
People Watching: A Daily Portrait Challenge with George McCalman

Chapter 1 - People Watching: A Daily Portrait Challenge

Overview

- Hi, I'm George McCalman. I'm a graphic designer and illustrator based in San Francisco. I have a monthly column in the "San Francisco Chronicle" called Observed. I go around to cultural events and illustrate the people and the moments that I see. (upbeat music) I'm gonna be teaching you my process as an observational illustrator. I'll be using pencil, pen, watercolor, wash, all of my favorite tools. I encourage you to do the same.

Day 1 - Working with texture

- So before we dive in, I just wanna give you a sense of the landscape of the tools that I'll be using. I have all of my colored pens over here. This is a much smaller collection than what I actually use. I just find that I gravitate to the ones that I use a little bit more, and it's represented here. I've got a whole batch of thin colored pencils here and a whole collection of thick colored pencils depending on the kind of line quality that I wanna use. I've got my reference photo to the upper right of my friend Amy. The paper that I'm using is a Strathmore Mixed Media. The reason that I love this paper is that it holds all kinds of different media really well. Whether I'm using colored pencil, I'm using ink, I'm gouache or watercolor, it holds the paper really, really well. It holds the form really well. So I'm usually drawing out in the world, but for the purpose of this class, I took a photo of my friend and brought it into the studio so that I could show you my process. But the truth is you can do this anywhere. You can do this at a bus stop. You can do this at a cafe. You can do it pretty much anywhere. So what I'm always looking for when I'm illustrating someone is their expression, their body language, what they're wearing. In Amy's case, the things that I'm looking to highlight are kind of granular, the texture of her hair, the smile of her face, her teeth, her body language. Those are just the things that pull out at me. I love exaggerating expressions, and so the things that are calling out to me are the color of her eyeglasses. So what I'm looking to start is to create an underlayer of color and texture. So I automatically just start reaching, and it's always really organic. I don't really overthink the illustrations that I'm doing. It's just this feeling. So I reach for colored pencil and start creating some sense. And all of this is just really rough at first. It's just creating a sense of the shape. This is kind of my favorite part. And at this point, I'm not really thinking too much about the face or the shape of her head. I'm just trying to give some sense of where her hair is flowing. I love playing around with shadows and light within a particular part of my subject's form. So just starting to play around with different tonalities in her hair. I illustrate through the lens of being a graphic designer, and what that means is that I'm always looking for the most graphic treatments. So right now I'm looking to create a sense of the shape of her face. And one of the favorite parts of illustrating someone are glasses. It's a really easy way to bring the features of someone's face together without having to worry about drawing the shape of the face first. I just use the pencil to create shape of her face, just to give some contour. And at this point, I'm still playing around roughly with two different colors, mostly focusing on her hair right now. Now I'm going to start drawing her coat. I love the idea of letting shapes and form define the figure. I'm not even thinking about the likeness right now. I'm really just getting a sense of her body language and the flow of how she's standing. One of the ways that I illustrate a lot is letting the shadow of whatever article of clothing someone is wearing be exaggerated. So you'll notice that I'm not actually trying to replicate the exact color of her coat. I

will take color license with an illustration that I'm doing of someone because I'm not trying to create exactly, perfectly what I'm looking at. I'm trying to create my own version of what I'm looking at. What I am trying to get is a sense of how her coat is sitting on her form, little creases in the shadow, a shadow flip of her collar. And I'll start playing a little bit more with some of the shadow underneath her coat. I also don't mind making mistakes as I'm creating an illustration. You'll see here that I created a line and then realized that I wanted to change the shape over here. I have no problem letting that line sit. I don't get obsessed with the idea of perfection in my illustrations. I'm a graphic designer, so I focus on perfection in a lot of the work that I do, so I really love making mistakes as I illustrate because I find new ways to redefine the shape and the form and I'm not as concerned about creating a perfect finish. Oftentimes some of the illustrations that I'm doing, they're not full forms. So I basically have to create a way for her jeans to end. And I love allowing a line to be the thing that finishes an illustration. And I'll add just a little bit of color. And this way I don't have to obsess about making sure that all of the lines, that every aspect of her jeans are being calibrated. This pen I'm gonna start using to define the shape of Amy's features. And as I said, I tend to exaggerate, and I don't often try to get perfect features, but I wanna capture something that reminds me of the person that I'm staring at. I love working on eyes behind glasses 'cause I feel like once you establish someone's irises and someone's eyes, you start to see their soul. And I love that part when I realize that the person I'm drawing is staring back at me. I think that is just the coolest thing. And one of the things I don't get caught up in is thinking about the relationships between eyes. They don't always have to be the same size. They don't always have to be perfect. But there's just something about creating the window into someone's soul, 'cause the truth is nobody's eyes are the same size. Nobody's eyes are supposed to be exactly in the same location. So you create a little bit of that, and it becomes just a little more human. I always think it's really great to not pretend that someone doesn't have lines in their faces. That's actually the most human thing you can do to someone is just draw them as they actually are and not pretend that they don't have creases or lines above their forehead. What you'll notice is I was drawing using just line at first. I'm defining just the contours, just the lines in her face. I haven't really started adding any hard shadows in yet, but I'm starting to do that now. I did a couple above her eyes. I did couple in the lines right beyond her smile, just right beneath her teeth. I'm starting to place a little bit more of that in there to start defining a little bit more about what makes her face unique. I'm going in and using some of my colored pens to define a little bit more her glasses. I love drawing glasses because I feel like it's an extension of someone's personal style. And I love creating a sense of what makes that person unique. In the same way that your clothes are an extension of your own personal style, I'm always, that's one of the reasons that I draw sometimes from reference is that I'm trying to capture the parts of each person that makes them unique. That includes their clothes. That includes their glasses. It includes how they wear their hair, their sense of style. And I love representing that. I'm looking to find to replicate the kind of thing that was there in the moment when I met that person or that I saw that person. One of the things I love drawing is hair. I love the range of hair in human beings. I love hair that moves and hair that doesn't. And I will often obsess mostly about creating some sense of exaggeration in someone's hair. In this case, I'm making Amy's hair a lot longer than it actually is just to give some sense of how her hair sits. Now I'm going in and defining a little bit more of her jacket with the colored pen. Now that there's a background color, I wanna give some sense of shadow and shading. I can start creating little details in the coat. When I was in college, I was that artist that used to do stipple, where you take a pencil and you create painstaking detail. I don't have the patience to do that anymore, but I will often find a way to do a shortcut version of

that. And I'll do a harder line just to separate out where her arm is sitting in comparison to the front part of her coat and also some sense of finality. And this is basically what I would consider done, this area down here. I don't feel the need to fill out all of the form. So I'm just going through the rest of her coat right now. I seriously could do this all day. It is my absolute favorite thing to do. I find it pretty therapeutic. I also love giving a sense of light and shadow. There's some pieces that I'll do that will look and feel really flat, but that's often a graphic choice. And other times I'm trying to have it be as flat as I possibly can. So the line, the hard lines that I'm doing right now are really to connote the folds and creases in her jacket and her coat. It's just a way to make something very graphic. So I'll start exaggerating some hard lines now. And one more hard line just to create that styled brushstroke to add some shadow in her buttons. I love playing with buttons on illustrations. So one of the last things I'm gonna do with this illustration is to create some sense of how her hair is flowing. The darkest parts of her hair where it falls close to her face, where it creates a sense of light and shadow. And oftentimes you'll see in my hand, I have a colored pen and a colored pencil. Oftentimes both of my hands have multiple of these pens at one time because I know I'm working on three or four different colors that I'm gonna be using a lot. And so I'll just keep it in my hand, just adding in some shadow under her face here, just a couple more lines in her hair. So I recommend that you play around with color. I really love the idea of creating something that is slightly different from the piece that you're referencing. I think it's a great way to play around with color for yourself to really get to know color.

