Digital Portrait Painting in Procreate with David Tenorio

Chapter 1 - Digital Portrait Painting in Procreate

Overview

You might think that traditional drawing and painting and digital art are two separate things, but we're going to find out how they are really closely related and they work very well together. My name is David Tenorio. I'm an art instructor in the Bay Area in California. I've been teaching art for about 15 years and I specialize in figure drawing and sketchbook techniques. As someone with years of experience in portrait drawing and portrait painting, I'm going to show you my workflow to take those ideas of traditional theory and combine them with the power of digital art. In this class, I'm going to show you some of the most important steps to starting a portrait painting. We're going to get into some basic ideas about color as well as advanced color theory. And finally, I'm going to show you how to finish really strong so that you have an accurate likeness and a really emotionally powerful portrait. When we synthesize these elements, the traditional art theory, the power and potential of digital art, the result is a portrait that is powerful and personal.

Materials

These are the supplies I use when I'm doing digital art. I have an Apple iPad that I use with the Apple pencil. I do have an OtterBox cover that I like a lot because like many of the tablet covers, you can sort of roll one side of it into a little base, and I like that because when we're doing art, whether it's traditional or digital, it's really nice to have the artwork and even the reference picture tilted a little bit towards you. That way, you're staring at it more directly. Sometimes if it's flat on the the table, it might be a little bit distorted. So I have the tablet, the cover. I'm using the Apple pencil. On the left side of the screen I'm actually using an app called Vizref, and this is a little separate window that holds your reference picture. Now, you can print the reference picture out of course put it next to you. You could use the gallery app on an iPad or a tablet to have a picture on the side as well. The one thing I do like a lot about Vizref is that it creates this big floating canvas that you can put multiple reference pictures in. And there's even some options to flip the picture, change the angle, and this would be great if you want to draw a different angle or version of the picture and then also if you're doing that flip, sometimes that's a nice way to check the picture to the drawing to sort of mirror flip them. The brushes I use in Procreate are a combination of some default brushes as well as some artist brushes that are from Sadie Lewski, and that information is in the materials list along with the PDF. Overall, the brushes I like in Procreate are a combination of brushes I can sketch or draw with, brushes that I can do painting with, and then some smudge brushes that I can use when I'm trying to create those hard and soft edges in portrait painting.

Techniques

This class has a variety of beginner, intermediate, and advanced techniques. I want to take some time to highlight the four most important techniques that we're going to be using throughout the painting. The first important technique involves our brushes and talking about the different brushes that are being used. Even though these are very specific to my own workflow, there's substitutes for these in Procreate as default brushes, as well as across any type of digital art program. What's more important is the idea behind these brushes. I like to use brushes for sketching, for doing my painting, for smudge, and then even choosing a nice specific brush for my eraser. The first brush on here is a

colored pencil brush, and the idea, the theory that we care about with this brush, is getting a brush that has a little bit of tooth, something that can be really soft, that's pressure sensitive. So I mean that when we press down really hard, it's dark. If we go kind of lighter, it's softer. So it's pressure sensitive, and then we do like that it has a little bit of tooth or texture. When we say tooth, what we mean is that little bit of grain that is on a pencil brush or a traditional pencil, right? That little bit of kind of nice, rough ending. And this is good because it sort of contrasts that more polished, like, softer look of the paint later on. Pencil brush or drawing brush is how we start. We sketch the drawing for the painting in. Then we have some painting brushes. Every program that's digital will almost always have this brush, which is a round brush. And the way that we characterize a round brush is anything that has a little bit of this pressure sensitivity. So I mean that the harder we press, it gets darker. The lighter we press, it kind of fades. And we even like this idea with the hard round brush, where it kind of stacks. I mean, if we were to put some brush strokes on top of one another, we even get a little bit of this like stacking or layered look. And the two basic ideas of painting brushes in this painting are the round brush and a brush that also fades and it also stacks. It just has a little bit more texture, right? It has a little bit more of that tooth idea. So when we see that one a little bit larger, notice how it has a lot of texture. And it can be both rough and then also very solid as well. The smudge tool, very similar to that pencil and even to that paintbrush where there's tooth. We look for this sort of chalky, rough end. So with smudging in this case, when we do smudge or blend with the smudge brush, we see a little bit of that texture. One of the harder things to combat, the thing that you have to think about in digital art is because it can be very smooth, it can be very polished, we actively try to make things a little bit more textured, have a little bit more of that tooth or that grain. And that includes the last brush that I think a lot about, which is the eraser. Even when I'm erasing, whether it's the sketch or erasing parts of the painting later on, especially if I'm trying to shape or kind of make something more precise, I like to use an eraser that also has some texture. So you notice this one is another form of a chalk brush, has a little bit of that tooth or texture. And this is great again for whitening as well as to shape, if we want to make like a sharp version of a shape. These brushes are really great for digital drawing and digital painting in general, where it's a blend of drawing, painting, smooth, as well as that textured idea. Another important idea that we're going to be talking about is a technique that we call ball and jaw. Ball and jaw is the idea that when we draw the head, we actually start with a circle that represents the top of the head, and basically the top of the skull, and then we draw a jaw below it. And we're sort of representing those two unique parts of the head, the more round kind of cranium, and then that more typically angular jaw. So ball and jaw, to start the head, is where we have a ball. We think about where the figure is looking, and then we draw a jaw. When we say where the figure is looking, we're actually not entirely thinking about their eyes. It's more about the center of their head. So where the figure is looking involves where the figure is turned. We try to imagine that center line, since we use that to base a lot of the features, to kind of wrap the features on top of. Ball and jaw is especially important when you're drawing someone at an angle, particularly the profile view, where it's to the side. You can see how it's very similar to a skull, that we will then stack features and more realism on top of. These last two techniques involve painting itself, very specific ideas with painting. One is about the look of painting, the other one is about color. We want to learn two vocabulary words, or two terms, when we're painting, and that would be tiling and blending. So tiling is more of the idea of leaving colors separate. So painting colors or shapes next to one another, and actually leaving them with a distinct edge, or kind of leaving them separated. They don't necessarily mix a lot. Blending, of course, a word we might be more familiar with, is when we actually blend those colors. We make them softer,

kind of merge with one another. So tiling can, of course, look like tile, can look like square. But what we're kind of shooting for in painting is that we tile with shapes that are more unique and specialized. These could be shapes that feel like a square or a box, and they can also be very abstract. These abstract shapes are what we are basing anatomy around, meaning we're kind of basing the ideas of anatomy, like a cheek or an eyebrow or a forehead, we're using these shapes to kind of reinforce that idea of anatomy. So tiling can be these separate colors next to one another. And then, of course, blending is where we would take those colors and we would blend. Now we can blend with our brush. So especially those chalk brushes, those rougher ones, and a soft touch. As we can see here between these two colors, we can actually blend by hand, as we would say. And, of course, this is like traditional blending, like traditional painting, where we're actually using action or stroke to blend. With digital art, one of the ways that we can blend is by using the smudge brush. So if we have the smudge tool or the smudge brush and we go between two colors, we can also blend. One thing I find really important is that because we can blend traditionally, so we can blend by action or we can also use that smudge brush, it's really great to use the two together, especially with that smudge brush. A lot of times we might use smudge, we get a great blend, but it feels a little bit abstract in shape. Sometimes we even get colors blending together in a way that we're not necessarily wanting to see. It's not as appealing looking. So what I always like to volunteer or express is that we should use that smudge brush. It's much easier, actually does a lot of the job for us with blending, but go back with a paint brush and kind of paint into it. That will create something that has a lot more complexity, a lot more interest. So in an area like this, where we're sort of rubbing two colors together, we should come back with our brush and potentially shape and create a different type of edge. Edges are very important in painting. We have two that we think a lot about, hard and soft. And sometimes even in one area, across one shape or across one line or one small area, we see a large variety of hard and soft edge. So that's where using the smudge brush and then coming back and painting, depending on the shape or the idea, can create some very interesting, complex moments in painting and in portrait. The final technique that we're going to talk about is called waterfall. And waterfall is a trick for picking color. It's a way to pick really appealing colors in a really simple way, a simple shape to remember for how to pick color. A lot of our digital art programs have a color cube. There are actually quite a few different ways. There's a disc. Sometimes there's bars or values. These bars you can kind of slide to technically pick color, which is very cool. It's a little bit more complicated. And so usually the box, this cube, is very common across painting programs. And it's a very powerful box when you understand it. The very simple way to understand this box is that to the left is more desaturated. So that's vibrancy. Saturation is just another word for vibrant, how vibrant or colorful something is. So the more to the left on the box, it's more gray. The more to the right on the box, the more vibrant, the more saturated it's going to be. So to the left, more gray. To the right, more vibrant. We go up on the box, we go higher, things are brighter. We go down on the box, things are darker. Waterfall is involved in those directions. The waterfall trick involves us thinking about the direction of the box. So as an example, we have a shape like this, an apple, a red colored object. And we were told to make a shadow. One thing we want to avoid, that usually is not putting us in a good place with color, is going down and to the left. So what we're doing here is we're making a color that is darker, which we do like that, that shows a shadow. But it's also less saturated, less vibrant. And this actually isn't the case with a lot of shadows. We don't want our shadows to get darker and more gray or less saturated. So down and to the left from that original color, not something we're wanting to do. Here's that original color. A lot of us, especially with this color cube, might go straight down. Now

the cool thing is that's much more encouraging. We're getting a better shadow color. It's darker and has a little bit more character, a little more color in it. Waterfall is one of the best choices we can make. If we take that color, especially if we color pick it, and we look at the cube and we do a waterfall, which means we go down and to the right, we will get a color that is darker and a little more saturated. So when we go down and then we go down and to the right, that kind of waterfall idea, imagine going waterfall falling like that, we'll get that shadow color that's darker and more saturated. This is really important with skin when painting portraits because skin in particular is reflective, it bounces light, and what we find is that a lot of shadows, a lot of dark areas of skin, actually have a lot of color in them. And more importantly, they have a lot of saturation. Meaning they're a little bit more vibrant. Sometimes they're even more vibrant or richer than the areas that are in white. So as an example, we have a swatch here to mimic an idea of skin. We color pick and we show those ideas one more time. If we go down and to the left, we have color that's darker, but more gray and more lifeless. This doesn't necessarily help us with that communication of skin texture. If we add the original color, we go straight down. We really have accomplished something pretty nice. We have a color that's darker. It's darker, it's about the same saturation. It's a good behavior for a shadow color. And what we're learning with waterfall is one of the best choices we can make, both with skin and even with anything that we paint, which is to go down and to the right. So when we go down and to the right, we get that shadow color that's very appealing. It's darker, so it's in shadow, and it's also a little bit more saturated. It's a little bit more vibrant. It has color to it, and it's rich. It has more richness to it. There are a lot of techniques that we're going to be covering in painting a portrait, and these are four of the most important ones that we'll see a lot throughout the process.

