Mixtape: 5 Ways to Make a Self Portrait with CBTV

Chapter 1 - Mixtape: Self Portrait

Make a blind contour portrait with Courtney

- Something everyone should do several times in their life is create a self-portrait. Now, it doesn't have to be a drawing, although that's what I'm gonna show you. It could be a photograph, it could be objects that represent who you are in the moment that you take the image. But self-portraits are a nice way to reflect on your own perception of who you are and what you look like or what your personality is. It's sort of like a time capsule in the moment because as time progresses, your self-portrait may change. That may be how you create it changes, who you see yourself as might change, and then, of course, physically your appearance changes. There are a lot of artists that work in this medium, and it's really interesting to see how people perceive themselves. I'm just gonna do a blind contour because I think that's the most approachable way to do a self-portrait because it's really scary looking at yourself in the mirror with such intensity. But it's also really fun because the blind contour is so quick. I've set up a little rig with a mirror in my pen box, and I'm working with a big Mr. Sketch on a big piece of Strathmore drawing paper. I like working with a crayon or a big marker. You can do tiny little mini-self-portraits too. That would be fun. But I like staying loose and open for this. And my mirror, I'd like a little bit more, but this is what I can go with. So it's kind of my face, my hair, and just up to underneath the top button of my dress. Because it's a blind contour, if you were watching day one, I'm not gonna look at my paper, and I'm not gonna pick up my pen. I will just orient myself so I don't draw onto the table. And here we go. (marker scratching) Who knows what this looks like? Teeth are really hard. Ooh, I have such big front teeth. (laughing) Amazing. So silly. Look at my scary teeth. And I love drawing eyelashes. They always come out like these little wings on your eyes. I don't think I have that big a forehead, but they're there. I'm gonna add my freckles, my most distinguishing ones. And let's try another one with a different color. Get this any farther away from me. I'm gonna do it in this big fat yellow marker. And then I'm gonna go back over it with a purple because I think that's really fun to do. Maybe I'll start in a different place. Maybe I'll try to draw my face first. Just my eye, nose and my eyebrow, my mouth. I'm not gonna draw my teeth. I probably haven't done any hair yet, oops. (marker scratching) It may be a little hard to see. I'm gonna go back over in the purple, and I'm just gonna do another blind contour on top. This is something I've done with my friend Alfonso where we'll use these Mr. Sketch markers, work really big, do one color and then do another one. And it's interesting to see how your marks line up, where they diverge. It's just like a super fun activity. (marker scratching) Wow, so different. My eyes are kind of like proportionately the same distance, but they're dropped down a bit. This whole face has dropped down a little bit, which is really funny. And these look like creepy hands coming out. So this is just one way to do a self-portrait. You can also spend a little more time and dry yourself a little bit more accurately. Just gonna show you something that I did earlier. This is the same thing, the blind contour just using my Mr. Sketch marker. This one was fun because I actually liked how it looked, and then I went in and add blind contour added the pattern in my top. It just made it a totally different color. But I love the three little buttons in the dress I was wearing that day. This one was with a little bit more intention, kind of, obviously, looking at my paper, looking back into the mirror using just a really limited palette of colored pencils. For whatever reason, whenever I draw myself, I either look really old or really young. It's really hard to draw yourself. So maybe this isn't your approach to how you do a self-portrait. Maybe you wanna take a photo

