

“Profile Portraits in Pen”



Objective: Create a realistic profile portrait using ballpoint pen.

Materials

- Ballpoint pens
- Paper
- Camera and Printer (optional)

Motivation

- Show students the work of Juan Francisco Casas Ruiz, and discuss the concept of portraiture.
- Talk about the important aspects of portraiture (features, values, expression, etc.) and discuss how they affect the look and feeling of a portrait.
- Look at what poses lend themselves to interesting compositions and how drawing in ballpoint pen can add unique features to make the portrait stand out.

Step 1: Pose and Photograph

Students should begin by having a classmate pose for them, drawing the subject in pencil. After a time constraint, take a photograph of their subject that can be used for later reference.

Step 2: Practice and Sketch

Students can practice drawing with ballpoint pen until they feel comfortable with the material. Or if you are feeling brave, let them dive right in. They can begin by sketching out the main features of their drawing, making sure they fill the page and have an interesting composition.

Step 3: Add Value

This is the part of the drawing that will make or break the finished product. Whether hatching, cross-hatching, scribbling or using another technique, the key is to find the right amount of value. Too little value and everything looks washed out. Too much value and the drawing looks dark and dirty. It will be different for each drawing, but tell students to be patient as they draw until they find the look that works for them.

Tip: Allow students to practice extensively with a ballpoint pen before they start on the final project. Becoming comfortable with the medium will save a lot of headaches and frustration in the long run.