Day 2 - Colorful details

- Hey, all. So, for this illustration today, I wanted to talk a little bit about what it is that I look for in the reference that I do. I'm always looking for accents on just the everyday person. In this case, this is not an everyday person. This is my friend Sana, a very uncommon young lady. She's an amazing human being. But this particular day, I was drawn to her scarf and the colors, and how I was gonna represent those colors on her. I don't have my paints with me today, so whenever I'm on the go and I just have my colored pencils, that's what I use approximate a sense of kind of washy, continual color. Just color that just smooths over each other, and I want to create that sense. So, what I'm looking for is a sense of color, and I'm looking to pull out some of the colors that I'm gonna be using. And since I know I'm gonna be using them, I can just set them aside. And you'll notice that a few of these colors are not exactly the same colors that are represented in her scarf, and that's fine. So, I have those colors to the side, but that's not actually what I'm doing first. I'm gonna start creating a sense of the tone in her face. Especially for people of color, I use several pens and pencils just to give a sense of the depth and richness of skin color, and as a way to create form of someone's face without having to use lines. So, I'm using a lighter color just to give me a really structural sense of her face without getting into the weeds or details, and I will save, I've said this often, I am not too invested at this point in getting her face perfect. What I'm trying to do is just create a little sense of the structure of her face. I'm trying to get the shape of her head. I'm trying to get the sense of where her chin is falling in relationship to the rest of her. I'm trying to have some basic sense of the shading and shadows of her face. And I'm starting to create what is the very first aspects of her incredibly beautiful hair. So, just really roughly. So, I'm starting to play around with some harder lines now trying to create a little sense of shadow and shading. Eyebrows are some of the more distinguishing features on human people, so I also love exaggerating the eyebrows that I see out there. And eyes are pretty different from one side to the other, and I don't feel like it ever has to be perfect. Start playing around with the shapes of her lips. Starting to play around with her hair now,

getting another layer. And hair is where I love exaggerating. I love exaggerating the shapes and the form. So, now I've established some sense of what her features are looking like. Now I'm starting to play around with that scarf. What does that scarf start looking like? So, I put down with a much harder line, much harder shading, like really differentiating how I was holding the pen and pencil for her face. So, much harder. I'm trying to exaggerate. Start just playing with a little bit of that line quality. Taking a little bit of that blue now. I want to just exaggerate those colors, have them blend into each other a little bit. I'm also trying to make the colors feel like the scarf, also. That kind of willowness of the texture of the scarf. I'm trying to bring some of that energy into this line drawing. So, I'm starting to use pencil to differentiate where the folds in the scarf are starting to overlap with each other. And because I'm using the darker lines, it's starting to intersect now with the sense of the color in her hair and her face. I'm starting to exaggerate a little bit more. So, now I'm gonna bring in my favorite pen and establish her eye. Now, what I do for eyes is I always make sure that there's a part that you can see the reflective parts of her eyeball. This is the part that brings a sense of humanity that takes it out of a series of lines, and color, and shape, and you start to recognize the person of the form of doing this. Once you get to the eyes, that's when the person becomes the most clear. Adding in a little bit of line and shadow. And Sana has the most beautifully expressive eyes, and so I want to make sure that the essence of that is represented in the illustration of her. She's got the most beautiful smile, also. Laugh lines are really important to produce, to show. I don't believe in editing people's wrinkles or lines. I think it's an honest representation of who we are and what human beings actually look like. So, right now I'm just doing a really basic outline. The other aspect of what I'm looking to do is unite a sense of color continuity in the shape, in the form, in the body. So, I'm bringing some color that's in the scarf into her lips, from one part of the illustration to the other. And then I'm going in and creating a little bit more of the shape of her lips and the color difference. Darkening some of the shadows a little bit. I'm going in and really kind of darkening her brow a little bit more. I want to darken her hair. And so, I'm really pressing down, starting to get a little bit more detail. And the great thing about layering color is that it produces color that's varied. And so, you don't have flat color. If you stare at it long enough, you'll start to see the red and brown, and it just makes for a more interesting illustration also, 'cause you can come back to it and you'll see the little flecks of color peeking out. With hair, I love also exaggerating and using thick line to denote flow. And it's really just meant to be graphic, it's meant to be suggestive of how someone's hair acts, or moves, or settles. So, right now, I'm exaggerating the lines. I'm pressing a little harder. So, one thing I love doing, the same way I don't edit out the lines in someone's faces, is I love showing teeth. It's one of those things that people can feel sensitive when someone points out an aspect of them that they may or may not be comfortable with. I think her smile is pretty incredible. I'm going in and I'm just darkening her eyes a little bit more, making them as pronounced as they actually are. Adding in some contour on her lips. And now, just filling out the form a little bit. I love showing just a little peek. Even if you're only seeing a little piece of her book bag, representing that color in there. I love exaggerating the creases of someone's sweater. Just showing a few lines here and there. And now finally, I'm giving her sweater some form. And right now, I'm going in for just the darkest parts of her sweater. And sometimes I love ending an illustration just on this really rough line. And there we go.

Day 3 - Style secrets

- I'm always looking for stylish people out in the world to illustrate, draw or paint. The subject of this piece is a friend and I have illustrated her several times because every time I see her, she's wearing

something new and fabulous and incredible. I'm using paint this time, as opposed to colored pen and pencils. I'm still gonna be using a few of the colored pens but instead of the baseline color, the colored pencil, I'm using a wash of gouache to create her skin color, tone, line and shadow. For this piece, I'm using a size four round brush. Not as specific with the brushes that I use, I'm generally looking for an area to cover. I'm looking for length. I'm looking for thinness and thickness. And that's pretty much it. But I'm pretty versatile with how I use my paint brushes. So you can be as specific as you'd like, or you can be as non committal as I am with my brushes. So at first, dip in my paint into my water and my water into my paint. Right now what I'm looking for is shadow, pure shadow. I'm creating a sense of her chin. And I'm being pretty vague with my line quality right now. And I'm looking right now, I'm covering her skin. I'm covering her ears. So I'm using the same tone for her outfit, as well as her skin. And I'm using the brush to create different aspects of the patterns in her sweater. And I'm gonna go back and give form to everything. But for right now, I'm just doing really general wash. One of the reasons I love using gouache is that it dries pretty quickly. And a lot of the tools that I use is really out of efficiency and economy. I really still have to do things quickly and so, waiting for paint to dry is somewhat inconvenient at times. So normally I'd give it about 10 minutes to dry. But I'm gonna continue. I'm gonna add in a second tone. If I'm painting at home and I'm sitting at my dining room table, at the end of the evening, I don't wanna leave a bunch of paints lying around. It's just super easy to clean up. Super easy to wash away. Wake up the next day, it's like it never happened. The paints that I carry with me, I'm able to just use and then put away when I'm done. It dries easily. It's easy to store. It's easy to carry around. I love wash. So right now I'm still filling using a little bit of pointillism. Adding some dots for some texture. I'm obsessed with Jillian's hair. It's always the perfect accent to whatever she happens to be wearing. So there's one more color that I'm playing with and it's the blue in her shirt. So one tip if you're not mixing paints, and you don't have a lot of extra room. Is to just take the brush and scoop the color out from the paint tube. I haven't dabbed any water in this yet, 'cause I like the look of the brush stroke in the paint. I just love that look when the paint stops being moist and starts taking on the brush stroke. So now that I've set up the under color, I can start thinking about how the line work is gonna compliment and bring the whole shape together. The paint isn't completely dry yet but that's fine. It's still giving me the basic shape and form that I need. And I'm keeping this overall vibe a lot looser. I want it to just look like it's fun, like she's really stylish. So I'm letting my line be a little bit looser than I have for some of the others. One of my favorite aspects of using paint in the illustrations that I do, is that I love it when things are slightly off registration. That the paint is falling outside of the lines that I'm drawing. So if it falls outside of the lines, I don't mind that at all. So as you see, the color falls a little bit outside. So now I'm using color in the line to create where the light meets the shadow in her hair. I'm running the entire shape. Drawing in the line of her shirt. I love her necklace, her crocheted necklace. And so I'm drawing that in a little bit more 'cause I'm going to use some of that to create a pattern that shows that it's different from her sweater. And I'm allowing the color to run into the line quality. And the great thing about this pen is that it will draw on just about anything to tighten. And I always like producing shadow in really specific places. Just so you start to see the three dimension. So I am that artist who believes that hands and feet are the windows into the people that I draw. It's another area of drawing the figure that I will exaggerate. If I'm using paint on a figure, I will usually not include color in someone's hands. Like someone's face, I believe that placing it in such a way that you can see light. You can see where shadows and light falls. It allows you to have a sense of how light moves on someone's face, that you can leave a lot open to interpretation and let your imagination take over. A couple more lines of color. Really broad strokes. Now I'm just gonna add, a

couple more touches in here. Just a little bit just to shadow. Not too much. Voila!

