

# FACES

BASICS OF PORTRAITURE

COREY   
LANSDELL

ILLUSTRATING. STORYTELLING. MOTIVATING.



“You can’t do sketches enough. Sketch everything and keep your curiosity fresh.” John Singer Sargent

“Learning to draw is really a matter of learning to see - to see correctly - and that means a good deal more than merely looking with the eye.” Kimon Nicolaides

“In drawing, one must look for or suspect that there is more than is casually seen.” George Bridgman

The human face mirrors the brilliance of the vast and varied wonder of the natural world. Creatively, I am enamoured with the human body. It is, in my opinion, the pinnacle of nature, fearfully and wonderfully made. About a year ago, I found myself desiring to climb the mountain of becoming accomplished at drawing the human body. I quickly became overwhelmed at the task of achieving a capacity to reflect its magnificence through my artwork. It was at that moment I decided to take a step back and work on understanding one aspect of it. Faces.

This task alone may be enough to occupy me until I am no longer able to hold a pencil in my hand. I realized that, though I could draw a face and render a reasonable likeness of a specific person from life or a photograph, I did not understand aspects of anatomy. As I've matured as a creative professional, I have discovered that I know less than I thought I did, and I have so much growing to do. I desire to advance from a competency of rendering what I see to an understanding and knowledge of what I see that will inform and empower my drawing process.

Fast forward to the evening of April of 2019. I was sitting at my kitchen table, trying to draw faces in my sketchbook without reference, just winging it, and oh boy, was it problematic. That night I came to the harsh realization that whatever effort I have previously applied to the growth of my skill, I'm nowhere near where I'd like to be. With this realization, disappointment, and agony that only an artist could understand, set in. What can be done about this? Practice.

Thus began a month-long endeavor of observing and rendering faces during which I managed to squeak out 92 portrait studies. Many of them are loose, rough, janky, and unscrupulously weak, but some indicate glimmers of growth.

This book collects the work I created in that month as well as basic instructional information explaining my approach and process. It is intended as a record of my progress and ultimately a tool to inspire and inform others who would like to grow in their ability to create portrait art.

Wherever you find yourself on your creative climb, let's all remember that the creative life is not a race but a journey. Every peak we assail only serves to expose us and show us new heights to reach for. Never stop challenging yourself and never stop growing.

Blessings.

