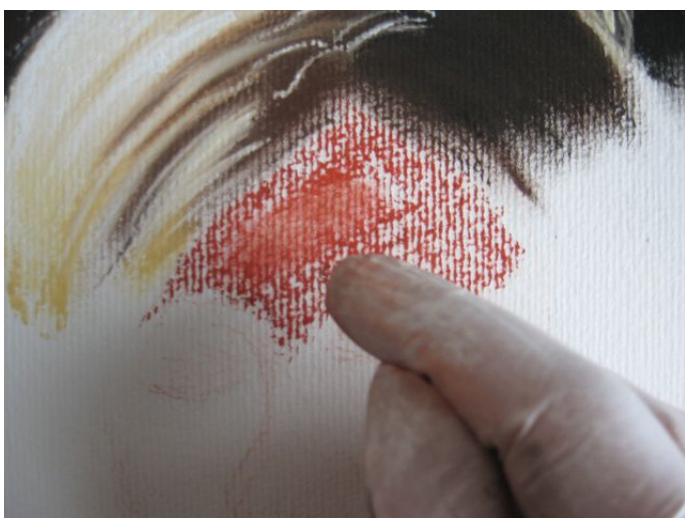
Chapter 5 - Beginning the Face.



Tip: To sharpen or get an edge onto the pastel I have some medium grade sandpaper handy. This is also good for "cleaning" the paper stumps. Be gentle to start....you'll get used to it.



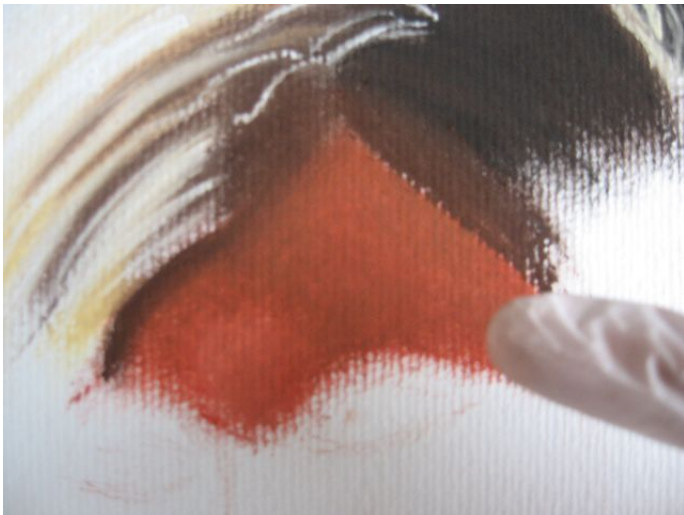
Using pastel, pastel pencil and a paper stump I work a bit more detail into the hair - repeating the same process as the "fly away" hair in chapter 4.



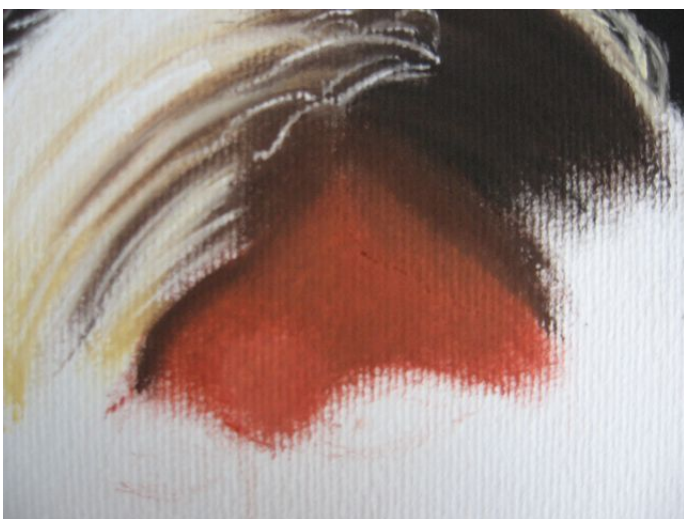
I start by laying down the dark color of the skin tone that I've chosen and smudging it into the paper. Do a second layer over the top. I've brought this color right down to the eye going over where the eyebrow will go.



As my subject is in a lot of shadow and I'm wanting this dark/light dramatic effect I test my colors on my spare paper first. Skin base, white to bring it up to a more skin tone then add the brown....or should I go with skin base with a medium or dark brown? I choose the medium brown straight onto the base and will play around with the dark and black for extra shadow.



I have added the dark brown to the hair on the left and blended it gently onto the skin as well. This is using those small circles, but going over both the brown and the skin....light to medium pressure.



Now I bring in the black to give the hair definition from the face ... you can see where I'm starting to create the shadows.



Using everything from above I've continued applying small amounts of pastel, blending, then a bit more, blending etc until I'm happy. I've also added more of the hair and background on both sides.

I Measure again. For this painting it's one "eye" wide from the left side of the face to the edge of the hair.... this gives me a guide.



Next part is the eyes. I'm doing both together as well as the skin around. So first I use the ruler for the angle. Place the dot in both corners of the right eye.



Again get the slant (angle) from both inner eye corners. I already know the eye is 1inch wide and that there is one "eye" between or over the nose. So, once I have the angle and allowing that nose inch I know where to put the dot. Do hope that makes sense.

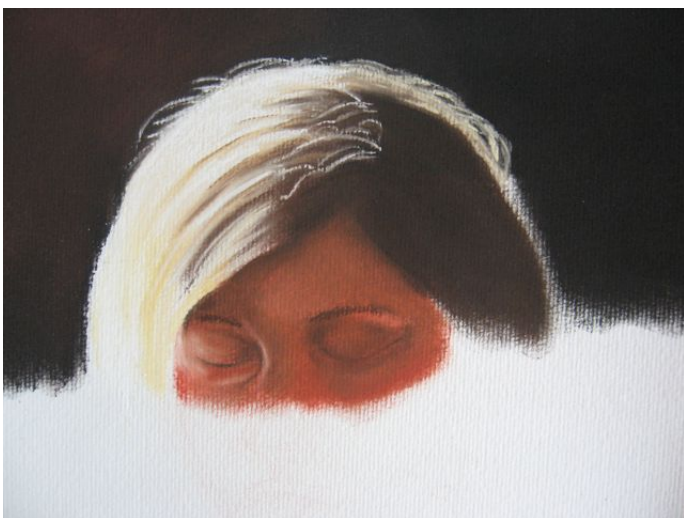


The last measurement or angle is the left eye which looks curved optical illusion, it's actually quite straight from corner to corner. Whew, I'm glad I used the ruler. In saying that, once the eye is all finished and I have done a bit more to the face, I will look again....it may be straight on the photo, but will it necessarily work on the painting???

Sometimes you do have to "make adjustments", but you do this near the end when you are standing back and looking.



So now I sketch in the eyes. This is where, if the subject you are painting has open eyes, please go over to **chapter 6** which gives you more on the eyes (both human and dog). So we'll both work away at our paintings and, when you've finished your eyes, come back here.....see you soon.



Good to have you back - this is where I'm up to.



I've continued to work at bringing both sides down to below the eyes. For the background and hair I have used the same methods as before.

I'm not so happy yet with the left eye, but it's time to take a break and come back to it with fresh eyes....excuse the pun.

End of Chapter 5

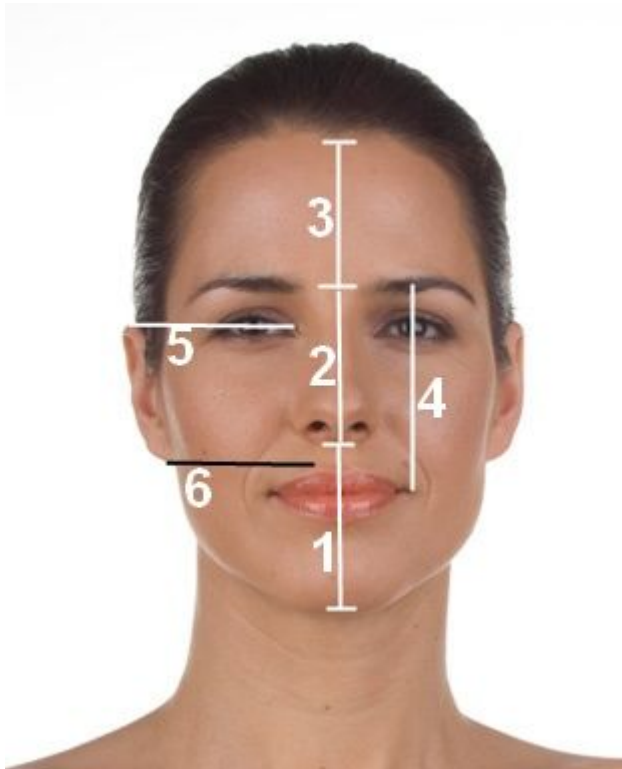
Bonus Chapter - Eyes

Because in my photo the young woman has her eyes closed, I suddenly realized that there is a good chance that your subject has his or her eyes open. Also you could be doing an animal. So here is a special chapter about eyes and I will demonstrate human eyes and doggie eyes.