How to chose a reference image
When I choose a reference picture, there are a lot of factors I take into consideration, especially when I'm doing a painting. I have to think about the figure or the subject. I have to think about the color. And then finally, I truly think about the connection. What kind of engagement do I have with the picture? With this reference picture, so many of those boxes are immediately checked off. I really like the color. Immediately, I love how the background color, the skin tone, and even little elements of the clothing have, of course, that pink, that kind of nice rose color. And then it's in sharp contrast in a really exciting way to the pop of the blue and potentially in painting the direction we could lean this gray into, this nice sort of almost blank canvas of hair, this color that we could kind of shift red or blue. And so there's this nice harmony overall with the picture. I do like fabric a lot as well. I like fabric, I like pattern. So I like to see fabric that either has a dynamic behavior or there's something interesting going on with the interior of it. So maybe a pattern or maybe a certain kind of fold or crunch. And so just the outfit itself was very engaging to me. I really liked a lot. With the figure, I like how the figure is looking towards us. I think this is a great portrait to paint because we're gonna be able to work through these features fairly easily. I think it'll actually be a pretty smooth process for those portrait features, which gives us more time to make decisions in painting and even in the color choice. There's also a candid quality to the photo. There's an idea of being against this wall and this outfit, and even just with the expression where I really like this capturing of a moment, a capturing of this person in some type of moment. And ultimately, that's what makes a great reference picture for me is I have an immediate reaction. There's a challenge or something I really like in the technique and the drawing and painting I'm gonna be doing. And then finally, a genuine connection, just a genuine engagement with who I'm drawing because the more I'm

connected to the picture, the more I'm connected to my artwork that I'm gonna create.

Drawing
To start the painting, we're going to go ahead and make a sketch. We want to get that drawing on the canvas first, that way we have a good idea of the portrait and the structure, and then we'll start to introduce some basic flat colors before we get into that real heart of the painting. On my brush list, I'm going to look for a sketching pencil. I want to find something that has a little bit of that tooth or that grain, and because this is a painting, and we still want to do precision, we want some detail, of course, and some nice shapes. As a painting, I still feel like I want a tight drawing, but I can make the brush for the pencil a little bit bigger, so this could be like a little bit of a simpler sketch. It can be a little bit more broad. The line doesn't have to be as fine as we would with a standalone drawing, so I'll actually take the brush and I'll make a little bit larger. I might even drop that opacity. I mean, I'll make it a little bit lighter, and to help out with some of the painting of a portrait where we're dealing with skin tone, you could work with black as an ink color. You could work with any kind of color, of course, but for that drawing color, I want to go ahead and pick kind of a warmer brown, something that'll kind of integrate well with the skin tone, and I potentially would even blend out later on. To begin, I want to get the portrait onto the canvas. I want to kind of place the head and then start to build on it, so that's where I'm going to use that ball and jaw idea. I'm going to take the brush and I'm going to make a ball or a circle. I'm going to show where the figure is looking, and whenever we say where the figure is looking in this context, we don't necessarily mean with their eyes. We sort of mean more of the center of their head, so wherever the center of their head, if we imagine like an absolute center, wherever that head is turned, that's what we mean by where the figure is looking. In this case, we're going to do pretty well or be pretty okay with the idea of having it facing the front. We're not going to have too complicated of a view, so we have the ball, we have where the figure is looking, and then we go ahead and we put a jaw, and right before we get to some of that more specific facial structure of the features, I will put a little bit of what I call that context for the head, and these are things like the neck, the shoulders, maybe even just a little bit of the hair, like a rough shape, so we can also move. We're going to do a lot of changing and manipulation in this first step. We're going to draw, erase, maybe even liquify with Procreate, like use one of those digital tools to get everything kind of sized in a way that we want before we go deeper into that drawing. So we have the ball, where the figure is looking, the jaw. We'll very quickly add just a little bit of that context, so again meaning a little bit of that neck and shirt, and then maybe even a little bit of the hair and ears, things that we again are going to change a lot, but just very simple shapes and what we call very simple decisions, so just very small kinds of shapes and ideas. So maybe a little bit for the ear and a little bit of that hair. We might notice on this reference picture that the head is actually going off the frame a little, in particular the hair, so the hair is kind of doing what we call breaking the frame, it's kind of going outside, and sometimes when we're drawing portraits, depending on our preferences, we might think that's not a good thing. We might think, oh I want to make the head contained in the canvas, or oh I can't see the rest of the hair, should I make it up? But something I've learned, a little bit more of like an intermediate-advanced idea with composition, is we actually sometimes like that head to break the frame a little bit. It gives the portrait a little bit more power, kind of like a little more presence. It makes the figure feel very alive. It kind of is nice to have them engage the frame versus being totally contained in it, and what I would advise, if you see that in photography or in reference pictures that you're looking at, I would advise just be careful of having a feature break the frame. So be careful with like a nose going off

the frame, or something where the ears or the eyes or chin, anything that gets cut off like that. Those can be artistically very cool, but that's where it gets a little bit trickier in terms of composition. But having that hair go off the frame, we actually like that a little bit more in terms of composition. So this is a rough drawing of a head that has no likeness. So I mean there's no sense really yet of who this person is, and that's very much okay because we're concerned right now with kind of sizing, just even getting a head. It's very similar to when you're trying to tone a canvas, which we will be doing that too. We're just trying to get a sense of getting that information on the screen or the paper and getting started. So now what I'll do is I'll rough in a few of the features. And my personal preference is to always start with the nose. And I like starting with the nose, especially for this front view, because this is the anchor, as I would call it. So meaning it's the center of the face. If the head was turned, it actually has the most projection. But as a center, it's really nice to be able to line things up with it, kind of base a lot of the face around that nose. So I'll usually kind of think about the nostril. So actually just sort of the bottom of the nose. I've really enjoyed recently in portrait drawing kind of going and looking at these pieces of the socket, kind of like these little shadows or areas that we can see of the socket or shadows that are being formed inside of it. I like to put those things sometimes before I draw the eye itself. That's a great example of the structure of the head. You know that the eyes are important, but we want to also think about that anatomy. We want to find that those anatomy landmarks. We're quite a bit away from drawing the eye in detail or getting it in there. So we're just giving ourselves a simple two or three lines to represent it. A little bit of the eyebrow. Right away, I would like to start changing a little bit on here. I want to add the mouth and things, but I can already tell I want to move some things and kind of resize a little bit. And so two ways that we do this in Procreate would be we could use the Lasso tool and we can use Liquify. Lasso tool is one of the first ones that I like to use. And this is where we go ahead and we take our brush and we can cut something, like kind of almost cut and paste something out, and then move it. And we're going to see that it creates some artifacts. I mean, like we might see like gaps in the drawing, things overlap, but we'll take care of all that stuff in just a bit. So right now it's more about sizing, shape a little bit, ratio, I mean like how things feel towards one another. That's more of what we're concerned with at this moment. So we have our head. I'll put a little bit of a line for the mouth. I can see right away I need a little bit more shape on this jaw and chin. I'll make my brush a little bit larger. Again, I actually want my decisions in this stage to feel a little bit more simple. You can erase with the eraser that I'm using. It has a little bit of texture on it. For a lot of this painting, I'm actually interested in tooth texture, grain on the brush, something like a little bit of that chalky kind of feeling, just so it gives some tactility to the painting, right? It kind of makes it feel a little bit more physical. So there's never a right or wrong time to erase or kind of edit things. So you can sort of clean up some of the structure lines if you don't need them anymore. And then of course we can also change some of our proportion and sizing. Everything right now is very simple, again, as a decision. I sometimes will call this a one-two move, so meaning left or right, up or down, big or small. So what that means is when I'm drawing a shape or I'm making it, I'm not thinking a lot about the heavy detail or like the really specific details. I'm just making very simple one-two decisions. Is it this or is it that? And I can get more nuance later, but in this early stage, I want to keep it nice and simple. I make the whole head a little bit smaller because I like that hair, you know, again, it comes off of the canvas, comes off the frame. Compositionally, something we're really interested in actually is making sure that the eyes are above halfway. Again, you can do some artistic decision-making with the head and like where you space it, but usually in portrait, compositionally, we like to have those eyes a little bit above half of the image. That goes back to the idea of some power in life, like

this really nice way of, you know, honoring the person and keeping them a little bit higher than the halfway. We have a lot of time and opportunity later in the painting to change things, to manipulate parts of the painting. So I mean, like if we want to move things, even when there's color on here, but the more time we spend in these early stages, the better, because that'll give us a lot of comfort when we're doing the harder decisions like color choice, painting marks, you know, like mark making with paintbrush, things like that. We have more opportunity to focus on that versus trying to fix the drawing. So this part can take as as much time as you'd like truly. And in fact, the more time you spend here, the easier and a little bit more enjoyable things get to be later on. Considering the level of detail of this sketch for painting, it's interesting. It's not a standalone drawing. We're going to be adding color, we're going to paint, and to be honest, we'll even cover up some parts of the drawing. So we want to find this happy balance where we have enough information to use when we're painting, but that we also don't need to put tons and tons of detail into the drawing itself. So right now at this stage, what I'm going to start to do is continue finessing some of that proportion, like a little bit of the sizing and the proportion of the face, and then also showing some important pieces of structure, like some important parts of anatomy or structure that I think will come in handy later on when I'm doing the painting. A lot of times when I come and revisit parts of the painting, I start from a similar order. So I start with the nose and I kind of build things out. I'll sort of start with the nose again and build things out. No specific order that I'm keeping track of, but it's a nice way to think of cycling. You're sort of like cycling through that decision making over and over again. So as an example, I'll come back to the nose and considering a little bit more of that width, I can put these really nice lines in here. I really like what I call experience. So that's the experience of someone, whether it's the age, the life, the background. I like to find these moments, especially in portraiture, where we show some of that experience, we show some of that nice anatomy too. So we don't just have a face with features sort of stuck to it, almost like a sticker. Instead, we have this nice sense of the face's form and all the wonderful, unique things of this person's face, all these unique qualities. So we get that nice experience in there. There's very minor things I'm seeing that I want to move and shift a little bit. So this is, again, the time that I want to take care of that. And the good thing with painting is we'll have more time to do that too. As we paint, we can kind of, again, shift and move things a little bit. But the more I do in the drawing, the better. Besides the eraser, sometimes the eraser for a drawing, especially for painting, will wipe something out. We can whiten stuff, but it'll kind of totally take something away. So another method that I would use is I would grab this smudge brush, still using something that has a little bit of that chalky texture. And I might use that to sort of push down some of that information. By push down, what we mean is we'll sort of spread it out into the canvas. And so it's there, but we're essentially moving or erasing it. And the bonus is that we're actually building up some texture. We're actually starting to build texture into the canvas. And when we think about traditional versus digital art, that's one of the things we have to sort of combat or work with in digital art is we want to make sure we get rid of that really clean shine of the screen or of the canvas and kind of build a little bit of tooth or grit. So this is a really nice way to do that. So we're kind of softening it up a little. Here's some more of that experience, that nice anatomy that we want to feature. We'll do that on both of the eyes. One thing that I would really notice or bring up about this way of drawing is that I don't actually pick up the brush or the stylus a lot. So I'll put it down, and I'm kind of almost scrubbing it as I make the drawing. And that's a really big difference between what we'd say or what we'd call line and shape, where line is where we're sort of drawing exact lines. Shape is where we're kind of building a shape up. And these things overlap a lot in drawing and painting. Drawing might be line-centric. Painting might be more

