

Strathmore 2020 ONLINE  
WORKSHOP SERIES

# HOW TO DRAW PORTRAITS

with Justin Maas

## LESSON 4: A complete portrait in colored pencil on white bristol.

In video 4 we will draw an entire portrait from start to finish in colored pencils on white bristol.

### SUPPLIES:



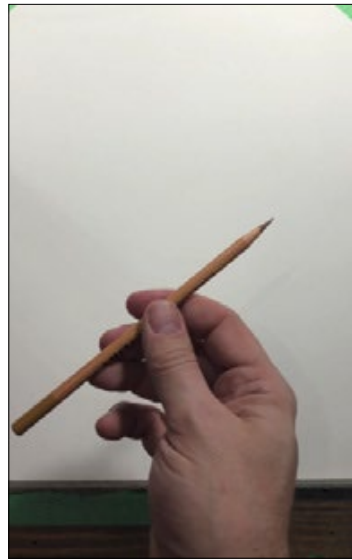
- Strathmore 500 Series Bristol Vellum
- Lyra Polycolor Pencils
- Pencil Sharpener
- Drawing Board / Easel
- Tortillion / blending stump



I am exclusively using Lyra Polycolor pencils. I use the following colors: white, raw umber, true blue, ochre, pink madder lake, black, dark sepia, burnt ochre, Indian red, gold ochre, Pompeian red and Van Dyck brown.



Pick a mid-neutral pencil (like an ochre) so that you can lay down your colors lightly. This type of colored pencil requires layering but you can fill the tooth of



the paper if you work too hard or add too many layers too quickly. Go slowly, go softly and build up your drawing.



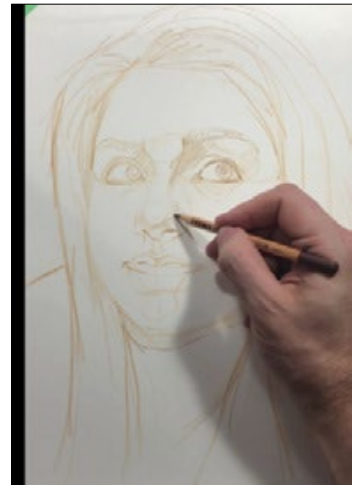
I begin the block in but not with a traditional graphite pencil. Since this is a colored pencil drawing, we will do the block in using a colored pencil. If you use



graphite you will spend a lot of time trying to cover it up and may end up damaging the paper trying to erase it all.



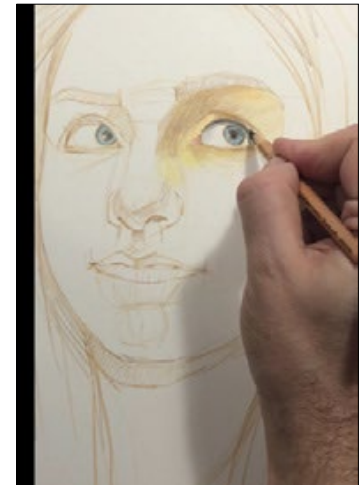
Once the basic block-in is done, I will add a bit of a darker color in



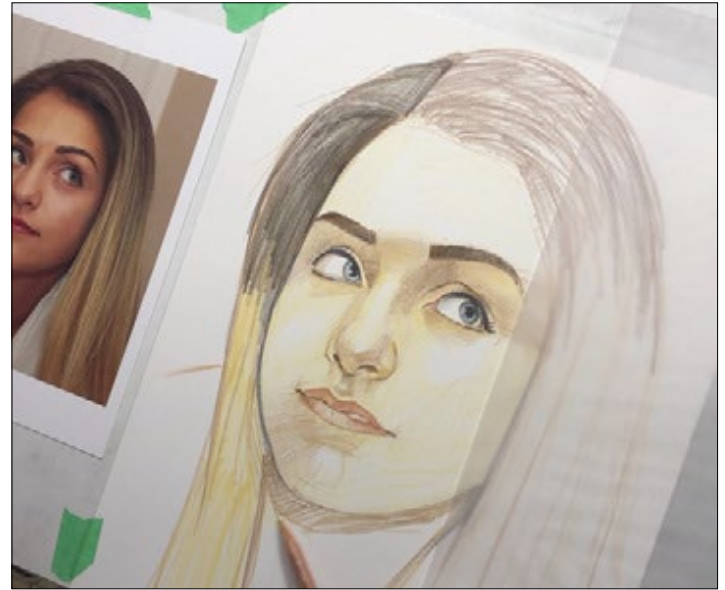
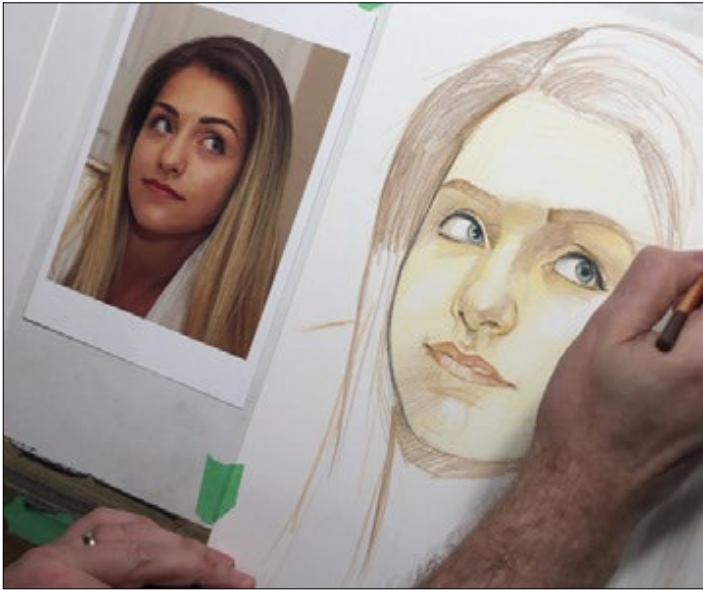
some areas to refine and lock in my lines.



