

my copy

18 April 2005

Kathleen Penny
c/o Department of Commerce
HCHB Room 6520
14th and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Ms. Penny:

Having been informed only today that a formal offer to paint the portraits of the Honorable Donald L. Evans and the Honorable Norman Y. Minetta must be submitted by the 20th of April, I will do my best. I do recommend that you contact the Midland, Texas office of Mr. Evans who has already seen and evaluated my portrait art. I learned only today that the Commerce Department would also like to have a portrait of Mr. Minetta. *Minetta*

I am sending you a package of portrait images, along with some biographical information (a relatively recent news magazine article) and a letter from an satisfied patron (President George W. Bush).

My brother Stuart and I currently have two large landscapes of the Bush ranch at Crawford hanging in the family quarters of the White House. Although it is still an informal request, the president has asked me to paint the official White House portraits of both him and Mrs. Bush. An official offer does not come until the last days of a president's term of office.

I am also sending you a giclee print of Mr. Bush's official governor's portrait now hanging in the capitol dome. It is painted in oil and acrylic which is the combination of painting media that I wish to employ on the portraits of Mr. Evans and Mr. Minetta if I should be awarded the commission.

I shall now try to briefly answer the questions posed by Factors I through IV of your solicitation.

FACTOR I: ARTISTIC STYLE AND ABILITY,

I am sending a package containing nine images of my portrait paintings of important leaders in business, science, education and politics. They are as follows:

1. Portrait of George W. Bush as Governor of Texas.
2. Portrait of President Bush at his Crawford ranch.
3. Mr. John Roach, former CEO of Tandy, Radio Shack Corporation.
4. Mr. Trammell Crow, real estate magnate.

5. Dr. Alison Richards, former Provost at Yale, now the Chancellor of Cambridge University, England.

6. Mr. and Mrs. Perry R. Bass, business and art patrons.

7. Dr. Jane Goodall, naturalist, conservationist.

8. Mr. Don Williams, former partner of Trammell Crow.

9. Mr. John Truelson, attorney and friend.

All of the above paintings are done in drybrush watercolor except for Governor Bush's portrait which is done in oil and acrylic. Watercolor is my painting medium of choice although it is more difficult and demanding.

Mr. Evans has already seen the above examples of my portrait work. Mr. Minetta has not. You are free to send them to Secretary Minetta if you wish.

FACTOR II: EXPERIENCE,

I have been painting portraits for more than 40 years, and I have never had a portrait rejected. Because of distance and the very busy schedules of many of my clients, I now work almost exclusively from photographs. Whenever possible I insist that my painting be done from a single photograph that has been mutually agreed upon between my sitter and myself. I do not like working from several photos with perhaps one photo showing a good facial expression and another photo displaying a good pose. When my work is done from one approved photograph there are no unpleasant surprises for the client.

Although I feel that I am basically self-taught, I did attend the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts for almost four years where I studied with John McCoy and Walter Stuempfig. In fact I am just completing a portrait of John McCoy's brother-in-law the artist Andrew Wyeth who posed last July on his island off the coast of Maine.

So far, I have never missed a deadline.

FACTOR III: PAST PERFORMANCE,

Although I try to limit my involvement with governmental or official portrait commissions, I have on occasion painted portraits for corporate board rooms and for universities and banks. I must say that most of these works were done as favors for important clients and I was well paid for them. To be candid, modern official portraiture must follow traditional formulas and offers few creative challenges as the vast numbers of examples hanging in government offices bear sad witness. I think you would be impressed if you knew the names of the people I have turned down, including most recently two very important members of the Bush administration.

I did indeed paint President Bush's portrait as governor in part for the prestige of painting a president, but my main reason was to honor the friendship and the many favors that the Bushes have bestowed on my brother and me over the years. Mr. Evans is not just a former member of President Bush's cabinet

but also a very close and important friend of the president. I do believe that it would please President Bush if I were to paint Secretary Evans. I am inclosing a copy of a recent letter from the president which I think is evidence of a satisfied patron. I recently sent him several giclee prints of the two portraits I painted of him.

FACTOR IV: PRICE,

My usual price for a three-quarter length portrait measuring 30 inches by 40 inches (unframed size) begins at \$45,000 and, if the background is complicated, the price can be \$65,000 and higher.

I have already informed somebody at the Department of Commerce that, because of your budget considerations, I would be willing to do the Evans portrait for \$30,000 plus the cost of the frame (which should be no more than \$2,500), and any shipping costs.

I must add that my portrait painting schedule is rather full these days, and I am trying to control future commitments. It might be a good idea to find another artist for the Minetta portrait.

However, if the Evans portrait is contingent on my also painting Secretary Minetta, I will consider the project on the same terms as the portrait of Secretary Evans.

I follow a simple commission procedure employed by many portrait artists. After the photograph of the client is mutually agreed upon, I will require a 50% non-refundable deposit for work to begin. The agreed upon timing for the completion and delivery of the portrait begins as soon as the deposit is received. This is the same procedure that I followed with the governor's portrait of Mr. Bush for the state capitol of Texas. It is also the exactly same type of commission contract that I employ in private commissions.

I do hope that this hasty response to your solicitation does answer any major questions that you may have. I will be sending the portrait images and other material today by overnight mail if possible. They will be sent to the same address listed above for this letter. If I may be of an further assistance, please do not hesitate to call or contact me on my web site www.gentling.com.

Whatever may be your decision, I do thank you for honoring me and my work in your deliberations.

Sincerely yours

Scott Gentling