

LEARN TO PORTRAY RACE AND CULTURAL FEATURES IN ART **PART 1 OF 2**



How to define ethnic facial features



If you plan to do a drawing, painting, artwork of any medium and you wish to distinguish your artwork to be of a particular race of people, you need to define what are the characteristics of the race .

The best and most effective way to do that is to find a minimum of 3 images of people from that race of people. Breaking down the images to facial features is the easiest way to determine what is unique to a certain race.

DRAW FEATURES AND COMPARE

For example by drawing the individual features from each image you will start to appreciate a pattern.

The drawings to the left are from 3 different men of the same race, if you investigate them you will find that the common trait in all 3 is the triangular nose shape.

So I know to progress further with my artwork that my person requires a triangular shaped nose.

Let now study the eyes.

Eye study drawings



Eye study

From studying the faces of pictures of 4 different people from my chosen race of people, my conclusion is that their eyes have more of an Asian appearance than a Caucasian appearance, although the inner lid is not as pronounced and covering the actual eye on the inner corner of the eye like that of Asian males.

From what I gather from looking at collected pictures, the race shows all of the eye from left to right, however only the middle of the eye ball is shown when looking at it from an up and down perspective giving a squinted looking eye. The eye from outside looks quite triangular in shape, thinning as it goes to the outside of the face.

So again I have a solid indicator of what my eye shape should look like.

Let move onto the mouth

Lip study drawings



Lip study

The lip study concluded that my race of people have mouth features that all seem to have one common trait, the corner of the mouth turns down on both sides, looking like a sad face would.

All the pictures I collected and looked at this seemed to be a very strong feature in most facial pictures.

So what have I determined from my study

Well that my nose needs to be triangular, my mouth turned down and my eyes slightly squinted.

So let's put what we know into action

Understanding how ethnic features differ from race to race



I started by quickly and roughly sketching a Caucasian man then I placed a sheet of paper over half of the original image of the “white” looking man and started drawing my ethnic featured man. I decided to do it this way, so I could keep the features in the same place, just turning him into a more ethnic looking man that has the traditional features as researched in the eye, nose and mouth study.

Study your differences

Once you have finished your rough drawing take a good look - Do your features resemble what your study earlier suggested?

Compare – How does your ethnic man differ from your Caucasian man, it is important to understand the difference to further your artistic talents. Make notes in a note book to refer back to later.

Can you guess the race of my man yet?



Facial study – Understanding racial features



Now proceed to draw the other side of the face to draw the other half of the face on a new sheet. It's important to do this so you completely understand the look of your new individual as a whole.



Your drawing will not be perfect

This is not an exercise in brilliant drawing technique this should be a rough quickly done sketch, you don't want to spend all day doing fantastic study drawings unless your interest is conceptual art (more about the process than the finished project).

The purpose is to plant a seed in your mind for future reference, a bank of knowledge if you like.

The more you do this exercise with different cultures, races, ethnicity the more you'll be able to draw them realistically with acquired knowledge rather than guessing based on memory or assumption.

**ARTIST'S DO RESEARCH JUST LIKE
TEACHERS, DOCTORS, AND ANY
OTHER PROFESSIONS**



Thank you for viewing part 1, I hope you enjoyed and learnt a bit more about how to find the differences in cultures and races and how to more accurately depict them.

In part 2 I will delve into different ways to depict this race in real life artworks, I hope that you will join me for that.

Karen Elzinga



elzinga  *collective*



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