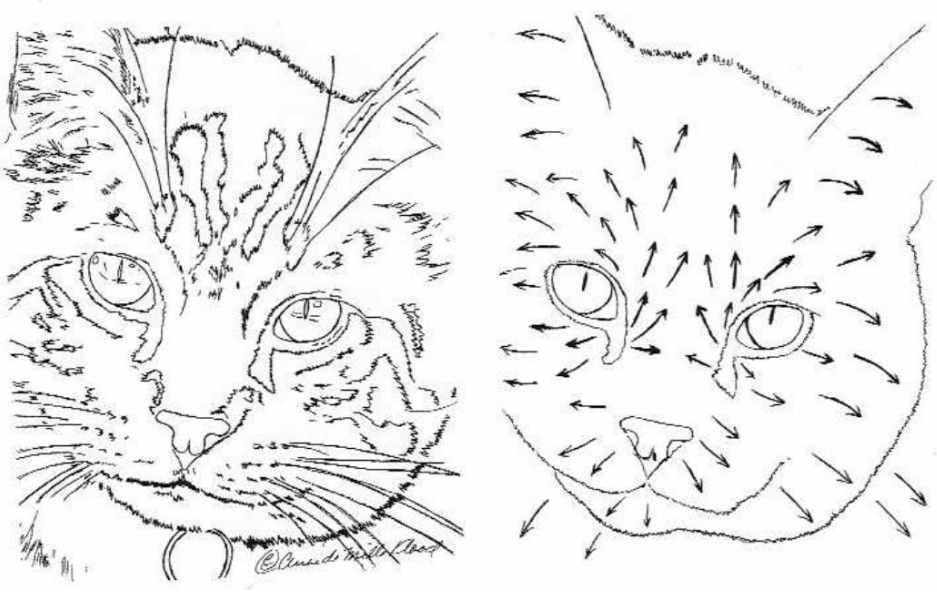
# Did You Know?

## Patterns of Fur

Here are some hints to help you with your cat or dog portraits.

**Stroke Pattern**

Whether the fur is dappled or solid, it is important to apply each layer with a stroke pattern that characterizes and reflects both the type of fur and the direction it is traveling. If every stroke is applied in a too-precise or repetitious manner, the fur will appear phony and artificial. The fur must move and change with the shape of the animal in order to make the viewer see the pattern without it appearing fake or unnatural. It is helpful to carefully observe your reference photo and check it often that your pencil is moving in the same direction as the fur shown in the photo.



**Make an Accurate Road Map**

Your line drawing should be considered a road map to guide you as you work, including correct outlines of all the important markings on the animal. Another trick to help you create believable furs is to trace a simple map of the fur direction using arrows to show the pattern. Keep this map next to your drawing while you work to remind you which way the fur has turned in a certain area. (Source: Realistic Pet Portraits in Colored Pencil by Anne deMille Flood)