

Important Reasons You Must Have A Mentor

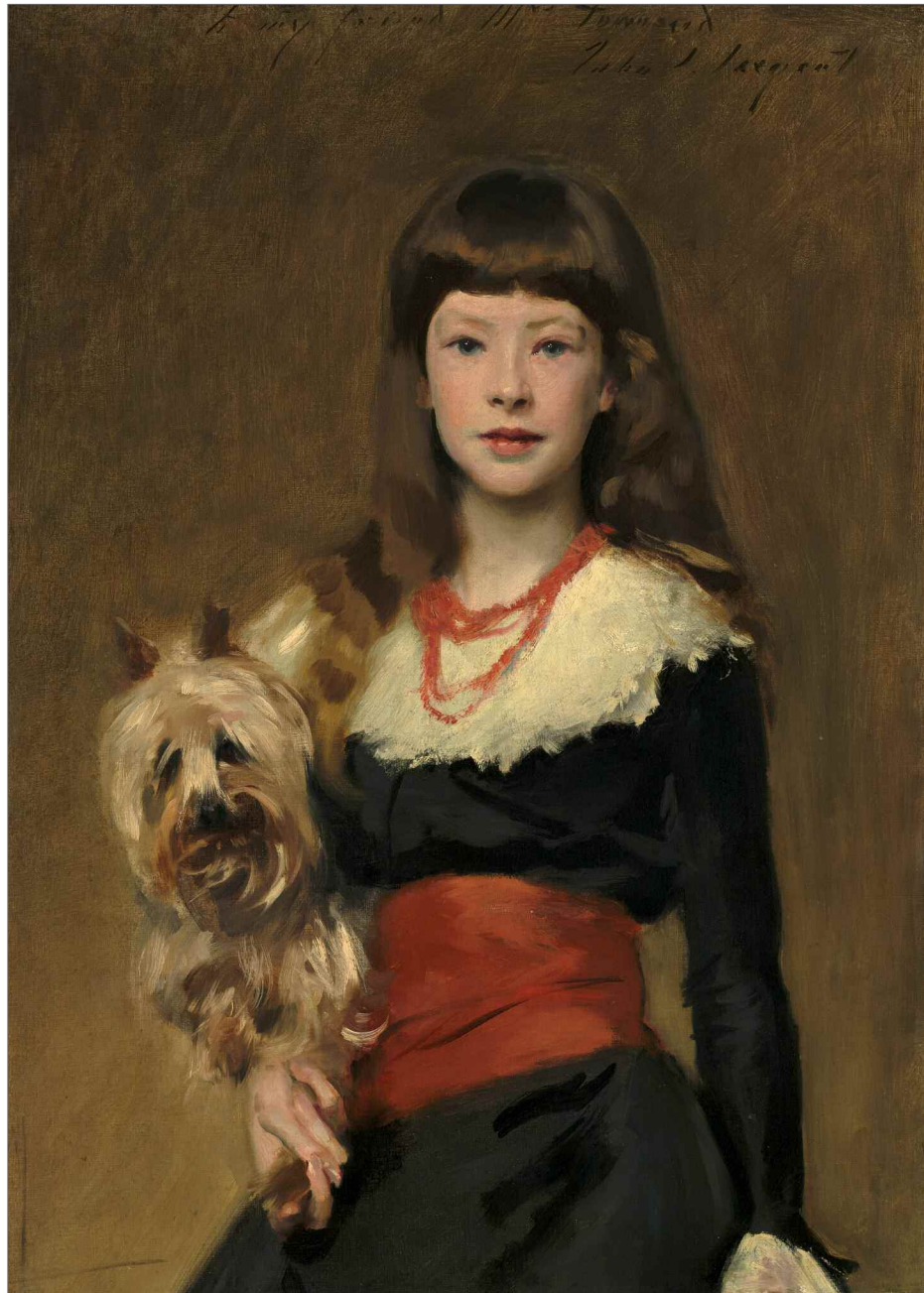
When you get stuck, or reach a plateau, or find yourself at a crossroads, who will be there willing to take you to the next higher level?

(Excerpt from How Successful Artists Study)

BY SAMUEL ADOQUEI Can you pick up the phone any time of the day and ask for help from an experienced professional artist you consider your mentor and get a sincere and honest opinion about a question that's bothering you? Do you have a true, caring and generous professional you can count on whenever in need? "No" to these questions means you need to do what all successful artists do: find a guide. "Yes" means you have a guide and therefore a bright and successful future.