Human Eyes.

Measuring the face.

I can't stress enough to measure. This doesn't have to mean you have to be good at math (not my best subject), but it does mean in order to get the proportions correct then you need to have an idea of how the face is made up.

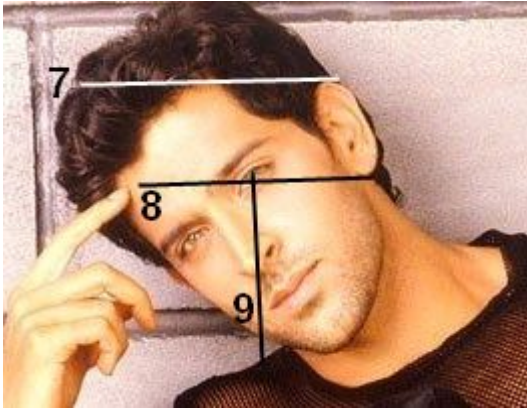


The distance between the chin and the bottom of the nose *number 1* - bottom of nose and between the eyebrows *number 2* - between the eyebrows to the hair line *number 3* are generally the same measurement - this can vary, for example I personally have a large forehead, so 1 and 2 are the same and 3 is a bit more.

And front view the distance *number 5* is the same as numbers 1 2 & 3 (from the corner of the eye to the top of the ear).

The center of the eye is directly to the corner of the mouth - *number 4*.

When working out where the ear goes look at your photo and place a ruler from the top of the ear across in a straight line, then do the same with the bottom of the ear, e.g. *numbers 5 & 6*.

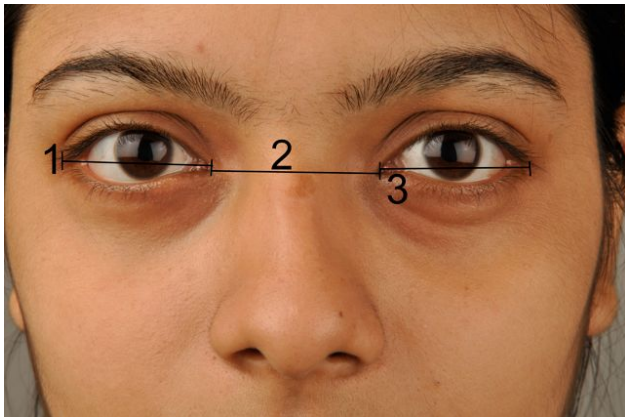


Now, if the head is angled in any way do the same...place the ruler on the top of the ear and go straight across the photo...the ear now is in a different place as you can see in *numbers 7 & 8*.

You can also see that the center of the eye has also shifted in *number 9*.

Once you learn the fundamentals of the face you can easily get your proportions correct.

Measuring the eyes.



Measure from one corner to the other of one eye *number 1*.

Take that measurement and, from the inner corner to inner corner, *number 2* it should be the same.

Number 3 is the same again.

So, the general rule of thumb is that from the outer corner of one eye to the outer corner of the other is three equal parts.

Even if the face is tilted you can still use the same rule.

If you are working with a more profile subject you can always use a similar rule. Check on your photo to see if things are the same size. Lay your ruler across to get positions, then you can transpose these onto your painting.

Once I have the measurement of the eye I use that on the rest of the face, so for example, the length of the nose may be two eyes.

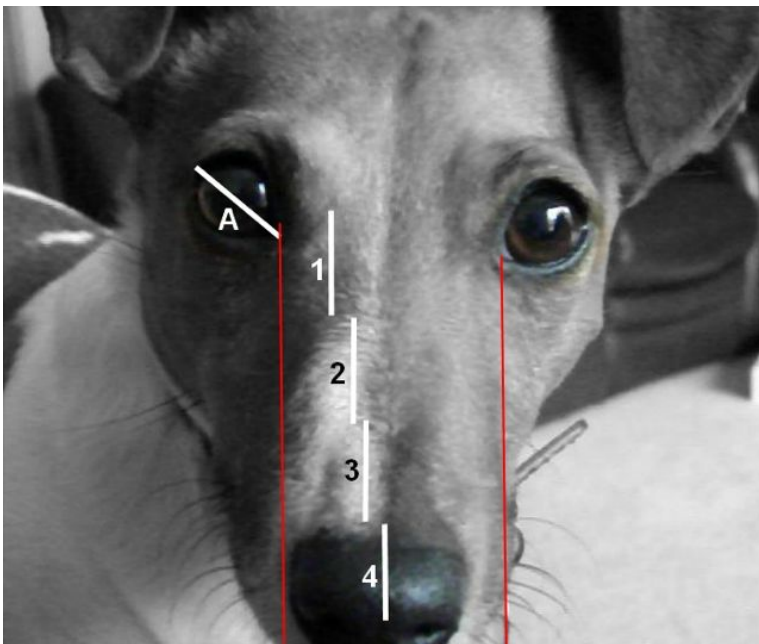
Dog Eyes

Hopefully you have already read up about the human measurements. Measuring animals is a similar process.



In this example you can see that there are now four equal measurement going across from eye to eye.

As dogs and cats and other animals can be different in the length and width of face, I work in "number of eyes". Sounds ridiculous I know, but it works for me.



So here you can see (*white lines*) I have measured the eye from corner to corner (A) and taking it from a point between the eyes, there are four "eyes" down to the nose.

If the photo was complete I'm guessing there would be five "eyes" to the bottom of the mouth.

I've taken the ruler (*red lines*) from the corner of both eyes to see where the nose lines up.

I also know that the nose is two "eyes" wide, so I would start on the left of the nose and work across my "two eyes".

As I keep painting I keep my ruler handy and keep laying it over the photo so I'm lining up o.k. and I continue to check the measurements by using the "eye" as a guide.

Note: This is a demo only so I have only done one eye, both with the human and the dog. I would normally do both eyes at the same time measuring as I go and getting angles and sizes just right. I've tried doing one eye then the other and it just doesn't work for me, but everyone is different so please, do whatever feels right for you.



To get the angle right between the two eyes use the ruler. Here's an example of the dog's eyes and where they are in relation to each other. Can you see just how different the angle is? You can see the slant by looking at ruler versus top of the photo. This is a great way to make sure you have things in the right place.

Even if you are not painting an animal, please read the next part about the dog eyes, I've given more examples of using the ruler to measure.

*Before we go on I'll just mention **the ears** for both human and animal.*

Again using what you've just learned from the above, measuring is important and, using the "eye" as your guide, measure the distance from the outer corner of the eye to the ear. Is the width of the ear a full "eye" $\frac{3}{4}$ of an "eye" etc??

This is especially good if you have a profile or a large portion of the ear is showing. Ears are funny things, they are usually a lot bigger than you think and when you first put them on in the sketch they can sometimes look enormous....but trust your measurements and measure again if you're not sure.

I know we're not doing a full body here, but when I do I measure the head then use that to get proportions....so many heads equal the body regardless if the person is standing or sitting.

My ruler is constantly beside me in order to get angles, and remember, I'm not good at math so I make it as simple as possible.

The next pages are all about the "how to" of the actual painting.

Human Eyes.

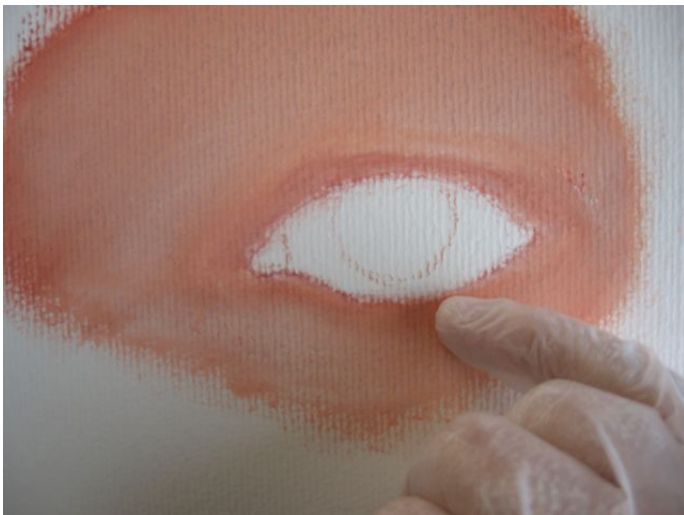
I'm using the same colors as the demo painting....a very limited palette. I want you to see that you don't have to have lots and lots of colors in order to do a good painting.