Next comes the base layer. This starts as a very light color

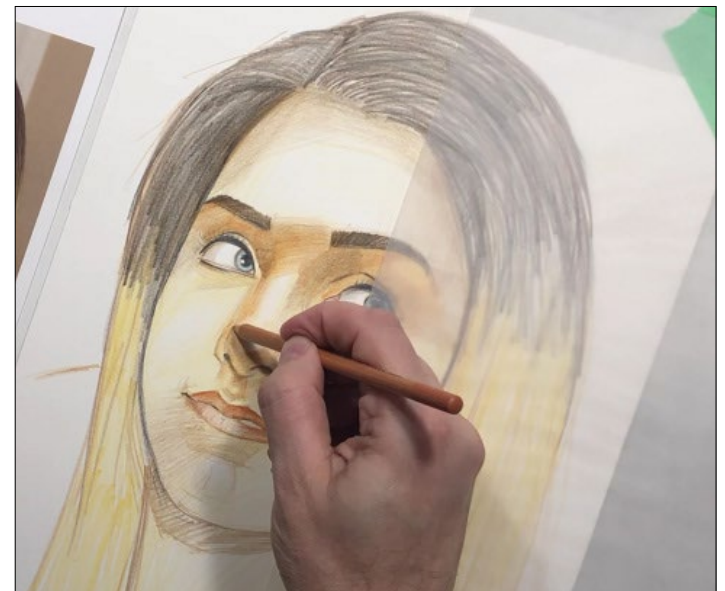
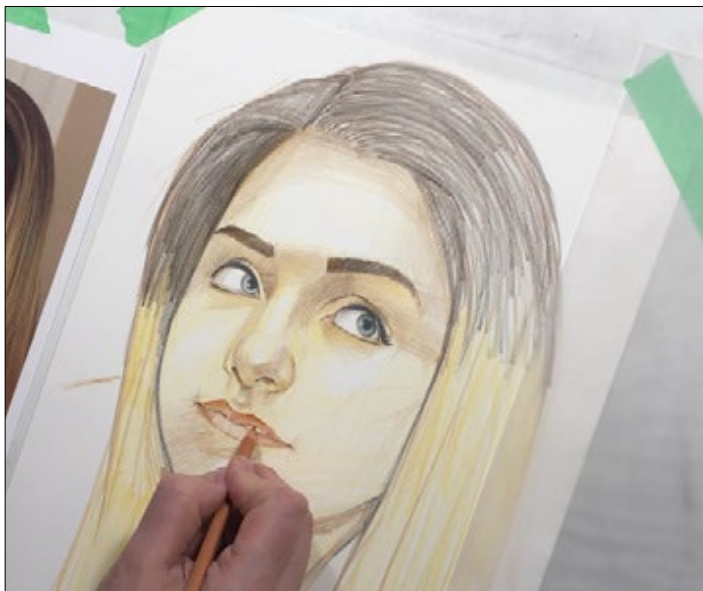


- ochre - in key areas (eyes, skin, hair) to help me develop values.