Day 4 - Close capture

- I go back and forth about whether it's easier or harder to draw people that you know versus strangers. Sometimes I find it's easier to draw strangers. Other times there are things that I see out in the world that, if I'm not able to capture in an illustration, I'm really hard on myself. But in this case, I'm drawing someone that I know really well, so what I'm trying to do is fine aspects of him that I know while not being completely beholden to trying to capture every line, every aspect of him. I will exaggerate eyes and noses and lips and hair, but I'm gonna exaggerate the color of his skin. This time I'm using the pencil to basically draw everything. It can really start filling out all of the language of his face. I'm mostly using one color to create a sense of line weight, shadow, composition. Earlier in the series, I referenced that hands are some of my favorite things to draw. There's a lot of personality in that. Another thing I love drawing are ears. They're pretty much as individual as you can come. And you think that they might start to get repetitive, and they're really not. They're pretty individual, and sometimes I will obsess and take some time to really draw in the details of someone's ears. And they're funny-looking things. Sometimes they're lopsided. Sometimes they're more horizontal than vertical. They're pretty weird-looking things. (pencil scratching) So I'm taking another pen, just to note the color change in his shirt, but I'm only using one color to define the entire thing. And sometimes all it takes is a few lines, and that's it for his shirt. (pencil scratching) Typically when I'm drawing, I will take extra time on some aspect of the figure. For me, right now it could be the stitching. Two lines, but then you put a few extra ticks, and suddenly it feels a lot more three-dimensional and a lot more real than the jacket looked before. Just adding a few lines gives it some of that detail that just feels real. (pencil scratching) Now I'm going in with the final line. (pen scratching) More detail in his beard. You know, this is a trick that I learned back in my college days of figure drawing, can take the chalk and outline a general sense of the form that you're gonna draw in. But now, these days, I use it as the actual color. I don't give myself room. I just let it act as the final under color. So his face starts to take a little more shape, and I'm not trying to get granular with the detail in his face. I could sit here obsessing about the lines in his beard forever. And I'm not gonna do that, but just to have a really general sense. Getting back to the ears again, can get a little more detail. Ears are really strange, and I'm obsessed. And I love getting that little shadow right where the ear meets your neck. Some people hate drawing feet. Some people hate drawing hands. I'm the weirdo that likes drawing all of it. Want to give a little more volume to his eyebrows, fill that out a little bit. Just a little more volume to his beard, just to show that some parts of it are darker than others. So now I've put the final touches. I filled out the line quality in his hair and his beard, and now he's done.

Day 5 - Strappy style

- One thing you'll notice by now is that all of these photos that I'm using as reference are pretty unstaged. They're all people in the midst of pre-, post-conversation, walking, settling. Since I've taken all of them, I'll tell you a little bit about why they all feel a little bit undone. I'm a graphic designer by trade, and I stage and style a lot of photography. When I started my column, I made a conscious decision to not represent people who were over-posed, over-styled. I wanted people as they are. And so, I'm always looking to capture people in the midst of some form of body language. I never want to embarrass people, so I won't illustrate people who are eating, I won't illustrate people who are talking, but I will illustrate people who are laughing, people who are engaging with

each other. So, this is Jacqui, and this setting was at an art opening that we were both at. We were in the midst of a conversation, and I just loved how relaxed and stylish she seemed. I loved her red glasses, her red lips, the polka dots. I loved the setting. I'm gonna do mostly black line with splashes of color. I'm starting with my favorite pen, and you can see the difference in the line quality that I have. Playing with the shape of her eyebrows. Jacqui has a very mischievous face. She's beautiful and she's very funny, but she also has a really mischievous side of her, and I want to be able to capture some of that. I just really love how versatile this pen is. It can go from really soft lines to really hard lines by just holding the pen differently. I've decided I'm not placing any color into her skin, so I'm using color only in her clothing. And what that decision does is it allows her features to stand out, and it allows me to really make a graphic impression. Drawing in her fingers, remembering that there's no color going into her skin. So, that absence of color becomes its own color in a weird way. It allows things to be differentiated and to stand out. And all of these decisions are born out of my own background as a graphic designer, where I have to apply these kinds of color decisions to layouts that I'm doing. I have to decide what gets color, what doesn't get color, why it doesn't get color, what the thinking and the rationale is behind it, and I've brought that into the illustration work that I do. If something does not make sense in terms of why I'm adding color or not adding color, that often comes out on the page. So, I will make those decisions before I start 'cause one of my favorite aspects of doing people's clothing is, when I start creating patterns, it becomes this meditative aspect of what I'm doing. I'm not even looking at the reference. I'm just enjoying coloring in circles and dots, and some can be lighter than others, and others can be heavy. It becomes this really meditative practice. Over her arms. And there we go. Hi. Jacqui.

Day 6 - Hat fabulous

- For this next drawing, I'm gonna use a little bit of paint, I'm gonna use a little colored pencil, and I'm gonna use some line drawing. This is gonna be a healthy mix of a few different ideas. I love creating with paint, something that I call dramatic line. I love creating an impression. I love how just a line can create a swoosh, it can create a little bit of dynamism, that can just tell you a little bit something about the artist, me, and the person that I am creating. I like the idea of this fur vintage coat, creating a look of glamor. It's the kind of thing you wouldn't see today, but it's still evocative of a time when it was okay to wear a fur coat in the middle of 70-degree weather. Here, I'm trying to create a sense of the folds. While that paint dries, I'm going to use the yellow pencil to create a little bit of texture around her hair. So I'm doing something now I wouldn't ordinarily do. I am creating the shape of her head. I usually leave that to be one of the last things that I'm doing, but because there are so many competing elements in this, I wanted to find some sort of structure. Getting some of that grandeur. It's easy for me to forget that I'm waiting for paint to dry, so I have to hold my hand up off the page. And I'm exaggerating her highlights. I want this to be a festive piece. Anna's a really vivacious personality. She's a photographer, and a world traveler, and I want to represent some aspect of that freedom that she has over her life, in her ability to travel the world. And so, I'm extending beyond the color parameters. And you'll see in my line quality, some of it is representational, and other aspects of the line quality are a little bit abstract. And I like that combination. Always keeping an eye on the drying paint, making sure I don't plop my finger. I do like it when I see one of my illustration subjects loves a particular color of lipstick. I will try my best to represent it. When someone cares to define themselves a particular way, I try to make sure that that is there in some aspect of the illustration that I'm doing of them. And it doesn't always have to be the exact color. It's just something that says that I see it. All the while, keeping my eye on the

paint drying. And the reason for that is I'm going to be drawing over the paint. So now, I'm bringing in some the darker aspects of her hair color, but still allowing that orange, and the yellow, to be dominant. So I'm not gonna overdo it on the line. Just enough. So now, I'm going in to get a little more texture in her hat. So now that things are starting to dry, now I can go in and start defining the shape of the coat a little more. And I've decided I'm not going to use hard line for her hands, because she's a photographer, so she is very sensitive with her hands. So I want to connote some aspect of that in my line quality. And I want to create some form of kind of Botticelli hands that she has, where it's a little more soft curves. Even though she is holding an iPhone, thus taking the romance out of it, there's something very simple and beautiful about the way she's holding the phone. I'm following a little bit of the line quality to create a frame. So I'm giving the coat some shape now. One thing to note. Earlier, as the paint was still wet, my finger accidentally touched the paint, and I smudged the paper. A lot of other people would think that that's an accident. I really don't. I love texture on a page, and to me it's just a natural part. So, I don't really obsess about something like that. Sometimes, if you catch something like that, you can take a piece of paper and wipe it away. I chose to leave it alone. I really like organic mistakes like this. They don't feel like mistakes at all to me. So I just wanted to point that out. So, I'm in the midst of putting the finishing touches on this piece. Just a little bit of smudging here and there. I don't want to overdo it, but I want to create some aspect that this is a fur coat, and that the surface of the coat has texture. And there's Anna in her vintage fur coat.

Day 7 - Material motion

- Sometimes I'm really interested in just how clothes drape over a person. So I'm looking for blocks of color that I can simplify the face that I'm working on to focus on folds and color. I just really dig the swath of her scarf over her black top, and it just creates this color block that frames her head, and that's gonna be my approach to doing this illustration. But I'm gonna start with a little coloration in her face. This is really just to define her face, and just get a sense of contour and line. And I'm working on this first because I'm gonna be painting everything from her neck down, so I wanna make sure that I'm getting as much of this so I don't have to double back later on. So I'm taking a bit of the next color, just to define some shading in her hair. And right now I'm not going into a ton of detail, it's just to get a sense of form and line. And now I'm gonna get a little wild on her scarf. And the pencil that I'm taking and I'm using, I'm apply a little more pressure to show different values of light and shadow. And I'm using it also now as a piece of fashion and exaggerating her scarf. I wanna create some accent color. So I'm gonna start using my orange pen. So the idea is that your eye is supposed to go to it first. That even though, there isn't that much of it, you'll still be able to see it. So now, focusing on some lines, lines in her face, and lines in her scarf, and lines in her body. And I vacillate in between using brown ink for line work, using gray, and using black. And in this case, I'm using gray because I'm gonna not change my color from her face to her hair. And so, it's providing a softening line quality that allows me to get into the detail without it being too heavy. And it's a very organic choice, but it's one that as I was looking at her face, I decided that I wanted to use gray instead of black. So I can start moving in between the lines in her face and the lines in her hair. So now I can scoot up to her hair, get a little detail going on here. And then I can start in on her ears. I can honestly sit and obsess about the detail in someone's ears for hours. Get some line quality going over here. Get a sense of motion. And I never feel the need to really correct how someone's hair is falling. I just kind of take it as it is. People are as they are, and that's how I take them. I will exaggerate but I don't really try to edit or change. Because I spend a lot

of time illustrating people out in the world, I'm often asked if I do edit things out, and one thing I consistently edit out is people holding their iPhones, because more people hold and read their iPhones than anybody really needs to see. So I end up editing out iPhones. So now, what I'm gonna do is complete the piece by adding in the black. And right now I'm just trying to frame the photo, I'm trying to frame what I saw in the photo, as that block of black really helps define the rest of her form. One of the things I love about gouache, in this case, an acrylic gouache, you could put it on several layers and then it becomes really black, but if you happen to water it down a little bit, it almost comes in gray. So you can play with the values of the black that you like. In this case, I want it blacker. So I'm adding more layers than I really even need to. I'm deliberately not overdoing it, I'm just adding in enough. I love these lines here that look more like the brush than the paint. And now I'm just gonna let it dry.