Mentorship is not a common practice today because many creative people are not aware of the importance of mentors, that between mediocrity and success lies a guide or a mentor. Also, many don't know how to go about finding a true mentor. This excerpt from the book *Mentor in a Book* (now called *How Successful Artists Study*) helps explain how you can find a mentor to help your artistic pursuit.

Today's artists are blessed to be living in the information age. Helpful information, quick fixes, techniques and pointers, tricks and gimmicks are all up for grabs on the internet. You can rake through this material and take whatever you need, and it seems like excellence is all free with a few clicks. Younger artists in particular are accustomed to downloading free stuff from the web. But many don't realize that all this free content comes with hidden psychological damage, denying them from achieving their fullest potential.



Miss Beatrice Townsend by John Singer Sargent

The Importance of a Mentor

The most important element that is not free is the extra special real human knowledge, human experience, human assistance and human presence. You need someone to provide you with the moral courage, motivation, protection, inspiration and encouragement to prepare you to reach your highest level of excellence.

The special relationship between a mentor and a student is different from that of a college professor asked to mentor students. A mentor out of love, sympathy and charity gives his or her lifetime experiences for no salary, unlike the professor who is paid to share wisdom. This is what those who are fortunate to have a mentor must recognize and be grateful for. That's why, of all the hundreds and hundreds of books on the market for artists, the one book you need most is a book that helps you find a mentor, a book that leads you to real human knowledge and advice, a book designed to provide the kind of advice a mentor will give to a talent who wants to excel. You need a kind of a mentor in a book to address and answer important questions only a mentor (a real human) could know.

Five reasons to have a mentor

Many times career teachers and professors don't have the same contact with the real world as professionals whose livelihood depends on dealing with real-life experiences. For this important rea-



Studio by Samuel Adoquei, 1990

son a mentor's direction is more practical. A mentor tells you the truth and sometimes prepares you so that with confidence and courage you can overcome your fears and worries, deal with the curveballs and avoid unnecessary surprises.

If you are confused about your approach and direction, unsure of what to do and how to work, mentors are there to clarify things. Everyone has the potential to do much better. How can you know your hidden potential? Mentors push and challenge you to help you reach your fullest potential because they have the abilities to extract the best from you.

How to Find a Mentor

After deciding to become an artist, you have enrolled in a good atelier or art school or are working privately in an

artist's studio, where you are studying all you can in order to be able to begin a romantic but lucrative vocation. Is it still necessary to have a mentor? Who do you have with experience, wisdom and honest advice guiding and protecting you from risks so that the free Internet information and the "free with clicks" becomes more helpful, not damaging? The answer depends on how big your ambitions are.

Imagine, for instance, having a kind and generous friend who makes himself available to you whenever you are in need of a consultation. Imagine an understanding friend who out of kindness and compassion is willing to hand you the secret keys to success in your creative vocation, someone with the knowledge and wisdom you need, knowledge and wisdom that are not included in the studio or school's curriculum. This sympathetic person, who is connected to the

Read below to see how you can get Big pdf File with close-ups of Samuel Adoquei's most recent art works, to enjoy brushworks, color and details

