

*All good wishes for a Happy New Year from
Portraiture in the Grand Manner!*



*~Portrait of Kristie~
Oil on Italian linen
Life-size, 76 x 36 inches*

*~The Huntsman~
Oil on Italian linen
Life-size, 81 x 47 inches*



*Epiphany
6 January 2012*

Holiday greetings from us both here in warm and sunny Charlotte, North Carolina as we end this busy holiday season and begin to focus on our return to Lucca February 16th this year. Today is such a memorable day in Italy ~ the feast of Epiphany is a national holiday that commemorates the 12th day of Christmas when the Three Wise Men arrived at the manger bearing gifts. La Befana (the Christmas witch) has visited each house last night and left gifts and candy for all of the good children ~ or a lump of coal (usually rock candy to look like coal) for the bad ones. Today is like another Christmas in Italy and it marks the official end of the Christmas and holiday season. Those Italians ~ never wanting to end a celebration!

So onwards to 2012

We certainly hope to have an exciting year ahead. John is looking forward to his completion of a full schedule of portraits ahead, including the official state portrait of Gov. Beverly Perdue ~ our first ever female governor here in North Carolina.

Additionally, his award winning portrait of Mary Rinehart (right) is featured in the December/January issue of International Artist Magazine, including a discussion of his artistic influences and his process for staging and painting her portrait ~ which was painted completely from life sittings here in the Charlotte studio.



Left: John's sensitive and luminous bust portrait of Hannah (The Girl with the Diamond Earring) is also currently featured in a national magazine ~ Portraits, Inc. has used it for their current ad in the February issue of Veranda.

*People often tell us that “John’s work has something different about it” and that it is unlike most other contemporary portraiture. I think that this is more and more true. A good discussion of what sets it apart can be found by googling: “**Portraiture in the Grand Manner**”! Wikipedia actually has an excellent description and definition of this historical tradition and training, including a mention of master painter Pompeo Batoni from Lucca ~ one of the most renowned portraitists in the Grand Manner style of portraiture who succeeded Rubens and van Dyck.*

The very latest portraits shown above of husband and wife (“Kristie” and “The Huntsman”) are perfect current examples of this tradition. Everything was taken into consideration with the painting of these portraits. Although they were painted to hang in separate rooms near where each portrait setting is depicted, the framing of the heads within the Italianate architecture of their villa and the use of complimentary colors of orange and blue amongst the neutral stone add extra iconographic significance to their complimentary union and relating to each other as a couple. Kristie’s main reference information was from their previous nighttime wedding photo, yet John worked to stage both of these life-size paintings with the perspective in mind of where they would both eventually hang to be viewed high on the walls of their estate home.

David, the avid huntsman, was posed in a very historical way at the entrance to one of several rooms pertaining to the hunt theme. John had the great American painter Charles Willson Peale and his famous “Staircase Group” in mind ~ as this life-size work also invites you to step right into the world depicted by the painter and join the sitter in his immediate environment. David’s is a world that he has shaped and created in a very European sense. The Renaissance Beretta family (the oldest firearms manufacturer in the world) of Italy’s Veneto could not ask for a better poster child!

All of which leads back to Europe.

Our dates again for this next Lucca studio season will be February 16th - May 16th of 2012. Other than Tuscan adventures, we do know that we will be in Madrid and central Spain from April 12th - 17th, right after Easter this year. We would love to get back up to the Dolomites and also to Austria this May, but that remains to be seen. Three month’s time will fly by!

In celebration of all things winter, the hunt, and alpine Italy ~ I will attach my recipe for the unique and delicious version of goulash that persists in the Dolomites even today (this region of Italy was previously Austria until after WWI) and also my recipe for the creamy polenta that traditionally accompanies it. If you have wild game (such as venison) to substitute for the alpine grass fed beef, all the better!

The final attachment to this email newsletter is the new 2012 portrait price list. These new prices will not take effect until after the end of this month.

*Auguri,
k & j*

Portraiture in the Grand Manner Charlotte/Lucca www.johnseibelswalker.com