I have put my skin tone around my sketch of the eye, including where the eyebrow and creases of lid and under eyes will be.



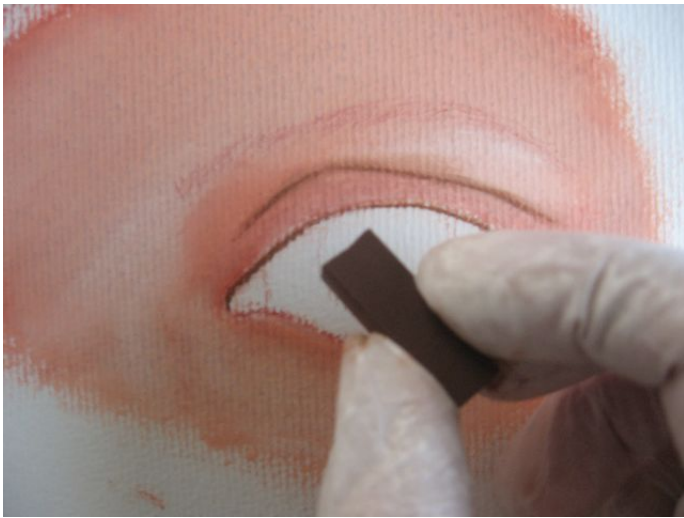
With a pastel pencil I draw out the eye marking in the relevant areas, e.g. iris, corner and upper crease.



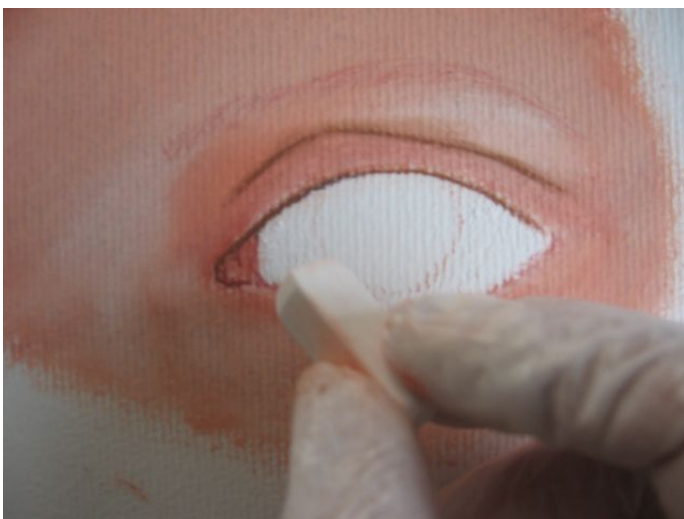
Now I bring the skin tone to that outline and blend with my little finger, getting as close to that line as possible.



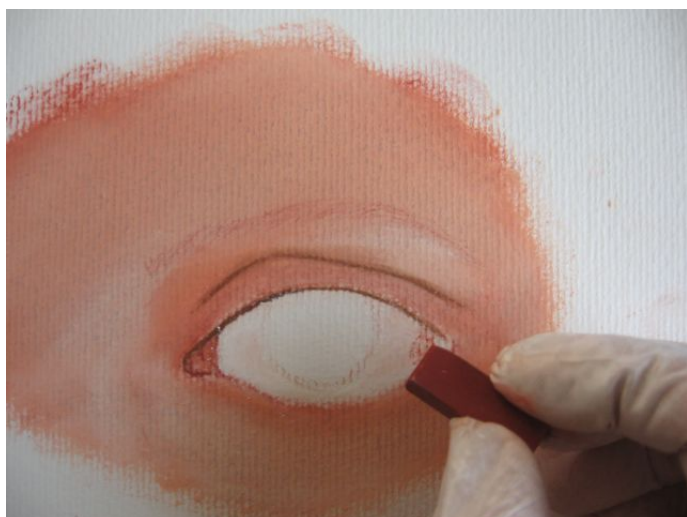
To give me a bit more perspective on the upper lid I put in an outline of the eyebrow. This time the measurement is taken on an angle. On your photo lay the ruler from the start of the eyebrow to the corner of the eye - that's the angle you want, so if you put the ruler in the same position on your painting, you will get the start of the eyebrow.



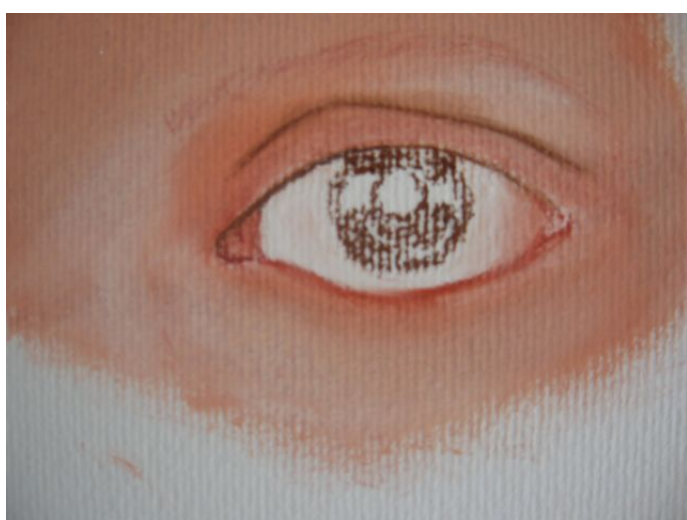
The next step is to get a bit more deliberate with the crease and eye lid. I've also added the color into the left corner.



Before I go onto the iris I lay down the whites of the eyes.



No eyes are perfectly white so I blend in some of the reddish color from the skin tone.

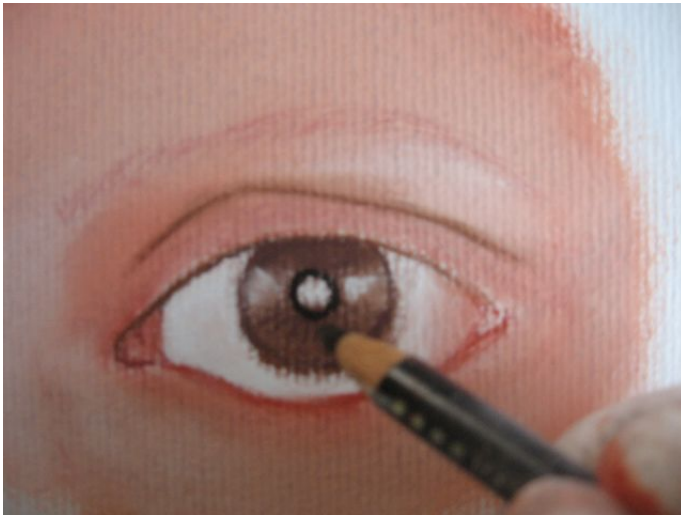


The iris is next. To begin I'm using a medium to dark brown and I color in the parts that are darker, leaving the pupil and the "shine". Blending with little finger.

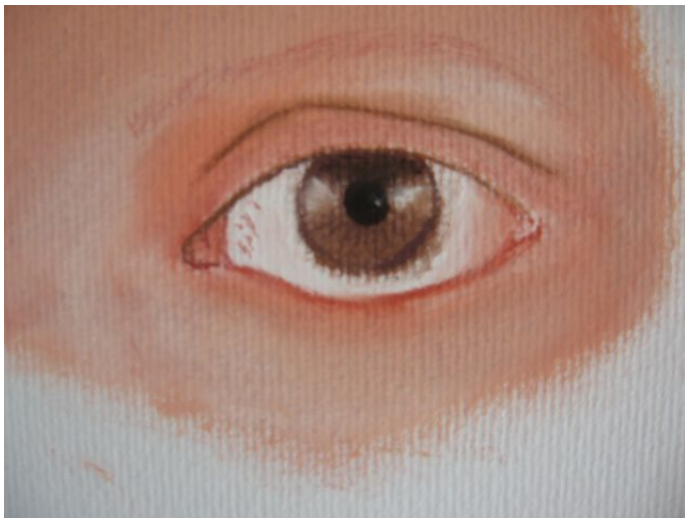


All this part of the eye is done with pastel and pastel pencil.