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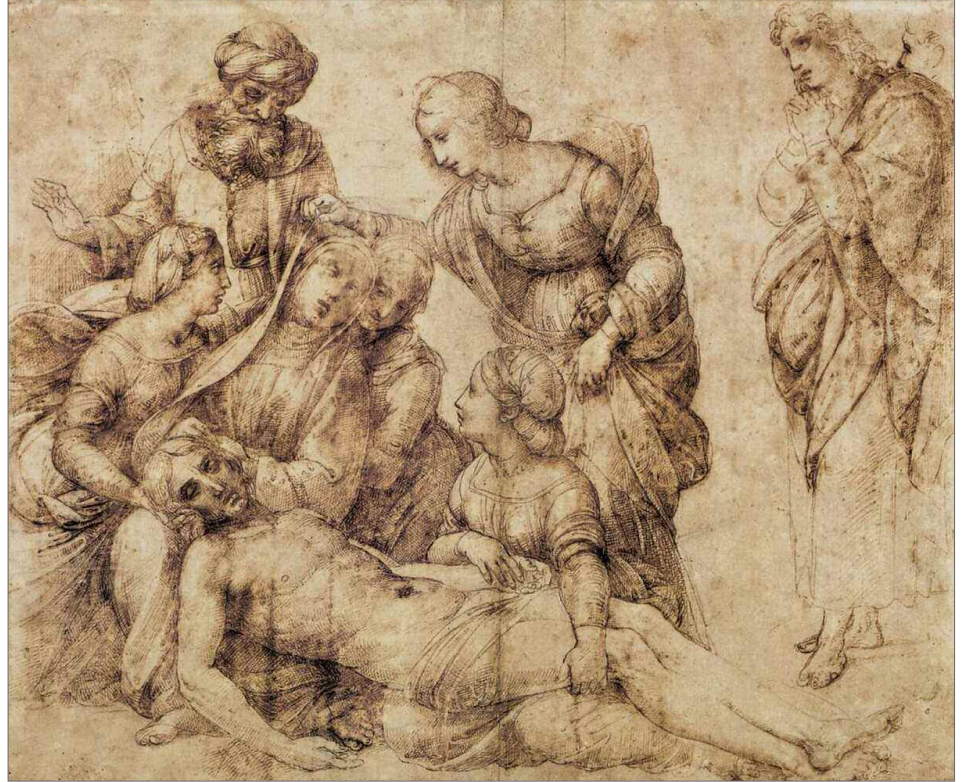
world you intend to do well in, will help you achieve that knowledge and wisdom just for the sake of helping you. On the other hand, imagine being on your own, struggling and searching for answers to your questions. Imagine how much work it will take to discover the extra knowledge and wisdom that usually only come from years of experience through trial and error. With a mentor, that extra knowledge and wisdom come in quick and easy doses. Without one, they will come slowly with a heavy price tag.

Mentors do not get paid. They help out of sympathy and empathy, and the only reward they get is the good feeling that helping gives them. The most effective approach to finding a mentor is first to enroll in a workshop taught by a master. In a studio or workshop, it is much easier to prove your sincerity, loyalty and humility. It is also easier to study with and get to know the master before approaching him or her for the mentorship opportunity. Close contact in a class also helps you gain first-hand knowledge of the mentor's character.

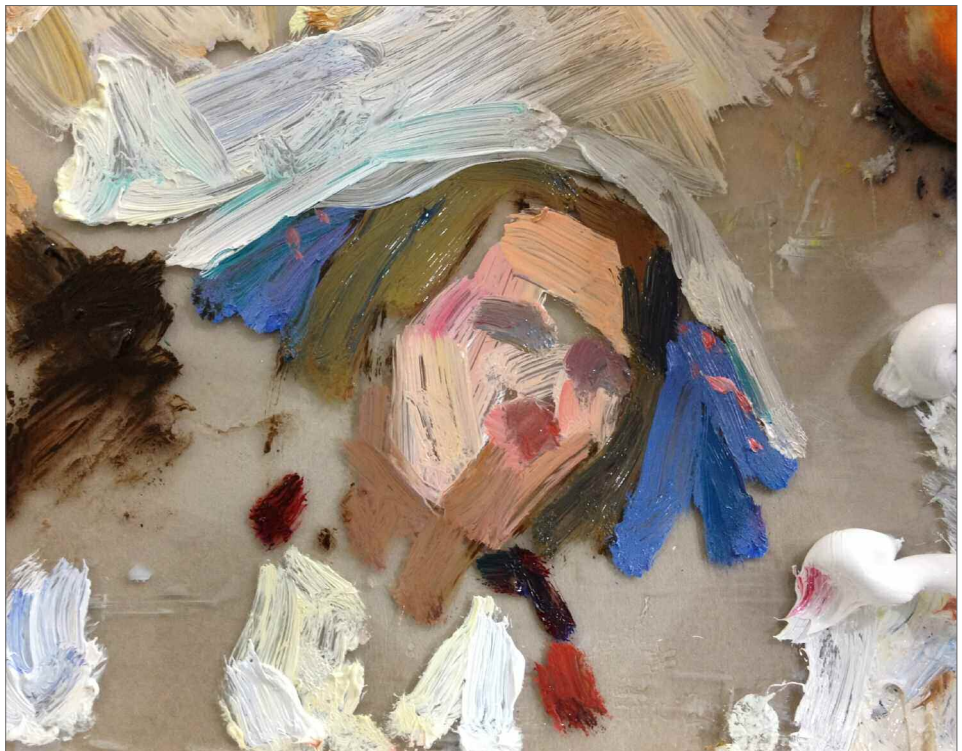
Naturally, however, there are also people who are good mentors from afar. Magazine articles and interviews, as well as school catalogs, are very helpful in researching professional artists and their backgrounds, beliefs, ideas and philosophies. The appropriate way to approach such artists is to send them a sincere and honest letter or email. A more formal approach to finding a mentor is through recommendation by a respectful person acting on your behalf. I prefer the letter approach; there is something personal and respectful when people take their time to write a letter to a prospective mentor.