shape-centric. But we can do and work with the two together. We can make our drawing feel a bit more painterly. We can have the painting have some drawing quality to it. So when we put the Apple Pencil, the stylus, whatever tool you're using, we put it down to the canvas. That's why we see that we're kind of like scrubbing it in a little bit. We're thinking about building those shapes. I like to do that a lot in the eyes too. I like to sort of scrub the shape of the eye versus trying to draw that exact circle. This whole stage of drawing, especially right now, is where we start to build a little bit more likeness. So I mean like we're really interested in making the drawing start to feel like our reference. And there are some color decisions and some shapes with paint that will help that out. But in this drawing stage, if we can do it also in the drawing part, that helps too. She has this really distinct look with her mouth that I really like a lot. It goes back to one of those ideas I like in a photo where it feels a little candid. There's like a little bit of like a mouth opening, like maybe even possibly like a little hint of like a smirk or like warmness. And these are those moments that can be very hard to capture. But to capture them, the way to figure that out would be we just pay really nice attention to some of those little angles, especially like the corner of the mouth. We see a little bit of that experience in the forehead, which is great. And I really like, again, the hair. I like the hairline, in fact, especially like where it starts. I like the kind of shape of it. I like the way the hair grows off of it. So in this drawing stage, this is something I'd want to address, something I'd want to finish establishing, make sure it kind of feels like it's in a nice spot. And we're getting very close to where we want to start putting some color into this drawing. We shouldn't be afraid, especially when we use some of these tools like Lasso and potentially the Liquify later, we shouldn't be afraid of some really big moves or moments. And one moment that I'll often find in digital drawing in particular is that I'm trying to make sure the head and the face fit with one another. They can feel very separate. You can have like the head shape, like the outside, the face shape that has the features in it. And sometimes they don't fit. The face is too small or is too large. And so that's something that I'm working with right now is sort of sizing that face and making sure it feels like it fits the head. One thing we see a lot in portrait drawing and just in drawing people in general is we actually naturally, all of us as artists, do a pretty solid job or a good job with the features. It's kind of making them work together. So like we draw each piece really well, but to make them all kind of sync and work together, that's where more of that challenge will come in. When we ask ourselves, how do I figure out what to fix? Or how do I figure out where there's a problem even? Like how do I know what to address? What we're doing a lot of in a piece like this is we're simply looking at a lot of comparisons. We're trying to compare, you know, where does the nose line up to the ear? How does the width of the mouth feel to the height of the forehead? It can get very abstract like that. There's actually no right or wrong thing to compare and contrast. What does matter is that you're doing a lot of that. You're trying to figure out lots of moments that you can compare with one another. And that's also what helps with proportion. Proportion can be all these rules and tips and facts. Those things are excellent. They really help out when you're drawing and painting ahead. But at the end of the day, what counts in terms of observation is comparing relationships, how things relate to one another. So we definitely think a lot about that as we're drawing. And of course, even as we're painting, we can put a very low amount of value just to scrub in the drawing a little bit for some of those darker areas that we see. But we're ready to go. We're ready to get some color on here. We could show a little bit of some of that turn of the forehead, that front of the forehead, the side of it, right? So we can throw a little bit of drawing in here. This is not far from an underpainting. If you're actually painting on canvas and you're sort of scrubbing like umber or like a brown as a shadow, that's one way that we would imagine this drawing part looks like. Earlier when I was changing

some of the size of the face, the rotation, like pieces, I was using the lasso tool. So just to show that again, because there's a moment that I want to use it in, we would take that lasso tool and we can grab or draw around an area. We can free transform. We can kind of make things bigger or smaller and even rotate. And so we're doing a lot of this because we're trying to make things the right size. As I mentioned, we're trying to make things relate to one another well, which includes the axis, like A-X-I-S, kind of like the line of how things line up. So we use the lasso tool for like big moves like that, kind of making things big, small, changing the rotation. Another really interesting tool that comes in handy is what's called the Liquify tool. This is an extremely digital tool. I mean, like it's something that all of our digital programs largely have, and it's something we can't do traditionally. And in the past, I used to think, oh, I should erase everything, redraw it. I've done that many times in my artwork and in my career. But I also learned to take advantage of the program, have the program work with me and help me out. And Liquify is a really great tool, especially in this drawing stage before you put that color on there. So I'll take the work. I'll grab the Liquify tool. It's the second option here on that top right or excuse me, that top left little corner. And with that pressure, especially all the way up, we can size the Liquify tool, especially one of those larger sizes. And we can kind of gently push and bend areas of the face. I especially like this when I'm zoomed out, right, where I'm looking at the reference picture and I can kind of see everything from a distance and do some final tweaks. And one thing I genuinely like about this, although it's very digital, is the the tactile or physical feeling of it to me is like clay. It's like sculpting or like pushing clay around. And clay is one of my favorite analogies for drawing and even painting, where we're putting information on the canvas, we're putting lines, we're drawing. They don't have to be correct. We can fix them, we can tweak them, but we're kind of like putting the clay on the table and then we're sort of like sculpting it into something we really like or something we want to see. And so this act of like Liquifying feels like that. It feels like we're kind of sculpting the face a little bit. And so even though it's a very non -traditional tool, especially for those of us that are kind of trained traditionally or do a lot of traditional work, that's a great analogy to think about is it's sculpting just like you would with clay, kind of push things around a little bit. And so I'll use this again to make shapes also bigger or smaller. I might grab entire pieces like this eye, push them into a space that looks a little bit more lined up, bring in that jaw a little bit, even move or push that hair out a little. And again, how do I know where to do this or what I want to do? It's that relationship comparing idea. I'm looking at the reference, I'm looking at my artwork, and I'm comparing a lot of how things line up or how they feel next to one another to give me a sense of how I want this final proportion to look. I still have some room to change it later as I'm painting, but as I mentioned, this is a nice time to really get things as good feeling as possible. Speaking of, my number by default is always about 80 percent. So what that means is I would really like to be 80 percent correct. 80 percent is a good number for someone like me and what I often suggest to everyone because I think it's accurate enough. It shows that you're respecting the reference, you're trying to make it as accurate as possible, but you're also giving yourself that liberty to not have to make it perfect to even be efficient. I mean like spend less time, be able to draw more drawings or draw the drawing again if you'd like or paint it again. And so 80 percent is a sweet spot. If it feels about 80 percent right in the proportion, the color, and even your goals, I think that's a great place to be. Trying to put that 100 percent accuracy, perfection on ourselves, I don't think that's actually the idea with drawing and painting and art in general, right? We do want some emotion in this. We want some expression and we want to feel really nice and good inside of it. So we go for that 80 percent and that's where I'm landing or starting to hit as I get into the stage of wanting to put that color on there. So when we navigate away, we can even show

before and after. And just those little again like massages with clay, those little like moves that we do around the face, push it into a zone or a space that we might feel a little bit better about. So some final things would be, as I mentioned, just sort of shifting or moving around a little, kind of moving the face around. I look back and forth between the reference picture and my artwork and I also think very broad, right? I mean like I'm looking at the entire head. I'm trying not to focus on a piece and it goes without saying that the reference picture I have to the left even feels maybe a little small. It's like kind of smaller on my screen, but that's good for me personally because I want to see that zoomed out look. I kind of want to see those big moments, those big ideas. So 80% I allow myself some room or some space to change a little bit while I'm painting, but overall I'm ready to get some color on there and get started. So again, just a little bit of that massaging. One of my favorite things is actually the face being in shadow. So meaning sometimes when the face is lit from behind, sometimes when there's, you know, shadow being all on the front of the face as a result. So if you get lit from behind, maybe the face is darker. And for me personally, that's not always these really dramatic shadows, like really dark or deep, but I like the kind of like calm look that when the face is in shadow, that's producer generated. And so I really like that in the eyes of this picture. They have like a warmness to them because they're not really high contrast or extreme. They don't have like big, bright light in them. And so even in my drawing before I started painting, I want to show that I love that kind of nice cloudy, soft look to the eyes. It's very calm to me. It kind of has like a calm feeling. All right, it's time to get some paint on here.