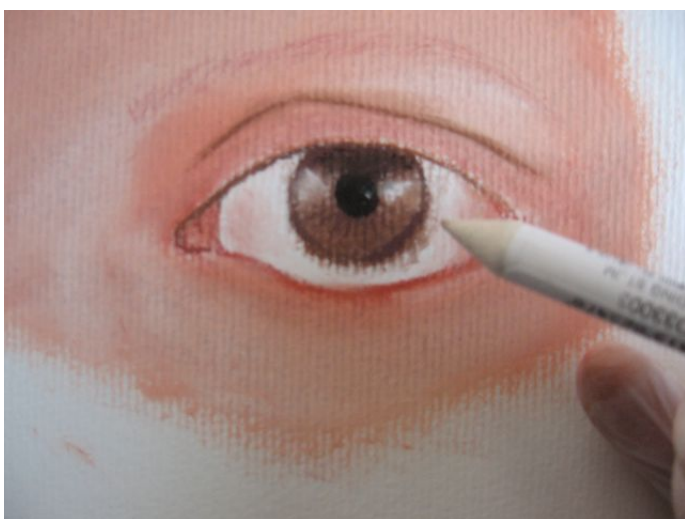
Note: If your finger is too big to get into the tiny parts then blend with the same or similar color pastel pencil.



The outline of the pupil is done with pencil, but I do like to use pastel for the center as it gives a better quality blackness. (You can also see in this photo that I have added more white to the "shine" or "reflection" in the eye). Once I've got the black pastel into the iris I use my black pastel pencil to blend it.



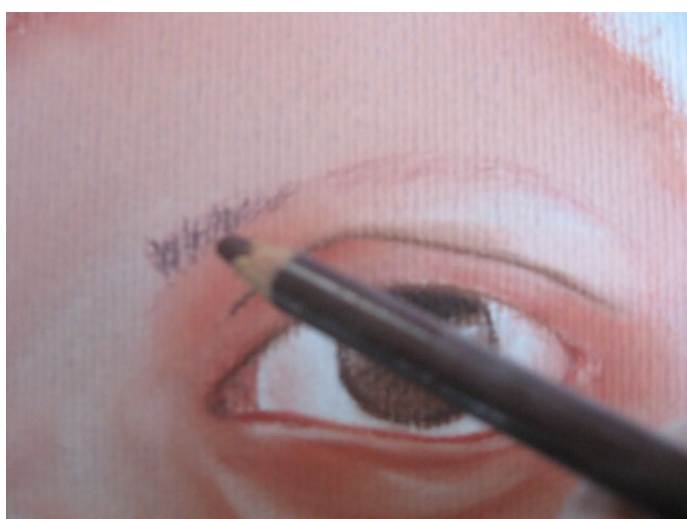
Now, the eye is starting to take shape, however, there is a lot of the brown smudged into the whites of the eye. You can also see that I've added a bit of the red to the left on the white.....only a little which I will blend.



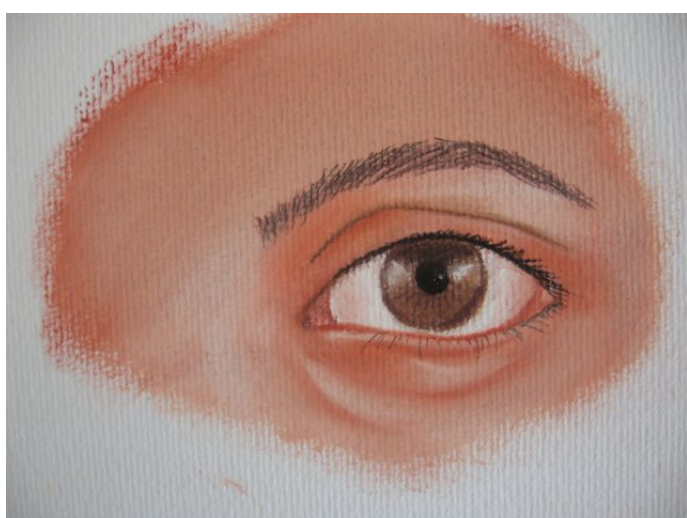
To correct use a clean paper stump to "wipe" away - it will blend a bit, so go back in with the white pastel. The stroke of the stump is a medium to firm...but start gentle and get the feel of it.



Now, looking at the photo and what I've done, I'm not happy with the distance from the bottom of the iris to the lower lid. This is fixed by using the pastel to adjust that bottom area. So I work away with my red and white and put in the creases under the eyes as well.



From here on in it's a matter of fine tuning it, continually checking the photo and the painting. Using both pastels and pencil I put in the eyebrows, darken the iris and add the little lines.



The last to go on are the eyelashes. Have a good look at your photo...even go online and study how lashes grow and what part of the lids they grow from. In fact, while you are looking up about eyelashes, have a look at how the eye sits in the socket, it will give you a better understanding of where your shadows should be.

Dog Eyes

The colors I'm using in this demo are black, white and brown.



As with the human eye, the eyeball is in a socket which, in this picture, you can see protrudes more than a human eye, however, the painting principal is the same.



You will already have the outline sketched out using the dots or grid as in chapter 1.



As you can see the eye from corner to corner is on an angle. To get this angle right put the photo carefully next to the eye sketch and lay the ruler across going from corner to corner on the photo with the ruler extending onto the paper.

You will probably need to slide the photo and ruler down in order to get the ruler through the middle of your sketched eye.

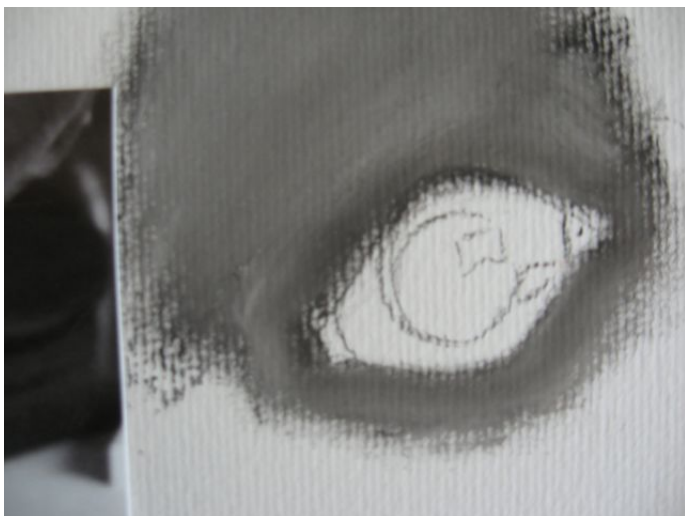
Mark the corners on your paper - this will give you the slant you need to work with.



Lightly sketch out the eye. If you look at the photo you will see there's quite an angle on the top right side, so for angles like this, again I use the ruler as a guide from photo to paper.



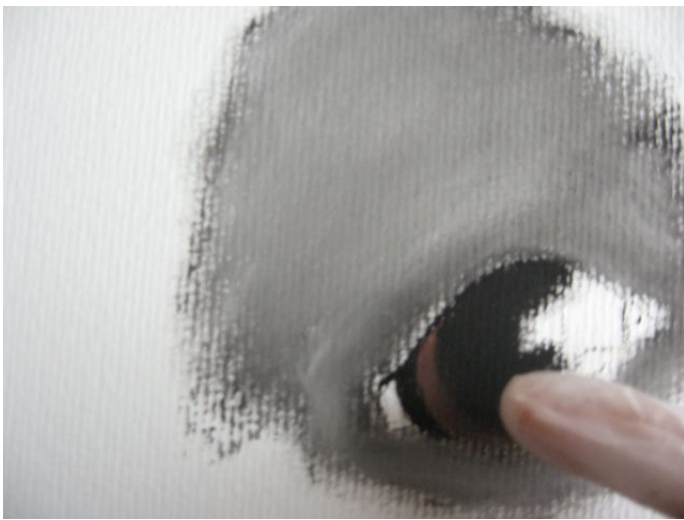
Now I lay down the "skin" color around the eye - I'm not too worried for now about the shape under the eye as this can be adjusted later.



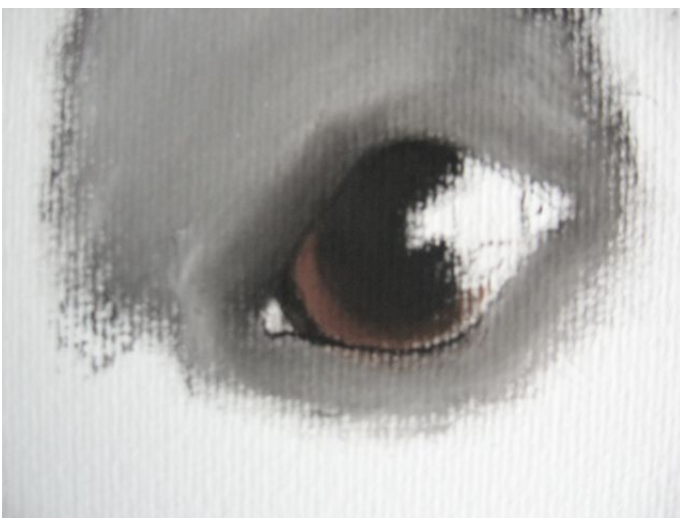
This little fellow has a very large pupil so I've sketched in approximately where it is and marked out the "shine" or reflection.



