

What an interesting evening and what an amazing portrait! Just over 20 people attended the demonstration on Monday 11th March to watch Mike Bragg paint a portrait of Sonia's husband, Pete.

Mike said he always paints from live models – not photographs. He was using acrylics and started with a large decorating brush and some seemingly random brush strokes!! He didn't use a pencil at all – but drew with his large assortment of brushes. He initially made sure that the head was correctly centred on his piece of paper, and said he also likes to put a bit of background detail in the picture in order to anchor the head to the background.

He used blocks of colour to build up his picture – almost like a mosaic. He explained that he tries to limit the number of different colours that he uses and avoids using pure black or pure white, substituting white for colours like Buff Titanium or Naples yellow.

Mike emphasised that he likes to step back a lot from his pictures and in fact he had improvised with a tool consisting of a piece of charcoal attached to the end of a long ruler – so that he could draw from a distance! He spent a lot of time working on Pete's hair and only completed Pete's eyes and his glasses right at the end. He said that the glasses should just be an impression of glasses – not over powering in their detail. Mike gradually built the picture up and achieved a real likeness. Everyone was very impressed ! We all enjoyed tea, coffee, biscuits and socialising in the break as well as looking at all the other portraits Mike had brought with him.





