

We are now ready to complete the picture shown in tutorial 5



I had intended just one more session on this painting to complete it, but as often happens when we revisit a picture, we discover something else we want to tinker with! The first thing I felt needed attention was the overall hue of the painting. It needed more warmth on the left and more yellow on the right to pick up the background light. First I painted a thin subtle glaze of cadmium red over the shadow side and blended it, then I added a subtle glaze of yellow ochre to the right to take out the pinkiness. I then let the painting dry. The hue of any picture can be adapted using this method, however the paint must be dry first. I like to do this when I'm unsure of what I am looking for hue-wise, and often try several tints wiping off and starting again. The following is what I saw when revisiting the picture to rectify

The shadows in the eye socket weren't deep enough so I added a glaze of alizarin and black blended in.

The eye whites and highlights were too stark so I glazed over with cad red and raw umber (this takes the edge off the red) and then added a touch of cad red around the bottom of the eye lids.

The skin on the light side of the face was too smooth, it needed a bit more grittiness in keeping, sadly, with my face! I glazed the whole lighter areas with raw umber and wiped off with a cloth so as to leave a thin residue of the glaze within the grooves of the brush strokes

The lip colour was too similar to the flesh so I added a light glaze of alizarin

The darks and lights on the beard and hair weren't contrasting enough so I added a raw umber and black glaze to the shadows, then added white with yellow ochre and raw umber for the highlights

The glasses were lacking in depth so I added a glaze of black and touched in highlights of paynes grey with a touch of raw umber to temper the blue in the grey

The background needed more yellow and a stronger light area so I glazed the whole background with burnt umber for warmth and wiped off the lighter areas with a cloth. I always complete a picture this way because it is so flexible for subtle changes. The hardest thing about this approach is to leave the painting at it's penultimate stage, knowing what you intend to do next, without over painting the picture. Only trial and error will build the knowledge of when to stop.

Blending softer skin

This isn't as tricky as it often appears to people. I add the paint to the picture as shown in earlier tutorials, and then simply blend from there. However there are two tricks to using the blending brush to achieve this. Firstly when blending two colours use a separate blending brush for each colour and keep them clean. This way you avoid putting too much paint into each area. Secondly when this is done use a clean blender to gently pull the paint in the direction of the facial contours. Always use a range of brush sizes sizes from '0' upwards to address different areas.



In my next tutorial I will show how I paint cloth and materials within a portrait.