If you are a parent and yearn for success for a loved one, please, please make the effort to visit the mentor. The natural human contact helps parents have a little insight. It also shows that you care. I am sure you would do the same with college and other learning situations, wouldn't you?

When all goes well and the master



Raffaello studio per la pala bagioni, Raffaello Sanzio 1483-1520



Composing in color by Samuel Adoquei (Color Workshop at National Academy)

agrees to be your mentor, you will not have to ask the mentor what he or she wants. Mentors are aware of the goals and traits of hardworking dreamers. They know you have gravitated towards them because you are hungry for more advice, hungry for ideas, hungry for knowledge, experience and guidance. It is not what the student wants from the mentor or how talented the student is that impresses the mentor so that he

wants to help the student—it is the student's attitude and the impression he gives of humility, sincerity and willingness to work that will impress the mentor.

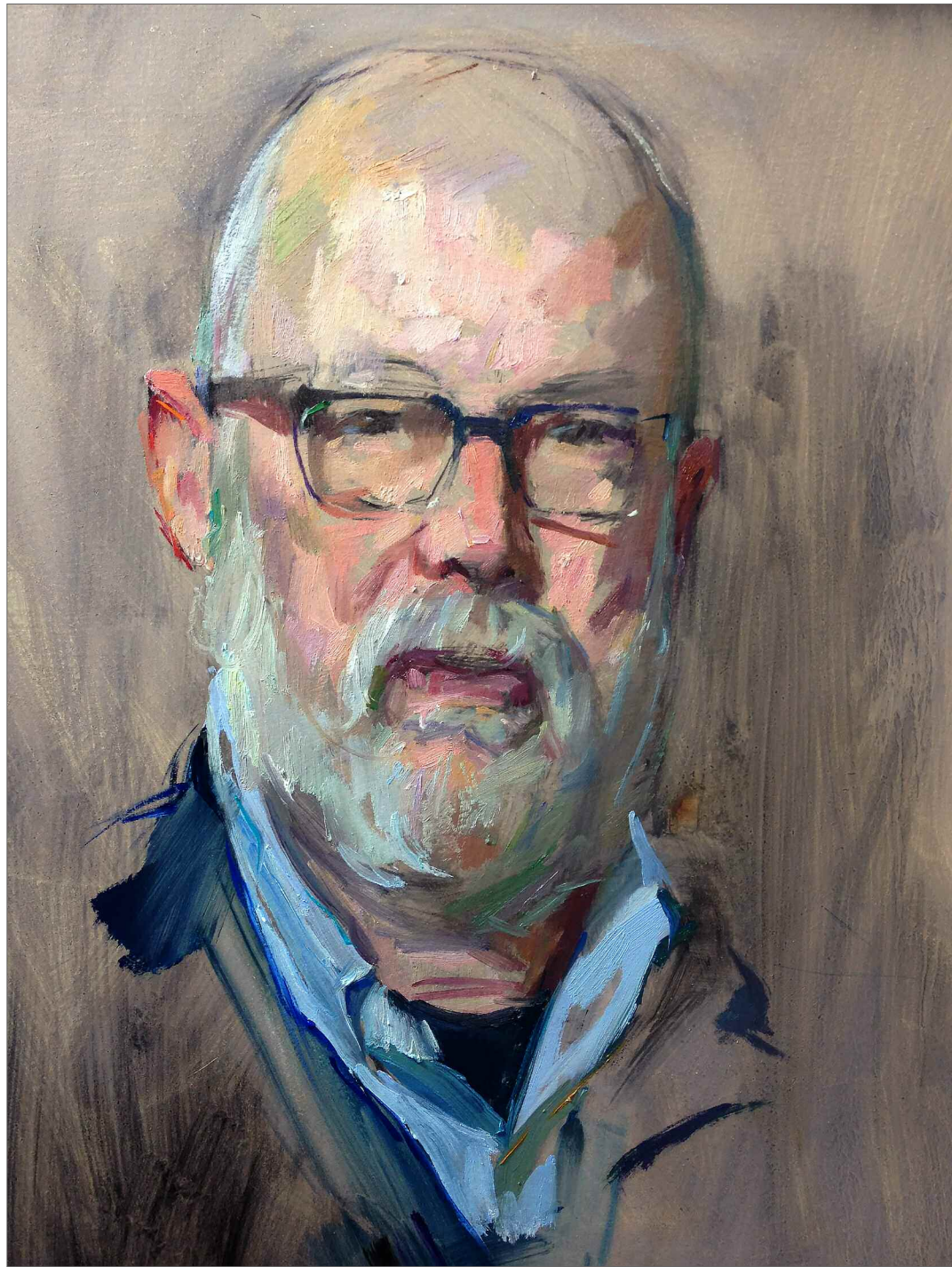
The relationship between a mentor and his protégé is built solely on trust. The relationship starts off as an adviser-student relationship, then continues to friendship and ends up being like a fam-

