

Legacy Portrait Painters

Presenting fine oil portraits painted from life by noted professional painters.

PORTRAIT PERSPECTIVES

Number 1 in a series of informative publications on fine portraiture.



Why choose a painted portrait?

Why would anyone choose a painted portrait over a photographic portrait?

There are certainly many very good portrait photographers who shoot wonderful photos for discerning clientele.

However, the painted portrait process and the result are very different from photographic portraits. Fine painted portraits are achieved through techniques unique to the painter.

No two painters see a subject the same way. The subject is filtered through the artist's life experience and shaped by his training and skills. No two painters practice exactly the same technique. This ensures that your portrait will be unlike any other.

Every painter has his/her own process, procedure and technique that are discussed and described to clients prior to beginning the portrait process. A painted portrait has archival properties that ensure that the work of art will endure for ages to come.

The fine art portrait experience

A painted portrait is a special collaboration between painter and subject. Portrait painters work to capture more than likeness, they work to celebrate the character of the subject.

A beautiful portrait is an accomplishment of collaboration. Its qualities are enduring and a legacy for generations to come.

In a sense, the painted portrait is simultaneously a faithful depiction and a subjective expression of the subject.

A fine portrait takes time to create. Both painter and subject require time commitments. Superior portraits are painted from life sittings. Generally, the more sittings the better. A minimum of two or three sittings is essential; an initial sitting is necessary to study possible poses and gestures, make sketch notes and shoot reference photography to be used only as general reference for certain details like clothing.



Sitting for a portrait painter is a relaxed, pleasant and enjoyable experience.



A beautiful portrait is a creation that both painter and subject can take pride in. This example by Don Mullins clearly demonstrates this principle.

Ideally, subsequent sittings are scheduled to develop and complete the painting. If schedules don't permit, the painting may be largely painted in the studio with details polished in a final sitting.

Painted portraits have been the standard for creating unique and lasting images of individuals through the ages. They are the timeless preservations of people, their personality and the world they inhabit.

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Artist Profile: Don Mullins



Don Mullins has a colorful and distinctive style that incorporates a classic appreciation of form with a plein-air painter's love of broad, painterly effects and natural light.

Taught primarily by professional landscape painters and later by the instructors at the Lyme Academy of Fine Art in the classic tradition of figurative anatomy, he has blended the two influences to produce vibrant and powerful paintings.

Don has had success in attracting clients from families and from the business community. He has been painting professionally for 25 years. Born and raised in Odessa, Texas, he now lives in Arlington, Texas, with his wife Karen.

Recent commissions include Jim Gill, bank owner and former mayor of Corsicana; James Parchman, president of CEI international; Arma Fitzgerald, graphic artist and wife of Dr. Lee Fitzgerald DDS, Deborah Mitchell, clinical pharmacist; the children of Pam and Barry Hodge; John Glaze, retired special forces officer and assistant professor of history; Dee Dee, daughter of Darryl and Holly Gabehart.



Mullins has received numerous awards for his work including Oil Painters of America, Portrait Society of America, Artist's Magazine and the Lyme Academy of Fine Art.

In addition, Mullins is a frequently sought-after teacher for local and national art associations. He is a member of The Portrait Society of America.



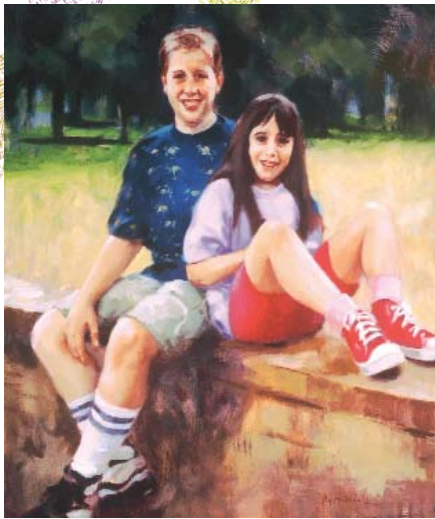
Sitting for a portrait; easier than you think

Most people have the impression that a portrait painting involves many grueling hours in the artist's studio, straining to stay still while the artists works. The reality is much different. Sittings are often at the client's home or place of business, are relatively short and always comfortable. Two sittings are usually sufficient.