Day 8 - Subtle smiles

- It's always nice to do over something that you've done already. This is an example of an illustration that I've done once before. And I always think that because you've done something, doesn't mean that it's done, it's over, you never have to go back to that reference again. It's an opportunity to try something else that you haven't tried before and also it's an opportunity for you to see how you have advanced as an artist. So in this case, I'm gonna start with her face. I've decided I'm not adding any color to her face with the exception of the accent of her glasses and possibly her hair. I haven't decided that yet. I want this one to be a little more graphic. I love drawing glasses. I think it's as identifiable a thing as someone's coat or someone's hair. But glasses are one of those things that I never feel completely comfortable drawing because the two sides are never equal in size and scale, so I always feel like they're slightly lopsided. And I've just come to embrace that. What I love about this reference also is that her hands are interacting with her face, and getting all of that language right is not always easy and I always view it as a challenge to see if I can make it look as honest as possible. And in her face, this time, I'm letting some of the lines that I'm working on overlap with each other. So I've decided that I am not adding any other color other than this brown. I'm deliberately not overdoing the lines for anything for her face. I'm just doing the slightest suggestion of shadows. Drawing her watch right now. A watch is one of those things that I don't really pay that much attention to, but I realize how ubiquitous they are. They are pretty much everywhere. So I'm often drawing watches as much as I'm drawing people's iPhones. And I'm gonna give this a little more detail than I did in previous ones because I really want the texture of her scarf to be more pronounced. I love a dramatic swoosh line in my illustrations. So I will often use a line to really define motion. So now, I'm gonna use some acrylic wash to define her sweater. Really letting that black frame the lines and that gray in her scarf really allows the whole unit to come together. And because black is such a unifying color, I use it liberally 'cause it holds up pretty much next to anything. And Hope is a dancer, so I am also deliberately elongating her shape because it's more dramatic and using the black to exaggerate her form. So I'm really going in on the darks, letting it be saturated, using it to come down to her elbow. While I let that dry, I can get back to some line quality here. I love drawing hands. So one of the things I learned about drawing hands when I first started drawing a couple years ago was, I was insecure about making sure that everything fit anatomically. I always got tentative when I was drawing where elbows connected to hands, and I started creating these little squiggles that connotated elbows and connotated where joints met or where this part of your hand would meet. It would orient me when I created this little squiggle, and now it's just become a signature thing. And it was just a tool in the early days of drawing to help me

feel better about not being completely anatomically accurate. I love drawing, I love it when I get to the part of a hand that connotes a little squiggle or at the very end of a finger. I don't draw hands like anybody else, I draw it like myself, and I've created my own way of drawing the human form that works for me. So now the final touches are in the pants. After staring at it for a little while, I like it better than the first time I did it.

Day 9 - Phone a friend

- I spend a lot of time illustrating people on their phones. Occasionally I have to edit out a few of the phones so it's not as ubiquitous as it actually is. In this case, I'm including the phone in what I'm doing because David is showing a photo of himself and one of his students. So, for this piece I'm gonna do it mostly in pencil. The really wonderful thing about pencil that even a colored pencil and certainly a colored pen or paint can approximate is both hard line and shade in one sitting. It's still the most flexible tool. You can of course correct quite easily because of the trusty eraser. I spent a lot of time in figure drawing class when I was in college. Even after I graduated college I would go to an organization called the Art Students League in New York, which was a few blocks away from where I worked, and on a Friday night while other folks were out gettin' drunk with their friends I would go and draw figures, naked figures at the Art Students League. I did that for a number of years and then I stopped. And then I didn't draw again for about 20 years and when I started drawing again I had this sense that all of this information that I had about human physiology and expressiveness was all just kind of hidden and it was there just like waiting for me to spend a little time with it. And now it is one of my favorite things to do. But, I think back to those days, going to the Art Students League with a lotta fondness. I love spending time on people's hair, getting to know the texture and the flow, and in his case, the curls. The great thing about pencil is that even if you're not using the eraser, you can still play around and make mistakes and a well placed line can cover it up. In college when I used to do these kinds of portraits, I could have sat here stippling all the detail in his hair to get it down to an almost pixel like precision. I don't think I have the capacity to be that detailed anymore. But I think back and it makes me feel great that I, I was capable of that. It's mostly patience. I know that I'm capable of it. I just don't even have the time for it. The thing about pencil is that you have to be careful about where you're placing your hands 'cause it's really easy to smudge the paper that you're working on. I'm exaggerating his fingers because I like exaggerating fingers and it's a counterpoint to his very rendered head. I like the idea of flattening his hands and keeping the focus on his phone. So, now I'm almost done and I'm just going in and defining his face a little bit more, adding in the darker shadows where they're appropriate. And there you have it. A man with his phone.

Day 10 - Standing oration

- I'm drawing my friend Marvin who is a reverend. He's one of the most dynamic speakers I know and I wanted to capture him mid-speech, where he was just feeling it. So I'm pulling out a few of what I'm gonna be using. Wanna make sure that I can just reach for whatever I need. Most times, I have a general sense of what I'm gonna be using. And sometimes, it is just in the heat of the moment, and I'll find myself reaching for a color that I had no idea I even wanted to use. This time, I have a good sense of what my background colors are gonna be. I'm really trying to capture the emotion more than any likeness of him orating. Right now, I'm being really general, not getting into a ton of detail right now. So I'm just trying to establish where everything sits. So now I can follow the contours of his head and create a shape. The first line I did that was around his head was really

just a marker. I knew that I'd probably have to go back in and retrace the line of his hat, but I had just used it to orient the shape of his face. Now that his face has been defined, I can go back in and get some more detail. And what this does, it now allows the hat to frame his face. That's how I use black in a lot of my illustrations. It becomes a framing device. The black allows you to look at his eyes and his raised eyebrows and really see the emotion on his face. If I were being completely obsessive about this piece, I would probably spend another 10 minutes really darkening up the black in his hat. So now, I can define the top of his hat, but I don't have to fill it in all the way because the black in the shadow of his hat is doing the heavy lifting. So now I'm pulling in some color. It's giving a little definition to his hood, or as the kids say, his hoodie. So what I'm doing now is going back into his face now that his figure has been defined. I'm not placing any color into what he's wearing. I've reduced his coat to just a series of dynamic swirls and lines and I'm going to keep as much of the gradient line work in his face as possible, 'cause that's where I want you to pay attention. Whenever I do jewelry, I see it all as a series of interconnected lines. So what I do when I do jewelry is I don't pick up my pencil at all or my ink or my pen or my colored pencil. I just let my tool keep moving so I can create a series of interconnected lines that are representative of a chain or a brooch. It's just one of those little subconscious tools that I use. Drawing in his teeth, just to have it feel a little more rendered and less cartoony. And Marvin is such a beautiful speaker. I want to make it feel like you can hear his words. And there he is, like he's speaking from his soul, straight to you.

Day 11 - Sweater textures

- So this reference is of a collaborator of mine. We've worked together often. She's an incredibly hard-working photographer, and I love that I caught this photo of her in the middle of looking at her phone. I like the body language. I love that she is looking up at the camera. And so I'm gonna paint this. One of the things that I'm always looking for in my subjects is texture in clothing. If there's a way for me to represent some aspect of texture, I am going to take it and run with it. In this case, it's the ribbed pleasure of her sweater. So now, I'm switching to pen and ink to give some shape and form to her hair and her face. Important thing to think about is when you're waiting for paint to dry, you always have to be careful where you put your fingers. I'm making her glasses slightly oversized just to exaggerate her eyes. I'm drawing her eyes a little bit differently than I have at various other times in the series. Because her eyes are so expressive and I'm not using color, I'm not filling in the entirety. I want to show her expression. So I'm doing it in a really subtle way that I'm not filling in the darks of her eye. This is the squiggle I mentioned earlier. When I first started drawing people, I wasn't sure that, or confident, really, that I could get all of the spatial relationships right between limbs and fingers and elbows, and so it was a way for me to give my pen a chance to rest to compensate, to figure out where my next line was going to be. And so they've just become a natural part of how I draw an elbow. I also love drawing people's rings and bracelets. It's a natural part of how we express ourselves, and I always make sure that some aspect of it is in the illustration that I do. I give myself creative license when I'm working with paint and I'm working with people's clothing. In this case, the sweater that I'm painting is a little bit oversized compared to the one that she's actually wearing. I like exaggerating forms. I like exaggerating people's clothing and trying to get the essence of what I see accurate. What is accurate for me while I'm painting is how her posture is pretty erect. She's been interrupted by me to take a photo, but at the same time, she's standing very straight. She's at alert. That's what I like about this shot. A lot of people when they are on their phone, they're slouched over, and I love that she just looks ready. And so that's what I wanted to represent. So now I'm putting just a little bit of the finishing touches in. And there she is,

checking her email.

