



## The Painting Cave

Art Space Solutions #011

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# Selfies

Or should I say self-portraits



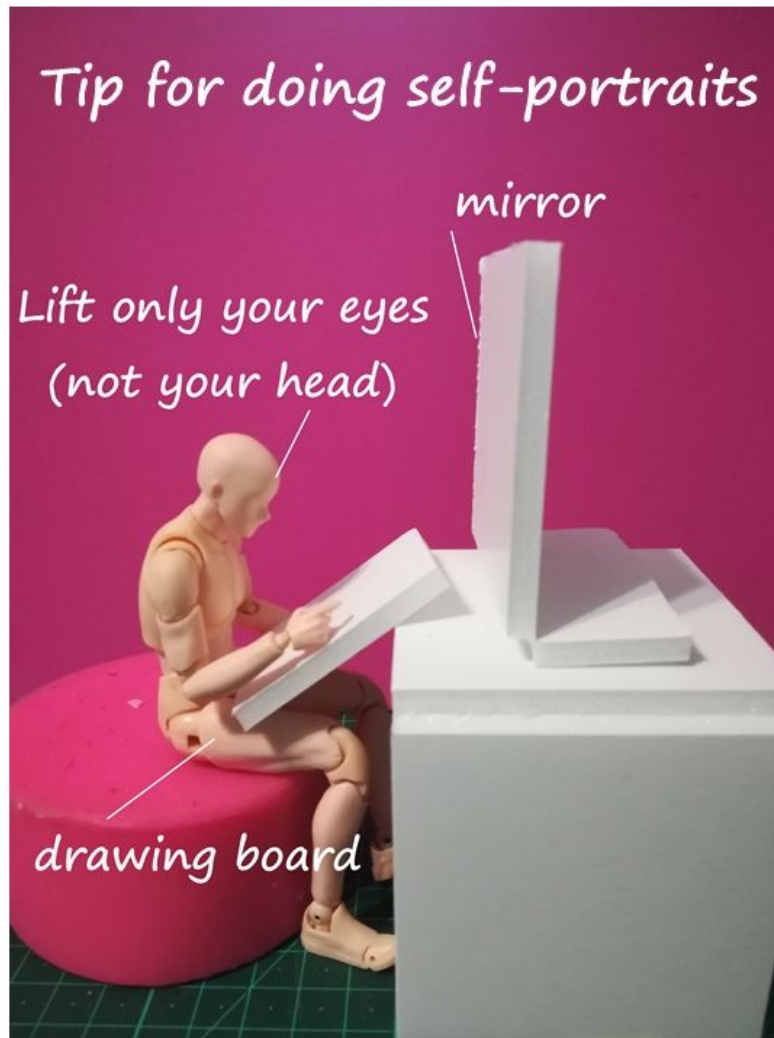
by **Jacqui Simpson** 2019

Creating a self-portrait is something every artist should do some time in their art career, if not, VERY often.

The human ability to recognize “likeness” is fantastic! Have you ever seen a face and said to yourself - “I’ve seen this person before..” Of course, you have. You know that face, maybe not their name, but you recognize a face, Right?

I think this is what makes it most frightening for artists to create a self-portrait because if it is wrong, they know it!

Creating a self-portrait that looks like you takes time and lots of effort. With that practice, you begin to hone your ability to draw what you see and this is why it is a crucial exercise for everyone to practice. I am of course referring to drawing from a mirror. Not from a photograph.



The biggest thing is to sit still and keep your head still! At least until you have all the features in place.

This image above is the way I like to sit and what works best for me. Obviously, you can move your mirror to the left or right, but you cannot turn your head to draw. Just your eyes.

The thing about doing portraits is the you are probably going to look a little goofy. I don't know about you, but when I am concentrating, I pull the worst faces! In the beginning, I realized that I would stick my tongue out while I was concentrating! Terrifying image!



This is a painting I did a few years ago. I went straight on with a brush and had very little light on my canvas as the light was only on my face.

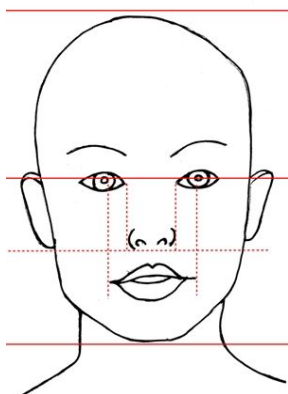
The focus was so intense, that I look like I am angry!

Sadly, until we can draw quickly enough to hold a smile, these are what early portraits look like!

If you draw your eyes first and then you smile to draw your mouth, your portrait will look disjointed because when we smile, our cheekbones move up and we scrunch up our eyes a little bit. So it is important to position your face too!

I like to encourage my students at The Painting Cave to start with the eyes first. The eye (actually ONE eye) becomes the focal point in most portraits. Many say that that the eyes are the window to the soul. When you look at anything, your eye can only see the size of a coin. What you see in your peripheral view is out of focus. So you really do not need to focus on huge detail to gain a likeness. Obviously, the shape of your face, head and the proportion is important, but as far as details go, in portraiture, if the eyes are visible, this is your main thing to focus on.

When you have all your features in place continue and then STOP when you recognize yourself. Take a photograph with your phone or camera and then finish. This way, you will see how quickly you progress in achieving likeness.



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Most importantly,

remember the rules of portraiture!

Please let me know if this helps you. I love making these Art Space tips, but I am not sure if it is actually benefiting you unless I get some feedback. Please let me know what you think our Facebook page - [The Painting Cave](#)

Have a wonderful week

Love Jax



## Who am I?

My name is Jacqui (Jax) Simpson. I am an artist and teacher and have taught many students over 30 years.

I am passionate about Art and about those who want to learn how to create art.

I will be sending out tips, tricks, and advice to you on a weekly basis.

I am here to help you and I would love to hear from you.

## Stay in touch with us!



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