

July 6, 1993

Nancy Sands
3821 Windsor Lane
Dallas, Texas 75205

Dear Nancy,

Here are the photos I promised you. I can sincerely thank you for helping me get my late Spring cleaning done at last, for I had to clean house to find them. I have enclosed some extra photographs of the portrait I painted of Taylor Davis so you can see her face a little better. I am also sending several photos of Sophie Bass. Ramona and Lee would probably shoot me for this, since they are rightly paranoid about having images of their children out in public. You and David are the first people I have ever shown them to, and I know that I can count on your discretion. The other photos are of Scott's portrait of one of our closest boyhood friends, John Truelson who passed away in 1989.

All of these portraits are very good likenesses. It is a shame, however, that David will have to get his impression of our portraits through looking at photographs of them. They make our paintings appear more photographic than they really are. I also believe that no photographic portrait can quite convey that extra magical sense of the sitter's actual physical presence better than a fine painting. Scott charges \$25,000 for a three-quarter length portrait with hands. Scott has instructed me to tell you that, if you decide to have all three children painted, he will reduce the price of each portrait by \$5,000. These portraits generally measure 22"x30" or larger. Scott works both from life and from photos, and I don't think you would be able to tell the difference. There are certain advantages in working from photos, because everyone, both adults and children, have such busy schedules these days, and our methods of working from life are so demanding that it can be a great inconvenience to everyone.

There is another advantage to working from photos. The client and the artist can choose the pose and the basic expression for the portrait, so that there are no surprises, except perhaps that Scott always improves on the photo image. Should you decide to have your children painted, Scott follows the standard commissioning procedure used by most other portrait painters. The sitter is photographed by us, and the client and artist pick the photo to work from. The client then makes a 50% non-refundable deposit as soon as work begins and pays the balance when the finished portrait is delivered. I might add here that Scott has never had a portrait rejected. During the painting process he may need to have the sitter pose one or two times for color adjustments etc. Depending on the complexity of clothing or background, my brother usually takes a month to a month and a half to complete a portrait once work begins. Right now he is so busy that he probably would not be able to begin painting your portraits until late autumn, though I think we could do the photographic part this summer.

My brother and I noticed that you were favorably impressed with my portrait of Ann Penn's daughter Taylor Davis. He would not be at all offended if you wanted me to paint your children. My price for a portrait of similar size (22"x30") would be from \$9,000 to \$12,000 depending on the complexity of clothing and background. I don't claim to be as good at portraiture as Scott, since I have done only a few. But I do think that I have a feel for it, and I see no reason why I could not please you as much as I did the Penns. Also, since Scott is so busy, I might be able to come up to Maine this summer for a few days as you suggested to photograph the kids and do some landscape painting. I have never been to Maine, but painting at Martha's Vineyard in the seventies was a most enjoyable experience.

Whatever you decide, it was delightful to see you again the other day. I have no doubt that Julia will make a wonderful portrait no matter who paints her. She has plenty of personality. From their photos your other two children seem equally attractive and interesting. You have no idea how that makes the portrait painter's life more easy.

Let Scott and me know what you decide. Until then. . .

Sincerely yours,

Stuart Gentling