Day 12 - Smiles for miles

- I chose this photo because Blossom is one of the most exuberant people I know. I wanted to draw someone who was in mid-movement, and had just a joyful sense on her face. So I'm starting this piece with a little background. Now that the paint is drying, we're switching to pencil to define a little bit of the shape of her body, and her expression. And so because the paint is drying, I'm being extra considerate and using a really loose line to define her shape. What I'm doing right now is the equivalent of a blind contour that I can actually see. So I'm not worrying about it being perfect, I'm not worrying about anything resembling detail. All I'm doing right now is focusing on structure. And I'm also letting the color that I painted blend into the line drawing that I'm doing, and all of this right now I'm just buying time so that the paint will dry. So now I'm switching to color and what I'm using right now is the texture of her dress to define the pattern and the way that I'm allowing the purple to land on her dress. And I want you to be able to look at this drawing and tell what the texture of her dress felt like. I've decided that this is where a majority of my energy is gonna go into this drawing. So I'm taking my time, and letting the texture just fall into the drawing. So now I'm going in and adding a little bit of contrast. I'm gonna be adding in some shadow, going back in with the first color. But right now I wanna bring just a little bit of attention so that when your eye stares at this, it's aware that there's something else in there and inadvertently it's darkening the color. So it's also going to add an element of shadow and shading where I don't need to just use black. Or a darker version of the same color, and I'm doing it mildly so that it's just a hint. So now I'm switching over to pen. Squiggles, just keeping it really super simple. Just adding some of that three dimensionality. Just giving her dress another dimension. The paint is mostly dry. I can take a little more time with her face now. What I'm adding in now is just a little bit of color. Just slightly. Just to show that there's a light source. So the final touches that I'm putting in. Same purple I used in her dress. I'm letting it define the shape. And just a little bit of color right here. But I'm leaving the pencil squiggles 'cause I really like how that looks. And there she is, Blossom is blossoming.

Day 13 - Out and about

- I love drawing people from all angles. And what ends up happening is that I will take reference of people doing all sorts of things in all sorts of poses. This is an example of drawing from reference where the person is turned slightly away from the vantage point. And I find that I get a little bit bored if I'm drawing everyone from the same angle. So I'm always looking to stretch my own sense of anatomy, my own sense of expressiveness, by doing something that's a little bit unconventional. So I'm starting out with a pen. I'm switching up the color. And the face of my subject, just to keep some dynamism going. Add a little bit of texture to her hair. Now I'm switching over to get a little bit of skin tone. Get some of those rosy cheeks. Highlights on the forehead. I can get particular with the palette that I'm using. If I decide on some set colors, I'll pretty much decide that that's all I'm using. And in this case, the reds that I'm using, I'll decide that I'm using one red for as many times as it appears in the illustration. And that's the bit of continuity that I'm looking for to establish in the piece that I'm doing. So I'm bringing back some skin color. And right now, I'm not really focusing on any particular line work. Just establishing some overall color in her skin. And her dress. Bringing some shading to her dress. Right now, I'm doing a little cross-hatching. Which I haven't really done before in this series. Taking a little time, I'm being very gentle with the paper. I waited until the body of the pencil was a little degraded so that the line on the paper wouldn't be too hard. And I'm just

bringing it all the way down and letting the texture of the paper pick up. The touch on the paper and the pencil is really super soft. And I'm just letting it be gradual. I'm letting it fill out the length of the page. And now I'm adding a little shadow, showing where the directional light is falling on her. Letting the brown line define some of the creases. You'll notice that I didn't use the gray to really define the dress. Because I wanted there to be a little bit of contrast. So I'm gonna go back in towards the end and define that, but in the interim, I just wanted to let the line be a little more subtle. Letting some of my squiggles define the shape of her knuckles. And her thumb. So I decided that I'm not going to overdo this piece. Usually, at this point, I would've gone back in with a gray line to define a little more of the folds and curves of her dresses. But I really love the subtlety here. I love that she's looking a little off to the page, that she's obviously engaging and mid-conversation, speaking with someone. And I love the subtlety of the lines of her dress. So with the exception of one more little piece, this will be done.

Day 14 - Portrait of a portrait

- This photo's a little irregular compared to the other photos I've used as reference. This photo is from a series that I created with one of my studio mates. His name is Jason Ladera. And we started this series called The Individuals Project a number of years ago. We've been shooting it for about eight years. And this is one of the very first series portraits that we took. And it's of my friend Rose Winjugu. And it's one of my favorite portraits of her. It shows an exuberance and a happiness in her that I very much think of her. And so I very much wanted to include it in the series. So I'm gonna be playing around with a few different pencils. And right now, I'm going very, very softly on the page. I'm using it for both contouring line work and color. I wanna capture the joy on Rose's face. I wanna capture the color in her gorgeous skin. And I wanna capture her cherubic nature. So I'm gonna spend a little time kind of drawing and redrawing. Just getting a really general sense. And I've angled her face a little more than what is actually in the photo. But I don't mind at all. And I always try to pay attention to those little details. If I've done something that falls out of line or that can be perceived as a mistake, I try to be pretty considerate and not beat myself up because I find that if I spend time dwelling on what is not working, then I take myself out of the simple pleasure of drawing. This is something I really love to do and it's really important that I enjoy it while I'm doing it. And so, it's wonderful to lose yourself in your process but if you're grilling yourself for making mistakes, you're not really gonna enjoy it. So it's important that you give yourself room to make some errors. And the color that I've chosen is not quite a brown. But it's interacting with the brown that I used earlier to create a slightly darker version. It's still soft. And it allows me to go back in and make a few extra lines without having to worry about it being perfect. Now that the shape of her face and the personality is coming in, now I can go a little bit darker. So now I'm starting to play with her hairline. Transitioning the brown to the black of her hair. Filling in her hair. So now I can start bringing in a little more brown to compliment the gray in the underlayer that's already there. So let me tell you something about drawing teeth. It used to be, and still is, the most intimidating part of drawing someone, especially when you're drawing from life. You're drawing people that you know and people can be really sensitive about their appearance. And so, when you're drawing people, just in general, you are interacting with someone who is going to have an impression. And the last thing you wanna do is draw something unflattering on someone. I think about teeth the same way I think about someone's ears. They're pretty unique, so I don't approach drawing it as a template or one size fits all. So now, I'm working on her eyes. And this is a moment where a lot of the illustrations that I work on start to come to life. Because I can feel the subject staring back at

me. So I'm closing out the illustration with the brown. Really just kind of defining shape, shadow. Just really finalizing. So now the final piece is to frame it a little bit with her top. And there we go.

Day 15 - Barbershop

- The last two weeks, I've been working with a nine by 12 notebook, and it's been interesting to work at a larger size. But for the rest of the series, I'm taking it back to a five by seven notebook, which is a notebook I usually carry around with me when I'm out in cafes. I just love the mobility of it. The rest of the series will be with this notebook. I'm really happy to be diving in. I took this photo at my barbershop while I was waiting to have my hair cut. This is the first one in the series where I'm gonna be illustrating two people as opposed to one. I love the composition. I love that the guy getting his hair cut has a little bit of beer in his glass. And I love that he's getting a fade. So for this one, I decided that I'm going to use just two colors. I'm not gonna use pen, just colored pencil. So I'm coloring in the underlayer, the shadow, and the skin of the barber and his client. Now I'm switching it up to do a different color on his head, on the barber's head. And I'm playing with shadow on his shirt and his pants. And now I'm coloring in the color on the guy on the left. I'm coloring in his five o'clock shadow, just to give him a little bit of sass and character. I wanna keep the line work really simple, just to evoke a sense of motion and movement. I love that he's got a glass of his beer in his left hand. And now I'm coloring in the iconography on his, let's call it barber bib. I was thinking about using white, but it doesn't really take on the pencil, so I'm just using the second color as a contrast to the black. Now I'm coloring in the icons, just keeping it graphic and bold and not worrying about too much detail. Wanna cover the entire shape and form so that it draws your eye to it and it balances the color, the second color that I'm using for the barber's head. Now I'm just putting a couple finishing touches. And we're done.