Color flats, mother color, facial features
We're actually going to work this painting in a few layers, although we might find ourselves at the end working on one layer altogether in a very traditional way. So some of the layers that I want to work with to start would be, I do want to give myself a flat background color, and then I also want to give myself what I'd call color flats, which means basic flat colors for the skin tone, the hair, even the shirt that I can build on top of, but just to get the whole conversation started with color, right? So I'll make a new layer, and I'll work on first doing that background color, kind of that nice pink. I can lighten a lot of my colors, but I do like working with traditional concepts of painting, which would be dark to light. So choose color accurately or choose it as best as possible, how you work with it, but keep in mind also that you can always make it brighter, and that would even follow the traditional quality. We do dark to light in painting because the idea is that the shadows and darker colors are thinner. We want the thicker paint on top, which would be that highlight. So as an example, I see that the background is a lot lighter than what I picked, but I kind of want it to be a little bit deeper and sort of add into it as well. So I'll do that color. And then to start the skin and the painting, I actually like to put a base color that's sometimes unrelated, and it actually is what we call a mother color. And this is a color that we use this term in oil painting. You can use it in other types of painting, but as a sort of intermediate idea about skin, as an intermediate idea, the mother color is a color that goes underneath the skin and everything. And ideally, it's a color that could kind of interact a little bit with the skin. And so let's show that off real fast. Let's see how that looks. So we make a new layer. I'm actually grabbing one of those rougher brushes, one of those kind of chalkier brushes. And the reason why I'm grabbing that brush is because I actually want a little bit of the background color to interact. So I actually wanna see a little bit of that background color peeking through. This goes back to that tactility, that texture idea. Now, the color that we often really enjoy for a portrait as a base or a mother color would be a form of green. And I'm actually choosing kind of a nice middle green that's a little bit desaturated. So meaning it's on these color cubes to the left,

it's a little bit more gray. And the idea is that if we have a little bit of this green color under the skin, when we go to paint the skin, which is typically a form of like an orange, like a warm orange, they'll kind of interact with one another in terms of color theory. And what we're playing with is complementary colors. So complementary colors are colors that are opposite on the color wheel. So that'd be red and green, orange, blue, purple, yellow. And these colors are called complements because they're opposite on the wheel and they vibrate visually. So they're kind of like exciting next to one another. And if you've ever painted with traditional paints, you will actually see that color that gets really muddy. Meaning like it kind of turns like brown or gray, things like that. That's usually from complementary colors mixing together traditionally. We don't actually worry about that too much in digital. But going back to these colors that are opposite, we have a color wheel actually right here. The idea is when we put them together, again, they get that little bit of visual vibration. It's exciting visually. And so that's our theory. That's our philosophy is let's put a color that can serve as a base that happens to be a little bit exciting when it mixes with that skin tone. Say that color, we can even name it on here just to keep track of it. We'll call it mother color. Now we'll make our new layer and we'll start with our skin tones. And what we wanna shoot for is a form of orange. Orange is in many ways the parent color or origin of skin tone. So what's fascinating, and we can actually show a little quick swatch over here, is that all the colors that we see in everyone and their different backgrounds from whiter color to deeper color to very rich tone, they often come more from the parent color of orange than let's say red. And I talk about that a lot as an intermediate idea for skin tone because with things like crayons and markers, which are awesome, especially to not only learn like when we were younger to work with, but even in our adult lives working with, sometimes we see skin tone as more of like a source of like red, like pinks or like dark pinks or deep reds, things like that. And we definitely have so many colors in skin tone that we see that color for sure. But otherwise what we find is that a lot of the origin of skin tone from whiter to darker to richer is actually forms of orange. So that's the color that we're kind of wanting to play with a little bit is this nice kind of orange, little bit desaturated, something like a little more natural, not as like vibrant. And that's a nice color to give ourselves as a base color. And I very intentionally with this chalkier brush, brush it on and let it have some gap. I let it have some little bit of parts like kind of peeking through. Again, that goes back to the idea of physical, tactile, texture. We like that a lot. And right now we're just doing one color. So I mean, just a skin color, we can do a color for the shirt, just like the drawing stage, those one, two decisions, those one, two ideas, which means one color, this or that, we're keeping it very simple and then we'll build up some deeper color. We have a lot of opportunity to play with the color of the hair. We would categorize it as gray, which is great. We'd say, oh, it's this wonderful experienced hair. It's gray, but we don't want to make it an absolute gray, like an absolute black and white, totally desaturated as we'd say, no saturation, I mean, no vibrancy, pure black and white. We actually want to give it a little bit of a hue, a color, and we have some freedom to even sort of bend the rules on it a little bit. But for now, the idea that I have in my head would be to bend it a little bit more blue. So kind of like a blue gray, which is a color that we see a lot in grays. And then I like that it makes sense with our shirt. It's kind of tying these two pieces together that are separate. With the drawing established, that background color, that mother color, that color that's a base for not only the skin, but for other colors in the painting, with those things all established, we have our basic painting, we have drawing, we have color. Now what we're gonna do is we're going to work on starting to build up some more color, and specifically, we're gonna focus a lot on those features. And the best thing that we can do is still keep the decisions very simple. So we want to kind of work with a couple of simple colors for darks, like for shadows, areas of the skin

that are richer, and a couple of simple colors for lights, highlights that we see. We can always build more complexity, but in these early stages, one of the nicer things we can do is keep it simple the whole time, especially as we lead to more detail. So we want to keep those color choices nice and minimal, then start to add more and more color and more rendering as we go along. We're still gonna work with this layer that is underneath the drawing, but eventually we're gonna really want to join all those things together and actually paint on top of everything. And this is one of my favorite steps, and truly my favorite parts, because it goes back to feeling traditional. It starts to feel like a real painting where we have canvas and paint, we don't work with these digital ideas, because as powerful and as awesome as the digital art is, it only really works well when we combine it with that traditional method, those traditional ideas. So one of the first things I like to do is I do like to push a little bit more of that structure, those shadows. And there's a lot of nice kind of warm shadows. This is a time where I can zoom in a little bit more. I can kind of go into the reference. And I'll take that brush, and I'm gonna do a lot of the painting with this chalky brush. And the Nikko Rule, the brush that you see, is actually, I believe, a default brush. So you can probably find that on Procreate. You can find something similar on your other programs, but all that matters is you find a brush, and it'll make a quick mark that looks something like this. It has a little bit of, again, tooth, and it can be sort of light or faded as you work very lightly with your stylus, with your pen on the tablet. So I'm gonna actually grab just color from the painting, kind of one of these nice warm colors from the drawing. And I'll start with very gently building up some of those shadow areas. And I'm actually dropping the opacity on the brush so that it's a little bit softer. So I'm kind of finding these nice warm areas, giving the painting just a little bit more structure. So I'm looking for shadows that are prominent, meaning like they stand out a lot. I'm looking for shadows that help with turning, ideas, so like maybe turning the forehead. That's an important idea with the face is that we sort of have the face, we call it the features, the sort of zone right here. And then of course we have a lot going on when it turns. We have the side of the forehead, we have the side of the cheek. And it's great even in this front view to show a little bit of that dimension where it turns, like where the side is. So in this case, we like this kind of subtle shadow. Right now we're painting a lot in tiling. So tiling is the idea that we have these sort of separate shapes that are not soft or blended yet. So we're actually trying to paint a very sharp, direct shape that we can blend later on. I check often for warmth. You know, I encourage warmth or vibrancy, even though I like the skin to be sort of neutral, which is a little bit more realistic. So neutral means it's a little bit more desaturated, it's kind of moved more towards gray. I do also want to make sure, especially because I'm making a painting, I enjoy the color in it, that I keep it kind of vibrant, even in these early stages. One of the best things you can do across painting in general, but especially in these early parts of painting, would be to leave that brush down on the canvas. Try to make some large shapes, some large relationships, meaning like connecting the side of the forehead to the cheek or connecting the cheek to a shadow in the neck. We love to have these large, clear, readable shapes in paint, versus having too many small steps, especially at the beginning. So get a little bit of that shadow in there. We can make it warmer, more red, just a touch brighter. There's a lot of warmth in the bar across the face that's the nose and the cheeks. It's from a lot of the blood and even like the nice softness of our face. So there's a lot of warmth in this zone, including even in our ears. And there's other areas that are not as warm looking like the forehead, which comes from how close it is to bone. So if we touch our cheek, it's very soft. Then we touch our forehead and we realize it's very close to that bone. It's a little bit harder or stiffer. And that affects how that warmth of the skin changes. So we do see a lot of nice warmth in things like the nose, the cheeks, even like around the eyes, especially the ears. Part of, again,

brushing lightly is making those shapes, making them direct, but also still seeing some of that color come through, even from the mother color, from the base colors. We wanna start seeing all that interaction of color even early on in this painting. We're doing a little bit of that pinker red for the lips. Anytime it feels a little too vibrant, almost like a little too artificial, you can always tone down that saturation, right? Meaning make it a little bit more neutral. I'm putting these basic colors, these larger moves, but I can still come back in occasionally and start to shape a little bit, shape the lip, shape some of those colors. And what we wanna do is we wanna kind of do a pass on everything. We like to sort of cycle in a painting, or at least I like to cycle a lot, which means touch a little bit of each area and then kind of cycle again and touch the areas. And that way we're building things up as a whole before we start to really hone in and start to focus on ideas. So with that hair, we can make our color a little bit darker and rough in or brush in some of that dark tone we see. Traditional painting idea would be again to kind of focus a little bit on the shadows and the darks. Build those brights later on, at the same time for sure, like as we paint, but kind of build them a little bit later. So we're kind of really focusing on darks right now. Darks and shadows, and shadow is not always something that's intensely dark or intensely contrasted, right? Like a high contrast with everything. It can also just mean things get a little bit richer. Especially in this photo, there's some nice shadow and highlight, but overall the photo is kind of evenly lit. So there might be some areas that are dark, but just also use that term rich. Sometimes you just want to make a thing deeper in color versus going fully into a darker color with it. We have a little bit of that nice pink going on in the shirt. For now, we'll just kind of give ourselves some spots where we see it. We'll sort of like refine it, clean it up later. And to be totally honest, we might not clean it up a whole lot. That goes to the idea of focal point, where we focus on the head, leave other areas a little bit more rough, a little bit more simple. So now I come back and with color, I want to start kind of painting into the face directly, as well as kind of tighten some moments. And this is where we start to think a lot about focal point. We're going to find like those areas that are actually important on the head. And what we're going to do is we're going to do two things. In some ways, we're actually going to reinforce the drawing. I mean, we'll start to tighten the shapes, make them a little bit smaller, make the paintbrush smaller, make things a little bit more fine-tuned. And then we will also add some new color, a couple of new colors, some new highlights, but we will keep our basic colors on here. This is like stuff we can eye pick or color pick from. These are things that we can use across the whole painting. So we're going to add some new colors, but we actually have a lot of color that we can kind of play with and work with on here as well. Now, for me, this is a time where I would actually make the whole painting go into almost one spot or one shot, one layer. And that way I can kind of mimic the traditional way of painting on one layer. You can always work with layers. In fact, that's the beautiful thing about Procreate and digital art programs is make as many layers as you want. If you want a little bit of a safety net to go back and make sure if you need to change something or if you want to go back to an older form, you can always duplicate the layers. You can always take all the layers that you're working with and you can duplicate them, flatten that duplicate, and that way you still have these old layers just in case you want to go back, which to be totally honest with you up front, I almost never do. You know, I kind of work with the painting and go from here, but sometimes it's nice to have that little safety net if you want to go back and kind of work those layers or pull something back that you really liked. So my brush is smaller. My zoom in is a little bit smaller. So I'm actually gonna get a little bit closer to the painting. One thing I see right away that I'd really like to do is I'd actually like to acknowledge that tilt that she has, but I can change her tilt just a little bit. So I'm tilting a little bit because I like that angle, but it's a little bit, it was a little bit sharp before, so I'm