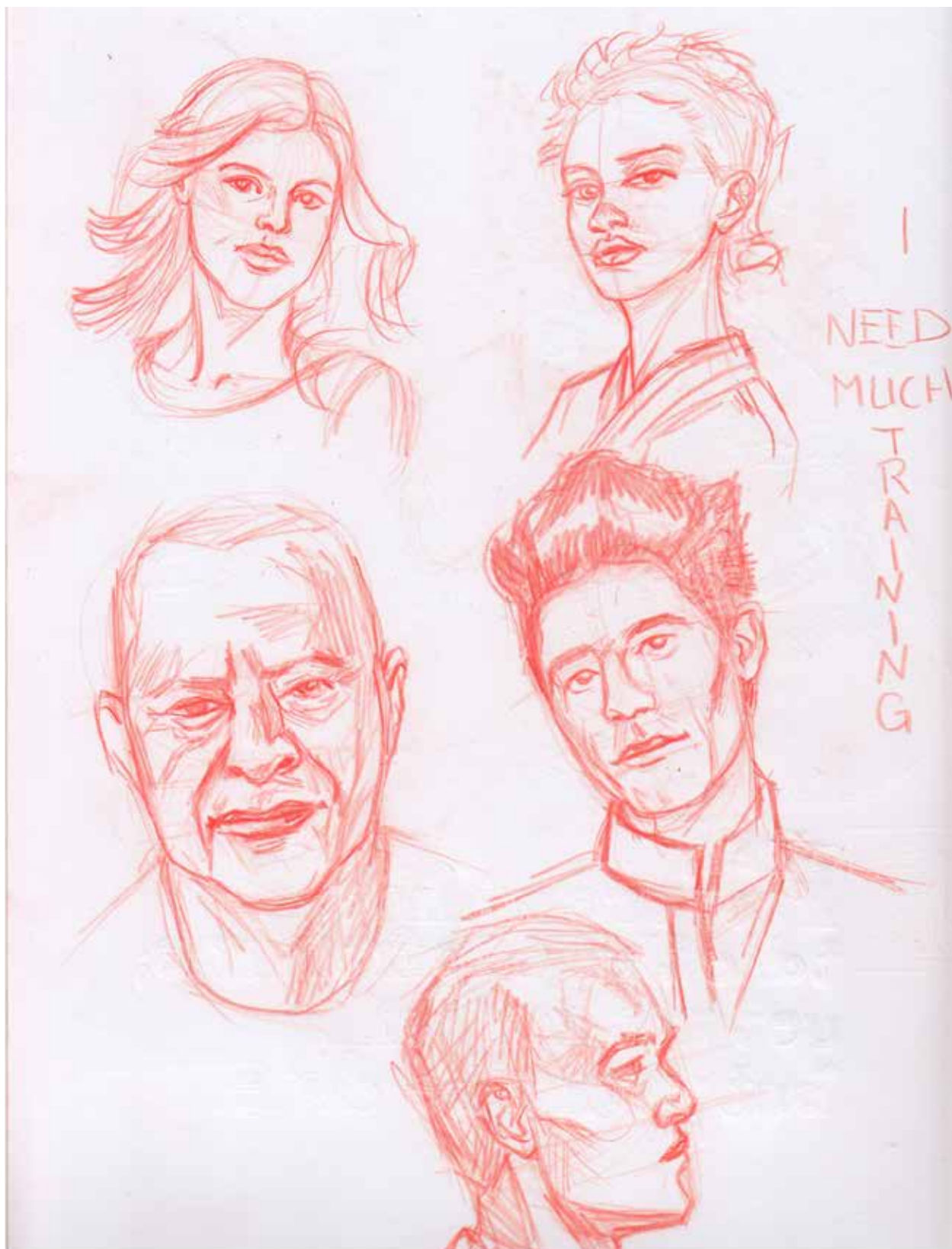
Corey

# THE ANGUISH



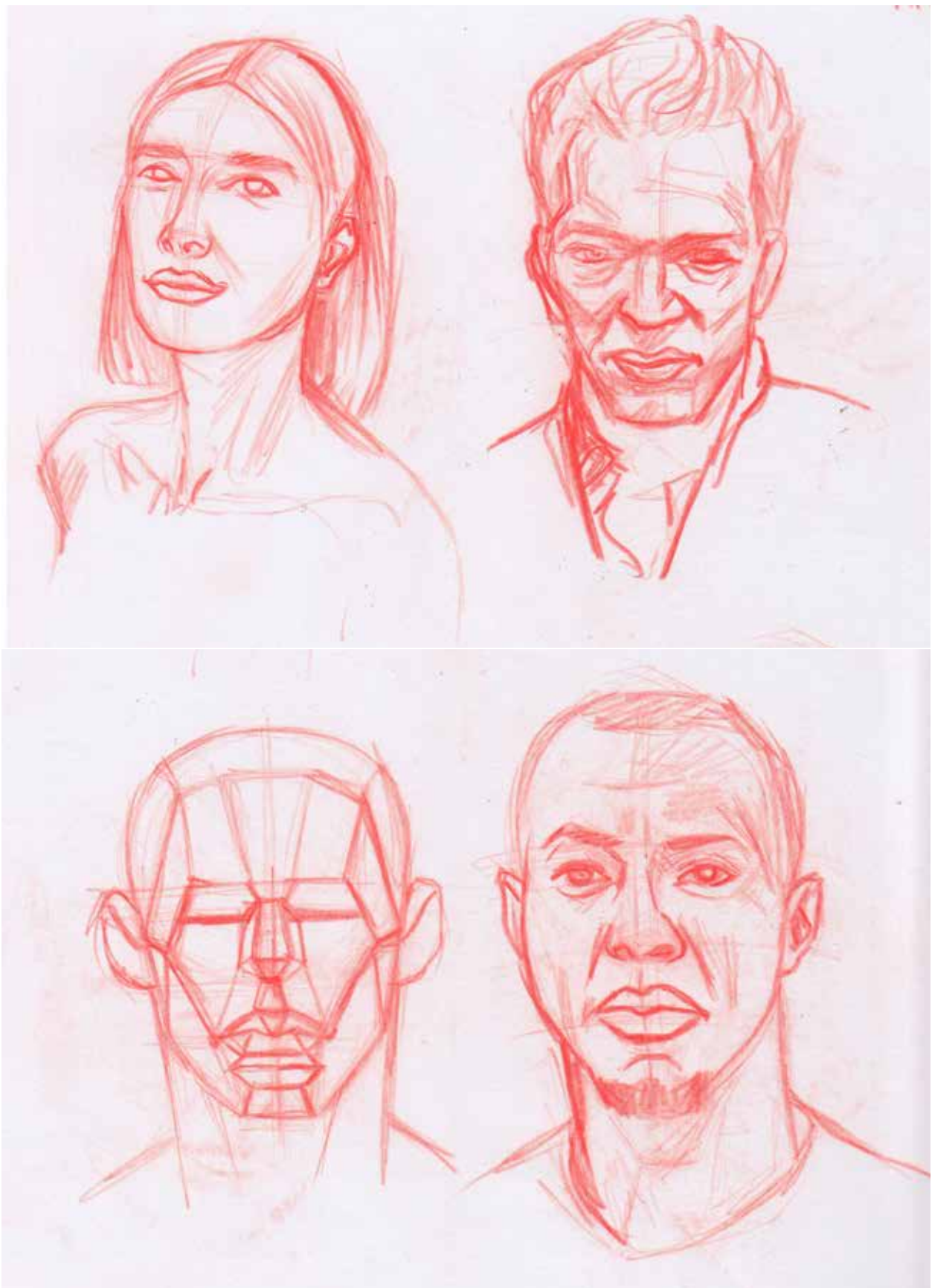
The moment I realized I need to apply more effort to growth and understanding of the human form.  
Sketches using Prismacolor Col-Erase Pencil