Day 16 - Foodie friend

- I was having brunch with my friend Evan and I took this photo of him. So now I'm gonna draw it. So for this drawing, I would like to focus on getting too different kinds of textures, one with pen and one with pencil. (drawing) I think I'm gonna focus on his head in pen and his sweater in pencil. I'm gonna render his head really tightly and his sweater really loosely. So now I'm working on his head, defining his hair color. Work on creating some texture in his beard, getting some shadow. This Strathmore is interesting with this pen because it's not really picking up a lot of the ink, so I have to kind of create some grays and blacks and leave the whites alone. There's not a lot of nuance I can get. So I have to work on my crosshatching to really kind of define the difference in one side of his beard to the other and to show a sense of light and shadow. (drawing) So now I'm working on the blue in his collar and his lapel. And that's the only accent color otherwise. (drawing) So now I'm drawing his hands and I'm bringing some of that swirly line from his nose and the lines under his eyes and his lips to his hands, just to have some sense of symmetry. And I'm doing this kind of swirly lines running into each other that I occasionally do that I really enjoy. I enjoy how it feels when I'm doing it and I enjoy how it looks. I'm creating diagonal lines that I'm drawing from one side of his sweater to the other. The whole point of this is to create a sense of patterning that his sweater has texture. Rather than just doing a sweater that's black, I wanna show a sweater that has landscape. So I'm drawing from one end of the sweater to the other and then crosshatching in the opposite direction. (drawing) Now I'm starting to create a block of black that sits on the left side of each diamond. And I can just do this all day, just dotting all of the diamonds. I'm not gonna be obsessive and dot every single one. It's just really to create a sense of how the sweater can feel.

(drawing) Wa-lah. And we're done.

Day 17 - Cafe colors

- Deciding on a color palette for a drawing is a pretty intuitive process, and so as I'm looking at this picture, I'm deciding on not just the color palette, but what I'm using. Am I using color pencil, am I using pen, am I using paint? And originally, I was just going to use color pencil and pen, but then I was looking at this accent color, and I thought, aw, that would be great just texturally, tonally, as paint. So, that's what I'm gonna do, but first, I'm gonna start with some colored pencil to define her hair and skin. I'm starting with the underlayer of her skin and her hair. I'm playing with two or three versions of browns and grays. I'm not really trying to match her skin color as I am trying to create a sense of three-dimensionality. I'm gonna spend a lot of time on her hair, because I'm trying to get volume, and color, and the denseness of her beautiful hair. (pencil scraping) So I'm using pencil now to create the frame of her sweater, and the shape I'm making is more graphic than accurate, (pencil scraping) but it gives you a sense of her body language, gives you a sense of how she's sitting, and it allows me to frame the entire composition, and now I'm going back in, creating some highlights on the other side of her face. Curls for her beautiful hair, so I'm gonna play around with some grays just to saturate it, and then I'm going to switch to a lighter color just to create some of the highlights, and I'm gonna exaggerate it by making it brighter than it actually appears on the image. Now, it's time for the paint. I decided that I'm not going to paint it flat. I'm gonna use a series of shapes to give a sense of the flowy-ness of her blouse, and the bow in the front, and filling out the color in her neck and her skin right where it touches her blouse. So now, I'm applying in lines and creating a sense of movement. And then we let the paint dry, and then we're done.

Day 18 - Sunny skies

- Some of my friends give me a hard time that I've never drawn them. I like to think that I'm busy being present with them and enjoying their company, but it's a real pleasure to be able to draw my friend Kay right now. For this drawing I'll be using colored pencil and colored pen. I'm starting with some colored pencil to define her skin color and unlike previous illustrations, I'm just using the color, one color, and using it flat. So I'm coloring most of her face, her hands, and her neck with the same general flat color. Now I'm moving on to taking another colored pencil to color some highlights in her hair, and I'm not trying to get any kind of shadow, I'm just trying to get a sense of texture. Then I'm taking a gray pen, and I decided that I want to have an illustration that is not completely black. I'm sticking with this gray flat palette. So I'm filling out her features and not adding any shading. There's no shading in this piece aside from the undertone of her skin and her hair. Filling in her eyes, her nose, her mouth, her hands. No gradient, no shadows, just those round little connotations of shadow, nothing beyond that. Then I'm taking a colored pen and putting in some more detail into her hair, but starting to produce a sense of a three dimensionality, but just by placing very specific shadows, nothing gradient, just small and flat. Just lowlights, really flat, just filling out some more detail and creating a sense of the waviness of her hair. Now, my favorite part of this piece, working on her blouse. I'm really inspired by the lines in her top and I'm thinking, "What would it be to make a completely flat piece made out "of the same curls in her hair "and the lines that make up the rest of her?" I'm creating curly Qs to denote the frills, and then line strokes to denote the other patterning in her blouse. More lines, this is the very meditative part of creating an illustration like this. I can just spend hours drawing these circles and these lines. This style of illustration reminds me of children's books from the '70s which is where a lot of my illustration inspiration comes from.

People like Maurice Sendak, but one of my favorite illustrators is the husband and wife team of Leo and Diane Dillon. They're probably the two illustrators that have inspired me the most. But if you stare at the different ways that I approach illustration, you can see their imprint all over my work.

Day 19 - Museum date

- I decided I'm gonna do this whole piece in paint. There might be some colored pen in there, we'll see. This is probably going to be the simplest piece that I've done in this series. When I'm looking at the photo, all I see is black, blue, and the bricks behind her, so that's what I'm reducing this piece to. I'm mixing some white into black, just to create a little bit of gray, and I'm starting with slashes, just simple horizontal slashes from the top down to the bottom of the page, to frame the figure, and to also give a sense of the background, so all I'm doing is slashes, and I'm not gonna create representational aspect of the bricks, I'm just going to give you a sense of the mood. I'm using black to create her hair and her sweater, but what I'm doing is I'm making it virtually abstract, and I'm letting the dry side of the paintbrush create brush strokes. I'm giving a general sense of her hair, but I'm not worrying too much about line, or, I'm just giving whatever my paintbrush feels like for her hair. I'm gonna go back in and finish it out with some linework later on. Now I'm using blue, I'm using gray, a little bit of the black, and the white to create a deeper blue than the one that I have, and I'm just painting down, following the strokes and the lines of the photograph, and I'm just going down, down, down. I'm adding in a couple more of the gray lines just to give a sense of three-dimensionality. The shadows are falling on the left, I'm just adding in just a couple lines just to round it out a little bit. I'm not going too wild, just a couple of slots. So now, I'm finishing out the piece using some brown linework, and I'm working on her shoe, just the one shoe, just to show you a sense of where she is standing. I'm not even gonna touch her hands, and just create just the simplest linework just to show the joy on her face. I'm filling out the linework in her eyes, her nose, and her hair, and that's it.

Day 20 - Act naturally

- This photo is of one of the sweetest people that I know. I'm really happy that I get the chance to draw him. I've drawn him once before for a column that I did a year ago, and I'm excited to do it again. I'm about to use my favorite pen. One of the reasons I love it so much is that it has a flexible nib, which means that you can get really soft, delicate lines, or really hard, textural lines depending on how you're pressing down on it. The truth is, I don't always know what color I'm going to use before I pick up my tools. And sometimes, I don't even know it after I pick up my tools. I think I'm gonna use one color, and then I change my mind, and then sometimes I change my mind again. So I'm starting with his hair. Creating some flow and dimensionality. I always take paper as it comes. So if I'm working with a piece of paper that is slightly resistant or not as absorbent, I don't really mind that, I use it as a challenge. This paper is a little bit harder than what I usually work with, but I am really liking the effect. It kind of looks like a ballpoint pen and I'm really digging the texture in his hair. So I define his glasses and then his nose. And then the scruff on his face and allow that pointillism to define his face structure. And now I'm moving down to his neck. So now I'm settling on a gray to define a majority of what he's wearing. So now I'm working on defining the color and the texture and the folds of his shirt. Working on the lines. So now that the top of his shirt has been defined, I'm going to work on his arms a little bit. And he has pretty sculptural hands and arms, so I draw that accordingly. So I'm representing that on his arms also. I do my squiggles for the elbow just 'cause that's how I always roll. And it helps with things like foreshortening and distance from

one arm to another. And now that that's done, I can turn my attention back to the rest of his shirt. And now I can define his pants and how he's sitting and really place his body language. And that's Daniel.