kind of straightening it out. Smaller brushes, more refined color. We're zoomed in a little bit more on the painting and the reference itself. And this is a good place to be. We didn't start with detail. We didn't start with small things. We're slowly narrowing into that nice spot where we start to refine everything, right? And what I want to do is I want to take that drawing color, make it a little bit darker and warmer, and start to tighten some of these shapes. This is where we say that we really do overlap drawing and painting. So I mean, we're kind of coming back and returning to the idea of drawing to sort of tighten these shapes and ideas. You could truly start with any spot when it comes to where to begin sort of like tightening and making the work a little bit more detailed. But as I mentioned, I always come back to the nose. I like the nose a lot as an anchor. And to be honest, a lot of the color that I'm going to be picking is actually from the painting. That's another reason we like that rough brush. We like that mother color. We like these colors that we've been layering, as it gives us basically a palette that we can work with and start to paint from. Nostrils on the face are very dark. We actually often characterize that. We say some of the darkest moments on a portrait or on the face would be the lip line, like the closed lip, the nostrils, the inside of the ear, maybe even the pupil right of the eye. So there's a lot of these things that we characterize as very dark. Oh, let's make that as dark as possible or it's one of the darkest moments. But the truth would be a lot of those shadows, especially on the face, have a lot of light. And photos in particular can be tricky because they make colors and values, the light and dark of an artwork, more simplified. They kind of make them darker or they make them more simple or higher in contrast. So all that said, when we do our nostril on a painting like this, we actually like a little bit of warmth, some red in it. We really like to see that on there versus doing an absolute black. A lot of those dark moments on the face should actually be different than things like nostrils or lip lines or even the inside of something like the ear. One of the nicer places we like a little bit of darkness is actually on the top of the eye, like on the outline or the lid. So this is a good opportunity with the brush to sort of redraw and fine tune the shape of that eye. We always like to work the eyes evenly. So I mean, whatever we do to one side, especially in this kind of view, we like to do to the other side. The technique in the eyes, we like this idea of building. So we like to build the eye versus maybe outlining it, right, using line or using drawing. We talk about this being a drawing step. We're trying to make things tighter and more focused, but that tool, that stylus or that pen doesn't really leave the screen. It kind of stays on there. And that's where we're kind of imagining, like a paintbrush, that we're building a shape versus trying to like carve or outline it. And so with the eyes, we think a very similar idea where we want to sort of fill in color. So use that paintbrush like a drawing tool, you know, carve or draw with it. And then also remember to fill in with it. It's the wonderful thing about drawing and painting. They really fit with one another. Even though we kind of honor them as certain steps or even like certain pieces of artwork, they really blend together at the end of the day. And more importantly, the more we use drawing theory and painting or painting theory and drawing, we make some really complex, beautiful stuff. We can make some really great decisions in our artwork. When we get that opacity lowered on the brush, that's a nice way to kind of even out some of that texture. We do like a textured brush. If you feel like it gets a little too like chalky or split up, you can lower the opacity and that way it'll still have texture, but it'll start to blend or soften a little bit more. This is what's so powerful about digital art is we can manipulate these brushes to behave so much like a traditional brush. And we start to have a similar feeling to what it's like to paint. And of course, even a similar look, we have a similar visual or an idea like painting. So we're building those shadows. We're kind of turning that form. It's a very intermediate or advanced term we think about a lot is turning the form, meaning like can we make the illusion that the face turns? Can we make the illusion that the

hair would turn? So we wanna turn the form. And we do that, of course, with two things. We can do it with drawing, but also just simply with the difference of paint, light and dark or the difference in color. We can turn that form by making those differences. That's what we think about down here in the chin area and even in the cheek. We wanna turn that form. Because we're on one layer in this painting, we can use the smudge tool to blend because now all the layers work together. So as an example, we could take the smudge tool and in an area that is very soft like the cheek, there are harder areas of anatomy, especially that forehead, as we keep mentioning. There's the front of it. It turns really sharp. So there's a sharp corner or turn there. The cheek is a lot softer. So to make that softer transition of color, we could take that smudge brush, especially one that has, again, that chalk, that kind of rough texture, and we could do a little bit of blending. I always advise to not use the smudge tool as kind of like a scrub, although we're doing that in a painting sense with the brush earlier. We should use the smudge tool in a way that kind of has a little more shape or direction versus kind of going back and forth like this where it's arbitrary. I mean, you don't really know. It's kind of a random direction, right? We want to give a little bit of actual direction. We can kind of brush it with the cheek. So we can use that for any areas that we want to smooth out. Here's some old drawing, right? Here's some old drawing line. We can always take that and push it down a little bit. We can turn the opacity up with the smudge brush. If you turn the opacity up, it makes it stronger. It'll kind of push or move the paint a little bit more. We can even use that to kind of soften the edges of the face. This is a really nice place to be in with the painting where we have color that we can pick from. So I mean, color that we can choose and sort of use as a palette. We see a lot of texture. That's a box that I would check for digital art in particular is can I see the texture? Is it not super like shiny or kind of like clean and smooth, but there's some of that grit. And that we're kind of building a likeness. We like to be in this stage in a place where there is some likeness. So I mean, it feels like the picture, it feels like what we're searching for in this picture. And one thing that's interesting in drawing and painting is ideally, so I mean, if you're invested in it, you're kind of interested in this idea. Ideally, the drawing or painting has a lot of strength in every step, like even when you're sketching it, when you're doing those color flats, when you're doing mother color, those first layers, all those things, that somewhere in all those steps, it has like an interest or it kind of looks really cool. It has something like cool going on with it. We like to do that in art. It's very challenging. It's not easy to make each stage have kind of some interest or even some appeal. But we like things like that truly when we're drawing and painting and we're really invested in it. We'd like to say, even in this stage where the color is simple, it hasn't gotten brighter yet, there's a lot we could do with it, that we're already seeing like some cool moments or some cool kind of like, again, that tactility even. We see some nice like grit to the painting. When we were working on the drawing, we had the Lasso tool to move things around. We had the Liquify tool to kind of push around. If we wanna make any adjustments as we're building colors, we're getting deeper in the painting, we would recommend to use the Liquify tool. In Procreate and other digital programs, one nice thing is the Liquify tool will move things on the painting and usually not distort it too much. If anything, it kind of leaves all that texture that you've built up. So I still would like to frequently check in with the drawing part, the proportion part of the portrait and make sure that it's feeling overall where I want it to be or overall like a likeness. So this is a good time where I might come in and tweak just a little bit. You know, I really like things like that proportion of the hair and the ears compared to the jaw and the chin. It's a nice time, again, to always check to the axis, A-X-I-S, meaning the line, right? Like how things line up. Are the eyes lined up? Are they like a little bit off? Are things kind of like turned and angled in a way that you want? This is a good time to check in on

that. And we try to keep these moves pretty subtle. In a way, I'd like to think like we use that analogy of clay that I'm not fixing huge things. I'm just, again, finessing, finessing a little bit, especially now that we have some color. It's incredible how color and painting will also change how you look at the portrait. It kind of gives it a new proportion, like a new idea of its sizing, of its ratio. So sometimes we admittedly do need to see color on there to even see like, are there more little things we want to shift and change and push around? So I'm looking at that structure, those cheekbones, that jawline, all kinds of like small, small moves.

Rendering, highlights, focal point

Making these next passes on the features will develop a little bit more focus on the face itself while we still respect everything else, we still touch a little bit of everything else. And each time you do one of these cycles, if you kind of work in this way where you want to kind of cycle through and go over and over through things, you can again do a little check-in with your proportion, your liquify tool, see if there's anything you'd like to change. One thing that I would like to change a little bit is just a touch more weight to the neck. I think there's this wonderful kind of nice idea happening, whether it's with the anatomy or even the lens, where there's some nice visual weight on the top, it gets like a little bit more narrow before getting into that shirt. So I like that a lot. And as an artist, you tend to even push something like that, I mean, kind of push that idea or that narrative. But I do also want to make sure that I'm not getting too narrow or too stylized. Stylized, of course, meaning that we add a little bit of artistic liberty or style to the painting. We want to do that genuinely or in general with a painting. But for me, in this kind of context of this wonderful reference, I'm in that sweet spot where I make some decisions, I push a little bit stylistically, but I love the reference so much that I want to respect it. I want to kind of work under what I see with it. Good time again to check any of those axis, A-X-I-S, right? Those lines, those kind of angles that things line up on the lips, the nose, the eyes. You can make the liquify tool really large and basically grab entire pieces, I mean, like an entire eye or side of the head if you feel like you need to push it around just a little bit. Oftentimes, you might hear this action of squinting your eyes or squinting your eyes and going out of focus. I don't think I really do that necessarily, like I don't actually do the action of it, but I do absolutely honor that idea where I'm trying to kind of like zoom my eyes out, zoom out like how things look, and make sure I'm hitting those really big decisions. Remember that liquify is a tool that is made to distort. That's the very act or action that soon as it's distorting. So use it and then supplement if you need to with painting. Painting, erasing, you know, redoing a section if you need to. Kind of work in tandem at all times with it, especially if you notice anything that feels a little bit distorted, kind of like odd looking when you're all done with it. But otherwise, again, it's a great tool, especially on Procreate and quite a few digital programs. It'll actually push things around and not really distort them. They won't leave kind of like weird fragments or marks. It just sort of gently moves things around. And I've learned in Procreate to really enjoy it, to kind of embrace this sculpting idea along the way. So we go back and here's before, after, before, after. We talked about in the drawing section, spending time on that to make sure our drawing feels as good as possible, then moving into painting. The more time we spend that drawing, the easier things get. But let's never forget, you can always do these little adjustments. And as you can see, when you cycle potentially, you kind of keep adding more and more. It's great to check in with it to zoom out. The actual idea of the color, the shadows, just more detail, that's going to help you see more truly in the painting and its difference between the reference. So it's always okay to check in a little bit with those ideas. So we zoom in, we can start to add some highlight in a stage like this. And for a lot of