The artist takes reference photos to capture necessary details, and uses the live sittings for precise colors or values (darks and lights). Most clients enjoy the sittings and find them an opportunity to observe the painting process and collaborate with the artist.

See our section on children portraits to learn how an artist paints a moving target. Contact the Legacy representative to answer any other questions regarding the painting process.





The challenge of painting children

Parents know that posing a small child for a photographic portrait is difficult. Imagine how much more difficult a painting would be! The portrait artists at Legacy understand and actually have a time-proven method to deal with little ones in constant motion.

The artists take reference photos of the child in different scenarios — changing locales, lighting, clothes, and compositions. With the parents, we then select the most promising painting possibilities. At a follow-up session, the artist ignores the movement of the child and takes color and value notes with his/her brush and paints to provide crucial information for the final painting.

In the studio, the artist combines the reference photo with the “live” color notes to complete the painting. A final sitting with the child to fine-tune the image is sometimes necessary.

Artist Profile: Gene Dillard

Gene Dillard comes to portraiture from a background of extensive academic training and experience in the graphic arts field.

Growing up in Texas in a home filled with art created by relatives, Gene began painting and drawing at an early age.

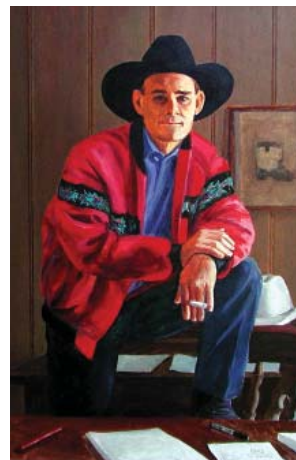
He studied art at Baylor University and completed a degree in fine art at the University of Texas at Austin. He then studied at California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles. He completed his second bachelor's degree at Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles.

He ascended through a career in advertising design as an Art Director and Creative Director for major national and regional advertising agencies in Texas. He worked on such notable accounts as Exxon, Borden, Phillips Petroleum, Frito Lay, Dr. Pepper, Kraft Foods and many others. His ad designs have been published throughout the U.S. in national media.



Throughout his career in advertising he maintained a strong parallel activity of painting and teaching art and design. He taught classes at Southern Methodist University, The Art Institute of Dallas and in the School of Visual Arts at The University of North Texas.

Gallery exhibitions have included Griffith Fine Art, Rutherford Designs, Mill Creek, Prelope Gallery and The Blackland Gallery. His portraits are in the collections of families and corporations throughout the Southwest. He is a member of The Portrait Society of America.



Satisfaction guaranteed

The portrait artists of Legacy have a satisfaction guaranteed policy. That means simply that the client pays the balance only if they are pleased with the painting.

Because the painting is a collaboration with the subject and family, or other painting "sponsors," the results are rarely disappointing. Legacy maintains high standards, because our artists insist on excellence. At the final sitting, the artist will make adjustments to the image and respond to constructive comments from family members or colleagues.

After this sitting, Legacy recommends that the painting be hung and "lived with" for two to three weeks. If, after that time, adjustments are felt necessary, the artist will be happy to make appropriate changes.

The legacy that "great art gives great satisfaction" is our goal.



Steps in the portrait process

You know a painting is just the thing for your home. What comes next?

Our Legacy representative will present you with examples of paintings from Legacy artists. This will allow you to select the artist who paints the images you like best. We will then check artist availability and schedule. The artist will discuss with you the painting you have in mind and offer suggestions.

There are many variables to consider. All of these variables will be discussed, and, with the artist guidance, an exciting new project will begin — a painting customized to your taste and best of all, depicting someone you love.

- Do you want an outdoor painting, or would you prefer an indoor scene?
- Do you require a certain size painting?
- Do you want full figure, three-quarter length, or head and shoulders?
- What clothes do you like?
- Does high key (lighter tones) work best, or are darker tones more appealing to you?
- Do you want to include pets, or favorite objects?

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Contact Michelle Bruins to learn more about commissioning a portrait. She will be glad to present samples of work for your review and answer any questions you may have.

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