

## WILLIAM J. RUSHTON



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William J. Rushton, a native of Birmingham, Alabama, earned his B.A. in psychology at Colorado College. He then trained for five years at Charles H. Cecil Studios in Florence, Italy, learning the sight-size method of drawing and painting and, in his last two years, serving as an assistant instructor to first, second, and third-year students. To deepen his understanding of the human form, he also studied sculpture with Matthew James Collins.

The subjects of William's portraits are painted from life using a technique that originated in the practices of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century European painters such as Titian, van Dyke, and Velazquez, and was more recently employed by John Singer Sargent and his American contemporaries. The sight-size approach allows for an unmediated visual relationship between artist and subject. Placing the canvas (or clay) alongside the subject, the artist walks twenty or so feet back to see both from a greater vantage point. Attending to the relationships of proportion, value, and color at a distance, he is better able to capture striking likenesses and a strong sense of reality. Although William's images are realistic, they are not photographic. The visual information he chooses to represent in varying degrees of detail yields a subtly dramatic and unique effect.

William's oil painting *Woman with a Red Earring* was chosen for the 2020 annual exhibition of The Royal Society of Portrait Painters, one of the world's most extensive contemporary portrait exhibitions. Available for commissions, William divides his time among Birmingham, New York City, and Florence.