the highlights, what I want to do is I want to grab the color that's on there and move it up and a little bit to the left. This is a nice desaturated highlight. I mean, it's very pale. It has a feeling of almost being like a white or like a chalky kind of highlight. And that's what we're kind of searching for is this feeling where it's bright and actually a little bit desaturated. That said, you can still feel very confident and encouraged to play with the color a little bit. In fact, the hierarchy of painting, one of the most advanced ideas in painting and even in drawing, especially with painting because color is involved. One of the most advanced ideas is there is a hierarchy of things that are important in artwork. And in painting, that would be shape is the most important thing. Value is the second most important thing. Value is the light and dark of a piece of artwork. And color would be the third most important thing. And the concept would be that if you have shape that works, if your values, your light and darks are working, then color can actually be anything you want. That's why we see Warhol, right? We see pictures or images of Elvis or Marilyn Monroe or like a face that we recognize even. We see it in all these wild colors and we know it's that person. And it's because those first two things were preserved. The shapes are correct or accurate. The light and dark of the highlight and shadow is accurate. So color can be anything at once. That's another reason we like to work this way where we're doing the drawing. We're kind of building up the shadows. We're sort of like building things slowly. When we get to those highlights and some of this later color, we can actually embellish. We can kind of build on it a little bit and do some different decisions. So again, desaturated highlight. We have different types of edge. We have edge that is softer, whether that's blending or kind of softening the edge of it. And then we have edge, of course, that is sharper and harder, especially in a place like the front of the nose, which we would argue is the most three-dimensional part in this view. If we're looking straight ahead, we'd say this part projects the most. So let's make the highlights, shadows, some of that work a little bit sharper, more focused. So it's coming forward versus potentially something like the ear that's farther back, and we can make that softer. We think a lot about shape, as we just said. It's such an important part. So when we're painting, we're also doing that. We're basically making these small shapes, these small tiles, right? These small little individual blocks of paint. And it's up to us looking at the reference or thinking about the texture, like we talked about between a cheek versus a forehead. It's up to us to decide if we want to blend or soften those tiles. But when we add it on there, we think a lot of that tile idea. We think about how we're sort of tiling things onto the face that we could blend. Now, a very advanced idea is that we have, as we mentioned, some warmth, kind of like a bar of warm temperature, a little more pink or red in the center of our face. So that's our cheeks, that's our nose, our ears. We also said that the forehead is a little bit thinner skin. We can tap our head, and that's why we get that tap, because it's closer. So the closer that skin is to our cool little skull, our bone there, we actually have the color change not from warm, but it gets just a touch more pale. The actual idea is it turns a little bit more yellow. And these are not, as we'd say, like Crayola colors. It's not like a bar of red, a bar of yellow. But it definitely trends towards that. So when we go do the highlights in the forehead, we could use that same highlight color. But an important thing in painting and drawing is that if we're using that same color and spreading it around the face, we visually are making this argument that that's kind of a flat idea, right? Well, if I use a highlight that's here, the same color and brightness, and I use it all over the face, it means all those areas are even or equal. We don't want that. We kind of want to prioritize. We want to show variety. We want to change things, right? So in the forehead, we could take that brighter color. We like the value, as we said, shape, value, color. We like how white and dark it is. We take that color, that value. We could slide it a little bit paler towards yellow, maybe even make it just a touch more desaturated. And that's a

nice color to introduce and bring in as highlight. Sometimes I like to lightly brush onto the skin and then color pick again. So kind of like almost blend it with that skin color, and it makes a new color that I can color pick and work with. And one great thing we'd say is that's exactly like traditional paint in a way. It's like using color that's on the canvas to create color blend. So we can do that. We can sort of lightly brush over the skin tone, pick that new color, and then use that as some of our highlighting color. So the good news would be we have highlight. It's still brighter. And at the same time, it's a little bit different in color or hue, which we see that in skin tone. Skin tone can be incredibly diverse just in this one surface area. So if we can shift color a little bit here and there, we like that a lot in painting. Gives us that nice variety. These highlights in the forehead, we can actually use them to create some of that experience, those little bit of lines and folds. That's nice. We don't always have to, again, use drawing. We could actually use color or value, the light and dark, right? We can use that and how it changes to create a shape versus always using a line or carving. There's a really nice highlight at the very top of the forehead that shows all those ideas we talked about. It's bright because it's thin and close to the skin, or excuse me, close to the bone. That skin's close to bone. It's thin. It comes out bright. It's very pale. It almost looks kind of like a white. It's really hard to show some color with it. And it's a great texture move. It's a great way of showing some texture of the head. I like the idea of tiling it, coming in here and blending, breaking it up a little bit. But a great example of the texture of skin, which we would say has got these different thicknesses to thin parts. It has this shine to it. Of course, even with oil. Oil is one of our favorite things in painting skin because it gives some luminosity to the skin. I mean, it gives it some light. We're going to work these eyes now. And the tip I always give for the eyes is to not be too dark with the tones. And then more importantly, be very, very relaxed or chill about how much detail you put in them. We want them to be a little bit blurry, a little fuzzy. It's what I refer to as the romantic quality, like the life of the eye comes from some of that focus being soft. And as I said in the drawing stage, the shadow in the eye, how it makes that really creamy white of the eye, that sort of like neutral, almost brown or gray white of the eye is wonderful for someone like me. It's one of the reasons, too, I like this photo. And the more that you draw and paint, it's very interesting. You develop these preferences for moments or ideas that you wouldn't expect. I always say that's in the form of like you you draw and paint and suddenly you like the elbow of someone, right? You like the elbow or the shape or you like the anatomy of it. For me, one of my favorite parts, I'm actually going to circle it is this part of the face right here, this little like tucked in shadow between the eye and the brow. It's usually like this little almost teardrop or like circle shape. And even in this piece, we see that there's a really nice sort of soft little triangle of it. It's just usually a really wonderful color because it doesn't get too dark because all that skin and light is bouncing around in there. And it's just a very soft, kind of like sweet part of the body of the face. And again, that's the thing you should encourage. It's so fun to draw heads and start to find these little preferences you like. Oh, you like this little moment of the face or you like, again, the lighting of a certain type of lighting of the face. In my case, I like that shadow. I like how the face goes into shadow and it softens everything. That's also why the experience is so important. You just learn when you draw and paint, you learn to truly appreciate people, you know, more. You appreciate their form, their body, their, again, even their experience, like the kind of life they've had and the really interesting, fascinating things it does to the body. That's that investigation idea. You're investigating people, you're learning more about them all through drawing and painting. It can be really, really a new lens to look at the world through. So whatever you do to one side, try to do that other side. You see that pupil? It's dark in there. But again, we want to keep everything very soft in the eyes. And soft doesn't necessarily mean that

there's no definition. What it means more to me is that there's just more blending of all those shapes that the pupil, the iris, the lid, they all kind of come together and make one shape or one idea. There's not as much distinction between them all. They sort of all blend together. Even though we think our eyes are completely equal and symmetrical, they are not at all. So their angle can be asymmetrical. The size of them can even be asymmetrical. So another thing we can relieve ourselves from, especially when it comes to drawing this front view, is match them up and make them feel like they have a good behavior with one another. But don't mechanically match them up. Don't think they have to have the exact same lines or exact same shapes. That's actually not true in general. It's not true sort of to the body. So it's okay if there's little differences between them. We want to see that. Grab some of that highlight color and start to highlight that lid. So again, grab colors and use them around the painting. And to be honest, the amount that you press down or the pressure that you apply can also change that color. So that's where you get some of that variety. When you're done with a painting like this, we genuinely believe we'd see lots of different little colors and moments. So if you see a bright that you like or they feel like makes sense with an area, you can grab that and push and move it around. You can also gently change the hue. Hue is just a synonym for color. They're the same word, color and hue. And so what we mean is that you can use the same, again, highlight, like the same kind of brightness, but just slightly alter its color, like alter it more red or orange or even more blue, green, right? Kind of slide it around. And that's how you also get some variety in skin tone. And that especially is with that advanced idea of how skin has different zones where it's a little more yellow because of the thinner quality of the skin, a little more red. And then actually in the mouth area, in the jaw, we start to see these blues and greens a little bit, depending on the person, depending on even the age experience idea. We'll see some bits of blue and green. So that lip line is defined, it's dark. But remember that even if the photo looks black, which I can see that, I can definitely see that photo is very dark looking for a painting and for real life, like for reality, we try to avoid that absolute black. We rather give it a little bit of, again, using those terms, hue. Give that black, that dark color, a little bit of color. Give it a little bit of value. It doesn't have to be absolute dark. It can have a little bit of value to it. Not pure dark, but slightly above that. And that will make more sense for the painting and just life in general, like actual real life ideas. This bottom lip has some really nice highlight that shows texture, shows how that bottom lip captures a little bit of highlight, as well as it shows the direction of light, that the light's coming from above. Anytime something's too different, like not integrated, doesn't fit into the painting as a color, again, you can always kind of softly brush over it and sort of push it in or blend it down. Blending is the smudge tool. It's like painting two pieces together. It's sort of gently going over a color. There's quite a few different verbs or ideas that blending really becomes or can become. So we want to start showing off some of this structure. Painting and drawing can be linear. It can have steps. It can be do this, do that, and then finish here at the end. But at the same time, what I find is I'm often revisiting ideas. So meaning I might have done some blending, some softening of ideas or elements, and then in the next minute, I'm actually making something stronger or sharper. I'm sort of like strengthening an edge. So you should be sort of nimble, as we would say, right? Be a little bit flexible to how you can do harder edges, softer edges. You can do blending and drawing, like reinforcing again. You'll see a big cycle there again of those ideas. Cycle, of course, meaning you do them back and forth. You go do one, do the other. That's the idea of push and pull. Very common idea or term we use in painting. Push an area, pull an area, push something down, pull something out. That bob and weave, that ebb and flow, right? Drawing and painting. Corners of the mouth, really nice anatomy moment to acknowledge. Again, that cheek, that turn in it. So we're getting deep into this. We're actually