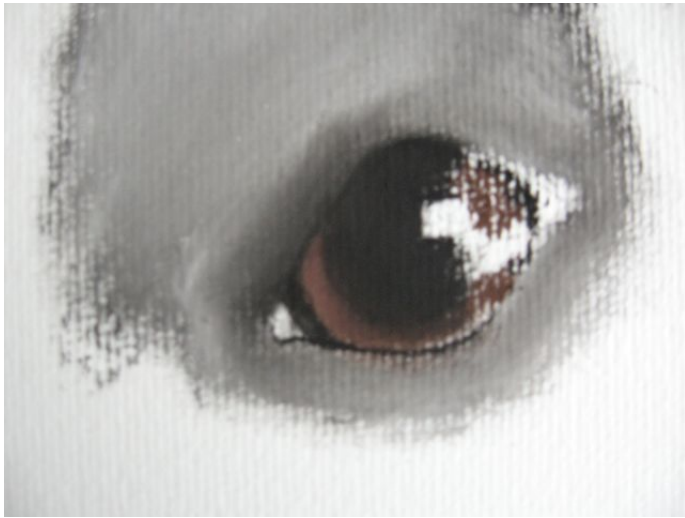
Starting with brown I go around in the iris also putting a dab of white in the corner. Then I use white to lighten a little bit of the brown. I'm blending with my little finger the tip of which is more on an angle as this is a pretty tight spot. From this point on I work with both pastels and pastel pencil (black and brown).



Now I bring in the black pupil, adjusting with the brown and black to get the right shape and leaving the area of the reflection.



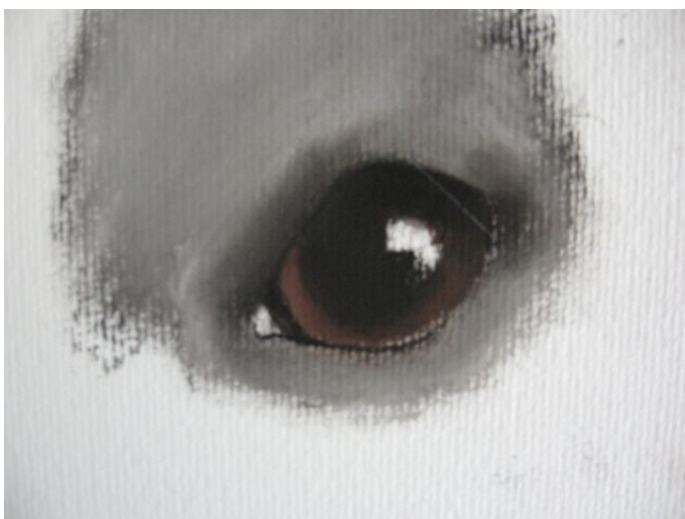
I am also tidying up the inner corner of the eye where I've put the white. To dull the white I use my glove that I've used for blending the black and gently give a couple of presses - this imparts some of the black dust that's on the glove. You can see that I've also started to darken the top of the eye to begin creating the shadows.



The right side is a bit of a mixture of brown and black and is quite difficult to see clearly on the photo. This is where artistic license comes in, so I lay both black and brown and blend together. I'm also not being pedantic about where I put the reflection.



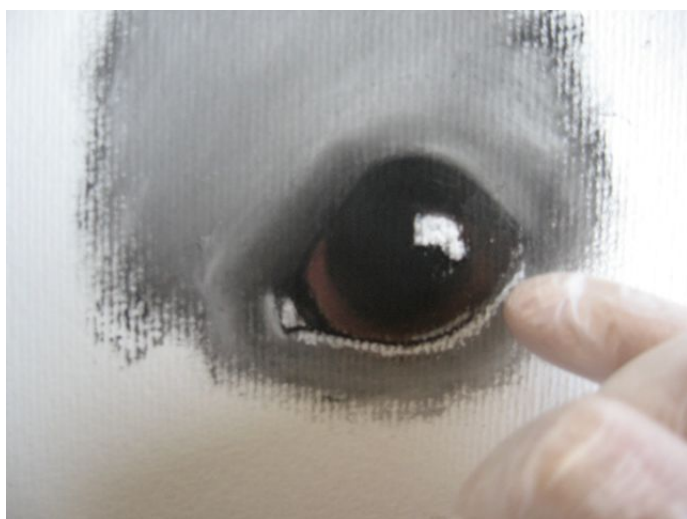
Now I notice that I don't have the angle right...so what do I do?? You guessed it, bring out the trusty ruler! It's easy to make the adjustment by using white to tone down the hard black.



I've drawn a faint line with my white pastel pencil along the ruler to get a better angle. It's a little too sharp, but now I can certainly see how far out I was.



So using white pastel and the line as a guide I begin to correct.



Under the eye I laid down white pastel and blended with the "clean glove, one swipe" rule. Next I'll tidy that up with black.



So now I'm pretty happy with how the eye is looking. All that remains is getting the shading above and below.



Getting the line of the head, again I've used the ruler to see where it comes to on the photo, and then put it onto the painting.

So now it's finished....we'll get back to our painting.



End of Bonus Chapter

Chapter 6 - Doing the Nose.

Now that the eyes are done and I am pretty happy with how it's looking so far, I'm going to continue going down the face. So the next step is the nose.



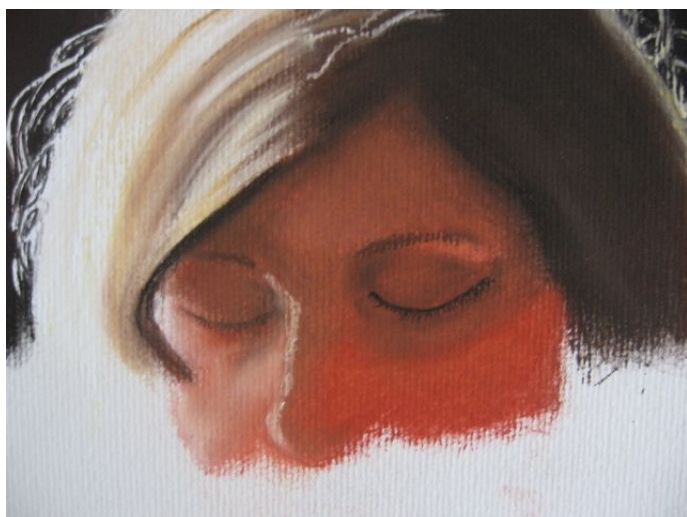
Knowing that my face is divided into three, I check again the distance from the hairline to between the eyes and make sure the distance is the same from between the eyes to the base of the nose. (It isn't always equal so make the adjustments as necessary.) Roughly sketch the end of the nose so you have a guide.



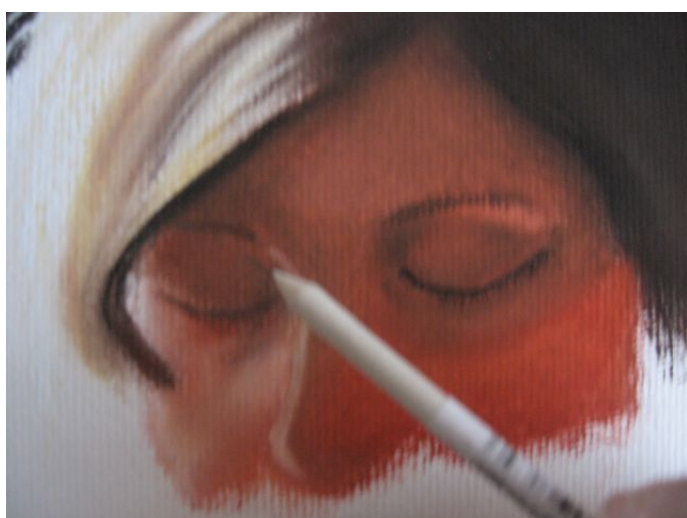
I've laid down the two coats of my base pastel, smudging at each layer and getting it blended into the above skin that I've already done....you don't want to have a line.



