

BELOW

**Self-portrait With Avignon**

2006, pastel, 25½ x 19½.  
Collection the artist.

### Reference the Highlights

Although Caporale wasn't completely finished developing the midtones of her pastel portrait, she felt the need to apply a few strokes of lighter colors in the representation of Chris' forehead and on the left side of his face. "I want to have a sense of where I am going as I build the pastels from dark to light, and adding those few strokes of light color gives me that reference point," she said. "I will keep in mind that the middle values need to become light enough to create a harmonious transition to the highlights without getting so bright that they compete with those final accents."

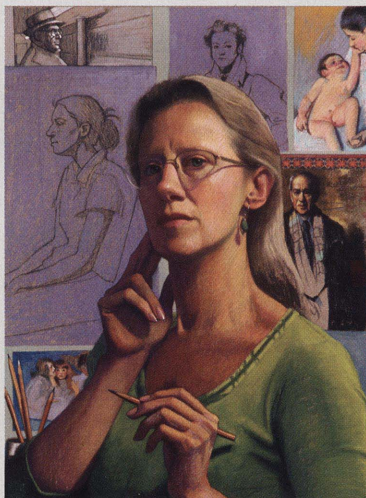
### Check the Drawing, Values, and Edges

Throughout the process of painting in oil and pastel, Caporale constantly stepped back from her developing portrait to recheck the drawing, identify potential problem areas in the color and value statements, consider the hard and soft edges, and confirm her plan for the next stage of the painting process. She also used the standard technique of looking at a reverse image of her painting in a hand-held mirror. "The mirror allows me to see both the model and the painting next to each other, and it jars my comfort level enough that I can immediately see any problem areas that need attention," she pointed out.

### Smooth Transitions and Add Highlights

Caporale was particularly concerned about the soft transitions of values on the bridge of the nose, in the cast shadow under the chin, and on both sides of the lips. She used light strokes of the Unison pastels to soften those transitions, sometimes moving the stick in a horizontal direction rather than a diagonal one. "In general, I stroke a brush or a stick of pastel in a motion that follows the contour of the face, but occasionally it helps to apply color in horizontal strokes," she explained.

The final stage of any painting process is the addition of highlights, and those are especially important in a portrait because they give life, dimension, and sparkle to such features as the tip of the nose, the pupils of the eyes, the bottom lip, and the cheekbones. Bracing her hand with a mahlstick, Caporale used both a sharpened Nupastel and a warm colored Unison pastel to add those important accents. ■



### About the Artist

**Wende Caporale** is a master pastelist with the Pastel Society of America and has received awards in juried exhibitions organized by *American Artist* and by pastel societies in Connecticut, Kansas, and Maryland. She holds a B.F.A. from Paier College of Art, in Hamden, Connecticut, and she studied painting at the National Academy and the Art Students League of New York, both in Manhattan, and in private workshops. She is a popular instructor of pastel painting for the Portrait Society of America, the Northern Westchester Center for the Arts, in Mt. Kisco, New York, and in workshops. Caporale and her husband, artist Daniel E. Greene, live in North Salem, New York, with their daughter, Avignon. For more information on Caporale, visit her website at [www.wendecaporale.com](http://www.wendecaporale.com), or e-mail her at [wendecaporale@aol.com](mailto:wendecaporale@aol.com).

*M. Stephen Doherty is the editor-in-chief of Workshop.*