Day 21 - Hair care

- I took this photo while waiting for my barber, Tristan. I'm gonna start with some paint and then move on to pencil. So my approach to this illustration is similar to how I used to do my column illustrations back in the early days. I used to do a wash of color, followed by some linework, and then some accents on top. My style has expanded since those days, but this is still one of my favorite ways to render action, motion, light, dark with a minimum of brush stroke and a minimum of linework. I'm starting with black to denote the barber bib, and Tristan's apron. I'm trying to just give a sense of shape and motion. You really have to keep in mind that you're defining two people in relationship to each other, so it's not just one composition, it's two, and the relationships between Tristan's arm and his client's head have to make sense when everything is said and done, so I'm trying to keep it loose, but at the same time, I'm trying to make sure that all the relationships make sense. I'm not adding any color into their skin, so I'm leaving it just really open and I'm saving the color for their outfits. Now, I'm switching it up, and I'm adding some deep purple-red, trying to define his shirt, and I'm doing that around the bib. I've added in some linework on his arms, mostly to help me define the rest of the shape, and I'm adding in the line now because I'm gonna be painting around it later on, and if I'd painted it first, I would have less of a sense of where I was gonna be placing his hands in relationship to the person that he's cutting. I want to make some moves on his gym pants, and I wanna define the flow and not add any strokes later on. I'm adding in a couple of dots of black to show that the form actually continues. Now I'm defining Tristan's head. Sometimes I'll be crazy and I'll attempt to draw someone's face from the bottom of their face rather than the top of their face, but I like the challenge, to see if I can define the relationship between someone's mouth, their nose, their eyes, and not have it look lopsided. It takes some practice. I'm trying to make the whole thing feel like it has a dynamic light source. I'm not filling it in all the way so it mirrors some of the negative space that I have in his shirt and his gym pants. Now I'm doing some crosshatching on his shoes, the black and white squares. So now, I'm just gonna do a couple lines to add in the chair, so it looks like his client is actually sitting on something. So now, the secret weapon is my white nib pen, and I'm making a bunch of shapes that are different variations on the mustache. I'm drawing thin ones, fat ones, ones that are kind of like goatees. I really like how this piece came out.

Day 22 - Jumpsuit for joy

- I love the color red. I love it anytime, any place, and I was really drawn to this photograph because red is the dominant color. I'm gonna start out with a red marker this time to define the composition, shape, and color. I really want the red to be graphic, so I am doing vertical strokes to cover the surface, just really rough. All-in-one continue a line from the red background to her red clothes, that it's all just kind of blending in together. Vertical pen strokes, up and down. So now I'm working on the figure, her face, her hair, her arms. I'm keeping it really rough, just following the contour. I wanna modify the blue that I'm looking at, and create something that's a little less saturated, a little more flat. So I'm starting with the blue and adding a little bit of black to it, adding some water just to dilute it a little bit. Just trying, adding a little more blue into it now, just trying to get it a little bit brighter but not all the way blue that it was before. So now I'm painting the background. I'm just

painting it flat. I'm just gonna let it cover and fill out the page. Occasionally I'll work like this. The majority of why I don't usually fill out the page with a background of flat paint is because I am cutting out the figures that I'm drawing to place into my column. So, it means that I have to be flexible with the background, so I have to leave it open. So I'm often designing them to be able to have that flexibility. Now I'm painting in her hair. I'm using just flat, black paint to cover as much of the surface. So I'm putting some finishing touches, adding some blue in for her earrings. And giving her hair a little more shape, form, and texture with some thin, black line. Really fluffing up the hair, making it flowy. And there she is, lady in red.

Day 23 - Top notch top knot

- I took this photo in Cuba two years ago. He's an amazing artist. I've drawn him in my column a couple of times, and as many times as I've drawn him, it never gets old. For this piece, I'm gonna keep it super simple and stick with colored pencil. I'm gonna stick with three colors for this piece, a charcoal pencil gray, a brown for skin color, and the red of the couch that he's sitting on. I'm starting with his bun, which is one of my favorite parts of his physical expression. I love drawing hair in all colors, textures, lengths. I just love it. He's got such a swagger to him. I wanna capture some of that. So catching the angle of his fingers, the way it touches his lips. That's all the stuff that I'm trying to capture in this illustration. So now I'm drawing cigar using that second color, that brown that I'm also later gonna use to define the skin tone. Coming down to his shirt. I can't forget his necklace. Now I'm going in again and coloring in the shadow in the T-shirt using that same brown. And now adding in a darker color for his pants. The red color is for the chair that he's sitting on, and I'm gonna use the same red to define the color underneath the doily that's on the arm of the chair that he's sitting on. I love stuff like this. I don't have to use anything else other than that color to denote what's sitting underneath it. I could go in and define the shapes a little more concretely, but I like the idea that it's just the impression. This is a very sketch-like, impressionistic piece, so I wanna keep some of that mystery. And even though the cigar is not lit, I'm gonna use some of that red to define some smoke coming from the cigar. Finis.

Day 24 - Perfect poise

- I took this photo on a trip with my friend Mariah. We had just arrived and were walking around. I loved the dress that she was wearing and that she was looking around, little bit lost like I was, looking to discover this place we had just arrived at. I'm gonna start with some paint for this piece. Adding in some black. That's gonna be a majority of the color on the page. So I'm using my paint to define her dress. I decided that I'm not gonna use any other line work for her dress. So I'm just allowing the shape and the definition of the black to define what she's wearing. And I'm gonna build my line work around the dress. I love working with black like this. It's just this glob until you give it form. So once that's done, I turn my attention to the line work in her hand. And I'm giving it just enough definition, but no shadow. So it's just clean line. And there's her hand bag that goes across her upper body. And I've let the paint, or lack of paint, define that there's a strap around her shoulders. And I've just let the white define that. So all I'm doing is defining what her bag looks like outside of the black and the white. And I'm not touching it otherwise. So now that I'm working on her head and her hair, I'm starting with her hair and letting that define where her face is going to be. So now putting the final touches on her face. The only shading and shadow I'm putting in to this piece is in her hair. And Mariah is now complete.

Day 25 - Art smarts

- This reference I'm using today is of my friend Chanda. She was standing next to a painting I had done at a show and I just love her expression, I love what she's wearing, and I love that she's pointing at a painted type piece that I had done. I'm inspired by the color in her jacket so I'm gonna work with colored pencil and colored pen. I'm gonna layer in an underlayer of color but I'm gonna start with her face just to establish the composition with a brown-colored pen. So starting with the hair... I love the shape of Chanda's hairline and her hair color. So I'm just establishing the flow and line work. And moving on to her glasses, doesn't she have the coolest glasses? I love when glasses really define the shape of someone's face and I really think that is the case and it really helps me to get the angle of her face to match the shape of her glasses. It's a weird thing to say but I'm always looking for those little details. So I established a little bit of the line in her shirt just to help me with the composition and now I'm turning my attention to the underlayer. So I'm using the colored pencil and I'm just gonna shade in the entire thing really flat and really soft, just a little bit of texture but not too much. I'm going to let the hard line of my pen later on define all the folds and curves and it's a conscious decision because sometimes I will let the colored pencil define all of the folds and the curves and the shadow but in this case, I like the softness of this color palette so I'm just gonna leave that be and I'm gonna let the colored pen later on define all of those lines. So I'm still drawing under brown shading really filling out the entire jacket. And then I'm going to do a little bit of color in her jeans just so I can see what the contrast and colors look like, not the entire thing, just enough to establish the area that I'll be drawing in a little later on. So now I can pick up the brown pen and start placing in some of that color into the jacket and her shirt. Now I get to her hands... And a little detail that I love from this reference is her bag and it's this kind of craft, tennis racket, I don't even know how to describe it but I'm kind of obsessed with it. So I wanna make sure I get some of those details in the handle of the bag. Drawing some of those details. But I'm keeping it casual, I'm not overdoing it, just enough line to be suggestive of the folds in her jacket and just letting the layers underneath of that flat textured color do some of that work. And now that the bag is in place, I can turn some of the tension back to the jeans. I'm gonna draw the underlayer with the colored pencil but just enough also like the jacket, not too much keeping it really flat and simple. Now I'm picking up my blue pen and drawing some of that definition into her jeans. Now that that's done, I can work on some of the background. I don't wanna overdo it. I made a decision that I wasn't going to write in any of the type because I really want to keep the focus on her. The main focus is her and the background is just just that, background. I'm picking up two colored pencils to work on the colors and the flowers. And I'm going with contrast, one is really kind of electric and one is closer to the actual flower color. I'm doing that just for emphasis just so it brings your eye. And now that the flowers are established, I can draw the background around it. The vase, the shelf that it's sitting on, the shelf above that right behind her head, really basic shapes. And now I'm gonna use the same color that I used for her jacket just to bring some continuity and use it for secondary tones either in the ceramics or inside of the ceramics. And there is in bloom.