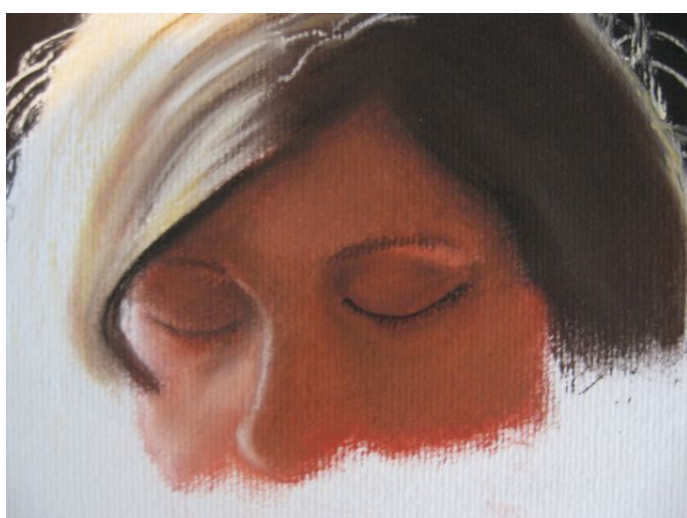
By using my ruler on the lighter photo I can see that the widest part of the nose (the tip in this case) is directly in line with the corner of the eye - I mark that too for a guide.



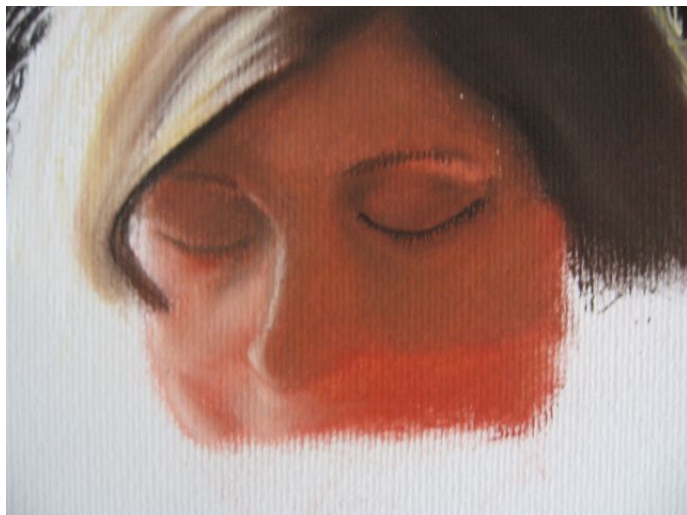
I can see that the curve at the bridge of the nose is not enough, so I lay down more white pastel using the edge that I've sharpened on my sandpaper. Now, very, very gently - swipe to smooth it out. Oh, and a clean glove finger.



Now, using more of the side than the tip of the paper stump, I gently move the dark pastel into the white to blend it and get the shape I want. This takes a bit of time as I add bits of pastel, both dark and light, along with the paper stump....just gently does it.

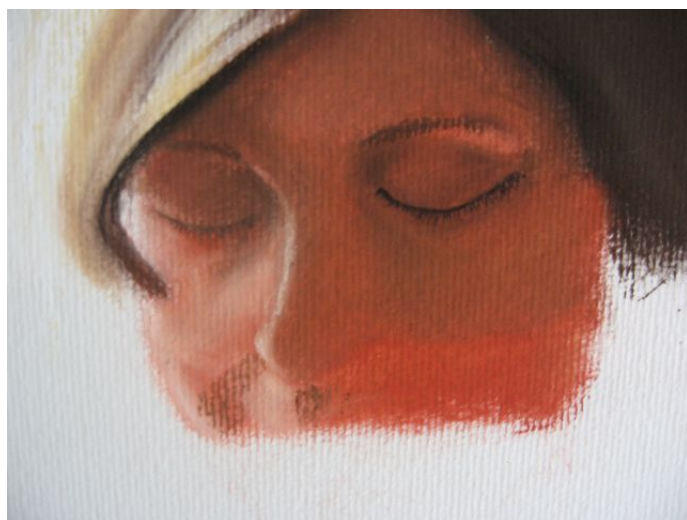


Once the light on the left side is done it's time to put the shadow down onto the right.



Next thing is to finish off the nose. I'm happy with where it's sitting so I add more base color and take it down to near where the mouth will be.

This is where I'm going to not do the "normal". Usually in pastel painting the dark layers are laid down first then you get lighter and lighter....however, all rules need to be broken!!! I'm putting in the light areas around the left of the nose first, as you can see above.



For the shadows I'm using the side of the pastel and a technique called feathering (refer to my Pastel Painting Secrets book for this), the difference, however, is that I then gently blend. I'll be doing the same on the other side. I'm just going to work away with my colors.....if anything needs changing or adjusting I will start the change by putting the base color first then the dark, medium

or light...this will help to prevent that muddy look.

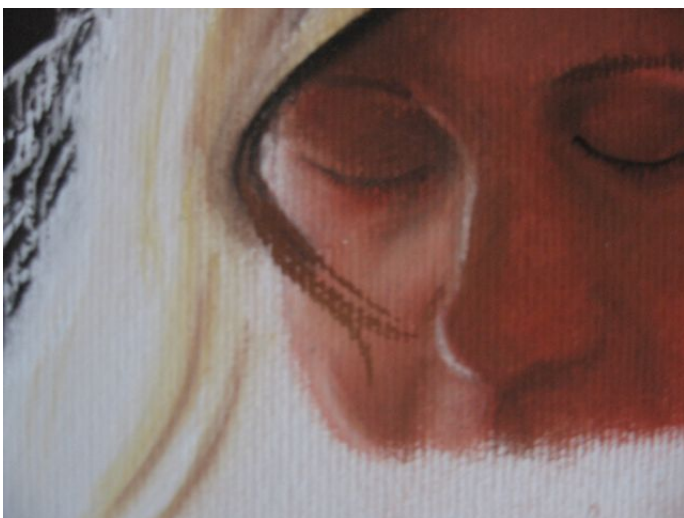
The trick is to lay the pastel down lightly and blend. Just keep repeating this until you are happy. If your pastels are really soft make sure you apply a very light touch. It really is better to do little and often rather than thick and few.



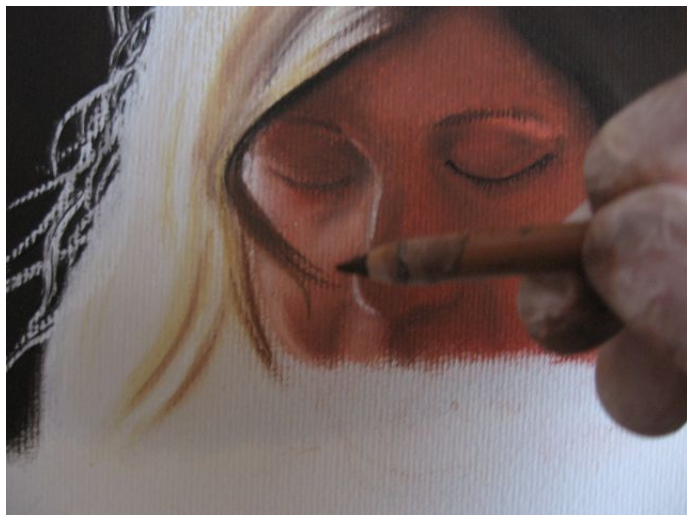
O.k. so I'm pretty happy with the nose. The next step is to bring both the sides down.



I begin by laying down the white to get the width, then follow that with my black/red mixture. As I've blended, some of the black and white have merged, so I use a cleaned (remember, use the sandpaper) paper stump to remove the excess, then go over it again with the white.



The hair across the face is done with the edge of the pastel, "swiping" round...that's the best way I can describe it...gently blend. The pressure is firm, but then my pastels are medium to soft, so if your pastels are soft then don't press as hard – maybe you should test???



Now I'm going to create some strands of hair with a dark pastel pencil.



The other side is completed but not taken down quite so far, as I want to get the rest of the face done first. But it all seems to be coming together o.k.