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instead. That's totally fine. I liked this one. I think it looks a little bit like me. It's a very loose, I used a really big paintbrush, and I tried to hold it kind of far away from myself to get a looser kind of mark making approach. I went back over my eyes with a little bit of deeper color in a few places, and I really like how the mouth turned out. I feel like it's very representational of my big front teeth, which I love. There are a lot of artists that work in the medium of self-portrait. Of course, Frida Kahlo might be already familiar to you. She is probably one of the most recognizable faces. I love her paintings. She's painted a lot of people, of course, not only herself, but I think she painted herself over and over and over with all this kind of representation of what was happening in her life and whatever story she wanted to tell. She had a difficult life in many cases and a magical one. And I think that's really Visible in her work, and especially in her self-portraits. And it's such an incredible marker of time, of course, in the era that she was painting in looking at the objects that surround her and her interests and so forth. Vivian Maier is one of those photographers that went unknown for a very long time, and a young man bought an entire collection of her negatives. Unbeknownst to him, she was unknown to the world at that point. And since then, there's been a documentary on her, several documentaries on her. And her work is out there and you can buy prints of it. And she did a lot of really interesting self-portraits using a medium format camera. This happens to be one of them on the cover. And she was an incredible photographer as well. She worked as a nanny, and often would take the kids in her charge into New York City and photograph people on the street and kind of daily life scenes. Look how incredible this photo is, this too. So just an incredible photographer all around, but also really, really interesting self-portraits. Because she was using a camera, she was always photographing herself reflected in another surface, which is an interesting way to go about your self-portrait, but you don't have to do an image of yourself. Like I said, you could collect objects and have that represent you. There's a French contemporary artist named Sophie Calle who takes a portrait of everything she receives on her birthday every year, and she puts it in this cabinet and photographs it. And in many ways, I feel like that's a self-portrait also. It marks time, there's consistency, and it tells a story about who's involved in her life, who gives her what and what she keeps. Whatever medium you decide to work in, take a look at yourself in a more discerning way with an artistic eye and record that in some way. Whatever is comfortable for you.

Draw a five-minute portrait with Charlotte
- Whenever you're stuck on what to draw, you know what you can do is just get a mirror out and draw yourself. I'm gonna work on two pictures of myself for five minutes using markers. (markers thudding) So with this one, I'm gonna create a background first, just using the markers (marker lid popping) and just almost scribble a little bit on the paper in the area of my face, (marker scribbling) just to create some color. (marker scribbling) I'm using the lightest colors first, and then I can go over with darker colors. (marker scribbling) (marker lip clicking) (marker thudding) (marker lip clicking) So once I've done the scribbles, I'm gonna pick a darker color and get all my lines down (marker scratching) and the proportions of my face. (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) Now I am going to switch to a slightly darker color, (marker popping) and just put in some details. (marker scribbling) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching)

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(marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) And that's the first one. And even if it doesn't really look like you completely, it's okay, 'cause it's just a drawing exercise. I'm gonna move on to my next one. (paper thudding) (drawing scrapping) (marker thudding) (marker lid popping) (marker scribbling) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (lid pooping) (marker thudding) (marker lid popping) (marker scribbling) This one's a lot pinker, so I'm gonna be using pinks and blues, (marker scribbling) as well as the yellow. (marker scraping) (marker scribbling) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker lid popping) (marker thudding) (marker lid popping) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (lid popping) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scribbling) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker scratching) (marker lid popping) And that's it, just by putting markers down very loosely on the paper in the beginning, helps me not feel that it has to be perfect.

Paint a portrait with Jon

- Every artist ought to have a self-portrait in their portfolio. So for today's lesson, we're gonna work from the reference that you'll always have with you wherever you go, your own face. But we're not gonna work off of a photo. I want you to really try your hardest to work from a mirror, just as I'm gonna do today. The idea of working from a mirror might seem daunting because there's gonna be a lot of movement, but we're gonna learn how to build up a lot of simpler shapes at first, so that once you start moving, you don't futz with the rest of the drawing. I'm gonna start with the Pigma fine brush pen, and the important thing here is that I try to frame my head within the mirror, and it's gonna move no matter what I do. No matter how still I can be, it's gonna move a little bit. So don't try to pick a facial expression where you're smiling or trying to hold something that's too complex. Just choose a very resting position, and try to remember the angle that you're at. So starting off, I'm gonna make a shape that sort of goes around the scale, around the shape of my head, and I'm starting with a finer brush pen, so that if I need to make any adjustments as I go, I certainly can, and it won't be the end of the world. So I'm going around looking for shapes that I see, and, you know, again, if you don't get it right all in one fell swoop, that's okay. We're just trying to sort of make an approximation here of where things are, where they line up. And the idea of having movement is actually something that can make this look better than if you're doing it from a photo anyways. So if it's not perfect, that's kind of a nice element to consider. So I'm going around the brow ridge here. I know that I'm gonna have to make this part of my beard a little bit wider overall. And so, again, with these brush pens, you can really focus on the overall shape, but you can also focus on the pressure, and so I'm trying to just sort of lightly get in the shape, so that I can build upon this with a progressively harder touch. Now, as I do this, I'm obviously moving my mouth, but you should try to keep your mouth still while you do this, so you can focus a little more on the drawing. But keep in mind, again, it's really about getting the shapes in first, and then going in and defining them a little bit more with detail. All right, so I have a decent beginning here. I'm gonna use my medium brush pen now, and I'm gonna get some of these bolder areas where there's a lot of dark value, and then

