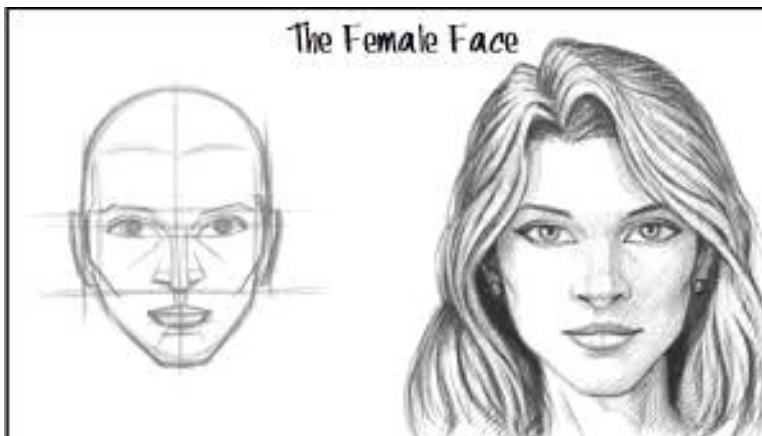


A Brush With Art

Most of my students tell me they want to draw people, and faces in particular, so this week, I want to give you a very simple exercise, to teach you about the dimensions of the face. You may be surprised to discover that when someone is looking directly at you, the eyes are half way between the top of the head and the chin. The end of the nose is halfway between the eyes and the chin, and the mouth is halfway between the end of the nose and the chin! Ears are level with the eyes and usually the bottom of the earlobe is level with the end of the nose. Not as complicated as it sounds. Draw an oval shape – now divide it in half and draw eye shapes. Now divide the space under the eyes in two and make a line for the end of the nose. Divide the remaining space and place a line for the mouth. Simple! At least so far. The illustration shows more clearly how to construct a face – and you can try that first. Afterwards find a face in a magazine picture and try to get the proportions right. Don't expect a perfect likeness first time – it takes a long time to become a portrait artist.



Pencils are a wonderful medium to draw with. They come in different levels of hardness, and it's useful to have at least two or three different ones. If you can get an HB – the one we usually have at home as it's an average hardness for most purposes, a B1 and a B3, these will get you started. The higher the B number, the softer the pencil. This means that it is darker in colour and useful for shading without having to press too hard on the paper.

Try to draw something each day, because all the time you are opening new pathways in the brain and building your own library of techniques and knowledge. You will soon find that when you are out and about you start to notice shapes, shadows, colours, and proportions. Keep a little sketch pad in your bag and try to make simple sketches of the people on the beach, in the cafe or at home. You have to be quick because your models won't stay still for long. It's the best eye training you can get, and soon pays off in building your drawing skills.

Suzanne teaches art in Quesada, La Siesta and Los Montesinos. See www.sue-stokes.co.uk for

more information