

Subject: Past Masters Gallery of Alexandria-Washington
Lodge No.22
Date: Fri, 28 Jul 2000 16:01:35 -0400
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To: aw22@aw22.com

Greetings,

To clarify a few details about the Past Masters Prints in the Past Masters Gallery of Alexandria-Washington Lodge No.22 I have put together a few things that might interest the Lodge. It is difficult to say exactly how long any photographic material will last, even the great Kodak only guesses at their longevity. I can point out that if you look closely at the prints you can already see some deterioration in prints especially from the 1970's and 1980's.

The prints starting with 1992 have been produced with every possible archival procedure possible. This process includes the use of "Fiber Based" photographic paper that was washed according to archival procedures to remove as much of the remaining chemistry as possible. In addition the prints were treated with "Selenium Toner" which replaces the silver with the heavy metal selenium, a more stable material. The prints were framed using acid free rag board and tapes. Most prints are labeled on the back with the details of how the print was produced including the materials used. This information includes the name of the individual, the year they served as Worshipful Master and some even include the Master's theme for their year. Finally I put my name on the back. This is not to take credit for the work but it is to take responsibility for the work. I look forward to my dotage and seeing for myself if all of this is still working.

From an esthetic point of view many of the portraits are quality works of art. One can note that there are several techniques used in the production of these images. For example the quality of light used. In these cases a fairly small light source was used producing a well-defined shadow usually under and off to one side of the nose. This type of light also produces a highlight in the eyes, which adds life to a portrait. You can also see that one type or another of rim or back light has been used. This light adds depth to the image and also defines the shape of the head. Another technique that adds to this style of portrait is the limited depth of focus (which is slightly different than depth of field). The sharpest portions of the image are the eyes. The rest of the image is allowed to go out of focus or soft. This was due to the limitations of lenses in the past but because we have gotten used to that affect it has become the standard for a classic style portrait. This soft look extends to the background adding distance and diminishes its presence.

There was a conscience decision to reintroduce this classic style portrait including the cropping and I am pleased to have been part of this process. This type of work is very time consuming and the material are more costly than other processes. From a budgetary point of view depending on individual Masters either the Lodge or the individual Master has paid for their portrait. I would like to point out that I do recover the cost of the material plus I usually charge for one hour of my time. The rest of my time is donated to the Lodge for this important record. It might interest you to know that this portrait has been used for other purposes as well. It is usually used on the Website and may also be used for programs and invitations. Some Masters have gotten additional prints for their personal use.

You may view some of the Past Masters portraits at -
<http://www.aw22.org/> (Click on Past Masters)

Sincerely and fraternally,

/s/

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