

## Questions & Answers

Digital Art Academy Sargent Webinar  
Heather Michelle Bjoershol

### ***Is there a hot key for the tracing paper?***

Yes, Control + "T"

**OR**

On your image (make sure it's unmounted by hitting Control + "M") there is a tracing paper icon on the very top right of your box (it looks like two papers over each other). You can also control the opacity of the tracing paper if you hover over it.

### ***Did Sargent have any animals in his paintings? How did he do those in a few strokes...such as horses? do you google for references?***

I've seen small dogs in his paintings but if you look closely he didn't put many strokes into them. If you look at them closely, you'll see that there is a base color for the coat, just a few strokes for highlights on the fur, and details, and maybe 5 strokes for eyes, nose, and tongue... very simplified. He didn't not put in tedious details as they were not main subjects. Horses - same technique. They'll have more details as they are larger than the small dogs. Just remember to keep it simple. Remember to build up highlights upon highlights (gradual). Google is a Godsend - yes, use it!

### ***Did you take the photograph?***

No. I can't take credit there. Ralph Melvin of Charlotte, NC photographed the gorgeous image. See more of his work at [RalphMelvin.com](http://RalphMelvin.com).

### ***Brushes will be available on the download?***

Yes! I will have them for Painter X, and XI along with a PDF that explains various ways to install them.

### ***Repeat how you saved.***

When I save the retouched file in Photoshop I save it as a jpg. When I save it in Painter, however, it's important to save it as a Photoshop file (PSD) to keep the full resolution of the image in tact. You'll find that if you save it as a jpg in Painter, the pixels degrade. Upon the initial save, you click FILE>Save As> (name it), and then choose PSD or Photoshop file, and (this is important!!) CLICK UNCOMPRESSED! Voila!

*A note on saving: unless you change this in your preferences Painter will save a .bak file for you each time you save. This file is a duplicate of the file you're saving, and is totally useless. Make sure you uncheck "create backup on save" found in the general preference window in Painter 11, and in the save preference window in Painter 10.*

*Also, I know there are Painter Masters who swear by RIFF files, but I've had very bad luck with them in the past so it's a matter of personal preference.*

### ***What would you do with the jewelry?***

I would probably use the same skin brush. The "Sargent" brush is too large for small jewelry. Any type of smeary variant (oils) is awesome for this brush. I personally love the smeary flat variant as a cloner (try about 25% resat). To give details like shine on pearls, or engraving, try using Oils>Detail Oil Brush 5 as a color brush. It smears too much as a cloner. If painting like Sargent, however, make sure to keep it simple. He didn't paint in significant details in his jewelry.

### ***Do you ever use pure black or white in a portrait? Would that be the eyes?***

**Absolutely.** Remember Sargent would START painting in midtones and then gradually go from there to the darkest dark and whitest whites. It kept out odd colors, and gave a clean look. I love hot whites on small details such as pearls, clothing (sparingly). You do NOT want to add too much hot white, pure black. He normally always mixed his jet blacks with some color so why shouldn't we?

As for the eyes, sample what's actually there by clicking "d" or clicking on your dropper tool. It may not be jet black. Paint the color that's actually there. As for highlights, if the face is fairly illuminated, then yes, the catchlight should be a tiny dot of titanium white.

### ***Would children's faces be a bit different with the highlights than the adult faces?***

Yes. Children's faces will be a bit harder to paint as there is not as much definition as there is in adult faces. Again watch the planes> children's faces are more round. Don't go crazy over adding highlights to the apples of their cheeks if they're not there. If you do, use a large soft LIGHT brush. A large round area will need a larger highlight area than a small tightly formed area. Make sense?

### ***How long have you been painting, Heather?***

Since I was little, literally. I was the child who would paint murals on the wall with my Tinkerbell nail polish, or make food sculptures. My parents encouraged the arts, so I always had fairly nice art supplies at my disposal. The rule was if you're going to doodle, doodle on nice paper. I started formally painting when I was in Elementary school; professionally (meaning I actually got paid) in high school doing murals for

stores, stationary for Mon Petit Chou, custom greeting cards for friends, and backgrounds for photographers.

