

## Portrait Sculpture with Beth Schoen

### Photography Guidelines:

These guidelines are for taking the ideal photos for creating a bust for personal use or for a commission. If you have limited photographs to work from, we can look at them together and discuss them.

If you can bring these photographs to the first class, it will give you a head start, but if you prefer to discuss them first and bring them to the second class, that's fine, too.

1. **No Flash** – this is crucial.
2. **Black & white** photos are best, but color is ok.
3. Place a **contrasting (solid) background** behind subject. For example, a light-haired person should have a dark background and vice versa.
4. Take photographs at **eye level** and **stay at eye level**. In other words, do not vary the height of the camera as the subject turns. Photos can be taken with the person standing (if you can stand at eye level with them while taking photos)... or they can be sitting.
5. It is best to keep the camera in one position and **have the subject turn gradually** in one spot until they have turned 360 degrees. Start by having the subject looking straight forward, directly toward the camera. Have the subject turn and stop for a photograph two or three times before getting to a profile position. Make sure to get a good profile shot, because it is an important photo to work from. Have the

subject continue around in the same fashion, taking photos of the back, the second profile, and back around to the front. In all, you should have about **12 – 16 photographs**.

If you wish to have the subject tilt their head a little, or smile, keep in mind that the pose must be the same for all of the photos as they turn. **Smiles**, especially with teeth showing, are much more difficult. Slight smiles are easier.

6. Two other important angles to photograph are **below the face**, at about a 45 degree angle out from the chin, and **above the face**, about a 45 degree angle out from the forehead.
7. It is best to stay at least a **5 or 6** feet from the subject to avoid distortion. If you have the option, use the **portrait lense or setting** on your camera and zoom in for close-ups. Even for close-ups, make sure the entire outline of the head is visible in the frame. Outlines of the entire head are crucial. Additional photos from over 6 feet from the subject can also be helpful.
8. The larger the prints you make, the easier they will be to work from. The best is 8 x 10, but smaller will also work. Some places, like Sams, will make 8 x 10 prints for about \$1.95 each. I like to place my photos in sheet protectors to protect them from my messy hands.