

**Miller-Havens and Martinez at The National Portrait
Gallery teaching 8th graders from
The Carol Morgan School
Santo Domingo Dominican Republic**

This was the first visit to Washington DC for any school from the DR. Pedro Martinez agreed to come to the Portrait Gallery and participate in teaching these school children about the relationship between art and the art of sport using his portrait, "El Orgullo y La Determinación" (Strength and Determination)

Susan Miller-Havens's intention was to engage the children in thinking about what she has come to understand from Harvard University's Project Zero research about the nature and importance of Multiple Intelligences. She had given them a series of questions about the portrait to consider before their arrival.

Below is the text of her talk.

"I have been reading about what you are doing for your electives. About twenty of you take drama, nine choir, eighteen band and twenty-one arts.

Sometimes in this new age people forget that without creativity there would be no innovation, such as no Macintosh computers. Steven Jobs and Bill Gates were inventors as was Einstein.

If you don't have the chance to create and express yourselves at your age you will be letting a part of your brain go unused. How wonderful you have this opportunity to participate in the Arts!

I grew up in a home where music was always playing, there was singing, and we went to hear opera and musicals. Playing an instrument and taking Art classes were required in my public school. I cannot imagine not having that experience.

I believe you all have seen and read about the steps I used to make this portrait. Link to process:

http://www.millerhavens.com/pm_the_process.htm

I want to just make a few comments and then ask you what you see in this painting and how it makes you feel.

Let me address the drama students here first.

There is no theater without actors communicating the writer's message to the audience.

The audience often imagines themselves as the people in the play.

Baseball players perform for their home audience with little script. It's Im-Prov.

The audience identifies with their efforts to win and their pain when they fail to get home.

In this portrait, think about what might be happening or what will.

Now those of you who take music I will say that music communicates feeling with sounds you make
Singing communicates through words and the way you use your voice.

Most of you listen to music in some form on your iPods or whatever.

Artists from Leonardo to Pollack painted listening to music. Leonardo composed his own music. Pollack immersed himself in modern jazz. There have been studies on the relationship between what an artist is listening to and the quality or direction of the strokes on a canvas.

Notice how many people who work with their hands listen to music. Music helps us to focus.

On the back of this painting I have written the names of the albums I listened to over the three months it took to paint it. Opera, Andrea Bocelli arias, Blues, BB King South American, Santana, and The Buena Vista Social Club.

So what about art? A painting is an original. It is one of a kind. A computer does not make it even though there is computer art.

One of a kind means it cannot never be done again because of how the artist feels when they paint, how they hold brush, which way the strokes go if you a, how hard the paint was pushed, what colors were mixed. A copy of a painting may be quite close, but the actual chalk or paint is not there.

Photography is an art.

Multiple copies can be created from the transparencies that look exactly like the original. It is only a one of a kind photo if the plate is destroyed.

So how does this painting make you feel? What do you wonder about? What do you see? Where is the DR flag?

Why would I have put Roses under the mound? Why is the light on Pedro's hands so strong? Why purple shadows? What is white?

Is the Perspective three point or two? It looks flat, but what is making it work? Lastly what is Pedro thinking?"

Martinez's comments (paraphrased no recording):

"Susan caught me at a very difficult time. I didn't know what pitch I would throw. I was in trouble. I think there were players on base. I knew that I had to be very accurate.

Susan understands that my hands are the most important part of my art. My fingers are long so I can control the ball even though I am small. She has shown a lot of light on them to make that point.

We talk about my painting the plate and that is what I have to do. As an artist and person she knows that I love my country so that is why the Dominican flag is on my sleeve instead of the baseball patch.

I also love flowers but she didn't want to interrupt the painting with them so they are hidden under the mound.

I am not doing anything. I am just thinking really hard.

I was surprised to see the purple in the painting, but now I understand why it has to be that way with the white she used. She understands why in doing my "art" my eyes and fingers have to be as strong as hers and her brush in her art."