getting into some stages where we almost say we're in that end stage where we're starting to add some more stuff, put some more rendering, but also we're in the third act, if you want to look at it like that, like a traditional story, right? This would be that third act where we're starting to get down to how do we want to finish this? And that can still take as long or as little as you'd like, but it's a good shift in the mind where you feel, again, truly satisfied with it. I think I'm showing a lot of the things that are important. I'm putting some work into that focal point, that face, right? I have my ideas of tiling and blending, and you want to start thinking about what's the end here? Like how do I start to push this thing to a nice place and a finish? So that goes back to after this work in the focal point, in that main part, that goes back to hitting sections like the hair, putting a little bit more definition. Hair can be an entire painting in itself. So meaning the time you dedicate, that 30 minutes, that hour, whatever it may be, we can truly do so much with hair. But one thing that I emphasize a lot is that hair is a volume, as we would say. So meaning it is like one shape or one idea. And if we try to put too much texture going through every piece of it, we ruin that idea of it being like a solid volume, especially when it's styled or when it's even put up in this case. So what we're more concerned with for the texture of hair is we want to imply the texture. And specifically the way that we want to imply it is we actually want to focus a lot on the ends and the edges. So meaning where things maybe end or begin, right? In this case, like where the hairline is, and then the edges, like how the outside silhouette would look. Silhouette just meaning the true outside shape of something. So when we're building the hair, we actually use some very large brush strokes, even some very large directional moves. And then what we want to start doing is we want to start picking up on some ideas where the texture happens at the ends. And although we would call this kind of the beginning of the hair, we're using that same term, kind of like the end, like where it starts, right? It's sort of like ending technically here, starting here, whichever one you'd prefer. But we want to find those textures along the edges and the ends. So we want to see occasionally a hair crossing through a section, especially with this wonderful hair where we have that nice mix of colors. But then we're also really interested in just seeing these pieces that happen on the edges or on the outside. Hair is also a lot like a ribbon as an analogy for its behavior. So I mean, it kind of like bends, right? It kind of like wraps around and bends. So you'll sometimes see these almost like bars of highlight that go across the whole hair. So hair is a thing that we love to imply. I mean, if you think about it, a lot of this painting is about implying, meaning we show a drawing, we show colors, we show certain moments that are painted a little bit darker, a little more focused, but we're actually leaving a lot of information alone. I mean, we're leaving a lot of areas not as realized as we might need them to be a little bit simpler. And that goes into, for my decision making and drawing and painting, some of the heart of what I do is I want to leave information that the viewer can complete. I don't need to tell them everything because their ability, my viewer to participate, is what makes their brain or even their body literally engaged, happy, working with artwork is by me letting some detail not be there so they can visually complete it. Speaking of, we have these ears. We want to show the anatomy. I mean, we want to show off what's happening in them while also keeping them pretty minimal. The ears we mentioned are in that bar that's very warm. So we can actually use quite a bit of deeper pinks and reds and definitely forms of that orange we talked about, but we can get a little bit more into that pink kind of stage because they're quite warm. We want to show a little bit of the earring. There again, we want to imply. We are going to slide this a little bit greener, almost into that yellow, because I do like that, what appears to be kind of like a nice gold color. So again, we're implying the earring, making large decisions, very intentionally not zoomed into the earring. And this is one of those times that I would definitely credit sort of an impressionist idea.

Like we're sort of using impressionist quality where we're using small strokes that are even abstracted a little bit to imply a bigger idea. Whenever I use a color like this that feels a little bit new, I selected a color for that earring and it's not quite something that's being used on the painting potentially. I do love to try and paint it or incorporate it a little bit elsewhere. So for instance, I might even paint just a little bit of this darker earring color into a little bit in the eyebrow, a little bit in the hair. We could even maybe use a touch of it just as like a little shadow here below. That's that harmony idea, even why we did some layers at the beginning to put underneath everything is we want to promote a little bit of that harmony. Now we do one of those implying textures, implying ideas on the shirt. And then we really start to get into that stretch of trying to finish it out, which we're do a couple of big moves. And that's often how I find drawings and paintings start to really end is I actually don't always put like a tiny dot somewhere to finish a drawing or my last, you know, 10 minutes or dots. It's actually usually these big moves, these like big ideas, especially because we now see the whole painting and we want to like find those big relationships again because we've put so many small marks and ideas into the piece. So again, we want to imply, I love the pattern and texture. And in another painting, like in another time or another like setting, I would potentially spend truly a lot of time on it. But now what I like to think about to keep my focal point is that I'm very impressionistic. I'm a little bit simple in my decision making. And that's a really nice thing to say. It's not that we have a lack of effort or that we're trying to skip over a part. We're intentionally keeping something rougher and more simple to contrast the area that we actually spent more time in. It's one of my favorite ideas I've played with lately is all these ways to create contrast, that contrast is not just light and dark, but it can be so many different concepts, fast and slow, big and small, of course. And then even like refined, unrefined, high effort, low effort. And when you create all that contrast, of course, that generates interest, that creates the true interest in your work. So the decision I'm making in the shirt is I'm making marks and decisions that imply that texture or feel like it. So I'm acknowledging it, but I'm also trying to pretend and discover what's a pattern or like a certain type of mark that I can create that mimics the ideas happening. Now, we're going to go all the way back to the background color. We're in this, what I'd call final cycle, truly the ending, where we want to make sure a couple of things. We make sure everything's represented. We want to make sure that we have that focal point. And then finally, we also want to finish off with some texture, some final sharp.

Final adjustments, clean-up

This final stage is about making sure everything has been represented. So I mean, we've touched all the important elements that we have a focal point that we've kind of put a lot of time and effort into that face and a little bit of that icing on the cake, right? Meaning we do a little bit of those small moves, small details, and also larger moves. And speaking of the first thing that I want to do to start wrapping the painting up is do some final, very large moves. What we'd almost call like adjustments. And the first one that I want to do is I want to take that background color and I would like to make it a little bit brighter. I do really like a lot of the color that's currently on there, but I can make a new layer to preserve it. I don't have to change it necessarily. It's a great thing about digital art is we can just adjust it. And this is a great time to grab definitely a large chalky brush. I'll grab that color. I'll make it a little bit brighter. And then as we mentioned with the idea of hue of color, one of the new advanced ideas you should play with is you can make something brighter and you can just barely shift it. Shift it more in this case towards red or towards blue or purple, but shift it just a little bit. In my opinion, what I'm going to do is I'm going to barely shift this pink a little more towards like that

blue. And my hope is that it would cause the warmth of the skin to stand out more. And this is all very subtle, but it'll kind of show through in the color theory of the piece. So large brush, really encouraging that tooth and even that overlap. Taking out some of that, again, clean or like shine of the screen of the canvas where it has a little bit of grit. We really enjoy that. And to kind of reference that this is even a wall, it's nice that we could also make this a little bit uneven. So it's okay if it's a little bit brighter towards one side. That's what we'd see in the lighting of a wall, right? One side has a little bit more light. So we can do that on there. Now, another very large move that is optional, truly, we can be kind of satisfied with our color is we can actually use one type of layer mode to kind of punch up the color a little bit and even create some, what we call like longer or larger shapes of highlight shadow, things like that. As we mentioned, all these small pieces have happened on here. So we wanna do some big moves to kind of also join it back together. You can make a new layer. You can set that layer on any of the digital programs that you use to what's called soft light. So soft light with its definition that could be a little bit technical, basically is a layer mode that kind of deepens and makes color a little bit richer. So it makes your brights a little bit brighter, makes your darks a little bit darker and it can even shift temperature a little bit and kind of like shift the color of things overall. So, although I like my color choice genuinely, I think a lot of the color choice is working. I can do this one big soft light layer with a big brush to kind of gently brighten an area, gently darken one. And if you think about it for all those tiny moves we've done, I'm kind of applying one big move to kind of help join them together. And what I like to do is I like to use soft light, grab that round brush and turn the opacity down. For any of us that have done traditional painting, especially oil painting or even watercolor, this is very similar to a glaze, like a very light wash of color. Now I'm gonna pick the highlight color as an example, make it a little brighter, shift it even just a little bit. And the idea is I wanna punch some of these areas and that term meaning we wanna like make the brights a little bit brighter, maybe make the darks a little bit darker, just barely bring up some of that contrast. And so if I make my brush large, low on opacity, and I brush, I can very gently pick up some highlight, especially in that nose area. And this is one of those steps that will actually turn on and off. We'll show the layer in a second on and off so we can see the effect that it's having. So we're kind of hitting those highlight moments. So here's on and off. We can see before, after, before, after. And we're using the round brush. You could use an airbrush, you could use the brush that feels the softest. But I also like to incorporate using this brush with that smudge tool. So if I see any edges that feel a little bit too sharp, or if I even wanna like tone down the effect, I could just use the smudge tool to sort of spread the idea out, to blur it out a little bit. So there's the bright before and after. And we can also do the same thing with a little bit of dark. Although for me, that goes into that term rich. I'm just making the shadows or those areas a little bit richer. So I don't really grab a dark black or dark gray or dark brown even. I grab more of like a rich brown to very gently brush those cheeks, brush that shadow in the neck. And again, this is surprisingly very traditional. Although we're using what feels like a very digital move, like a layer mode, as we call it, this is very similar to glazing traditionally. So a glaze or a wash in something like watercolor. Grab the bright, turn it brighter, slide that hue a little bit potentially. So we do like to think of this a bit as like an adjustment layer. So I mean, we're sort of adjusting or tweaking information. If you think about, we're not adding new paint marks, kind of like new brush strokes necessarily, but rather we're just kind of picking up the information that's on there and heightening it a little bit. Airbrush is great. I personally like the hard round brush for this step because there are some subtle moments of brush stroke or overlap. And as I keep mentioning, the more kind of layering, the more like little moments like that I get, the better to me. Build that texture up just a