# THE STRUGGLE



April 19, 2019





April 20, 2019

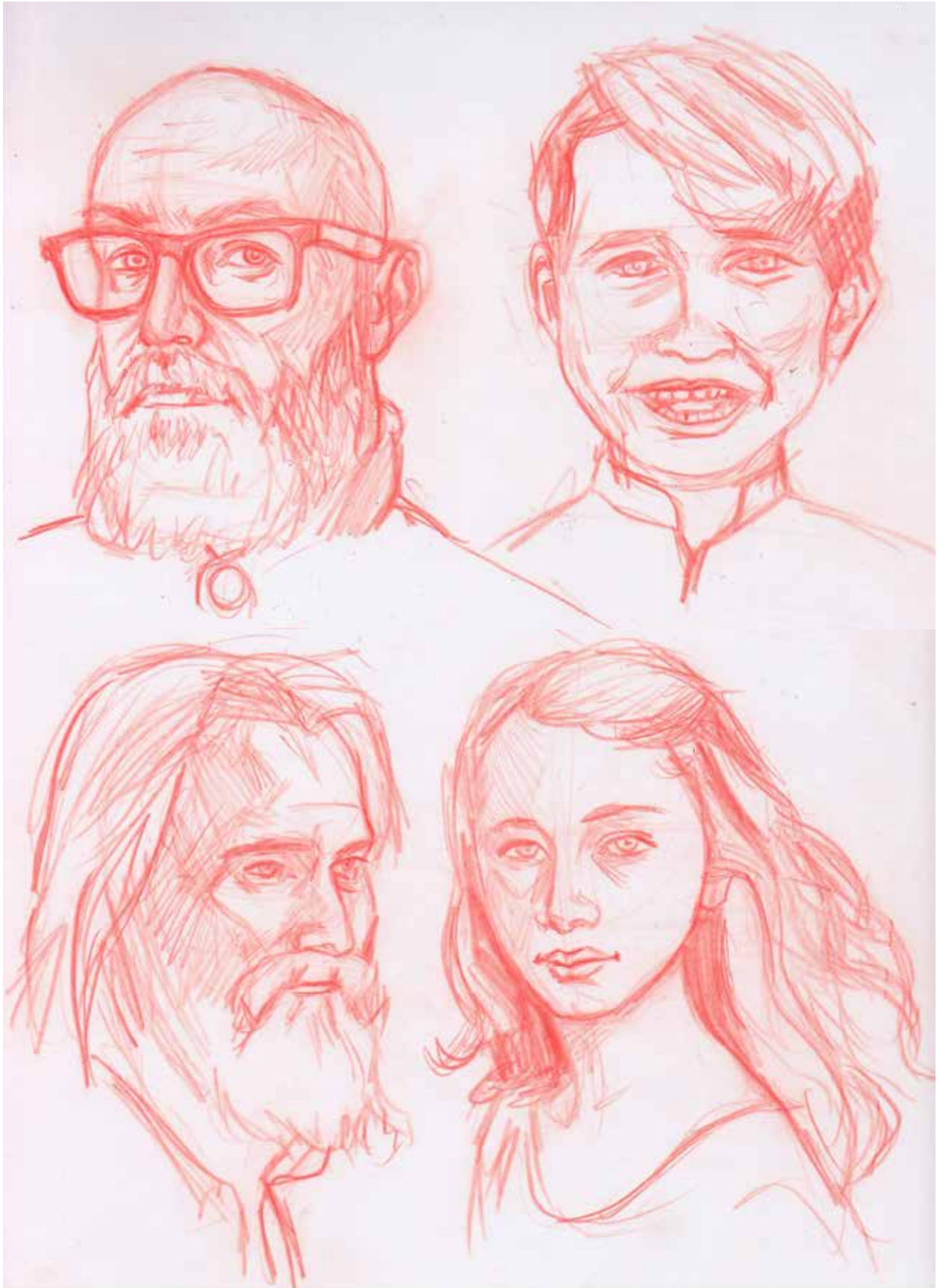
I spent a bit of time reviewing the structure of the head here.

