How to prepare your files for competition using…
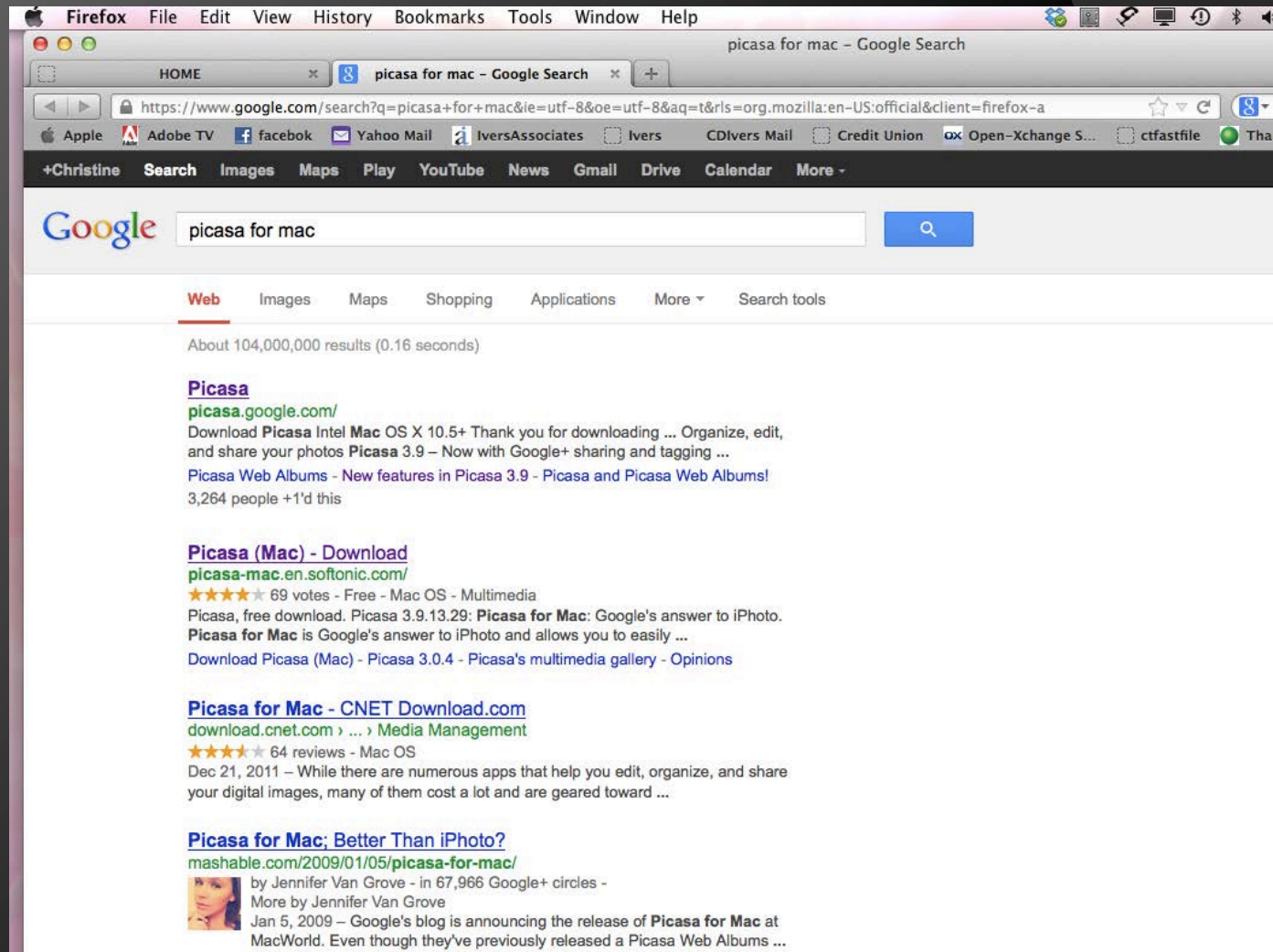
# PICASA
# 3.9.14 FOR MAC
# 4 FOR PC

Many thanks to Margaret Carter Baumgartner for the use of her portrait painting in this demonstration.

# Before you do anything!

- **MAKE A NEW FOLDER TO HOLD YOUR FILES OF THIS PHOTO! Put the photo of your painting in this folder and name it.**

- This folder will hold the original image and any files that you will save for future competitions.
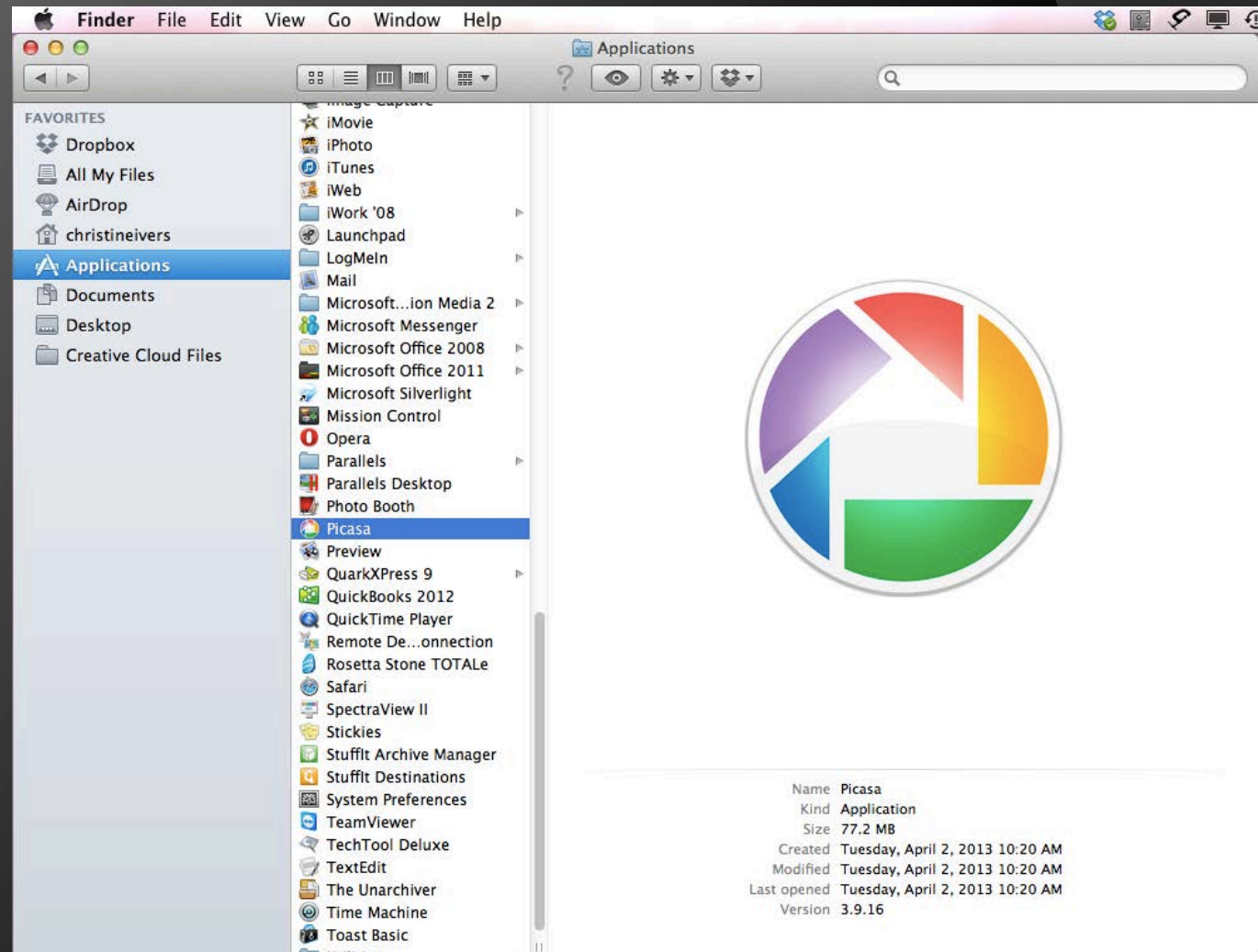
# Download the program.

- Picasa is a **free** Microsoft Application that you can download from the web. If you Google Picasa (Mac) or Picasa (PC) you will see the Download link. Just hit the link to get to the site that will let you download the program.

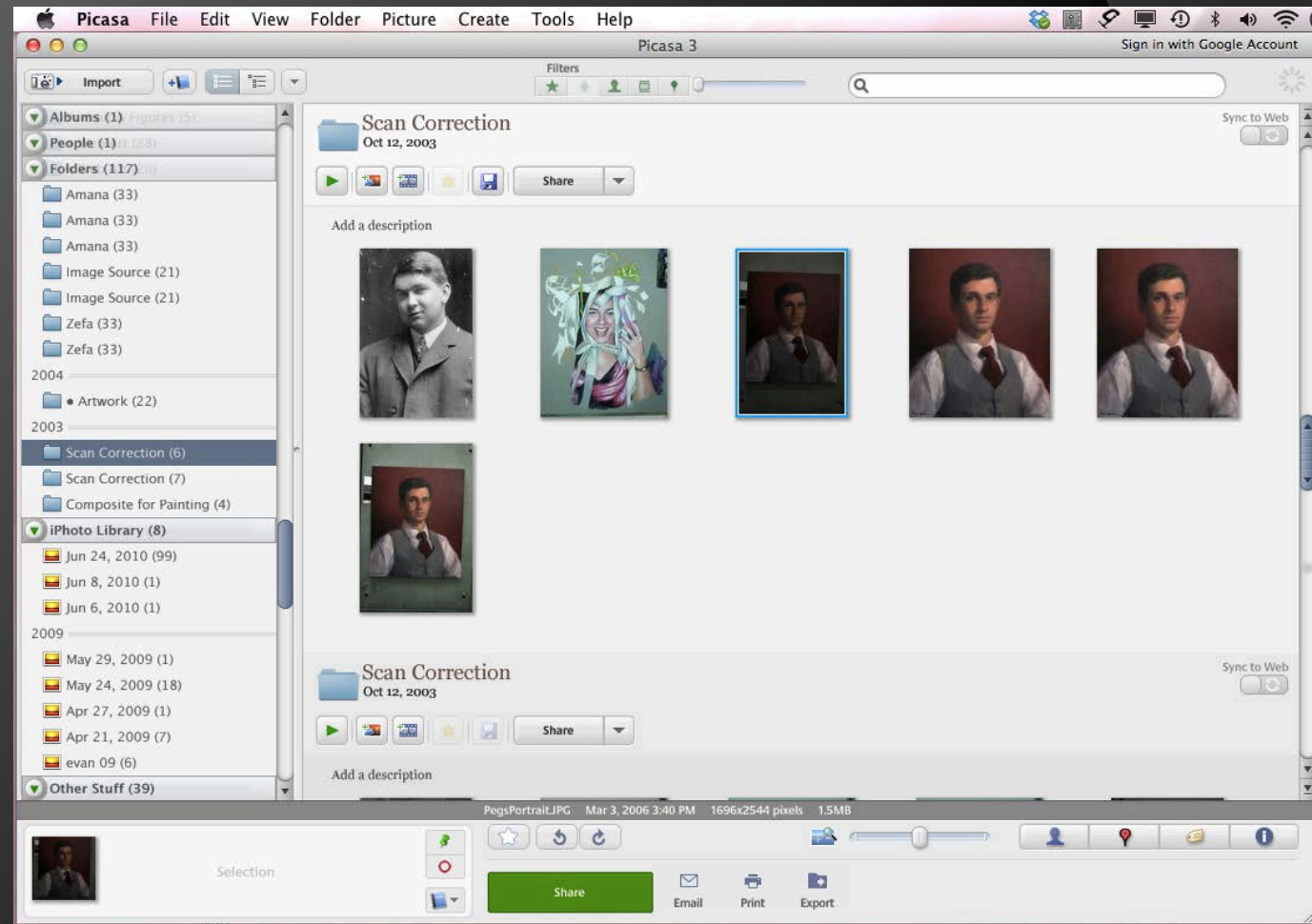- Follow the instructions, which are extremely easy!

