The Commission Process

You are considering investing in an original oil painting on canvas or a professional portrait in the medium of oils. What exactly can the prospective collector expect of this investment? The result will be fine artwork that is executed with quality materials and tested methods of painting and is sure to be enjoyed and appreciated by future generations.

When working on a commissioned piece, I first interview the client to familiarize myself with their expectations of the finished work. After the client and I come to a contracted agreement in which the price and size of the work is negotiated and the 30 percent non-refundable down payment is made, I will then photograph the subject of the painting and provide preliminary sketches of a prospective layout. When a composition is agreed upon, I purchase the canvas and begin the painting process.

I execute my original artwork from my own photographs as well as working from life. In the case of executing a classical portrait some sittings by the painting subject are preferred but not necessary. I can create an effective painting from clients' personal photographs provided they are of adequate quality and clarity.

I will also require the client's copyright permission, in writing, to use their personal photographs for the original painting they commission me to create.

As a rule, I require permission of the client to use photographed images of the finished original artwork for promotional purposes. Please be aware that under current copyright law, the copyright of any original painting (commissioned or otherwise) belongs to the artist. It is illegal to reproduce the painted image in any way without the artist's permission.

Also, executing a painting from a photograph taken by a professional photographer or artist's copyrighted work without copyright permission is illegal. I require the client to obtain verifiable copyright permission, in writing, of any submitted photographs or printed artwork to be used as reference material for the execution of the client's desired artwork.

Two final considerations involve the protection of this investment. The purchaser of the artwork will need to take into consideration that a work of art in the medium of oils will need a full year to dry after its completion and before the painting surface can be sealed with a final resin based varnish. However, the painting can be framed and displayed when it has had one week's drying time after completion and a coat of retouch varnish has been applied to protect the surface. This will protect the work until the oil painting is fully dry and ready to be permanently sealed. After the year, the application of a permanent seal is necessary to ensure the protection and longevity of the artwork.

I anticipate and fully expect to complete this final step of the painting process. The price of this final step is included in the agreed upon price of the original art work. If, for some unseen reason, I personally would not be able to complete the final sealing of the artwork I will pay a professional secured by the purchaser to apply the resin based varnish. If the Purchaser transfers ownership of the artwork prior to the final sealing of the painting's surface, by sale of the artwork or as a gift, they should inform the new owners of the artwork about this detail.

After reading this information, you may be wondering, "Is commissioning an original painting worth the effort?" In answer to this question, I invite you to view the timeless beauty of the classical oil paintings at my home studio. While viewing images of quality artwork in print samples or on a website are convenient, it just can't compare with the impact of seeing an original artwork up close. Personal viewing of quality artwork certainly brings a revelation of the beauty and richness which has inspired people for centuries to take the courageous leap to commission an artist to create something unique and irreplaceable for themselves and the generations to come.