This approach comes from *Figure Drawing: Design and Invention* by Michael Hampton



April 21, 2019





April 22, 2019

Two things I've always struggled with: women and children. (Just drawing them. Not them in general. :p)





April 23, 2019



May 2, 2019



May 3, 2019

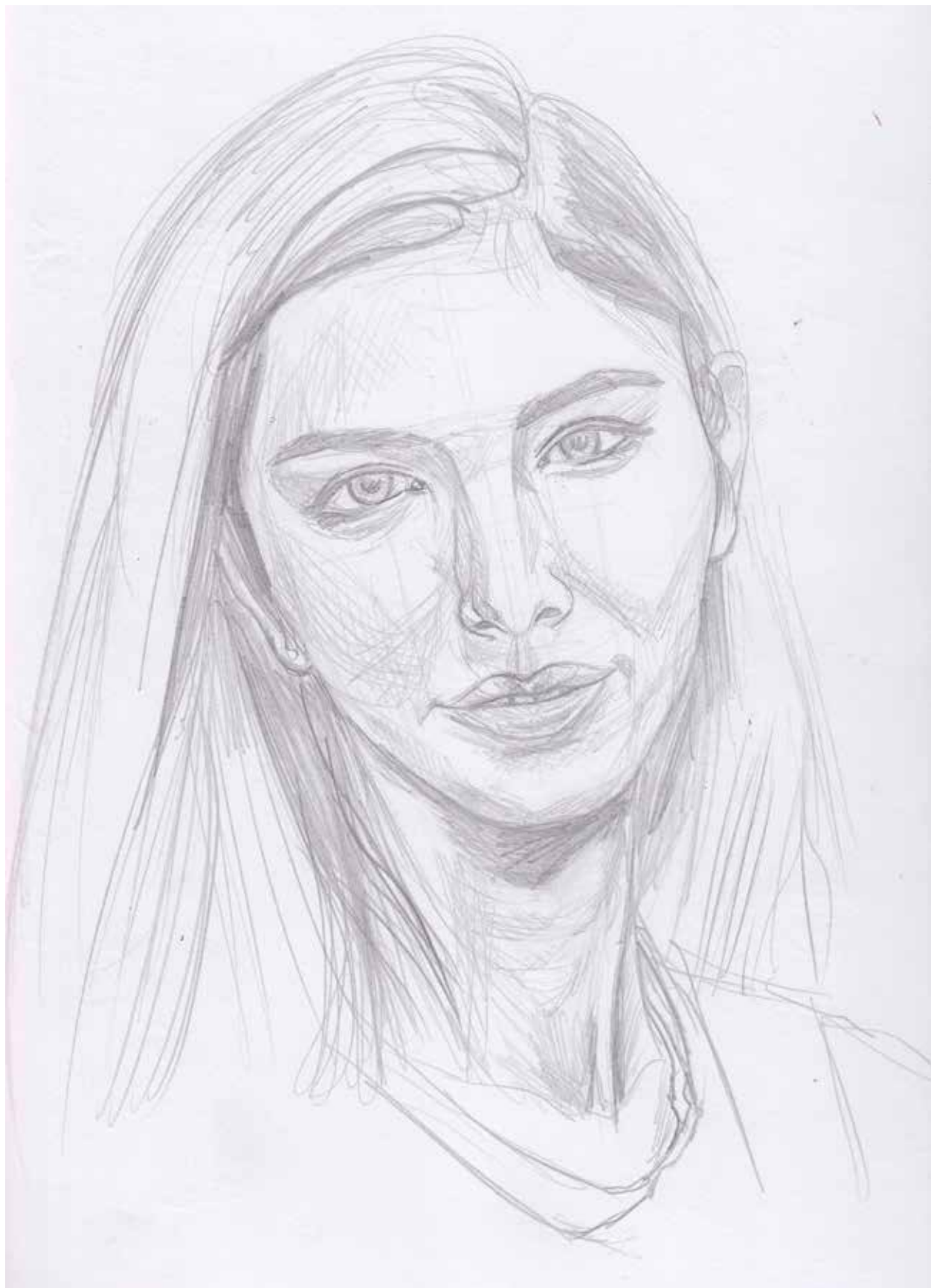




May 4, 2019



May 5, 2019



May 5, 2019





In these next several pages I make the switch to digital using my iPad Pro and a lovely app called Procreate.

May 6, 2019



May 7, 2019







May 9, 2019



May 15, 2019



May 16, 2019



# THE ANSWER

Only moments ago, I was online browsing the work of contemporary illustrator Matt Rhodes. He is, in my opinion, a modern master. Why? Practice. He calls his practice “sharpening the axe” and more than once, I’ve heard him share this quote.

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.”

- Abraham Lincoln

We’ve established that growth as an artist is a continual journey; that it is indeed a marathon. Looking at the work of Matt Rhodes I feel like an infant watching his Dad bound across a lawn of cool, green, grass with grace and mastery. The challenge here is that an infant has an unrelenting belief that they too can follow their parent to new horizons.

I have become painfully aware of my capacity and current skill level. This awareness has the potential to manifest two very different emotions in me. It can become a source of self-defeat or a source of inspiration. One post, in particular on Matt Rhodes art station account, houses thousands of figure studies. THOUSANDS. The man is where he is as an illustrator because he’s put in the effort. He has climbed and climbed and climbed. If I drew 2000 faces, I’d see growth. Surely I would. So would you in your practice.

**The answer.** Draw your stinking face off. Draw unceasingly. Climb! CLIMB!

# THE APPROACH

This section will outline the basic approach to drawing the human head.

## ONE

The first step is to draw a circle. This circle will represent the cranium, the large round portion of the skull. It doesn't need to be a perfect circle but just a nice round form.