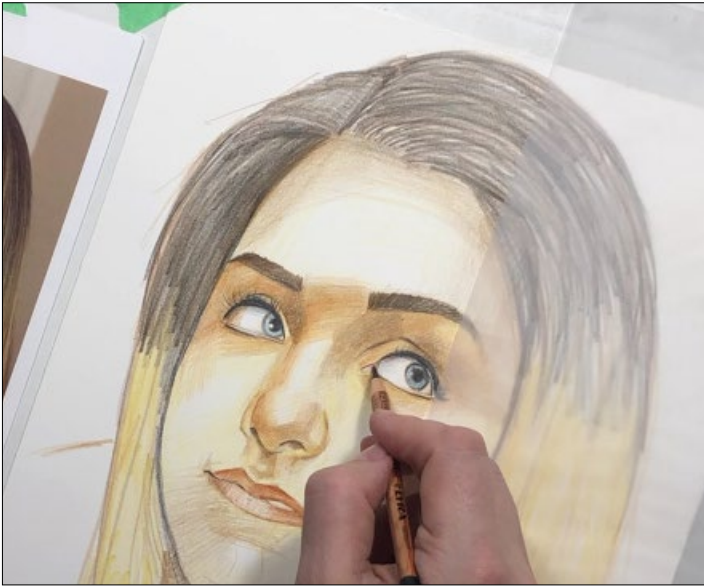
As the drawing progresses, resist the temptation to finalize any areas. Those big, beautiful eyelashes are just screaming to be rendered but I only 'indicate' them at this point because the skin behind that area is not yet finished. Remember: you can't add under-drawing below "finishing touches!"

To keep the oils of your hand off the paper (and to prevent smudging) use a piece of paper or acetate or similar to rest your hand on while working.

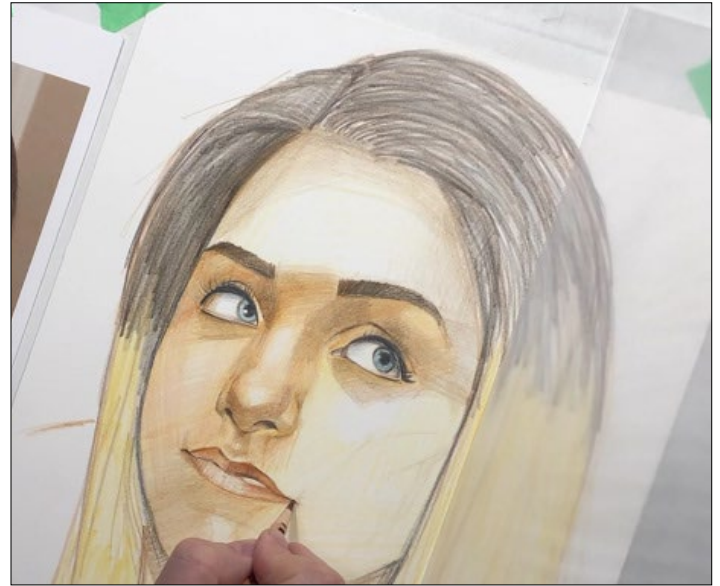


Subtle changes in color - like the lips - should be done gradually with several light layers. If you jump in with a dark red you most likely will create lips that are way too harsh.

Now I begin adding in some shadow. A warm, burnt ochre and various browns help to create this 'glow' on the skin.



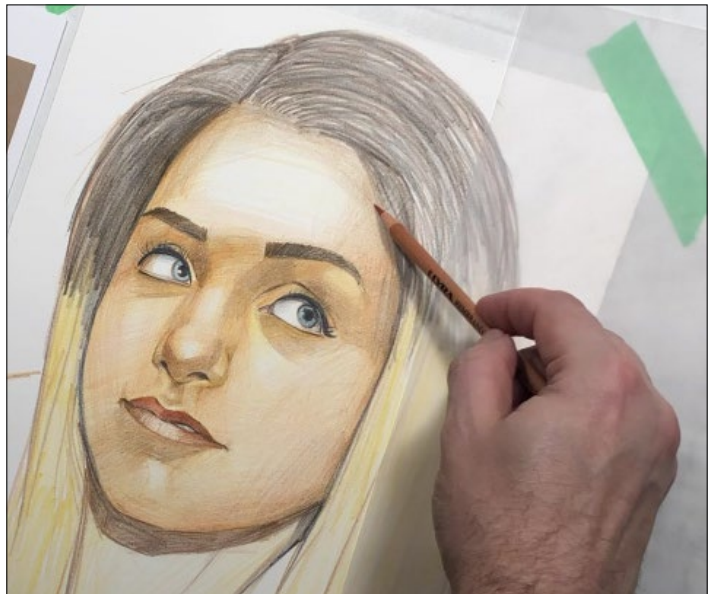
More dark areas are built up. Its a constant comparison between values, colors and tone.



I begin adding more darks and define the lips.



Its crucial with this type of pencil to not apply pressure too heavily too early. If you do, you will form a layer that is unworkable. Adding a few layers of workable fixative may help but ideally you want to avoid trying to fill up the tooth of the paper too quickly.