# Open the program.

- Once the program is downloaded. You will most likely find it in your **Applications Folder** of your computer hard drive.
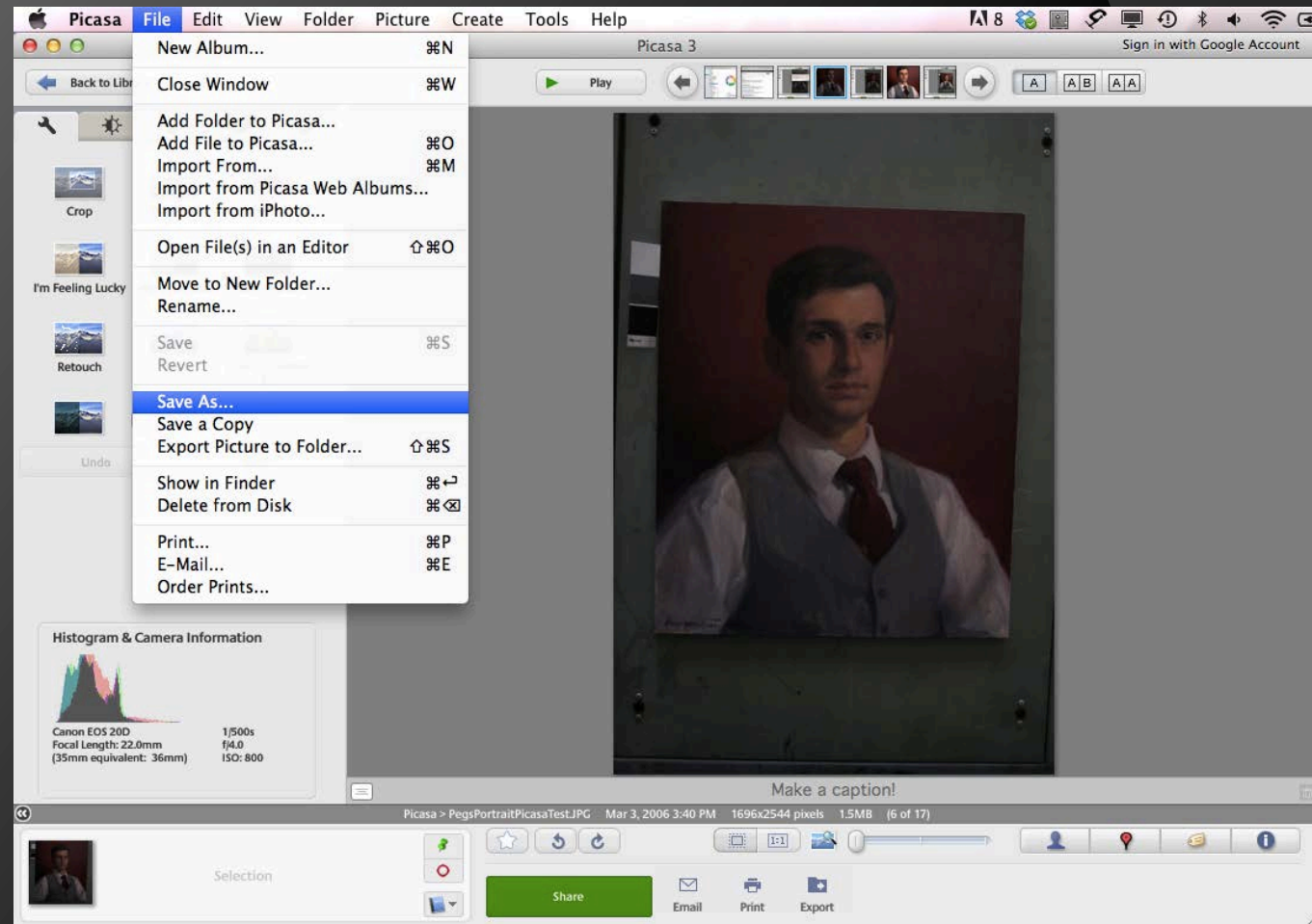
- Just double click on it to open the program.

# Open the file.

- When the program opens, you will see that it automatically finds every photo that you have in your computer.

- Double click on the photo of your painting that you need to correct. It will be outlined in a colored border.
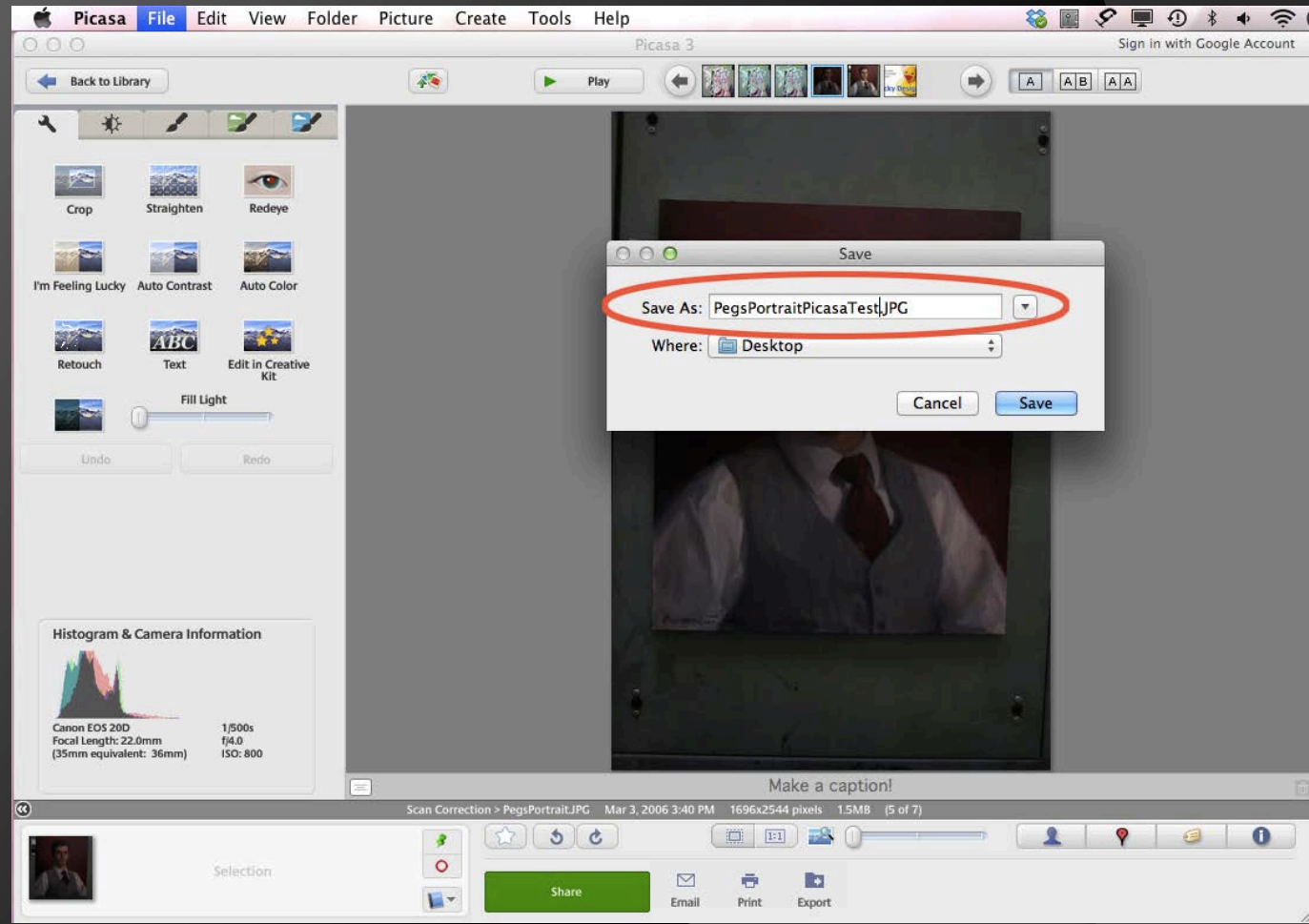
# "Save As" the file.

◉ In order to not accidentally overwrite your original file, **ALWAYS MAKE ANOTHER COPY OF THE FILE TO EDIT.**