Day 26 - Vivacious vibes

- What I love about this reference is her sass, and her body language, and the joy in her face. So I'm starting with her hair. I always use hair to help me define a figure and a shape. When I'm not sure where to start, I'll usually look for the hair to be a framing device. That'll help me figure out the architecture of what makes someone's face unique. I'm gonna stick with an all pencil drawing for this reference. I feel like pencil is really gonna capture her energy and vitality. And I don't wanna get

too precise 'cause I might lose some of the spontaneity in the energy in the reference. And I really wanna capture her body language, so I wanna draw her hair where it falls on her shoulder. And then use that to start defining the shape of her outfit. And I'm using the line of my pencil just really roughly, just to really fill in the shapes. I'm really just letting the pencil define the shape. I'm not being super precise about anything, 'cause I really just wanna feel the energy of how the pencil is connecting with the paper. I just want the whole drawing to feel energetic. I want it to feel loose. So now, I'm using the pencil to define some of the shape of her hands and her arm. Sometimes I'll deviate from the reference. Reference is always a great starting point, but I'm all for editing a composition to your specific needs. In this case, I wanted to see more of her right hand. So I decided to add a little bit more and show an aspect of the reference that's actually not there. So I'm drawing in what I think her hand is going to look like. And it's okay because I have the reference of her other hand, so I can create something that makes my drawing unique. I'm adding in some shading to her arms and her fingers. And I haven't gone back into her face yet because I just like that expression that she has on her face. So now I'm getting into the homestretch, and I'm drawing in the patterns in her leggings. And I'm doing it really abstractly, just flowing, just getting basic geometric shapes, just taking the essence of the reference. But not being too terribly precise, 'cause I wanna keep up that level of energy. And there she is in all of her sassy glory.

Day 27 - Purple perfection

- This reference is the most personal I've had in this series so far. It's of my grandmother, my most favorite person in the world. So I'm really gonna enjoy drawing this. For this drawing, I'm gonna stick mostly with my large, colored pencils. I have them over to the side here, and I'm bringing them in. I'm crazy about my grandmother, and I have drawn and photographed her many times. And as she has gotten older, she's become a lot more fine with that. Capturing her on her way to church is one of my favorite things to do, and this is a drawing that is of that moment. So I'm starting with colored pencils, and moving eventually into colored pen. Regarding her dress, I'm starting out with a blue, and I'm moving onto a purple. One thing I wanna recommend to you, if you don't have the exact color with the tools that you have, feel free to create them and that's not just with paints, but that's also with colored pencil. I'm using a blue and a purple to approximate something that's closer to the actual color of her dress than what each color represents. As you can see from the reference, there's a lot of greenery behind her and I wanna represent that in the piece. I don't really have a lot of time to render the background, but I want it represented 'cause it's not really the whole story just to have her standing in open space. And really just establishing that there is a scene and colors and using that to define the composition. So once the color is layered in, I can pick up and start using some of the colored pens to start defining some of the line work in her hat, in her face, and in her hands. Now that, that's done I can turn my attention to defining the line work in her dress and her feet. The body language very much defines my grandmother. She's in her mid-90s and carries herself like someone much younger. I'm endlessly inspired by her. I'm putting the finishing touches on her feet and her shoes. I always use hard shadows to really define where one of my drawing subjects is standing. I use it as a graphic element, but it works to really place a figure in a landscape or a background that isn't completely defined. And now she's ready for church.

Day 28 - Beautiful blossoms

- This is probably the most composed reference I've used so far. It's of my friend Toren, and we were in a house for a photo shoot, and she was standing in front of this piece of art, just a florist,

and I couldn't resist this composition. For this piece, we're gonna use color pencil, and color pen. I'm inspired by the flowers that she's holding, as well as the gray in her tunic. I'm starting with brown line to establish her hair. And for this piece, I'm really feeling like I don't mind if there's a lot that's incomplete. So I'm not gonna overdo her hair. I'm gonna leave some highlights in there. I'm not gonna color it in all the way. I'm gonna keep her face really simple. I love it when I have lines in a drawing that overlap each other, like it does under her chin. So now that her face is established, and her hair, I'm free to move on, and define the rest of her. I'm gonna do her hands, to establish where the flowers are gonna be placed when she's holding them. Now, I'm gonna do the background of her dress. Really keeping it light and simple. I'm gonna also leave that unfinished. Just drawing down to give the impression of the folds and the curves, but not a lot of shadow. So now that I've moved on to color pencil, I can use some of that line for the flowers that she's holding. Green for the stems, and just extend it all the way up. Just one line. Now I'm using purple for the blossoms. And I'm also keeping that simple. It's just textural enough. And now I'm adding a line to her other hand. And then some of the patterns in her dress, with gray pen. I could work on this diamond motif in her dress for hours, but I'm not. I'm just gonna do enough of a repetition to establish that there's a pattern. Just enough of a pattern in her dress. And Toren is now complete.

Day 29 - Vest is best

- I took this photo while I was having dinner with my friend John. So I'm thinking I'm gonna have this one be entirely pencil, but not regular pencil. I'm gonna do a black colored pencil. Just so I could get a lot of the grays and the scratchiness, but I can still get line precision. I like the idea of this being a little rough around the edges, just like John. So I'm starting with his hat, his cap. It's really filling out. And this is where I'm just testing this idea of playing with gradient and shading. And I'm testing out if I wanna do the rest of the illustration like this. And I'm looking at it and I like how it looks, so I'm gonna keep it like that. And now I'm moving down to his vest. I want the vest to look as three-dimensional as possible, so I'm really play with the ridges, and exaggerating so that it looks like it's puffy. I'm getting in details like his copper bracelet. And then his shoulders, filling out his shirt underneath his vest. And now moving down to his arms. Really drawing in the detail. Doing another curlicue for his elbow, but really not exaggerating it all that much, 'cause I want it to look like it's sitting on the table. So I don't want it to be a distraction. I'm moving over to his other arm. Filling out a little bit of shadow, a little bit of shading, but not too much. I want it to look like he's sitting at a table about to have dinner. So I'm including his glass of beer and his chopsticks. And then as I'm about to finish, I realize that I started his hat really with a light touch, and it feels a little light compared to the rest of it. So I'm looking over everything again, and I realize I wanna put a little more effort into his hat. You'll notice that I didn't include his eyes, and that is deliberate. I wanted his personality to come from his body language and his expression. And I like the idea of some graphic part of this, so I'm not including his eyes. You don't have to look at him to know what his personality is like. Just in time for dinner.

Day 30 - It's a drag

- The reference is kind of self explanatory. It's too good not to draw. With this piece I'm going to work with all of my tools and I'm gonna be working with them at different times, but I'm gonna start out with the large pencils, create a baseline, but I'm gonna be going back and forth a lot so this is gonna be a fun one. So I'm starting out with an underlayer of brown just to place into her face and her arms. Now that that's done, I'm adding in another layer of a different kind of brown just to add

some shadow and three dimensionality to her skin color. Now I'm taking the black and adding in some lines into her bustier. Now that that's done, I'm adding in some pink to her undergarment. Filling out the pink in her nails. Adding in some more black to her dress and then some pink after that. And now I'm adding in some lines just to bring the composition together. Now I'm gonna switch and add in some blues for the contraption on top of her head. And now I'm going back and forth between the pencils and the pen. Trying to give some definition to the shape. Using a pen, for instance, to do her necklace. Doing a pen and pencil to do her lunchbox. Using both pen and pencil to do her cool boots. And then again for her hair. And now she's ready for the ball.

Day 31 - Puppy party

- It's our last day together. I thought we'd go out with a girl and her dog. For the last piece, I thought we'd stay simple, and I'd use a couple of colored pencils and a couple of colored pens, and that's it. I'm starting with the yellow colored pencil, using it to color in her hair, to create an underlayer. I'm using it to give her head some form, and know how much room I have to create the rest of the composition. Then, I'm moving on to a gray pen to define her features. Her eyes, her nose, her glasses, and her lips. And then, I'm using her lips as an anchor point to start drawing the top of the dog's head. I'm using a different colored pen. A golden, brown to mimic the dog's coat. And using that line to build the dog around her. I really wanna create as much of an intimate scene as possible. So really have them super cozy and close to each other. And I'm going back and forth now. In-between the gray and the brown. I'm drawing in her hand holding the dog and the dog's form. Really trying to keep the composition at the top of my brain as I'm working out the different colors. And once I've created that composition that feels good, then I'm gonna take an orange pen 'cause I wanna really highlight her hair and exaggerate it. I know she's a blonde, but I wanna create just a little more contrast. So I'm using the color orange. I'm not overdoing it. I'm keeping the lines simple. Now, I'm moving on to her black dress. I wanna keep the dress as simple as possible, also. So I'm using a black pencil, but one that has a little grit to it. I've used this pencil a few times in this series 'cause I just love how it layers, how it's kind of gritty, and it gives you the impression of black without it being completely saturated. I really like that. I like that there are flecks of white in there. And so once that's done, I'm just touching up a few lines. And the cozy scene is done. After a month of daily drawing, you have the skills and confidence to grab your notepad, grab your tools, and take it to the streets.