



Artist: Kristi Hager, featured in the exhibition [Equal: A Work in Progress](#)

Artwork: *NEH*, 2019 (left)

Process: This exhibition is bookended by two amendments to the United States Constitution: Women's Suffrage (the right to vote) became universal in the United States with the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, and the Equal Right Amendment, which prevents discrimination based on gender, and was proposed in 1972 and is still making it's way to full ratification.

You can read more [HERE](#) about the complicated path of this amendment which has been unfolding since 1923!

Kristi Hager was also inspired by the [Women's March](#) in January 2017 when she decided to commit her artwork to celebrate women as friends and heroes. She calls the work "[unequivocal](#) portraits" and says she intended them to be "clear and unambiguous because it represents the unambiguous birthright we all have to equality."

Materials: Paper, pencil, eraser, photo of a woman you admire

Age range: The whole family!

Instructions:

1. Begin by creating a gray scale. Kristi used 5 shades of gray. Draw 5 small boxes, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch squares, in a row on your paper. Number them 1-5. In box #1 use the side of your pencil to shade it the lightest gray you can. In box #5 shade it the absolute darkest you can. Then in box #3 try to shade it an exact middle shade of gray. Box #2 and #4 should also be middle shades between the boxes on either side of them. Now you have a gray scale!
2. Kristi Hager painted portraits of women she admired. Some she knew personally like her mom and her friends, and herself (self-portrait!) Some were her heroes, like Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Think of a woman you would like to honor in this way and find a picture of her. If you are printing a picture from online try printing it our grayscale, even if it's a color picture.
3. Using your pencil on the side, begin sketching a portrait of your chosen woman. It probably won't look very realistic and that's ok. We're exploring the different values or shades of gray and how to use them to build a portrait.
4. Kristi used very few hard lines and her portraits have an airy and light quality to them. You can achieve a similar effect by using an eraser to lighten the portrait while you're working or when you're finished. Also, these portraits are quite LARGE. Experiment with drawing BIG since large scale portraits tend to make the person being depicted seem larger than life and very important to us.