◉ Go to **the Main Menu** at top, click, hold and scroll down **to Save As…** Now click again.
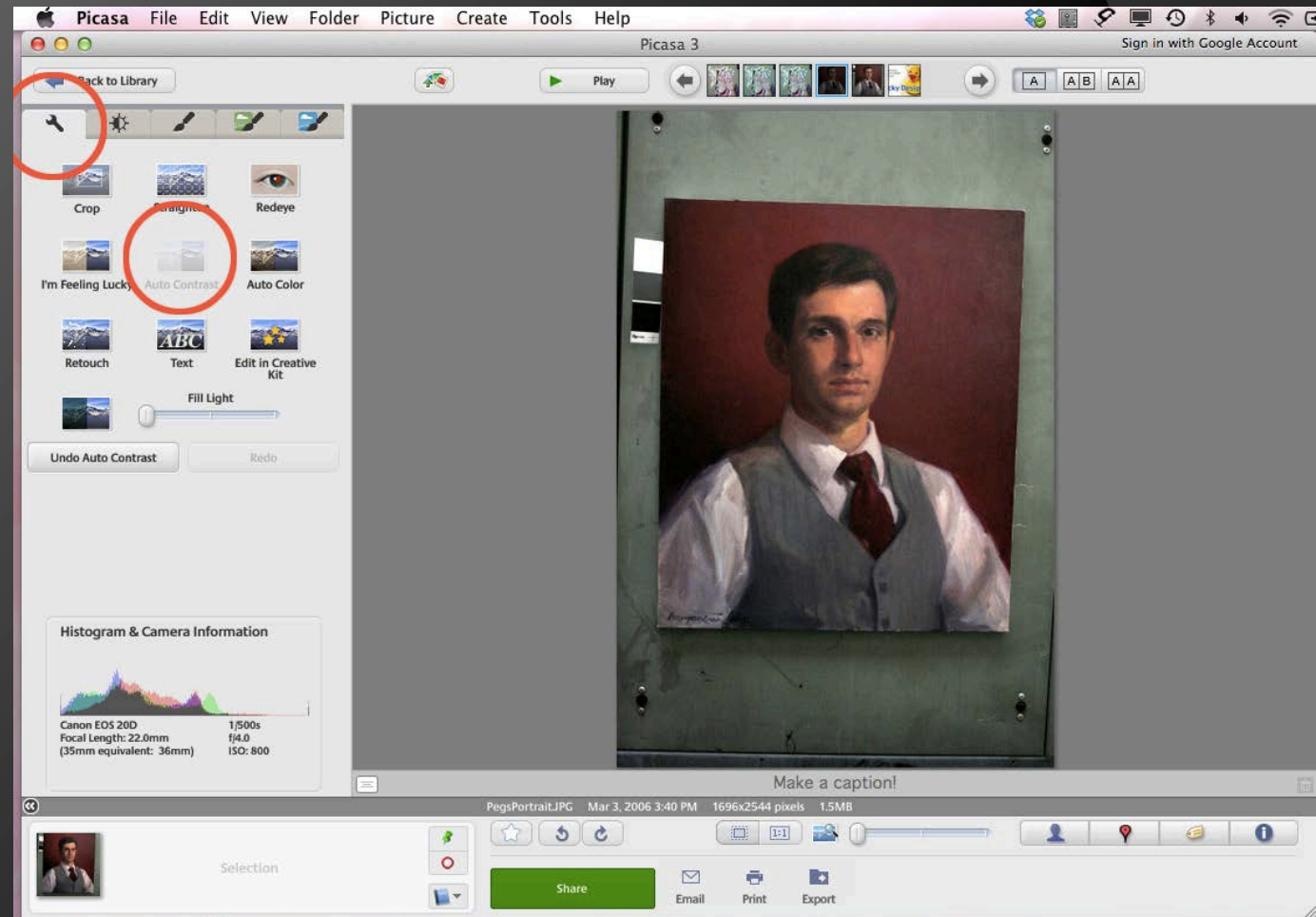
# Change the file name slightly.

- While renaming your file, make sure you put it in the folder that you made at the beginning of the lesson.

- If you accidentally forget to do this, just search your computer through **Spotlight (Mac) or Find (both Mac & PC)**. Then drag it or resave it to the correct folder.
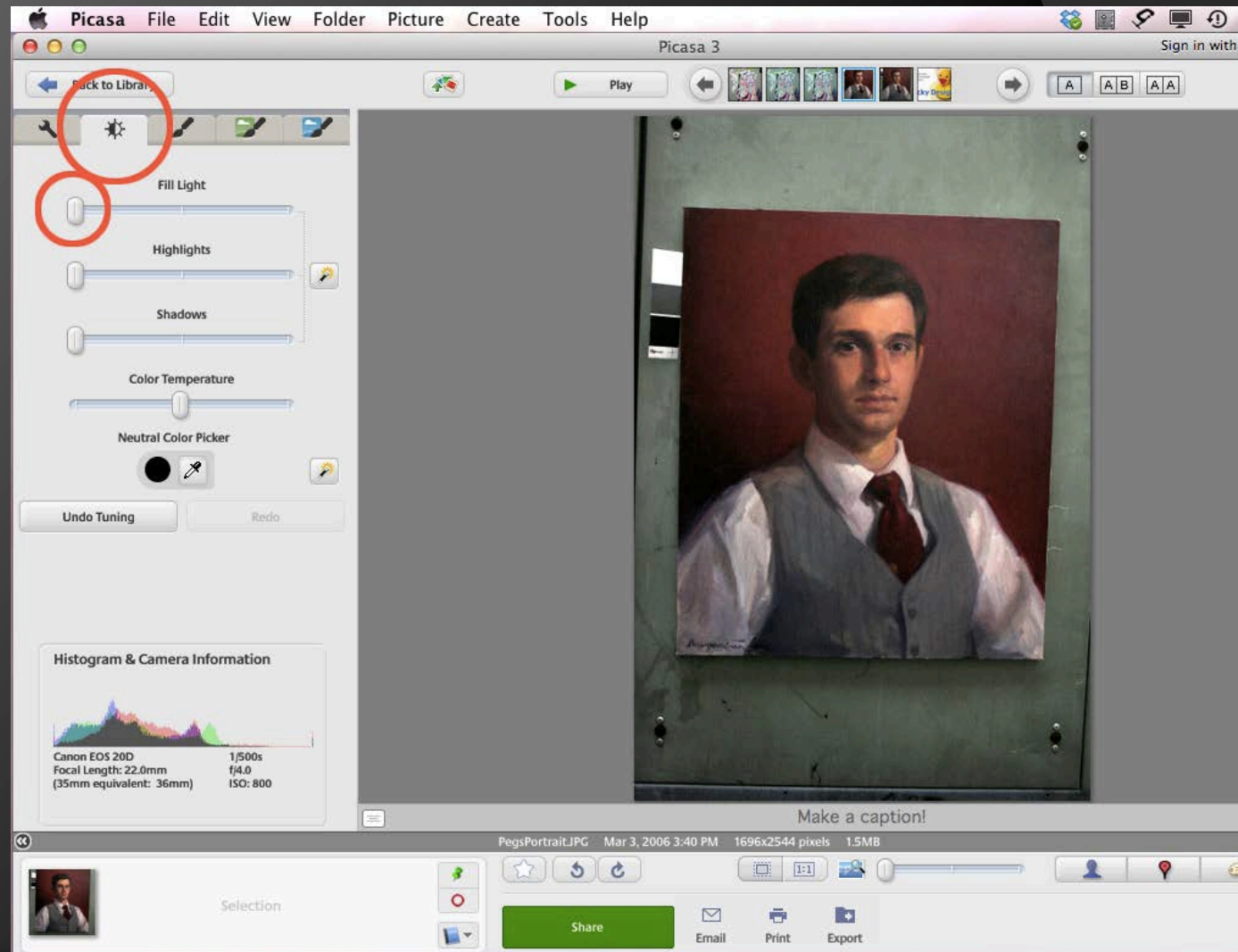
# Now start to correct color.

- In the top **Menu** of Picasa, notice the little **WRENCH**. Make sure it is highlighted and click **on Auto Contrast**.

- Immediately the image seems to be brought into much better contrast with colors looking more like the painting.
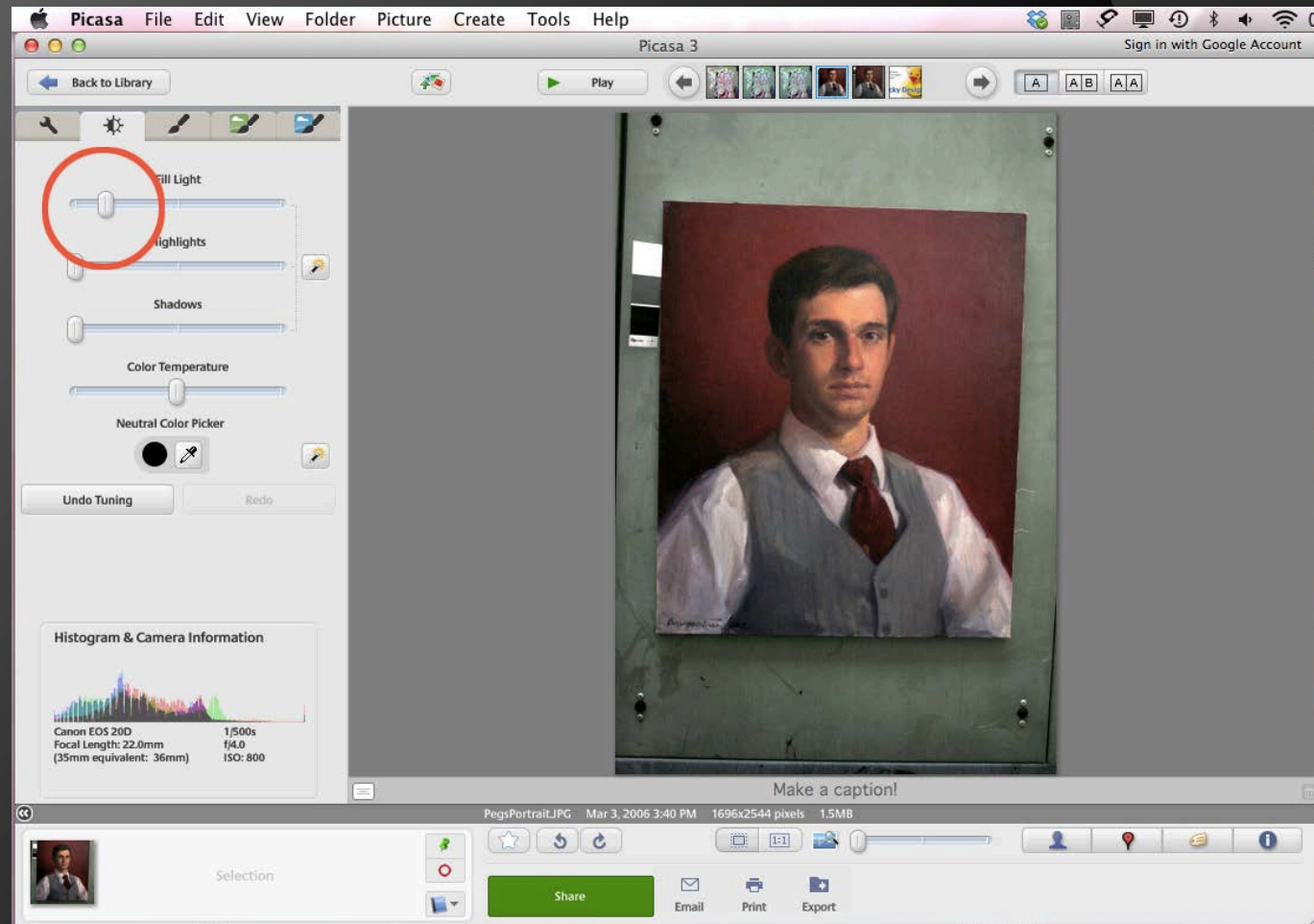
# Fine tuning.

- Now click on the **little sun** that is half white and half black.

- With your painting near you (make sure you are in as natural light as possible), you can experiment with the little **"levers"** by sliding them back and forth.