ily relationship. When this bond is formed, the mentor will do whatever it takes to make sure the student gets the best of whatever he or she wants. It is this that makes good mentors so important. They give so much for so little in return.

Mentors often test students in order to know if they can work with them. They will test the student's attitude, obedience, humility, loyalty and will to work. They cannot bestow their friendship and reputation on a stranger who lacks character and humility. This kind of testing is a common trait with leaders—those who have a lot to lose practice this technique. Their independence, reputation, privacy and profession are at stake. A mentor who holds back means he or she doesn't trust the mentee fully. Leaders try several unusual tricks in order to uncover the true character of their followers. You don't have to worry if in your heart a mentor knows your motives are sincere and honest. They know by experience that circumstances and situations do not make people, but circumstances and situations reveal the true and hidden character of a person. A humble, sincere and loyal student will remain so, no matter what the circumstances are.

(How to Pursue Excellence, Chapter 5, and How to Avoid Mediocrity, page 195, will help all readers learn the common traits of successful artists mentored by great masters.)

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) opened his doors to the young Edgar Degas (1834-1917) the advice; "Draw lines, young man, and more lines, from life and from memory, if you want to be good" from Jean-Auguste-Dominique was enough to change Degas' ways and approach to drawing" with this simple advice, Degas went on to produce some of the most gracious drawings in Western art. The chapter "The Artist in Search of Growth" in the Mentor in a book now called How Successful Artists Study helps you with how to continue growth once you start your profession.



Portrait of a Gentleman by Samuel Adoquei

How Do You Know When You Have Found the Right Mentor?

Mentors should be professional artists with a broad, traditional foundation, but be cautious because not all professional artists have a good enough foundation

to be of help to a student in need of the right and proper guidance.

All good mentors possess similar traits—they are generous with their time, they make you feel comfortable enough that you are never afraid or intimidated to approach them with problems and they have no time limit on helping. Such individuals become true and sincere friends who understand your needs. A student may miss the opportunity to recognize a mentor because, in a perfect studio environment, the student might take a good teacher's

kindness for granted, thinking the extra help and extra effort the teacher provides is part of the curriculum, and therefore the service will always be there. When you find someone whom you think is the right person, look for an opportunity to set up a special meeting to discuss your desire to have him or her as your mentor, too. For example, I love my students equally but I don't mentor all of them because their priorities differ and some like to come and go as they want. And I have a few who are not my full-time students but I mentor them anyway. In your search for a mentor, do not give up when your phone or letters are not replied to as quickly as you would like. Keep trying.

In some fields, it is a common practice for a student to study with one teacher and have a different person as a mentor. In the arts, the best situation is to have your teacher as your mentor, but often situations and conditions in modern life prevent this from happening, forcing a student to have a mentor other than his teacher. If this happens, the student should be very cautious. Art is too complex and the philosophies, ideas and beliefs of artists are too unique to have your ship captained by two captains with different compasses going to separate destinations. Again, be very, very cautious trying to be mentored by two different masters in the same field. Your creative mind is not a laboratory, and this is no time for experimentation or distractions that will push you off course.

