

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Michael Shane Neal is a sixth generation Tennessean. Southern charm, prodigious talent, and a strong work ethic distinguish this accomplished artist. Neal found his calling in the arts at age 21, and recently celebrated his 20th anniversary as a professional artist. He has completed over 400 portraits including United States senators, ambassadors, federal judges, and corporate and civic leaders. Neal received a B.A. from David Lipscomb University and has studied at the Santa Fe Institute of Fine Arts, the Scottsdale Artist School, and the Lyme Academy of Art. In 2001 he was awarded the prestigious grand prize for the Portrait Society of America's International Competition.

In 2004 Neal completed a commission to paint Senator Arthur Vandenburg for the Senate Reception Room in the Capitol. "It's an honor to think of my work in a place with such history," Neal remarked. He recently completed portraits of Senator Robert C. Byrd, Senator Arlen Specter, Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, former Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham, and Federal Chief Judge Anthony Scirica.

His portraits are insightful interpretations of the sitter's character. Neal's adroit brushwork makes his work appear effortless, but the artist devotes serious study to the individuality of his sitter and each portrait setting. When not engaged in portraiture, Neal teaches painting seminars and enjoys *plein air* landscape painting.

Neal and his wife, Melanie, reside near his Nashville studio with their two daughters, Mattie Ree and Lilly Kate.