

Background and Interview Questions

for
Charles G. Waugh

Background on Charles G. Waugh

'The early years'

During the middle of the previous century I was born and bred in beautiful Boulder, Colorado. My teenage years I saw me fall in love with woodworking. I went on to get a degree in Industrial Arts, which is essentially every shop class known to mankind.

After college I worked in Aspen, Colorado building cabinets, millwork, and furniture. It was the best of the best for the richest of the rich. Crazy fun stuff!

But, then I got seduced off into the world of production woodworking and spent 17 years at Triad Speakers (headquartered here in Portland!). I became a self-taught design engineer, designing the product, the processes, the machinery and the plant.

Varied Interests

Because of my varied interests and experiences, I am a now craftsman in wood, metal, plastics, ceramics, and quite competent at CAD, CNC, product design, graphic design, lean manufacturing techniques, and of course, *photography!*

Psst! I also love to do Spencerian Penmanship with gold ink and a flexible nib fountain pen. Just ask me, I'll be embarrassingly happy to show it off.

Studio opened in 2002

In 2002 I opened my photographic portrait studio, Charles Fine Art Portraits. It lives in a beautiful office building in the Milwaukie area.

Portrait Creation Process:

To create emotionally significant works, I design all of my portraits together with my clients in a consultation session prior to the photography. We discuss colors, mood, clothes, location, size of the finished pieces, etc., all of which contribute to the finished art piece.

Since 'expression is everything' in a portrait, the photographic session is where I expend a huge amount of energy. Humorously putting the subjects at ease is critical, it brightens the eyes and opens the heart.

My completed portraits are often mistaken for paintings. I am a master retoucher and I aim to remove the 'distractions' while retaining the character and soul of those portrayed.

A crisp summation: I am a painter with a photographic brush.

My websites tell the story of my portrait art:

www.charleswaugh.com - my main portrait website

www.weloveourpets.org - the website for this book project

My other art:

Oh! I almost forgot, I also revel in Redirected Materials, where I use whatever I can find and redirect it into more useful and whimsical purposes. Tables, smoking stands, chairs, etc. - my imagination goes wild.

That art can be seen at www.RedirectedMaterials.com.

And... I'm writing a book

It's a sci-fi novel about an Entomologist who studies and synthesizes the pheromones that insects use to communicate. After working with those powerful chemicals in his lab for many years he slowly becomes 'insectivized'. It isn't visible on the surface, but when he is angry he gains the strength, the hearing, the speed, etc. of an insect. And, he begins to shift his allegiance from the community of humans to the insect Hive, whom he seeks to protect from the humans... in any way he can.

Lastly:

I live in Boring on 3 acres, with two cats, two ducks, and one wife... and that is going UP the pyramid of importance!

Frequently Asked Interview Questions:

How did you get interested in photography?

On a trip to the British Isles a couple decades ago. I bought a little point-and-shoot with a zoom lens before I went. At one point I looked through the viewfinder and was amazed at how everything looked. I drove my wife nuts for two weeks during the vacation by spending way too much time begging her 'just one more shot... *please?*'

Why portraiture?

I love people, and I love the challenge of working with regular people who are not professional models and eliciting genuine expressions which creates incredible portraits.

Why the Oregon Humane Society?

They are the big dog in town! They do sooooo much in so many areas. Like the incredible effort they unleashed when they rescued 149 dogs in Brooks. Amazing!

Why animals?

Really it's the relationship between people and animals that I love. Just like with my kitty Bik - her purr is the most relaxing music I know. Yipes! Other than my wife's voice, of course!

Why a book?

In this age of disposable digital everything, a book has a permanence that is just too seductive for me. And, I want this book to SELL, to raise as much as possible for the Oregon Humane Society.

Is it easy to work with pets?

I love working with animals! Especially dogs - they are so responsive and open to new relationships - like with me, this guy with a camera who barks like a dog.

Is it easy to photograph cats?

Yes, it just takes two shots of vodka. One for me and one for the cat. No, really, they stretch my creativity to the max... and they often end up in a box of some sort. Surprise, surprise.

Are dogs or cats easier to photograph?

Oh, my... THAT's a softball question! :-)

What's the worst problem you've had with a pet during a photographic session?

There was the dog who wandered out into my foyer and pooped real quick and came right back. Not a big deal! I clean that stuff of all the time. But, we didn't notice, so it got stepped in and tracked around my oriental rugs a while. Oops! That's what professional cleaners are for, ya' know?

What else have you photographed besides just dogs and cats?

Horses! I love working with equestrians and their mounts - it is so amazing to see the connection with all that power. Also, Mirabella that two-striped skunk - she was so sweet, in every sense of the word.

What pets do you have?

Currently, two cats, and two ducks. We used to have more ducks and even a couple chickens, but the raccoons and the eagles have waged a war of attrition on us this last year. Our two big labs passed away a couple years ago.

Living or dead, who has been the most significant influence to you in your work?

John Singer Sargent, the great American portrait painter of the late 1800's. His posing, expressions, and gravitas is just stunning.