When Do You Leave Your Mentor?

In time, mentors become like good friends you hope to have a lasting relationship with, so naturally you will always hope to have the relationship with the mentor but you might not always need the same degree of help or the same attention and encouragement as



time goes by. As the old adage goes “a word to the wise is enough.” A sincere friendship develops and evolves.

When working with a mentor, do not put on your cloak of humility to deceive them, hang around with them only when you need their help, suck their energy and then drop them. It is best not to make a conscious decision to leave your mentor just because you think you have become as good as you wish. After all, when do you leave a good friend and move on? The idea of leaving a mentor means you have never been honest and sincere from the start. Of course, sometimes things fall apart in life; that's natural everywhere. In some cultures it is very bad karma to leave a mentor on a

bad note. Leonardo da Vinci went back and forth to his master's studio long after he had become a professional artist to join him for meals and help with projects. Raphael was a good friend to Pietro Perugino, his teacher, and it was through Perugino that the young Raphael got to know Leonardo da Vinci. In another extreme example in the musical industry, I was surprised to hear about Afel Bocoum, a Malian musician and amazing composer, and why he stayed so long—20 something years—with his mentor, Ali Farka Toure? “I love Ali, we do great works together, I do my work and I am very happy.” Life is not about proving, it's about doing great work. Wouldn't it be nice if such wisdom of humility became part of the

modern-day mindset?

When I wrote *Mentor in a Book*, now called *How Successful Artists Study*, my goal was to have a small pocket-size book serving as a modern way of mentorship, a reference with answers that lead to growth, recommended books to read and habits to help you develop your talent. It was turning the book into 18 comprehensive chapters, including chapters like *How to Avoid Mediocrity and Produce Works of Great Quality and Good, Mediocre or Amateurish: How Do You Know the Difference?*, and adding all the images that we realized it would be best to make it a bit bigger so that the many images reproduced and illustrations could be enjoyed.

There are countless masters who kept going back to their teachers/mentors until life decided otherwise. Mentorship is a common practice among all great artists. Traditionally, the evolution of great artists is, first, that the artists acquire training, and then they develop, get busy, explore, evolve and become independent. Although it is wise to follow your own inner calling, do not let the me-me-me syndrome confuse you or the “I will do it all alone” and “it’s all about me” rob your potential away. If for some reason you are confused, always remember to read again the important reasons to have a mentor. Ask yourself why smart artists have mentors and why only a few seek mentors.

When you read how John Singer Sargent (1856-1926), one of America’s best portrait artists, painted together side by side with the older Master Claude Monet, and how they even tried each other’s painting palettes, posed for Giovanni Boldini (1837-1917), the Italian master of the bravura style, and also for Sargent’s painting teacher Carolus-Duran, you might ask what kind of humble character allowed Singer Sargent to get along with many great masters of his time. Stories about him are proof that “the scent of humility attracts more bees of wisdom than the perfume of pride and ego combined.”-Samuel Adoquei

Good mentors sacrifice a lot—much, much more even—and do their best to make sure the student succeeds. After all, they have done everything out of compassion. As you improve, develop and succeed, you will have to work extremely hard to guard your pride and curb your ego. The arrogance of Pride and Ego, these two defenders of our image, forget the journey we are making. This mentor relationship is an extension of the mentor’s ideas and accomplishments, so it is in the interest of the mentor that the student succeeds. When you start to feel you have learned enough, and want to move on, please move on gracefully.