I refine the hair more, adding darks and stray hairs as it gets closer to completion.



Areas that need to be blended can be done by layer, but also with a clean tortillon or a colorless blender like the terrific Lyra Splender.



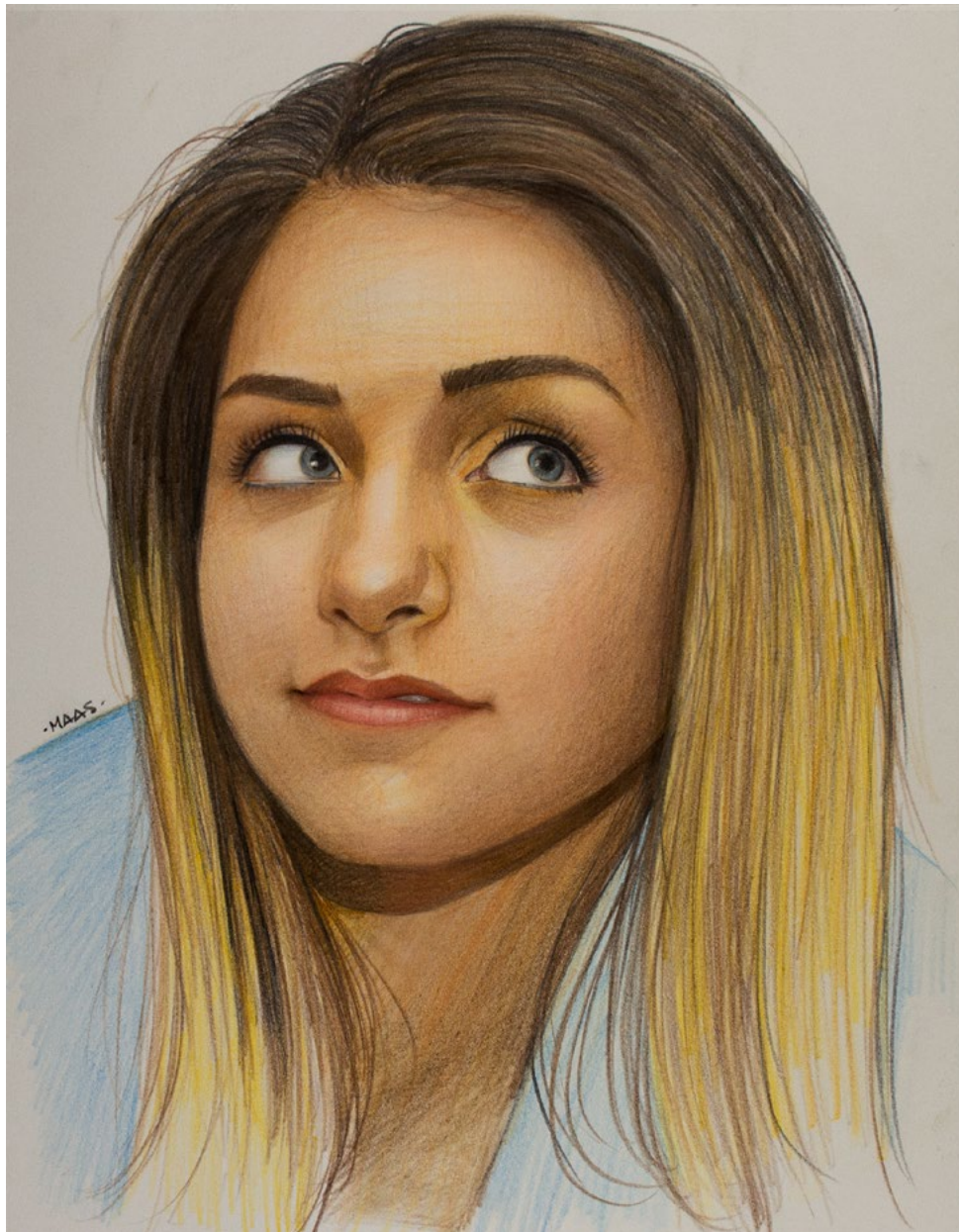
I make a decision to leave the background in white but to add a little blue to the clothing (which is cream in the reference photo). Don't be afraid to change up colors to suit the aesthetic of your drawing.



I make focal points more impactful with darks and hard edges.



It's finally time to add in those key details like her huge eyelashes and the absolute darkest darks. Because these are oil-based pencils, if you wanted to add in some very bright white highlights, you could add a touch of white oil pastel, but do so sparingly!



**The finished piece:**

*Chelsea*

11" x 14"

Oil-based colored pencil on  
Strathmore 500 series White Bristol