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while I'm doing this, I'm gonna kind of edit some of the marks I put down that I feel need to be fixed. (pen scratching) So I think I made the top part of my head a little too tall there, so I'm gonna shrink that down. And the thing about using a medium brush pen after you use the fine brush pen is, all of a sudden, these marks that maybe seemed a little too aggressive at first, they kind of pale in comparison, which is good for our purposes, because we wanna be able to show that we're adding a little bit of value, but we're also able to refine points and fix some edges if we feel like they're not accurate. Now, when I'm doing mine, I don't have the strongest light source, and I'm not worried too much about the direction of light and shadow on this one. But when you're doing this at home, if you want to try and see the elements of your face a little cleaner, having a good light source can certainly help. Yours also might not take as long if you don't have a beard. So that's another thing I'm contending with here. (pen scratching) I'm switching back to the fine brush pen, and I'm gonna add in just a little more of these subtle details in here. So working on parts within the eye, and you can obviously go around and add as much as you want, but the nice thing about starting with a solid beginning shape, if you've held everything together, you can move a little bit. You don't have to worry about messing up every single part because you've already got a good structure. You've got a good foundation for everything. So I'm gonna just add a few more details around some of the facial features, around my nose, and, you know, obviously, there's some movement I can even see in my drawing here. But the overall effect, again, is something that's very unique. You know, it's hard to look at a still photograph and get the same variety of tone and shape. There's a lot of times where you can look at a portrait that was made based off a photo, and you can almost see it more as a photo than an actual portrait. So the idea of drawing a self-portrait from life like this, where there is movement, where there is the possibility of shapes that don't totally line up, it's a lot more exciting. So the last thing I'll do here is just get some shapes in the hair. I'm gonna add some marks in the hair, right on the brow ridge right there, and then I'm gonna go to the ear and add some value right in here, and then there's a shadow coming off the ear like that. Get that in. (pen scratching) And voila. And now that you're done, you can look yourself in the mirror and say, "I'm good enough, I'm smart enough, "and gosh darn it, people like me."

Illustrate a portrait with Risa
- Let's get inspired by the thing that's closest to us, our face. For our first trio, it's going to be all about self portraits. For my reference, I print it out a selfie, but you can also use a mirror or just look on your phone. This, to me, is a little bit easier. Plus, we're gonna be using a printout selfie for our next two projects. Got all my pens, my paper. I'm also gonna pull a couple of colors that I want to use. That works. Sometimes self portraits can feel really intimidating, but it's not about having it look perfect and it's not about having it look exactly like you. It's all about getting pen to paper. So I'm looking at my reference and I'm just gonna go for it. I like to get the shape of the face first, kind of helps me ground the whole picture and then start filling in the nose, the eyes. I prefer a little bit more of a cartoony look. That's just my style. And it's this process that you start to develop your preferences. Maybe you like to do super realistic portraits. Maybe you like to only draw eyes and have some funky shapes for the rest of your face. That's cool, love that. The reason why I like using pen is that you have to commit to it. Once you go and you put your pen down, there's no turning back. And that's kind of fun because there's a tendency to overthink things when you're drawing. It's in this process that I get to kind of figure out what does it feel like when I do a really quick sketch, and what does it feel like when I'm doing a super longer sitting of a sketch? Does it have different results? And maybe you wanna do a little sketch first using a pencil just to kind of get the