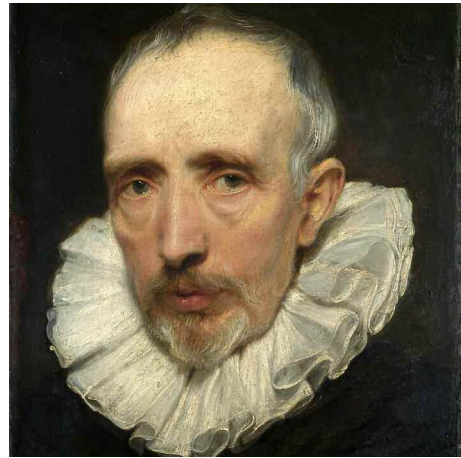
About the Author- Samuel Adoquei

Mr. Adoquei is on the faculty of the National Academy School of Fine Art. He has taught at the New York Academy of Art, the Art Students League of New York, the Educational Alliance and the Lyme Academy of Art in Old Lyme, Connecticut. Mr. Adoquei’s artworks have been exhibited at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. and other galleries and museums. He is also the author of *Origin of Inspiration* and *How Successful Artists Study*, both of which are Strand Books No.1 Bestsellers. The artist’s paintings have appeared on the covers of books, magazines and newspapers, including a highly favorable “New York Times” article about Mr. Adoquei’s painting, “The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King”.

About five years ago the Harvard Club commissioned a portrait by Mr. Adoquei, and this portrait is now hanging among some of history’s best portrait artists in the collection of the Harvard Club. Recently, the city of Pomport, Bergerac, France awarded Mr. Adoquei the City’s Medal of Honor for his contribution and dedication to the arts



Litta Madonna - by Leonardo da Vinci



Portrait of Cornelis van der Geest
by Anthony van Dyck

and culture of the area. In 2014 Mr. Adoquei was invited to join the Board of Advisors of the Portrait Society of America.



Drawing by Edgar Degas

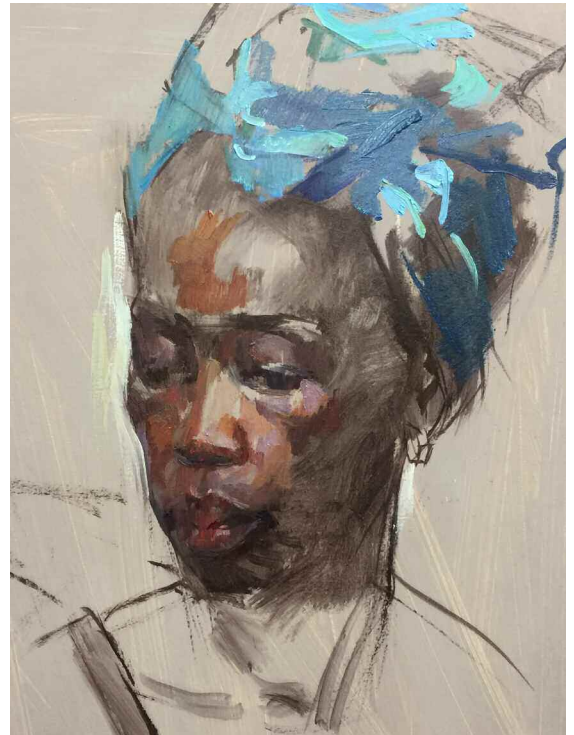
What Is It That Pushes Less Than 2% Of Artists To Popularity And Commercial Success?

The pursuit of art is hard, sometimes discouraging. Yet there are a handful of artists who—without even trying very hard—succeed and enjoy fame against all obstacles. That is because they have certain ideas other artists don't have and follow certain approach the average miss. The wisdom and teaching principles that have transformed many talents into artists, popular art teachers and gallery artists. are what you'll find in book **How Successful Artists Study**.

Your artistic vocation is too costly and the competition is too tough to dive in without a guide: the secret findings, and wisdom derived from over 20 years of teaching and helping artists, all put together by Samuel Adoquei for the first time for aspiring artists.

7 Important chapters to help you take control of your Artistic vocation

- 1- How to develop a strong, attractive style that stands out from the crowd.
- 2- Important Reasons You Must Have A Mentor
- 3- Help for artists at crossroads, uncertain about what step to take next.
- 4- How to transform your talent into a rewarding vocation.
- 5- How to capture the attention of collectors and gallery owners.
- 6- How to maintain continued growth.
- 7- How to avoid the "Starving Artist Syndrome."



Plus 5 Bonus Images Of The Author's Most Recent Works!

The romantic nature of pursuing art makes it hard to be practical and think far ahead. Before you know it, 5, 7 or even 10 years will come and go. Whether you will be following others' leads or others will be following your lead depends on the ideas and guidance helping you now, today.

Reading How Successful Artists Study is like brainstorming with a mentor. It reveals the inner mind of an insightful professional, an artist who has helped students and mentored artists, teaching them ideas you cannot find in art classes.

