



Photos by John Severson/The Republic

Karen T. Taylor attracts people from all over the world who want to learn about forensic art. She's teaching at the Scottsdale Artists' School for two weeks.

Top forensic artist brings skills to Artists' School

By Dolores Tropiano

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SCOTTSDALE — When *America's Most Wanted* needed to find the man who helped assassinate Orlando Letelier, a former Chilean ambassador, it turned to Karen T. Taylor.

The nation's leading expert in forensic art went to work with only a very poor-quality photocopy of fugitive Virgilio Paz Romero, one of the world's most wanted men.

Using her years of study and experience about faces and age progression, she came up with a drawing. Using her instincts, which told her he was a flashy man, she drew him with a red shirt.

The updated image helped U.S. marshals capture him in three days. And it just so happened that he was wearing a red shirt.

In Scottsdale

Taylor is in Scottsdale this week and next to teach forensic art classes at the Scottsdale Artists' School. Students from all walks of life and from across the globe come to study.

Classes include techniques for interviewing victims and witnesses of crimes, drawings from photographs of dead bodies and facial reconstruction using photographs of skulls.

Taylor's teaching, and that of her mentor, Betty Pat Gatliff,



Betty Pat Gatliff, who mentored Taylor, also is teaching classes at the Artists' School.

also in town, have helped make the Scottsdale Artists' School one of the nation's leading forensic art centers.

Taylor worked as a forensic artist for the FBI Academy and 18 years at the Texas Department of Public Safety.

She wrote *Forensic Art and Illustration*, the definitive book on forensic art, and is a consultant for *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* and other TV shows.

The CBS drama *CSI* created the character Teri Miller, based on Taylor. Both Taylor's artwork and hands appear in the show.

Taylor's book will appear in today's episode of *CSI: NY*.

Taylor has helped solved hundreds of cases over the years and put countless criminals behind bars.

These days, besides her teaching, she has returned to her first love, portrait sculpture.

"I have witnessed untold suffering and heartache by victims of violent crime and those close to them," she said. "I am grateful I don't deal with it on a daily basis any longer. Twenty years is enough for anyone. While I will forever be a forensic artist and victim's advocate, I am now also returning to portrait sculpture."