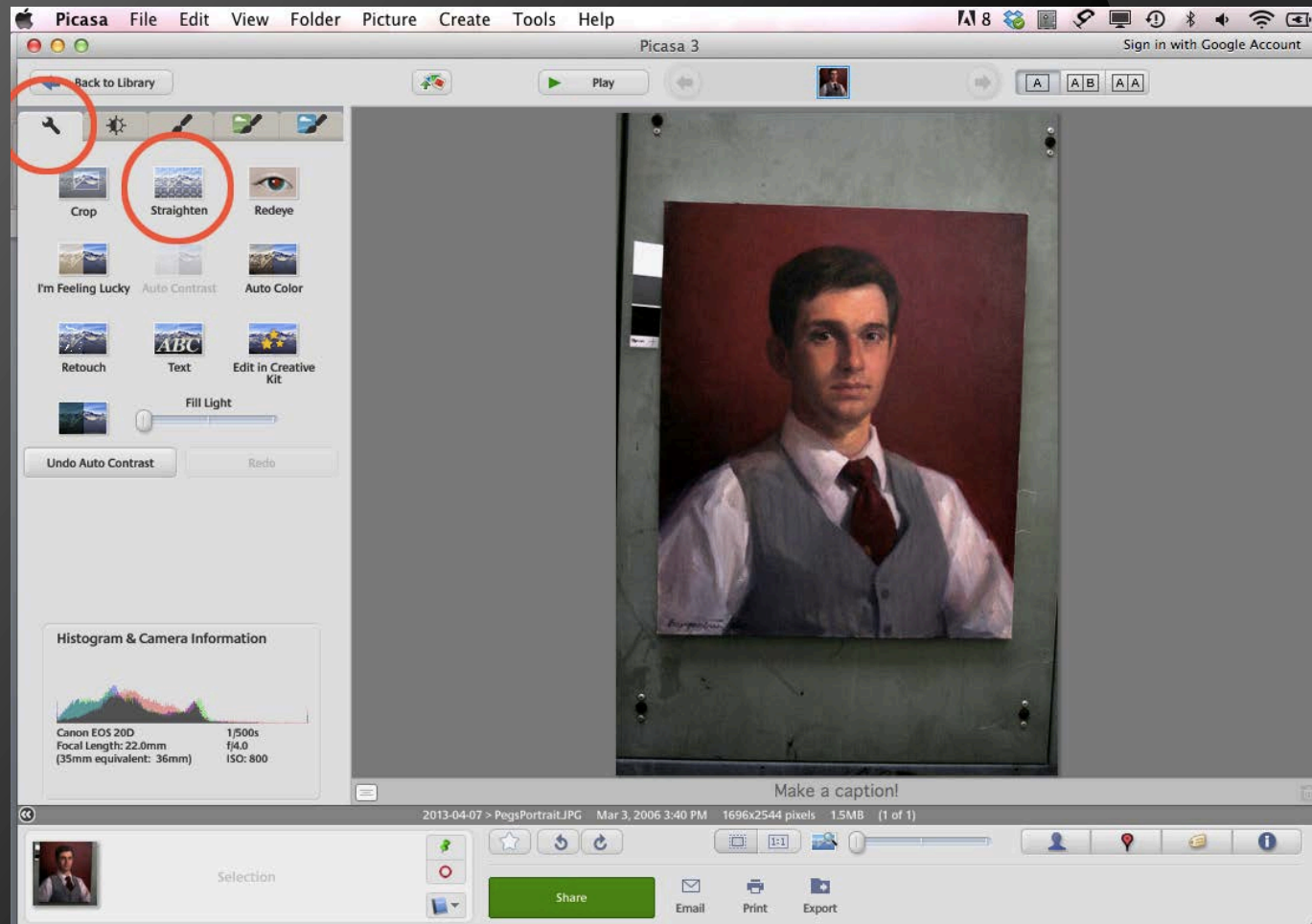- This will make any minor adjustments to the image.

# Make minor corrections.

- Since I felt the image was just slightly too dark, I added a little **Fill Light**. This will brighten the image overall.

- If your darks are the only things that seem too dark, or similar with the lights, adjust the **Highlights** or **Shadow Sliders** to correct the image.

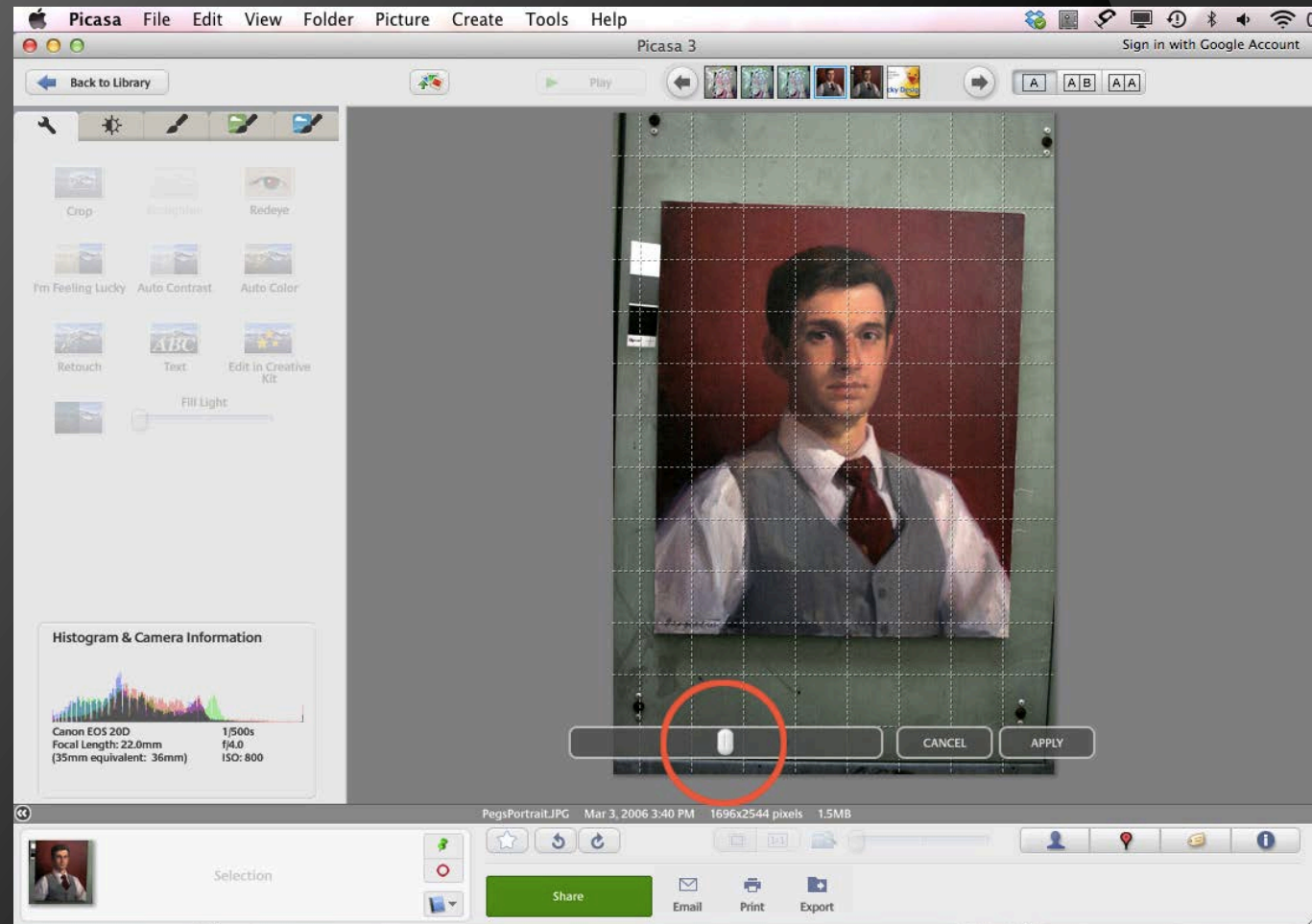- If it is too warm or cool, use the **Color Temperature Slider.**

# Straighten the Image.

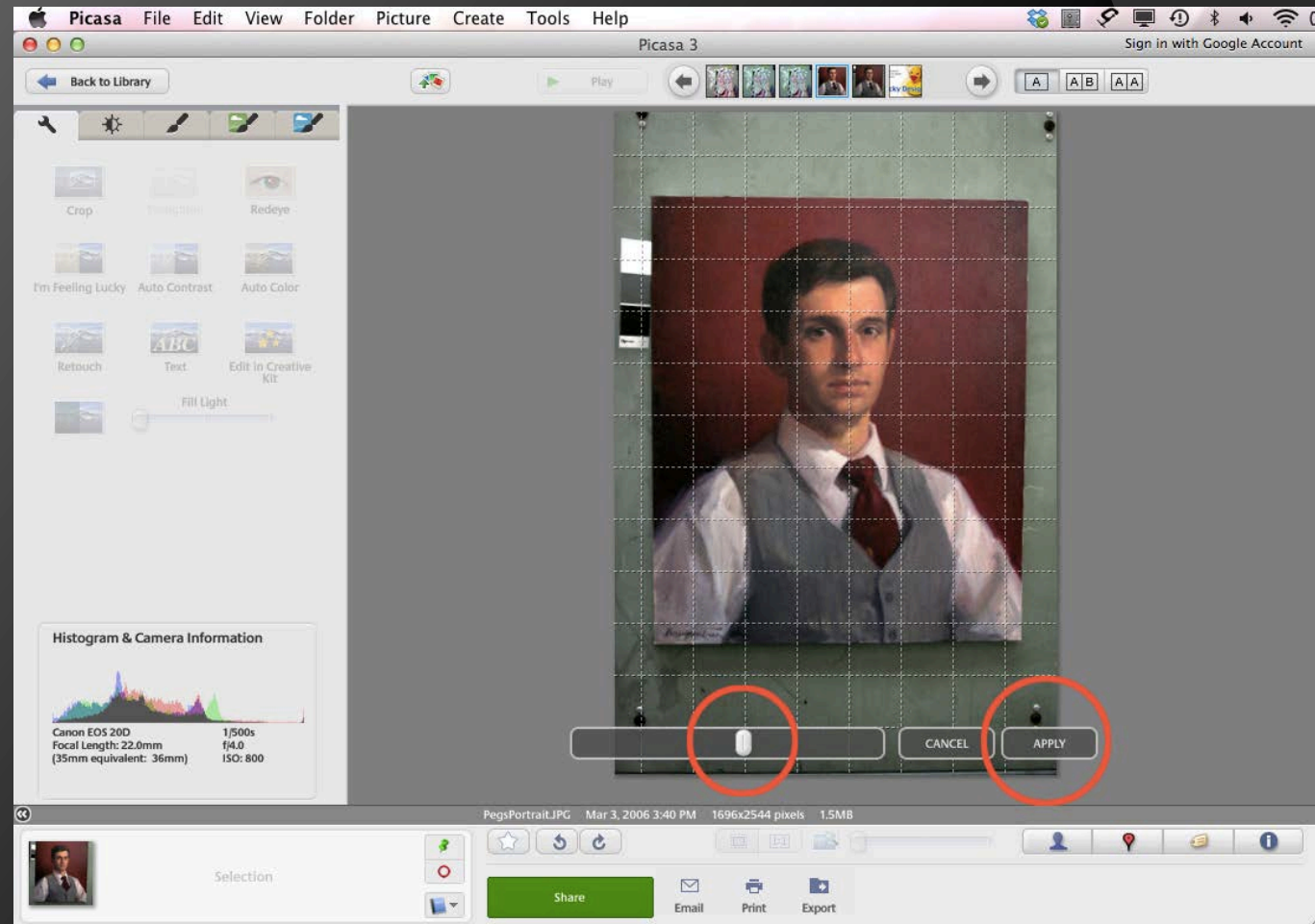- Click the little **WRENCH** again. Then click on the **Straighten Icon**.