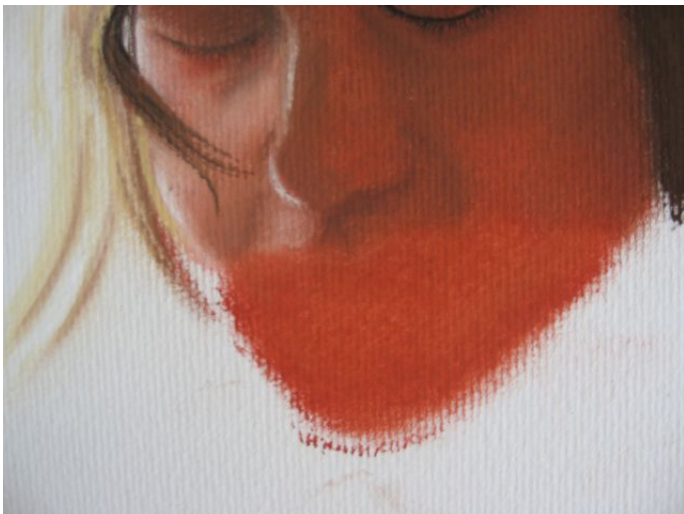
End of Chapter 6

Chapter 7. - Mouth and Chin

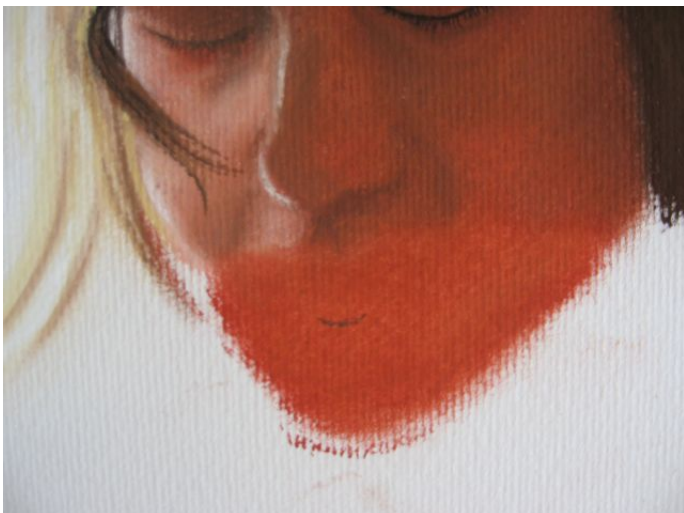
If I have an ear or ears showing then I usually do them at the same time as the nose, working across the paper, making sure I use the ruler to measure distance and slant.



I mark out where the tip of the chin is going to go.



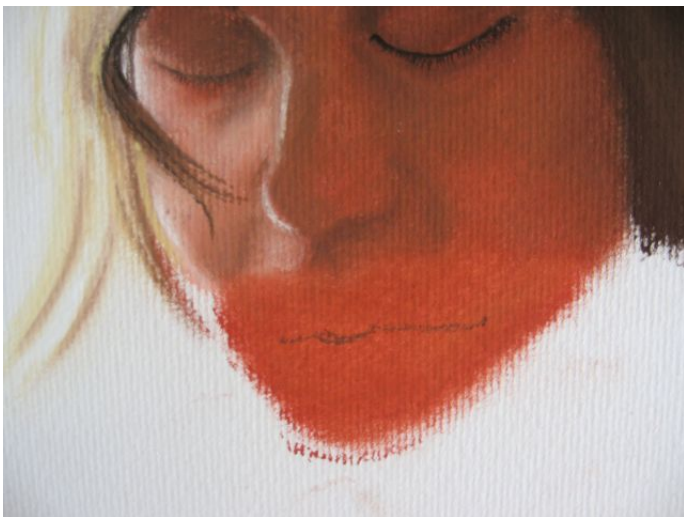
The mouth is the next part I begin and, before I measure out where it goes I lay down my base....again two coats smudging each layer. As you can see I haven't gone all the way down.



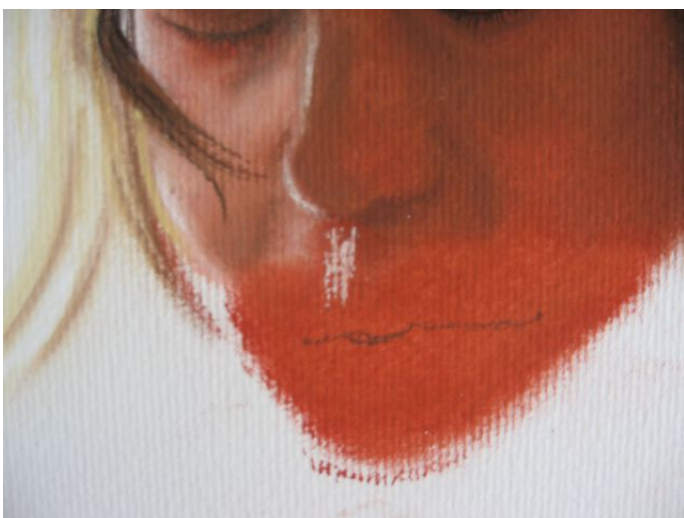
The line between the lips is about $\frac{1}{2}$ way between the bottom of the nose and the bottom of the chin. I mark this spot.



The ruler again! This is to get the start of that line. I also know how far out the corners of the mouth go and I do this by laying the ruler on my photo from the eyes down.



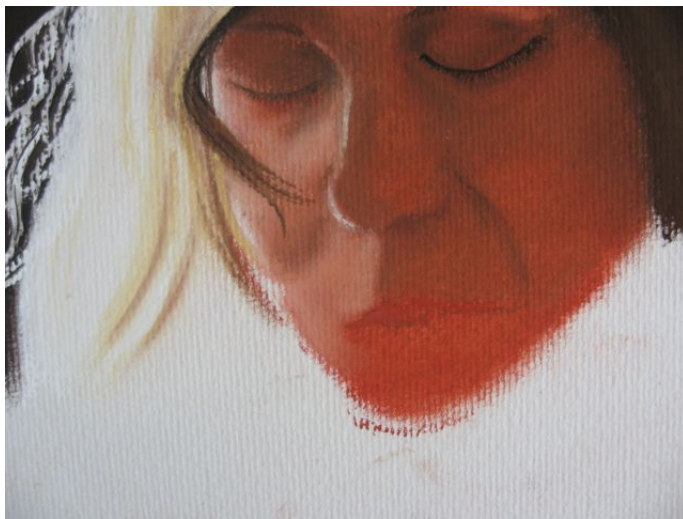
Next I draw the line between the lips to give me a guide.



I can now see a "mistake". The light and shade under the nose is the wrong slant. Easy fix...lay some base color over the dark then lighten with the white to the correct slant.



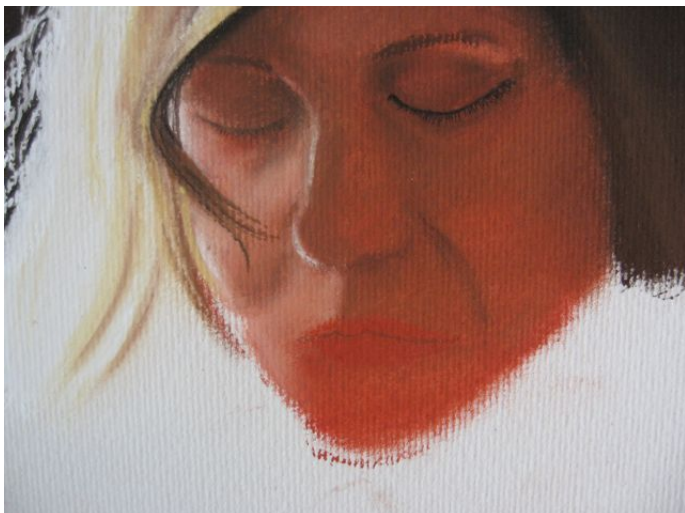
Blended in and it's looking better.



Here's where I've worked with the shadows and, using the base color, put in the top lip. I've propped up my painting and stood back and I don't like where the lips are positioned. Because the photo is small and the painting is large, proportions may seem a bit whacky. This is one of those times, so I'm going to use a bit of intuition or artistic eye and make some adjustments, bringing

the whole lot up a bit. I will start with the base color again.

Note: If you have been going lightly with the layers of pastels, generally you'll see a "mistake" before you put too much pastel on and are therefore able to make the necessary adjustments quite easily. If you have been heavy with the initial layers - not so easy and you may have to use a paint brush to brush off the excess before continuing.



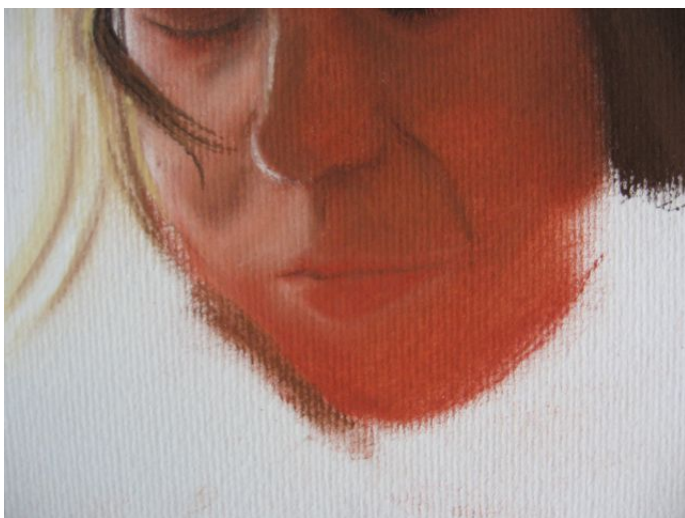
It's looking better. So now I'll work away using the base lights and darks, thin layer upon thin layer, blending between and hopefully getting the basic shape.



