



A Note on the Web-images

I have just re-photographed a large number of paintings and drawings on my available works page. Most of you will say, "It's about time! We were all wondering how long you were going to leave up those lousy reproductions." Well, as some of you may know, I have spent the last decade or more pursuing just about everything except the finer points of digital photography. I have spent my money on other things than expensive cameras or professional strobe images of my works. All the images that have been up for the past decade were taken by me with my little Samsung 6mp camera, and they were taken in sunlight. And I admit they were and are terrible. They have loads too much contrast, but even with all that added contrast (that you can't get out in photoshop) they still look completely flat. I think of them as reminders of my works, rather than as reproductions.

For years, I couldn't really figure out to get around this problem without spending a bunch of money. Finally, I borrowed a friend's camera and shot some images with the flash on indoors. When I photograph my models, I use old Nikon film cameras and never use the flash, since it does terrible things to 3-D objects. But when shooting flat artworks digitally, I found that using the flash lowered the contrast by a large margin and allowed us to begin to see the skin tones. Since my works tend to have a silvery quality that gets lost in photography, I thought there was just no way to capture it. But these new images get half way there, at least.

Since I don't have strobes or other fancy lighting, we still have the problem of glare, which, with the oil paintings, I have solved by just shooting from a slight angle. In most cases, I have left up the old images, so you can see the work from straight on; then you can consult the flash image to better see the skin tones.

Even these flash images still don't capture the actual contrast levels or colors. The flash images have much lower contrast, but they still have more contrast than the paintings themselves. I haven't found any way to reproduce the subtle tonal variations of my paintings. One of the reasons I haven't invested in a professional photographer is that in the couple of cases I did so, they still couldn't capture these tones. Even with 30 megapixels and strobes and all the other professional tricks, the contrast was still too high. So I figured, why bother. If I am going to have a bad image, I might as well get it for cheap. If you really want to see my work, you will have to come to my studio. Consider this an invitation.