# Straighten the Image.

- Notice the Grid and the Slider that has appeared on the image.

- Slide the **"Handle"** on the Slider until you feel that one side of the image is straightened.
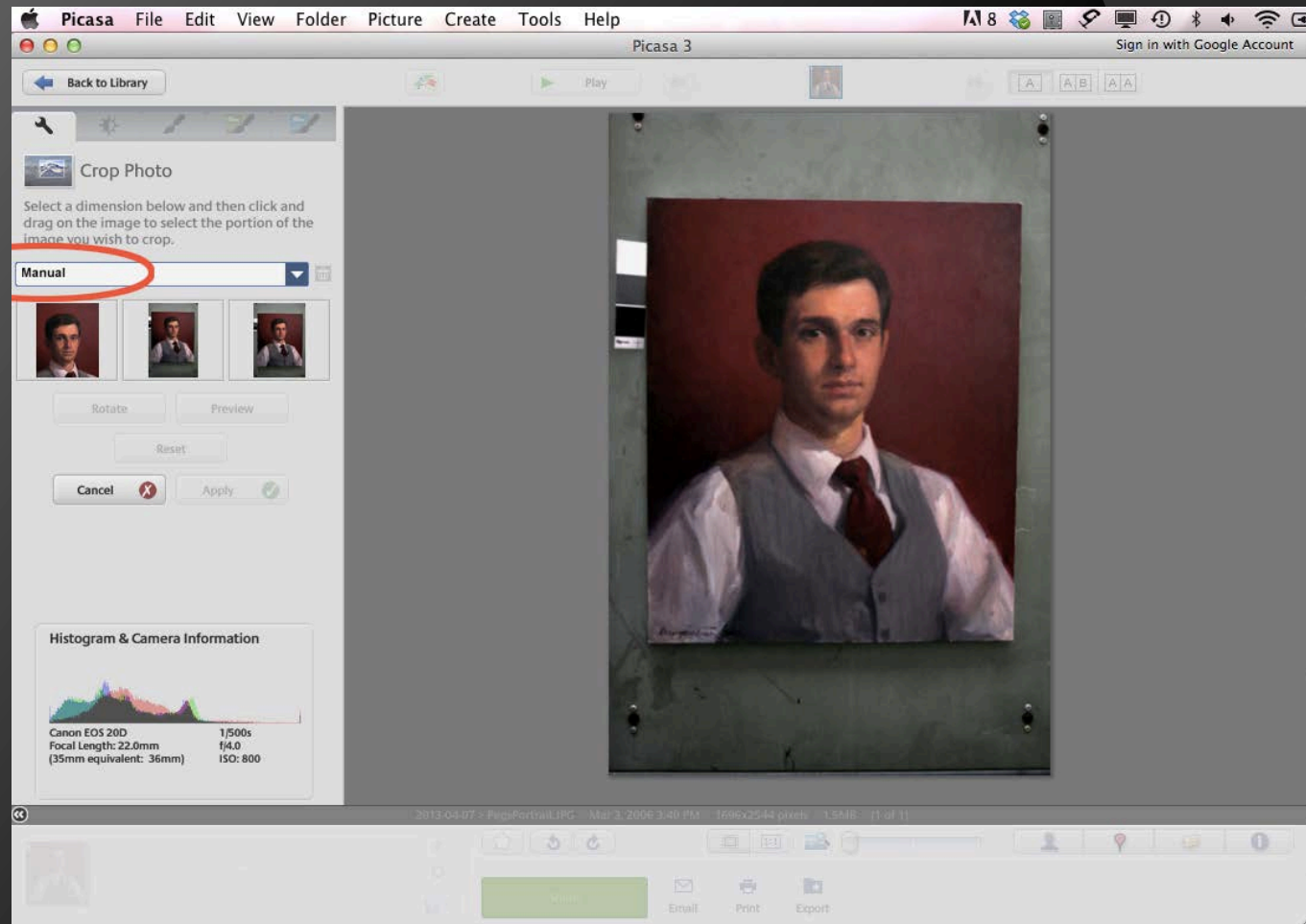
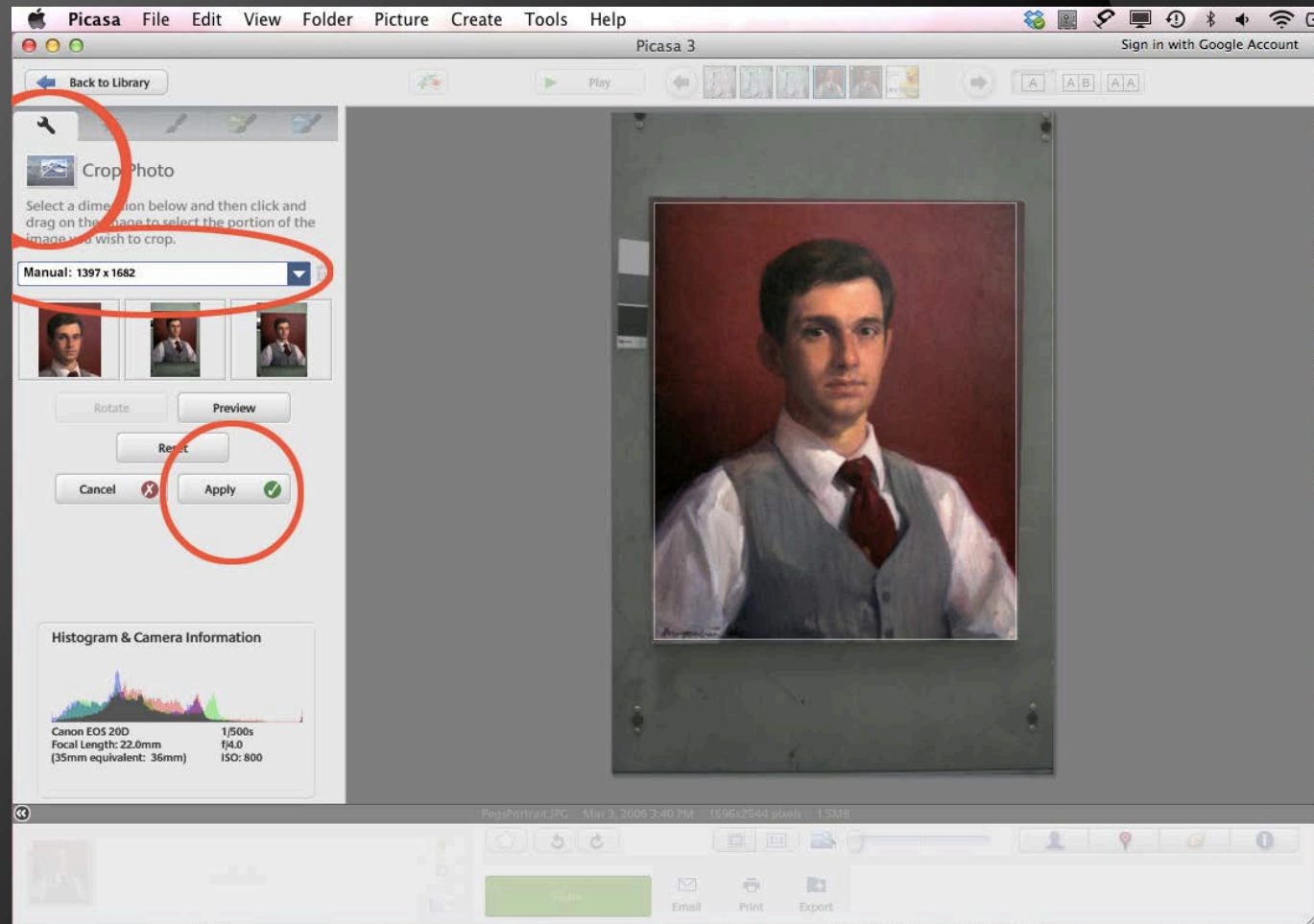# Commit to the function.

○ Now hit the **APPLY** button.

# Crop the photo manually.

- Making sure the scroll bar is set to Manual, place your cursor on the upper left hand corner of your painting and drag diagonally across the image until you get to the lower right hand corner.
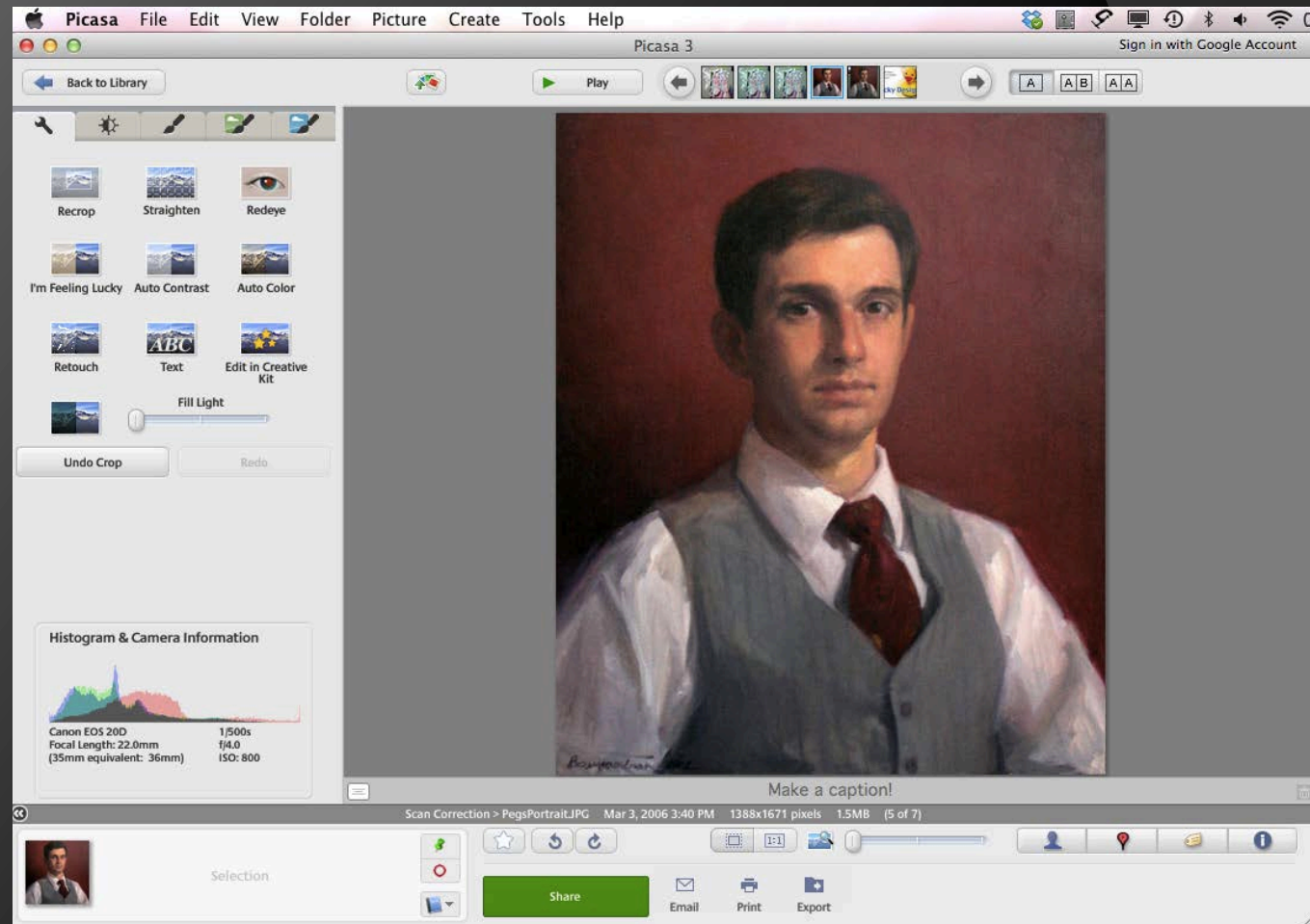
# Crop the image.