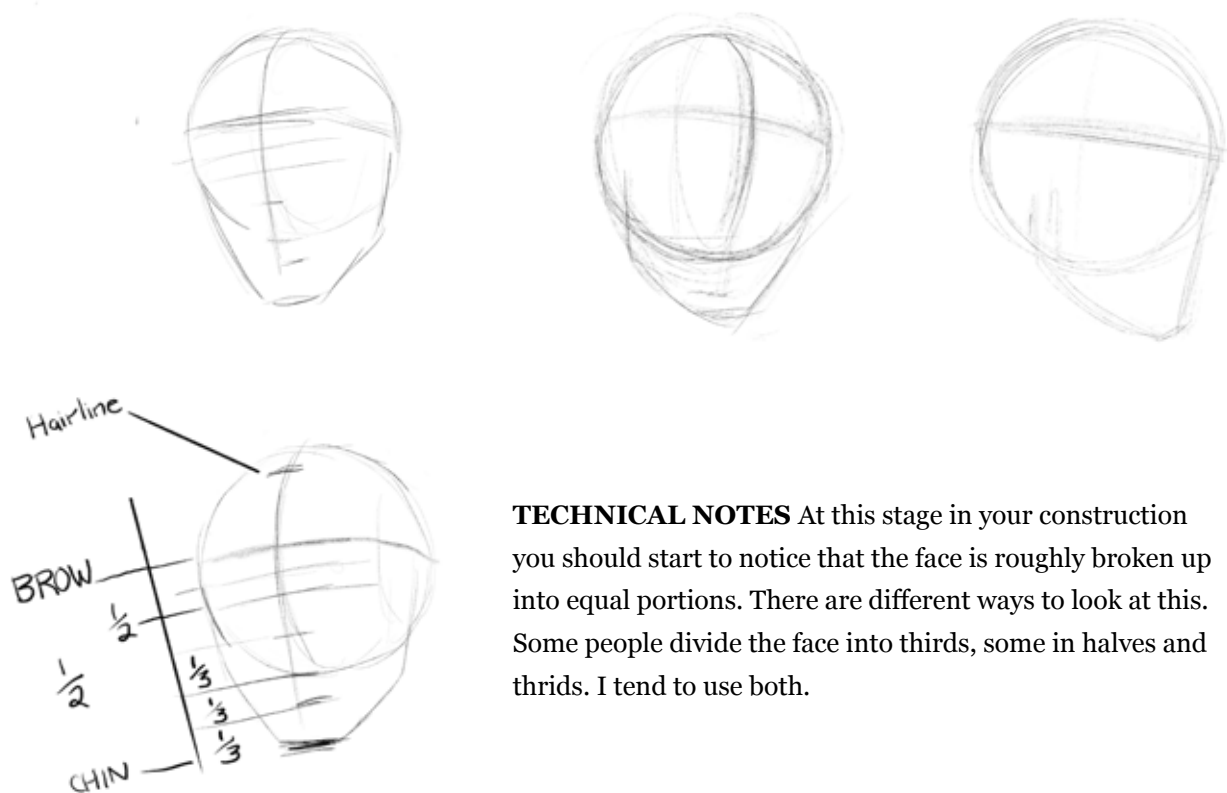
## TWO

Divide the circle in half vertically and horizontally. This shows you the center of the face vertically. The line may be in any location on the sphere and indicates the direction the face is pointed. During this process you are already thinking about the face in 3D space and beginning to interpret aspects of the face such as planes, mass, form, light and shade.



# THREE

Adding the jaw line turns the shape into an egg like structure.



**TECHNICAL NOTES** At this stage in your construction you should start to notice that the face is roughly broken up into equal portions. There are different ways to look at this. Some people divide the face into thirds, some in halves and thirds. I tend to use both.

KEEP IN MIND - these breakdowns are guidelines and approximations, every face is different

Hairline is usually around here .....

Brow	1/2
Eyes	1/2
Bottom of Eye Socket	1/2
Bottom of nose	1/3
Separation of lips	1/3
Top of chin	1/3
Bottom of chin	1/3

From brow to top of skull is 1/3

From nose to brow is 1/3

From chin to nose is 1/3



This shape is called the keystone. It resides between the top of the nose and the browline. Placing it will help develop the structure of the face and the location of key features.



# FURTHER STUDY

I want to make abundantly clear. This book is meant as a compilation of guidelines that I have developed in my practice. As I continue to work I continue to grow and I am constantly aware that my craft requires further study. You too should approach all of your work with a mindset of progress, not perfection. Every drawing is the stepping stone to the next one.



# FACES

## BASICS OF PORTRAITURE

### COREY LANSDALL

is the creative director and owner of Pulp Studios Inc. A boutique animation and illustration studio based in Edmonton, Alberta. He's married to the love of his life and has two wonderful children. In his spare time he works on his skills in drawing, painting, writing and storytelling.

You can follow him on all the social medias or follow his personal blog where he shares his creative journey with vulnerability and honesty.

**coreylansdell.com**

**Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube** @coreylansdell

**Facebook** @coreylansdellcreates



ILLUSTRATING. STORYTELLING. MOTIVATING.

**coreylansdell.com**

**Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube, Artstation** @coreylansdell • **Facebook** @coreylansdellcreates