

PORTRAITS IN SOFT PASTELS with BARBARA ETTER 8 weeks on xxx

Dates: xxx

This 8 week course will cover the basics of **animal and human** portraits particularly bringing an image or drawing to life with colour, detail and dimension. You do not need to attempt human portraits if you do not want to.

Portraits will be done from photo references. Time permitting, animals will include birds, farm animals, reptiles, wildlife, insects and creatures of the sea and ice.

The class will focus on the following:

- ☐ Choosing your picture and composition (where to find copyright free images);
- ☐ Choosing your materials: soft pastels: hard v soft, iridescent or not, pencils v sticks, paper type (velour, Pastelmat, Pastelboard, Colourfix and other papers) and colours (making the colour work for you) – special curated animal and portrait sets e.g. Unison and Emma Colbert;
- ☐ Importance of close and careful observation – where is the light coming from?;
- ☐ Colour, value, line and edge – the importance of contrast;
- ☐ Basic features of the human face, positioning and relative proportions (ball and plane method), the three different zones of the face – getting the biometrics right;
- ☐ How to progress your portrait – drawing up (including using the grid method) colours, layering, dark to light, when to do the background;
- ☐ Being brave and bold with colour – making the colour of your paper work for you, using black paper, blocking out and underpainting – using artistic licence;
- ☐ Backgrounds – including using Pan Pastels – avoiding the “cut out” or halo look and bokeh style;
- ☐ Light and light/shade pattern: light side, shadow side, cast shadow and reflected light;
- ☐ Capturing mood;
- ☐ Getting the right texture (fur, feathers, scales, skin/complexion). Using special texture effects on your paper, as with the waffle/honeycomb effect on Mei Tinte pastel paper;
- ☐ Different types of skin and “fur” (guard hairs v underfur)- [31 Examples of Animals With Fur \(A to Z List with Pictures\) – Fauna Facts](#);
- ☐ Getting the important details right: ears, nose, mouth and eyes and their relative location;
- ☐ The eyes – if you get these wrong, you can ruin your whole portrait;
- ☐ Getting fur or feathers right – nap of fur (“Nap” can refer to any fabric that has a directional appearance or texture), directional movement, intersections;
- ☐ Fixing any mistakes – erasers, going over in pastel, Colorfix pastels in background colours;
- ☐ Setting aside and the final touches – highlights and reflections in the eyes, shadows, to fix or not to fix?;
- ☐ Knowing when to stop, stepping back and the importance of restraint as well as suggestion/indication;
- ☐ Where to find useful online tutorials;
- ☐ Protecting and framing your portrait;
- ☐ Ongoing learning and useful animal artists to follow (eg. Alain Picard, Jason Morgan and Emma Colbert in the UK).

Attendees will be provided with demonstrations and mentored in completing their own portraits as part of the course. Participants will be encouraged to develop their own style and to eventually try different approaches such as caricatures or Pop Art.

The course will cater for the inexperienced as well as intermediate artists.

A number of reference books on portraits will also be available for perusal and inspiration.

The tutor will also draw on lessons learnt from Lyn Diefenbach and Alain Picard, who are very successful pastel portrait artists.

You will need to bring:

- **Reference photos** – your own, or free photos from Pixabay <https://pixabay.com/en/photos/> or Wet Canvas – Reference Image Library under Content Areas <http://www.wetcanvas.com/RefLib/> or see Facebook eg. Free Reference Photos
- Desk easel and backing board (although these will also be available at the studio for use on the day)
- bulldog clips or masking tape
- Paper towel or hand towel
- Baby wipes to clean hands
- Kneadable eraser
- Ruler for grid method use
- Pastel pencil or something suitable for drawing on pastel paper
- Soft Pastels (not Oil Pastels), including pencils (optional) and sticks (in colours appropriate to your subject) and Pan Pastels and tools/applicators (optional and if you have any)
- Quality Pastel papers or boards (including a variety of colours including black). I recommend Pastelmat (available in single sheets from Artery or in pads), Pastelbord or Colourfix.
- Sharpeners suitable for pastels or knives
- Tracing paper and transfer paper (if required) - handy to check whether you got it right or not and getting to know a face you would like to portray
- White and black charcoal pencils (optional)
- Tortillons or stumps (optional) – used for blending

Good sources of soft pastel include:

Jacksons in the UK - <https://www.jacksonsart.com/colour/pastel/soft-pastel>

Senior Art in Melbourne - [senior art supplies melbourne - Search \(bing.com\)](https://www.bing.com/search?q=senior+art+supplies+melbourne)

Soft Pastels Australia - <https://www.softpastels.com.au/>

Pastel supplies are also available from Artery in the Hobart CBD and Adart in North Hobart