little bit. You can also do that in the hair for any moments that you'd like to heighten the highlight of the hair a bit. So before and after. Again, a little bit of like punch. Now, feeling not too bad about this color and this idea, I can merge it. You could always leave it separate, but I want to keep painting on one layer in these final stages, these last little moments. I would personally say that when you do these adjustment layers that are soft, so for instance, the soft light, if you're trying to like kind of change or shift light and dark a little bit, you can actually return to something that feels a little bit smooth. So what I want to do now is in no particular order, but with a main emphasis on the focal point, the eyes, the nose, the mouth, that feature idea, I want to kind of add some new opaque, stronger paint strokes to kind of build up that texture. And I want the brush pretty opaque, pretty solid. So I mean, I want to see these brush strokes really stand out and they can be darks, they can be whites or highlights. But we're kind of reintroducing some structure. We're making sure that this doesn't get too smooth. And this goes back to tiling, right? Kind of using that theory or that idea of tiles, small, strong pieces of light and dark. And at this point, what's pretty fascinating is we don't even really need to pick color, or I should say we don't need to pick new colors. We have a lot of color that's been built up on the canvas that we can select from. This ending part is subjective where you're adding these stronger pieces of paint, but the goal overall would be as much or as little as you'd like kind of reinforcing that structure. And then for me, as I've mentioned many, many times, that texture, kind of adding that final bit of texture. There are no particular spots that are right or wrong. There's no particular colors that are right or wrong. A lot of the color is being sampled from the painting itself. That's a great thing is we've actually built a lot of palette we can work with, a lot of color on here. And the focus would be on the focal point, the features. So that's where I'm really prioritizing or thinking about what I'm adding is I'm just trying to make sure all these features feel like they're properly represented, like that we can see them. If there's any areas I feel like need a little bit of sharpness, especially in those eyes. Although I would say particularly towards the width, like the shape of the eye, that interior again, I really like to keep soft. So in painting, we would call this a cleanup stage. We're kind of cleaning up, we're tightening up, we're getting ready to go. And that's why we also allow ourselves to sort of hop around a little bit. So maybe we're just sort of, whatever catches our eye. And one thing that is pretty fascinating is this is a, again, very personal step in terms of how much or how little you do. And we might also find ourselves ending up with the painting looking very different in this stage. Meaning from the five minutes ago till five minutes later, depending on our speed and how we work, a lot can happen. And we like that a lot. We like that this last part has some energy. When it comes to working quickly or efficiently, things like that, we can do that. We can work fast, we can think like that. But fast does not always mean that you're rushing or that you don't care. The way that we really like to look at speed even when we work a little bit, in a case like this towards the end, is it's controlled. You know, we'd like to think that we're not being too flippant or like too kind of sloppy with our decisions. It just means we're really controlled when we work quickly. And that also, we do want some energy. We kind of want a little bit of energy in the piece. So again, reinforce structure. So that means the anatomy. Add those last tactile moments, right, with paint. We are so impressed, truly, myself for sure, with the power of digital art, the power of Procreate, the power of all these programs that we use. We can do so many awesome things with them. But the one thing that we often don't want to lose track of, at least in my case, would be that feeling of traditional, you know, that I am painting. It's one of the great things about working with these digital programs is you really are painting. Just because it's on a screen doesn't mean it's not the same philosophy, the same kind of tactility, you know, the same sorts of decisions. And so to preserve that idea, to make that idea translate

between traditional and digital, we keep this energy high. We kind of work in the same steps as we would traditionally. And we even do moments like that glaze idea. So they overlap quite a bit, the two ideas. Start adding a little bit of turn to that shirt. Again, these shadows are not very dark. We can go just a touch darker, but I tend to respect or think more about reality than the photo in this case. The photo will crunch the darks. It'll crunch those blacks. And that means it simplifies them, makes them look like pure black. But if we were there in real life, if we were really looking at this figure, we would see a lot of color in a great way. We'd see a surprisingly large amount of color. You can start to mess with the edge of the shirt, less definition, softer. Same thing with the hair. That zooming in and zooming out is all about taking in that big picture, going back in and looking at the details. And this is the equivalent, especially for someone like me, of having an easel and stepping away from it, going back and forth. Even like our great John Singer Sargent, someone who just would take one or two paint strokes, step back, do some paint strokes, step back. And that's very important. We're trying to nail this larger picture, this larger idea. We're trying to keep that energy, again, a little bit higher at the end, or just encourage it. Again, we're not trying to do a lot of unnecessary moves or unnecessary ideas, but we don't always like to end very slow or without a sense of some energy in the piece. And then it goes to show that although we work big to small, that doesn't mean we have to work with a lot of excitement in the beginning and then end very quietly. We can have a lot of excitement at the end as well. And that emotional part does translate to your work. It translates into what you're working on to have a bit of that towards the end. Notice how these moves get a little bit quicker. They're a little bit rougher. And again, that's the thing we encourage. We've had a lot of tight work. We've done a lot of tight moments, particularly in that focal point, particularly in that face section. So we can contrast that with some moments that are a little bit rougher, a little less focused. We want to come back into these eyes and start really putting that final texture, which would be potentially deepening just a little bit of that value. They are in shadow. Again, it's a wonderful thing in the lighting of this piece. And now we can add our highlight, which can be very dull. It doesn't have to be a bright white. It doesn't have to be colorful. It can be a very subtle gray and still create so much life in those eyes. Some final definition. So this is where you can return to a touch of drawing potentially. You can put a little bit of trim is a word I like a lot because that implies I'm not trying to outline. I'm not trying to like do full large shapes. But I'm just sort of trimming certain areas that I would like to be a little bit, a little bit darker, a little more defined. We had a lot of great color generated from the painting itself. So the way the colors were layered, we actually had a lot to pick from. In these final stages, if you need a little bit of highlight or shadow and you want to pick it yourself, this is where we would use any skin tone and we would waterfall. I mean, we'd go down into the right. So darker and a little more saturated. If we wanted to create or choose our own shadow color. And then we could say as a simple idea, again, as a simple tip, that when we're doing something like a highlight, it's actually just the reverse. We select the color, we go up and a little bit to the left. So that means we get brighter and actually a little less saturated, especially in skin. And if you start to paint more, you'll see this in all types of different subjects. Skin actually has lots of color, lots of saturation in the shadows. And we see that in even plants and animals and all types of things in nature as well. So you'll see a little less saturation in the highlight, a little more saturation going on in the shadow. We take one more look. We do one final idea of liquify, which at this point, I think a lot about that perimeter. Something like that silhouette or that outside. Maybe you wanna push something in a little. Maybe you wanna bring out those shoulders, have them go off the frame a little bit more. Stand over your painting or even away from it to get some final large ideas. And then you give yourself your last couple of minutes, if that, even

your last minute. So that means when you're gonna put that paint down, you're gonna put that stylus down, you challenge yourself a little bit in an encouraging way, in a fun way. And you say, hey, what are some of these last things I see? These last little moments. Because you can keep working, right? We could work forever, as we'd love to say. And you can. You're more than welcome to, right? With anything that you do. But it is very healthy, very encouraging, very important in art to find a moment where you feel satisfied. And let's think about those ideas that we're checking off. We love the idea of 80%, 80% likeness, 80% color that we like, 80 % drawing overall, 80% finish, even in these closing stages. So we like that. We like the experience. You know, if anything, sometimes when we finish a painting or we wrap up, it's just as much about like, are we having a good time? Are we enjoying ourselves as we draw? And once we start to feel that moment where we feel very happy with everything, that's a very nice time that you can call it. You can hang up your boots, right? And then finally, of course, do you feel that likeness coming through? That can be subjective, as it should be. We can be happy with our painting. We can think, ah, there's so much more I could do. There's always so much more we could do right. But overall, do you feel good about the painting? Do you feel happy with some of those decisions, some of those experiences you made? And when you get to this step, that's where you're saying, these are my last little bits and pieces. And for me, a lot of that is in that focal point. It's in those last little moments on the perimeter. The painting doesn't always end with that last little mark, although it looks like we're about to hit that idea. But remember that you can make some big moves at the end, as we did. You can make some last really nice large moves to wrap everything up. Because we've done so much small work, when you think about it. We've done so many small moves, some small decisions, a lot of decisions, in fact, in the time from start to finish, especially seeing it go from drawing to painting. So at the end, you do want to join it up with all those nice large moves to kind of join everything together. The coup de grace, as we would say, show off those pretty earrings. Let's not forget about them. So when you reach a moment where you feel, again, proud of what you've done, proud of the time you've spent, you've had a great time making art overall, and you have learned a lot about that person that you're drawing, that's a good time to call that painting. It can always be revisited. It can always move on to the next one. And overall, what is very important is that we have that process that feels reliable, and ultimately, too, that we use that power of that digital art program. We combine it with all those awesome concepts of traditional drawing, traditional painting, and art theory.

Review
Looking back on the painting, there's a lot of things I really like and I think turned out great. One of my favorite things is that the likeness feels a lot like the reference picture. So that personal connection with the picture, who I'm drawing, who I'm painting, I feel like I felt that from start to finish. And there's something really magical about when you find that moment in the painting, where you feel that connection between the person that you're drawing painting and that reference. You feel like they're one in the same. I really like that likeness coming through. I really enjoy the mark making overall. Mark making is when we refer to the brush strokes, even some of that drawing coming through, some of the texture. I just overall like that finish to the painting, especially some of those last moves where we got a little bit more physical with the paint. And this painting also has a lot of nice edges, I feel like, to it where I enjoy the balance of softer edges and sharper edges. If you ever wonder about what you can do more, what are some things you could push in a painting? For me personally, I think I can push in the future or at a later time, more of that hair, right? Kind of push

the representation of things like the hair, the shirt, maybe the earrings. In that idea of trying to find the focal point and staying focused on it, we can find a good landing spot. And what's cool is that later on, you can spend more time on things like hair, the shirt, the earrings, even the background, because you've established that main idea of the painting. It gives you the freedom to go all around to the other sections, those supporting sections. So yeah, a little more time, if we put more time into it, just means we get to keep refining, kind of keep bringing up those other elements. These other examples show some of that attention that you can put towards other textures in the painting, like hair and clothing. And then also examples of that physical idea of mark making, where once you've done your colors, you've done your blending, you can actually finish the painting with some stronger, more physical paintwork to add to the texture, to even reinforce certain textures, that fabric, that hair, and that skin. And then overall, just to build up kind of a presence to the painting. We see that in the top example. Here in the bottom example, I think what's great is this feels a lot like the strategy I went for in my other painting, the one that was created, where we have a mix of those hard and soft edges. There's a little bit of attention to keeping things sensitive, and kind of kept a little bit warmer, softer, a little more smooth in the turn when it comes to the subject, the person that you're painting. And ultimately, that's a really great thing that you'll see, is that whoever you're painting, whichever reference picture you're looking at, whichever person you might look at in real life, whoever you're painting, you'll find that a lot of that connection you have with them, that personality that you're really attracted to in the image or in the person, you'll find that comes through in the techniques. And that's what we want most from all this artwork, is we want to synthesize, we want to bring together all these ideas of traditional drawing and painting theory, the power of digital art, and of course, that real connection that we have with the person that we're drawing and painting.