***Do you add texture to the finished painting? Do you add strength to the strokes by taking it back into Photoshop?***

If there are lots of detail in the dress, yes. I take it back into Photoshop; make a copy of the layer (control + "J", OR drag the layer to the duplicate button on layers palette); and then go to Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask. You'll have to play with the settings to find what you like. However, I always MASK OUT skin. I don't want the entire image to be oversharpened - just the brush work in the dress.

***Did you cover every area of the canvas?***

Yes. I "grounded" the canvas with a solid color in the very beginning to cover any white areas (they'll print clear or white if left behind). To ground it, Sargent often used a midtone cool color. I also recommend to use a midtone, semi muted, iris color of your subject.

***How do you decide what to charge for a painting?***

First take into account your cost of actual printing materials. Then keep in mind the cost of your overall education, software, computer hardware, etc. Now calculate the amount of hours on average it would take you to paint a single person; a couple; a family; etc. With all of those numbers laid before you you have to be really honest with the hard question : how much is a one of a kind painting by YOU worth? I'd add at least \$300 per head to your top canvas finish (minimum!!). Remember this is an affordable alternative to paying 5 figures to have a true oil painting done. It's still a one of a kind piece of art. The tools are just different.

***Heather, can you give a beginner a quick explanation of the resat, feature, bleed, etc.***

## Opacity (or Strength):

How heavily you're laying down paint. Numbers on keyboard control the opacity here.

## Resat:

COLOR MODER: how much COLOR is being laid down

100 = 100 % color

0 = 0% color >>>> This turns into a BLENDER brush

CLONE MODE: this determines the accuracy of your source file.

100 = 100% accuracy

0 = 0% accuracy

## Grain:

For bristly brushes (ones that have FEATURE) this determines how much the brush SMOOSHES (yes, smooshes) into the paper texture.

100 = 100 % coverage on the paper, like you're smooshing the pigment into the grain of the paper

1 = 1% meaning you're lightly skimming the surface

LOWER grain = more paper texture showing through, especially on CHALK variants

For artist brushes (ones that use digital shapes like potato stamps), this determines the PULL of your brush.

100 = a very digital look, too heavy

5-15% = highly organic look for palette knives

## Bleed:

How smoothly your brush blends with the underlying pixels.

100 = 100% smooth (great on skin!)

0 = no smoothing (great for impressionistic, chunky looks)

## Jitter:

Your brush on too much stimulant. Highest setting is 4. It literally scatters your brush. Excellent to try 1 or 1.3 on Impressionist brush

## Feature:

The spacing between your bristles measured in pixels (max 20).

20 = 20 pixels between every brush hair = very scratchy looking

0 = will more than likely crash your computer because the brush is completely solid with NO space between hairs of the brush.

I like to start out at 4 and work my way around. If your brush is moving too slowly, try making your feature larger. Don't go any lower than .1

### ***Are you embellishing with oil/acrylic?***

I did in the old days. Now, I don't have time for it. If your lab sprays the print first check to see if the spray is water based or oil based. If it's oil based you'll need to paint with oils. If it's water based you can paint with either. Golden puts out an awesome clear gel medium that you can paint along the same brushstrokes in your digital painting. The result is awesome.

***Where are you based?*** Charlotte, NC

***What is the website?***

[www.HeatherThePainter.com](http://www.HeatherThePainter.com) OR [www.Etherielle.com](http://www.Etherielle.com)

- *I get a threat warning from AVG when I try that address??*
- Reset your cookies when trying HeatherThePainter.com. The host has been giving me a hard time after I went through a new site. It's safe. I just had a security breach over two years ago. If that doesn't work, go to [www.Etherielle.com](http://www.Etherielle.com).

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Thanks for joining us for the Summer Digital Art Summit!

You can check classes at [Digital Art Academy](#) for new digital painting classes.

The next session begins August 28<sup>th</sup> (that is session Five). Heathers class will be coming in Session Six.