- This is what you should see after dragging the cursor. Now click on the **Apply** button.

- Unfortunately, Picasa does not have a built in fix for distortion like Elements or Photoshop. You can download **Paint.Net**, a free program that was invented to replace Microsoft Paint, but I would just try to shoot your photo as straight as possible to begin with. Less trouble.
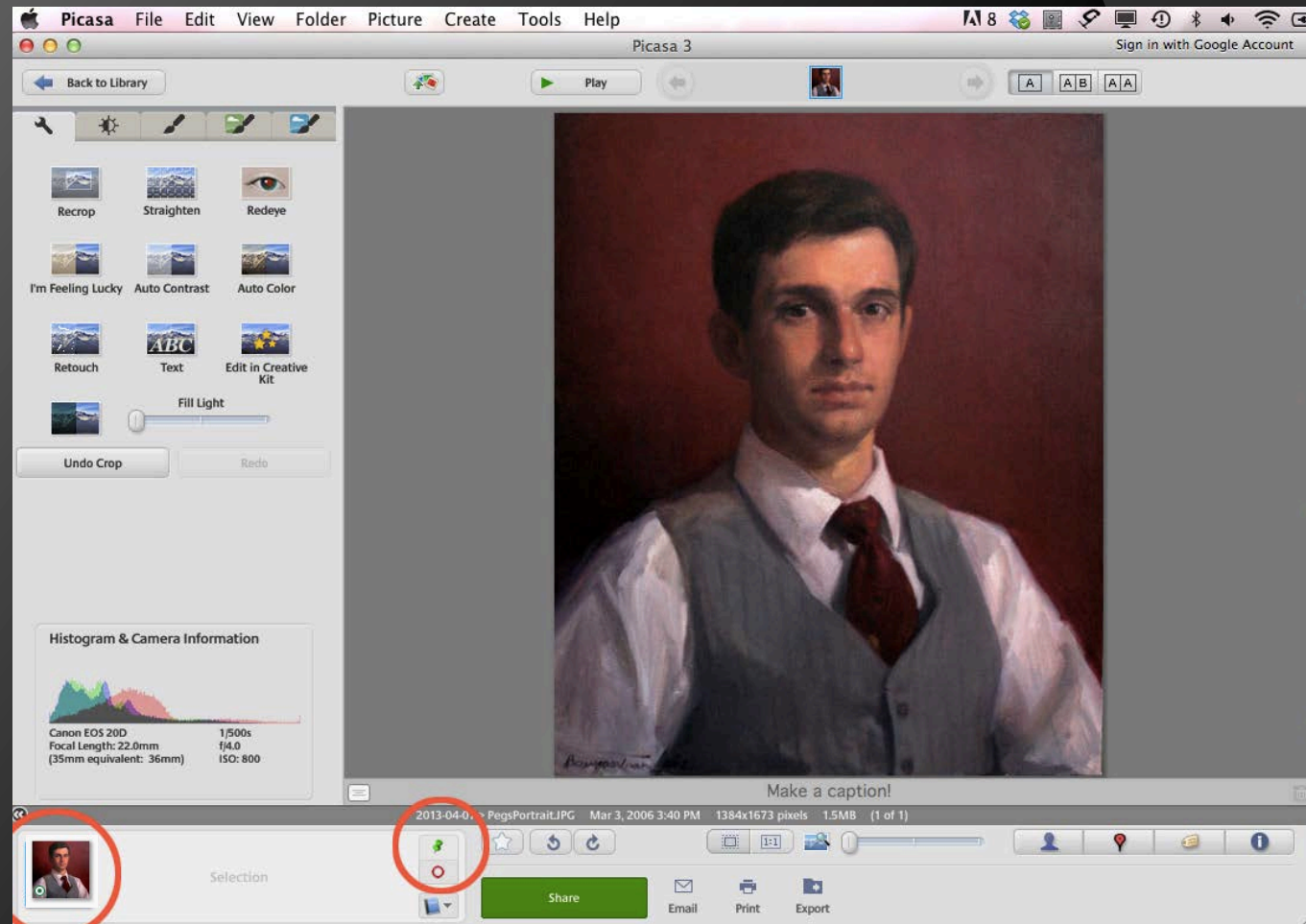
# The cropped image.

- This is what your image should look like now.

# Resize the image.

- At the bottom of the screen, you will see a little tiny green "push pin."

- Click on the pin and then click on the small picture of your image in the "photo bin" at the bottom left of the window.

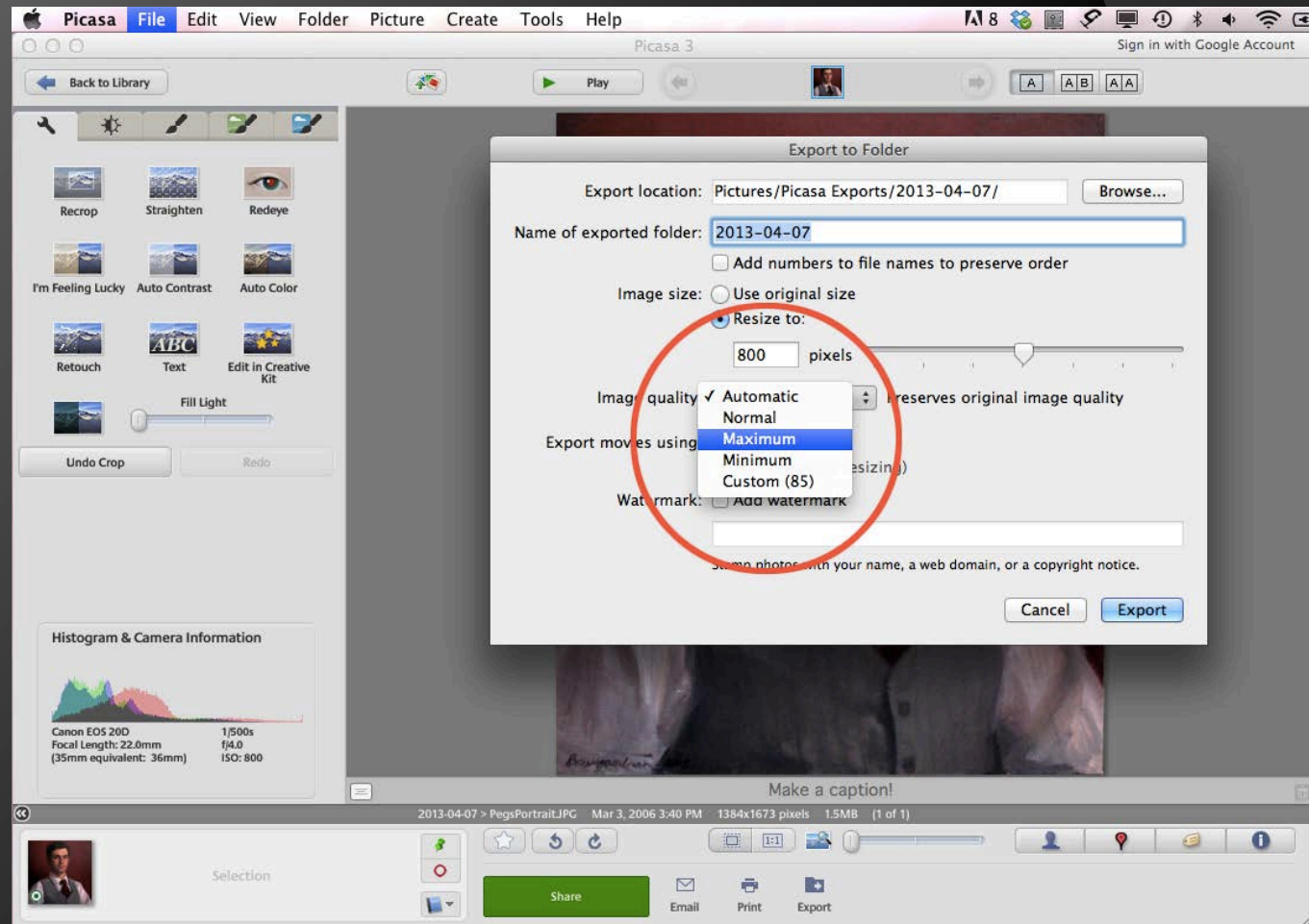- It will have a little green dot in the left bottom corner.