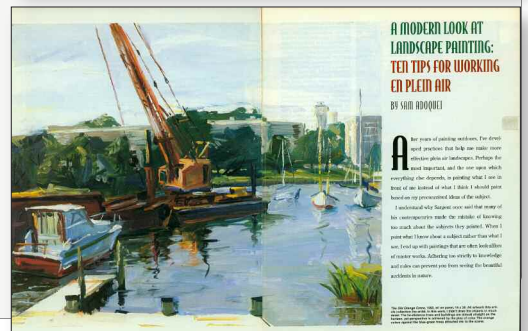
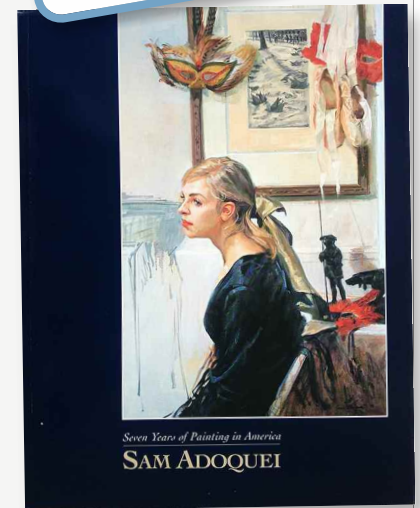


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How Successful Artists Study

“Samuel Adoquei’s teaching ideas and wisdom in the studio have worked for legions of successful artists at the National Academy School of Fine Arts.”

—Nancy Little, Former Director, National Academy School of Fine Arts

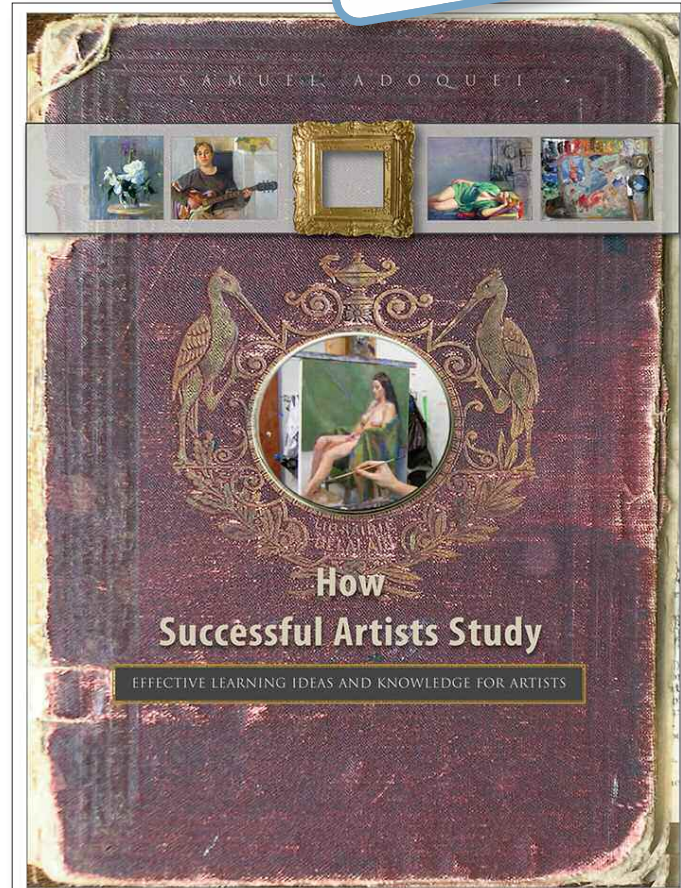
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A MENTOR IN A BOOK

This is not a book about a particular style or a particular tradition. How Successful Artists Study is to make sure the costly financial investment and the years you are sacrificing are assisted with THE WAY of successful artists.

A must-read for art teachers who must attract and keep students

IF THERE IS ONE GUIDE you must read, if failing is not an option, WHAT BOOK WOULD THAT BE? How Successful Artists Study is written to serve this purpose, to answer questions that only a mentor or a true professional could answer. Take advantage of this 240-page book containing 18 chapters of advice and suggestions—not to mention beautiful, rich reproductions and illustrations—for a fraction of what you would normally pay for a video, a workshop or an art class.



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Samuel Adoquei Bio

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Medal of Honor Awarded to Samuel Adoquei France.



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