Before I go any further I'm going to get the shape of the jaw right.



Again the ruler determines the slant...wow, didn't think it was this much.



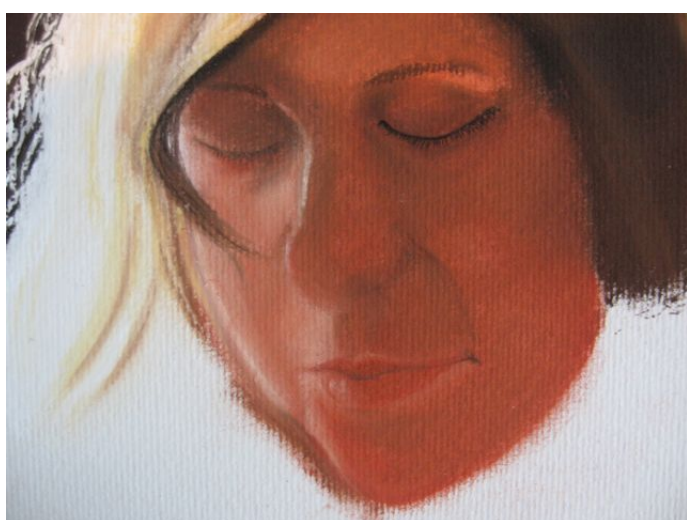
Scary stuff putting such a slant but, with some adjustments to the lips and darkening of the jaw line, I think I'm now getting somewhere.



Now I'm going to work with pastel pencils along with the pastels and fine tune the lips.



I'm still not quite happy with the result but my next step will be to get the jaw line right and fill in the sides.



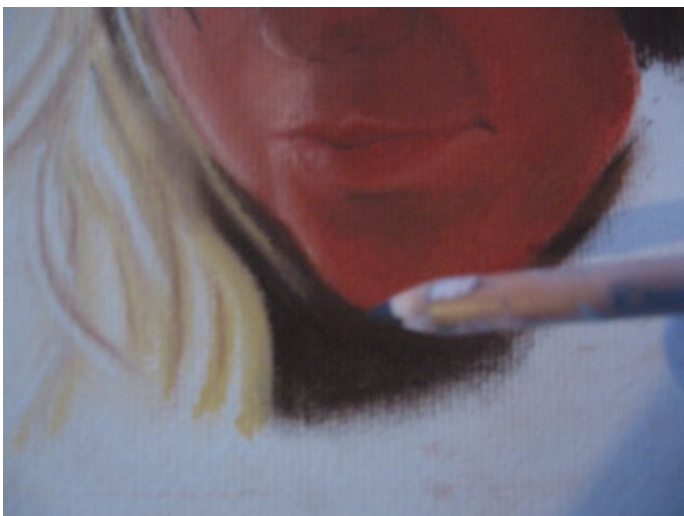
Looking better, however the nose needs adjusting.



From there I start to do the left side. I lightly mark out the shoulder and bring the black/red down.



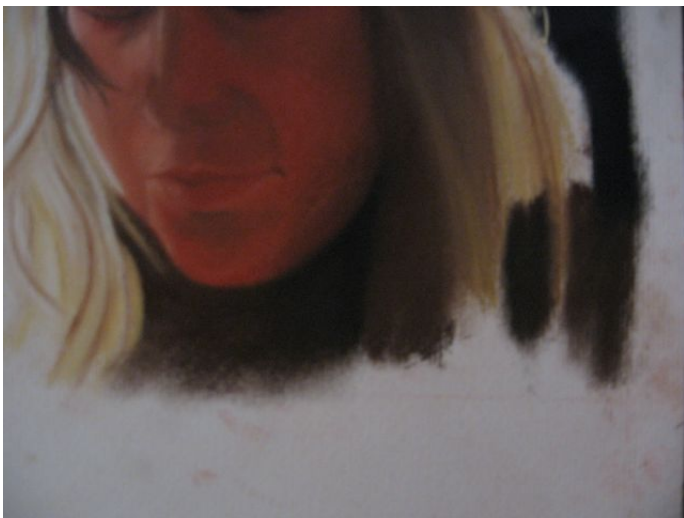
Now I work on the hair, applying the same techniques as I've done before.



Very carefully (because it's dark) I put in the dark area under the chin finishing the line with a swipe then fine tuning it with pastel pencil.



So far it's going o.k. The nose is better and the highlight on the side of the face seems right, there's still some more adjustments to make, but I'll come back to it.



I begin the left side putting in the darks and lights and bringing the black down to the shoulder area.



Now the painting is complete.....but nowhere near finished. The next chapter is on the finishing off.

End of Chapter 7

Chapter 8. - Finishing Off

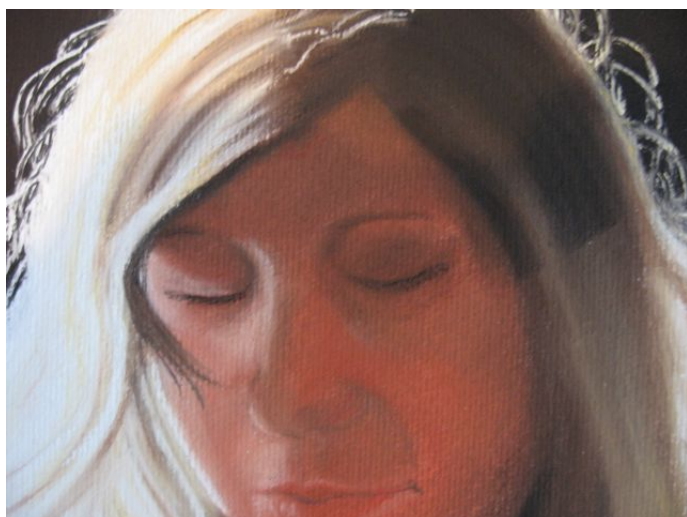
The first thing I do is prop my painting up and stand back and look. What strikes me is that the shading on the right is not blended enough...there's too much difference between the shadow and the skin tone. The other thing is the right eye...I knew I wasn't happy with it. (Have a look at the previous photo).



Now this is where the piece of plastic I suggest you get comes into play. If you don't have plastic then do as fellow artist David Chamberlain from England does and use some tracing paper. Lay the plastic down carefully, you are then able to lean on it. To remove, pick it up carefully (try not to slide it) and wipe it clean with a dry cloth before laying it down again.



With the eye I lay down the base, smudging it in to give me the foundation to work from. Rather than try and "fix" it, I'm doing it again.



I've worked both eyes and also added more black in the hair. I've also darkened the shading on the right of the face....you can see where the plastic has sat across the hair which will be no problem to fix. I've been using the base the dark brown and the white along with a pastel pencil for the eye line.



Continuing down the left side I have darkened the shadows. I lay the dark brown down and with the small circles I blend the dark, working back more into the hair where it's black. Then I blend out into the skin with what is left on my finger (glove).



Again, I keep standing back and seeing how it's looking. I'm going to work a bit of artistic license and do something with the neck. In the photo it is completely dark, but I want just a hint.



At this point I will leave the painting on my easel or propped up somewhere safe for a few days and look at it each time I walk past. Already I can see that the lower right and upper left edges need to be darkened before the framing, and I may work a little more on the neck area, but I've achieved what I wanted and that was the beautiful sunlight coming down on the hair.

End of Chapter 8

Chapter 9. - Done

The painting is now finished, or at least I'm not going to add anything more to it. I have put a little more red in the lips, used a dark brown pastel pencil round the nostrils and down the center above the mouth. I have added more color to the neck and tidied up around the sides and softened up the darkness on the eye.

I have made a border out of card to see what it will be like when framed with a mat board, signed it and here it is.



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my family for putting up with me running back and forth from painting to computer and helping me with the photography.

Special thanks go to

David Chamberlain, England, whose initial question prompted this book to be created and whose questions reminded me what else I should add.

Bobbi Truskin, Florida USA, who has inspired me and followed along with me every step of the way. I couldn't have done it without her continuous love and support.

I also wish to thank you, the user of this book. I truly hope that it starts you on a wonderful journey using pastels.

Happy painting



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Visit my website <http://paintingwithpastels.com> for more details.

End