# Resize the image.

- **NOTE:** If you are working on a PC but do not have software such as Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, or Preview, you will need to download Paint.Net for Windows which is supposed to enable you to set the resolution factors for competitions.
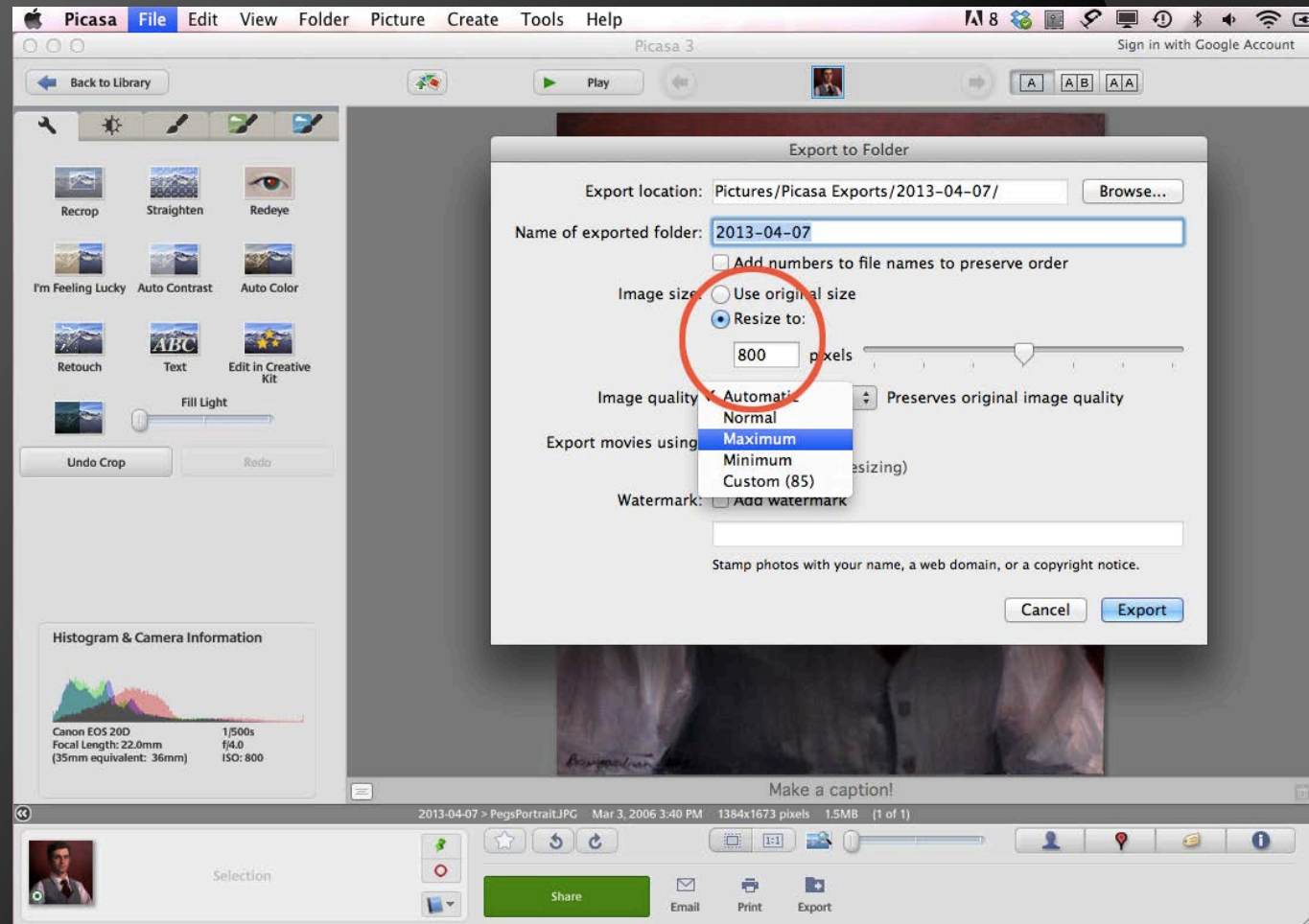
# Resize the image.

- In the **Export to Folder** dialog box you will see a number of things that you must change to resize and rename the image.

- First thing to do is to go to the **Image Quality** scroll bar. Click and scroll to **Maximum**.
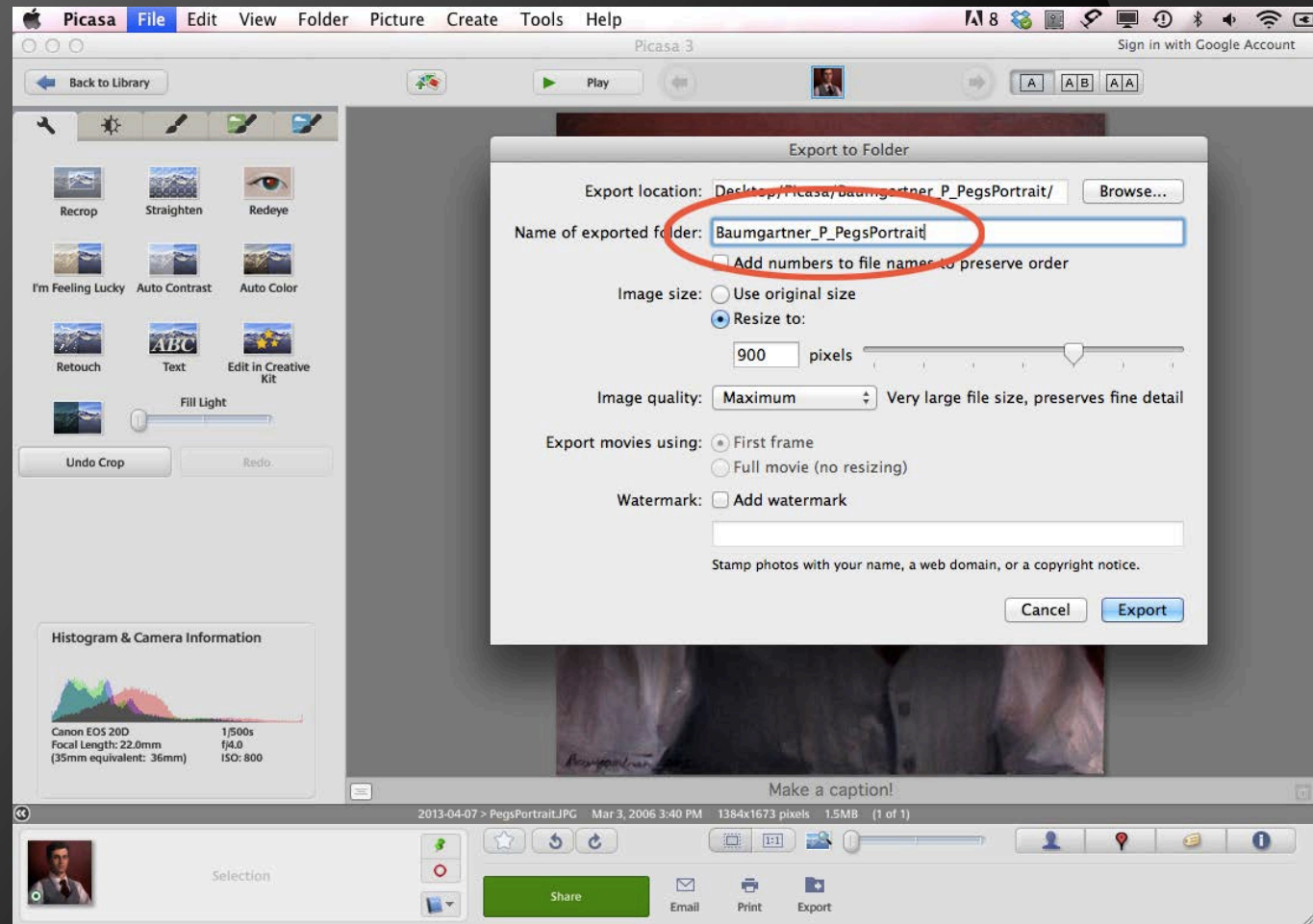
# Resize the image.

○ Always make sure you read each competition's prospectus carefully in order to set your resolution and pixel sizes correctly. In this case I will go to **Resize to:** and type in **900**.
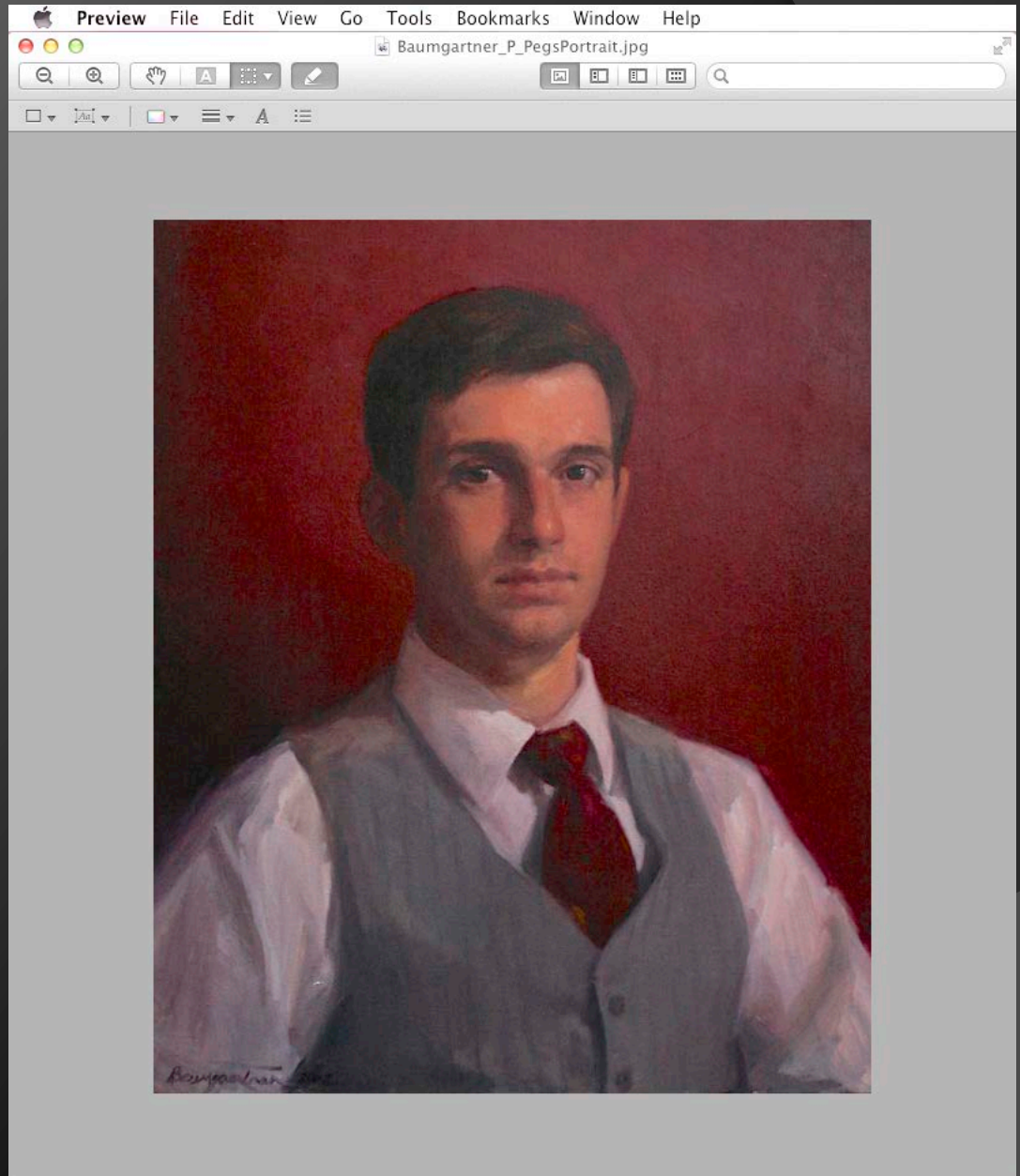
# Resize the image.

- Now rename the file for the specific Competition.