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outline or anything. It's not about having it be perfect. And the whole point of it is to keep going. And if a pencil and kind of mapping it out makes you keep going, then go for it. Do it, do it, do it. That is a very fun version of me. So I'm actually gonna start doing a little bit of details with my fine tip pen, because I love this pen. I love this pen. And it's really easy to kind of get some textures by just drawing some quick little lines. I love my little laugh lines. Wrinkles are beautiful. (pen whirring) I am gonna use a couple of my colored pens. (pen whirring) And the fun thing with pen is that you don't have to fill in all of the color in order to get the feeling of it. And I actually feel like just having a few simple lines creates a lot of movement. Like this hair, I just kind of go for a wave and then I follow the wave and it gives that sort of movement of hair, Which is really satisfying to draw. And sometimes I like to just bring in another color just to show that there's a little bit of a depth situation here. Give it some depth, some extra texture. (pen clicking) Experiment with your tools, with all of your pens. See what it looks like when you have this big marker on the background. How did that change your picture? (pen whirring) When I talk about the creative toolbox and being able to fill this toolbox, it's about moments like this where you're trying something and now you have an idea that it changes your image when you do something and now it's in your toolbox, it's in your mind that in order to get maybe a more dynamic picture or you know, a really good texture, you know to use this tool. (pen whirring) Just like that, I finished my self portrait and I really like it. It's super fun, it's really graphic. It's definitely more cartoony and that's great because that's my style. Hold onto your printout. We're gonna be using it tomorrow for paper.

Make a mixed-media portrait with Danielle
- Today is all about blind contour drawings. So you can do this with a mirror, you could do it with a friend and draw each other. I am in a situation where I don't have, oh, I don't have a friend or a mirror, so I am going to work with a photograph of myself as my starting point. The idea is that you only look at that. You don't look down at your page. And I'm also not gonna lift my brush pen off of the page as I draw. I can guarantee you that it is not going to be perfect. It is in fact going to be imperfectly perfect. And I actually, I'm not a great drawer, and I actually like blank contour a lot more just because it is so weird and free and not perfect at all. So I'm going to begin by choosing a piece of paper to work on. And instead of using a fresh new page, I'm gonna go into my recycle scrap bin of pieces that have gone awry and use that as my starting point. That way, I'll have a little bit of color, I'll have a little bit of something underneath this terrible, terrible, perfectly imperfect drawing. So, let's see. Here are the four pieces I've got. I love the colors in the background. They're a little rainbowy. Maybe I'll use this rainbow piece as my beginning place and draw over top of it. All right, here we go. Looking at me, looking at me, not looking down. (laughs happily) I know that lots of people have technique of how to do this. I do not. I just wing it. Okay, there's some hair. Do some glasses. Oops, I lifted my pen. Do another glasses, a little nose. Oh, how can I get down to my lips? There we go. And a little smile. Oh, this is going terribly. I can feel it. And we've got some pompom earrings. I wonder where the other earrings gonna go. And a neckline. (laughs genuinely) Not bad. So, I really love how the rainbow is underneath it. It kind of makes it a little more fun. And because I love working with gouache so much, I'm gonna just go in and add a little bit of wash, maybe some polka dot. It's like we did with the Frida pieces, just to add a little bit of color to this mishap of a drawing. I'll just grab a paintbrush, probably a little one just because I'm only gonna fill in the pompom, so I don't need a lot of paint and water. I'm gonna dip in my water. Let's see. I'll do something that works with the rainbow. Let's get a little bit of this pink and make it watercolory. It's a technical term, and I'm just gonna go in and fill-in my pompoms. The brush pen might run a little

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bit, but that's okay. That might be a pretty happy accident. (getting water from a thick glass) Let's do the other one in a nice neon red, (getting water from a thick glass) because pompom earrings don't have to match. There we go. And then I'm just gonna go in, just dry off my brush a little bit, and I'm gonna go in with turquoise without any water. And I'm just gonna add some dots and they'll probably run a little bit. Oh, or not. And there we go. Now I've got a little bit more fashion happening in my blank contour. Done. Pompom earrings complete. Since this is Danielle Krysa drawing. Danielle Krysa. We better give it a signature too. There we go, 2019. Beautiful. You can blind contour, draw anything that you like. Even that little composition that we put together of found objects from around the house, you could blind contour that, your pet, a friend, anything. Your living room, it just helps you see things in a totally different way. It helps you embrace imperfection. And then you've got an entirely new place to start next time you work.

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