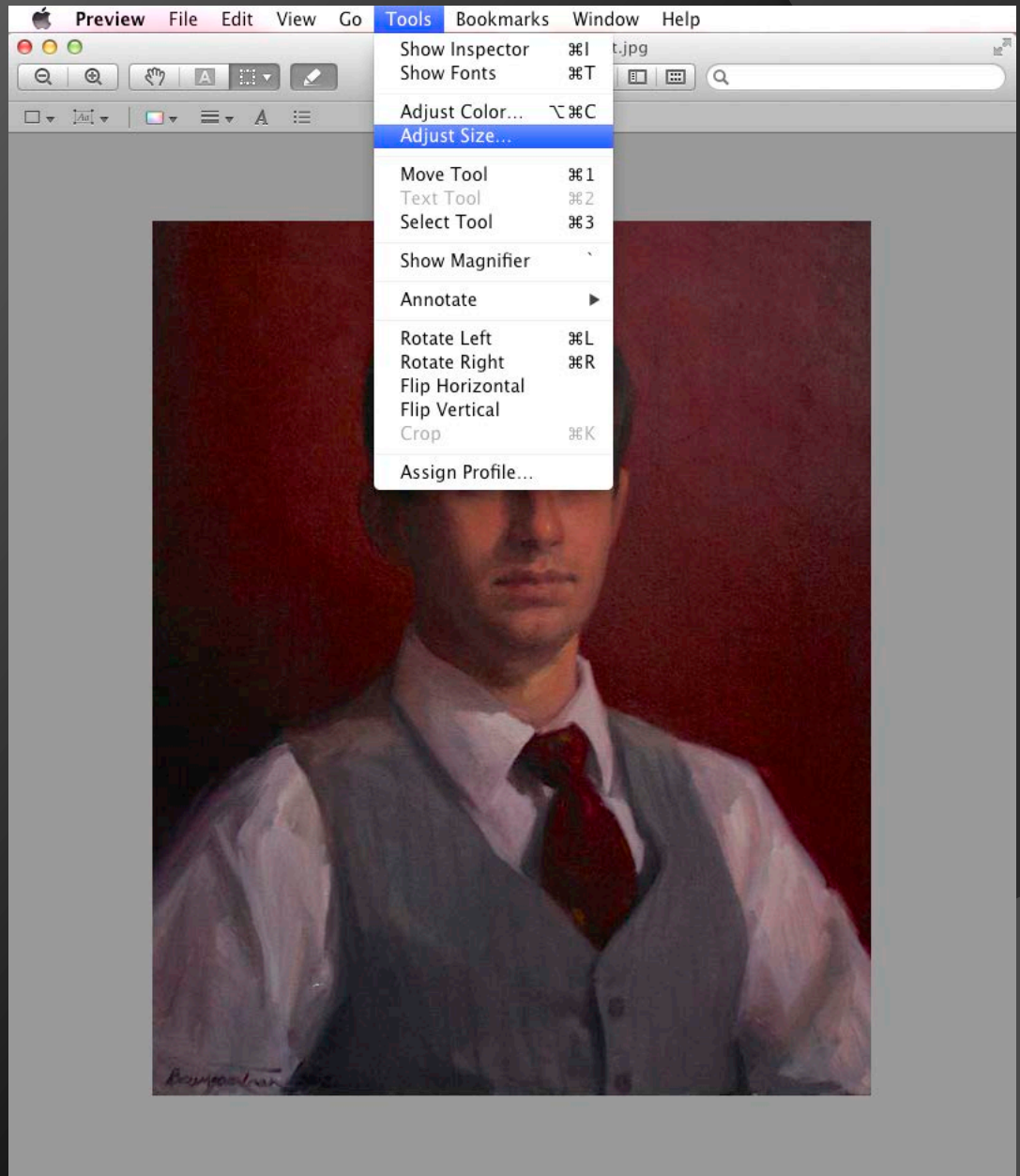- Picasa will automatically resave the image as a JPEG when you rename it.

# Resize the image.



- Since Picasa has no way to check the resolution settings of your image, you will have **to reopen the file in PREVIEW if you are working on a Mac**.
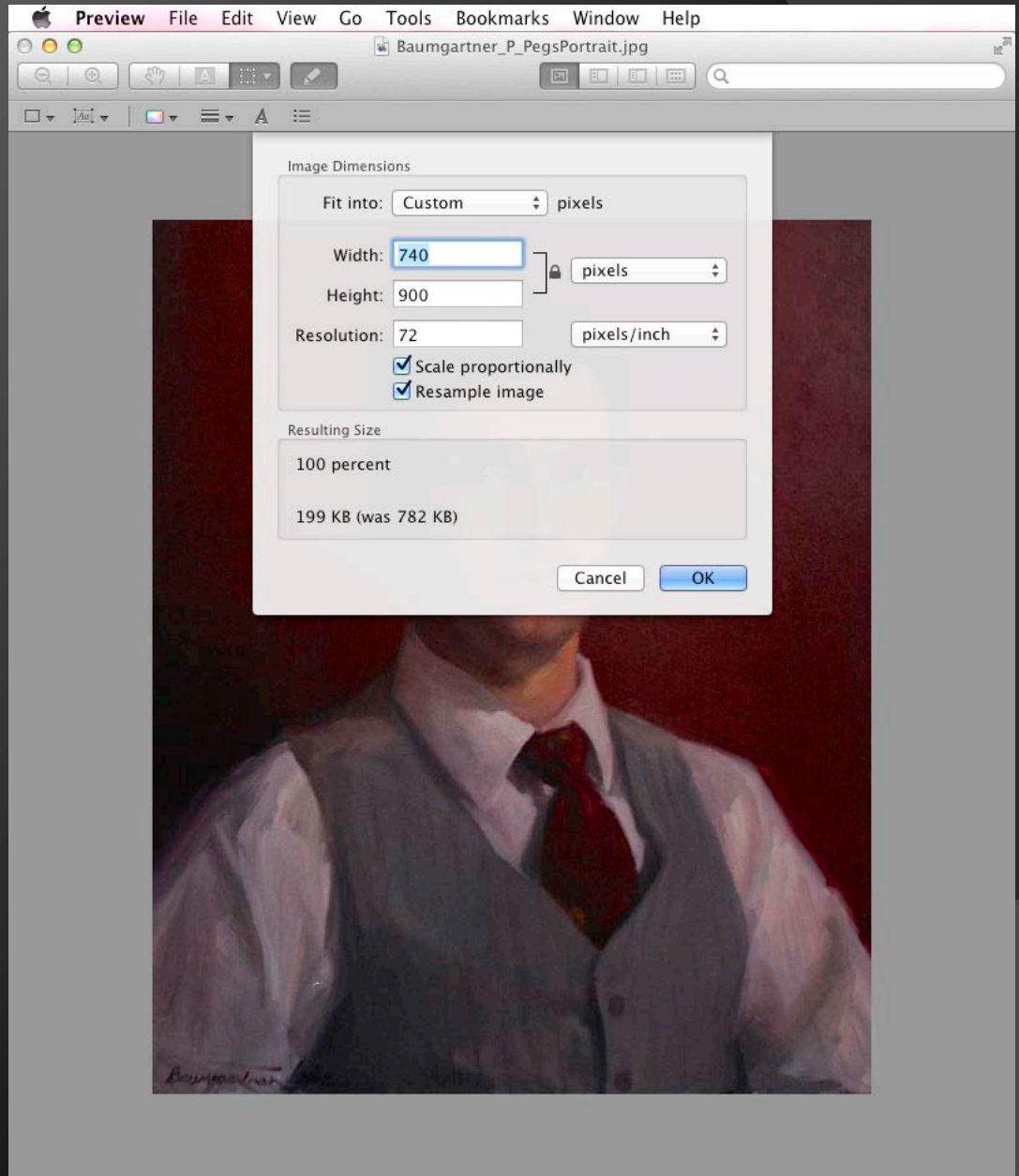
# Resize the image.

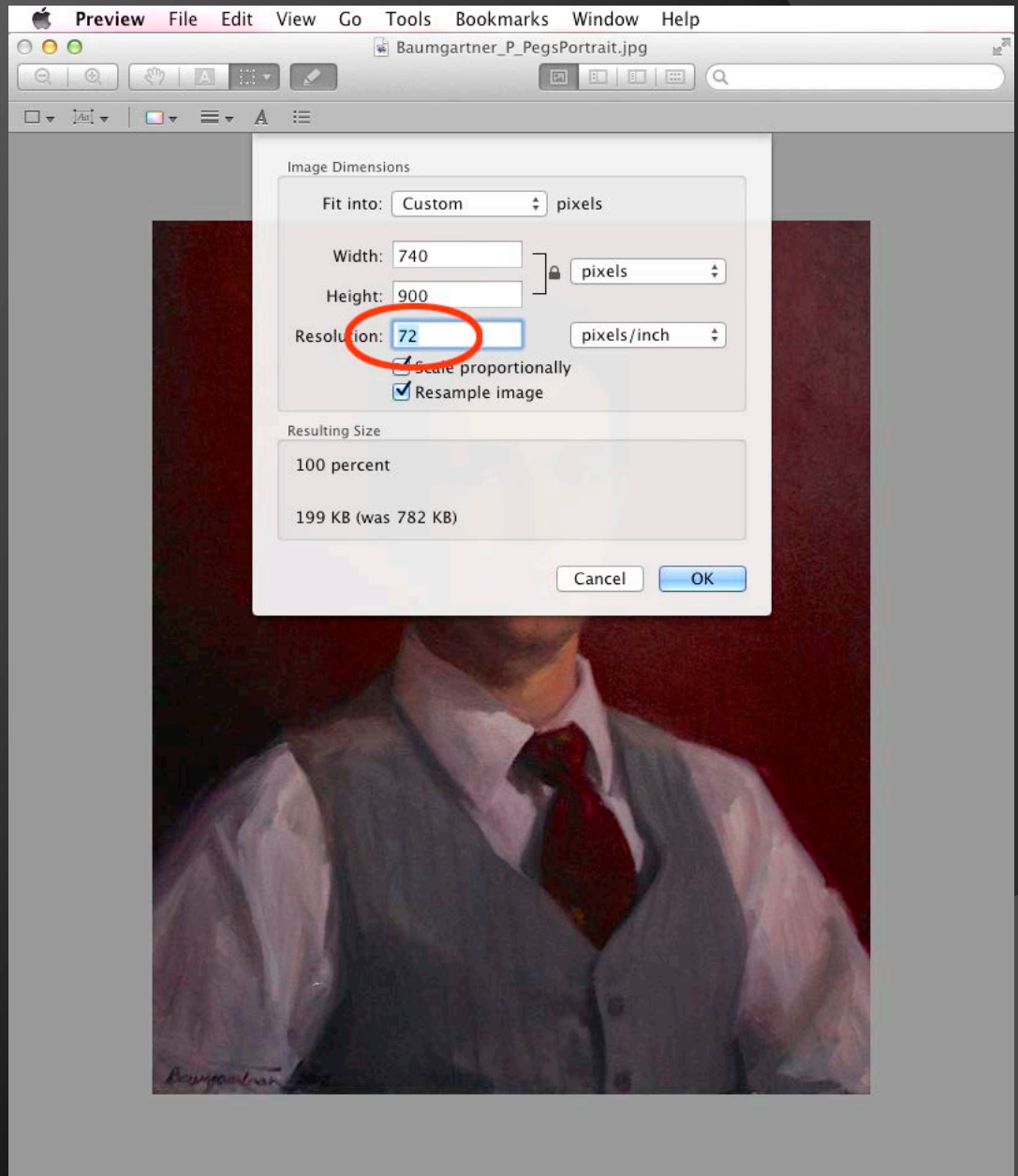- Now go to the Main Menu, click on Tools and scroll to Adjust Size…

# Resize the image.

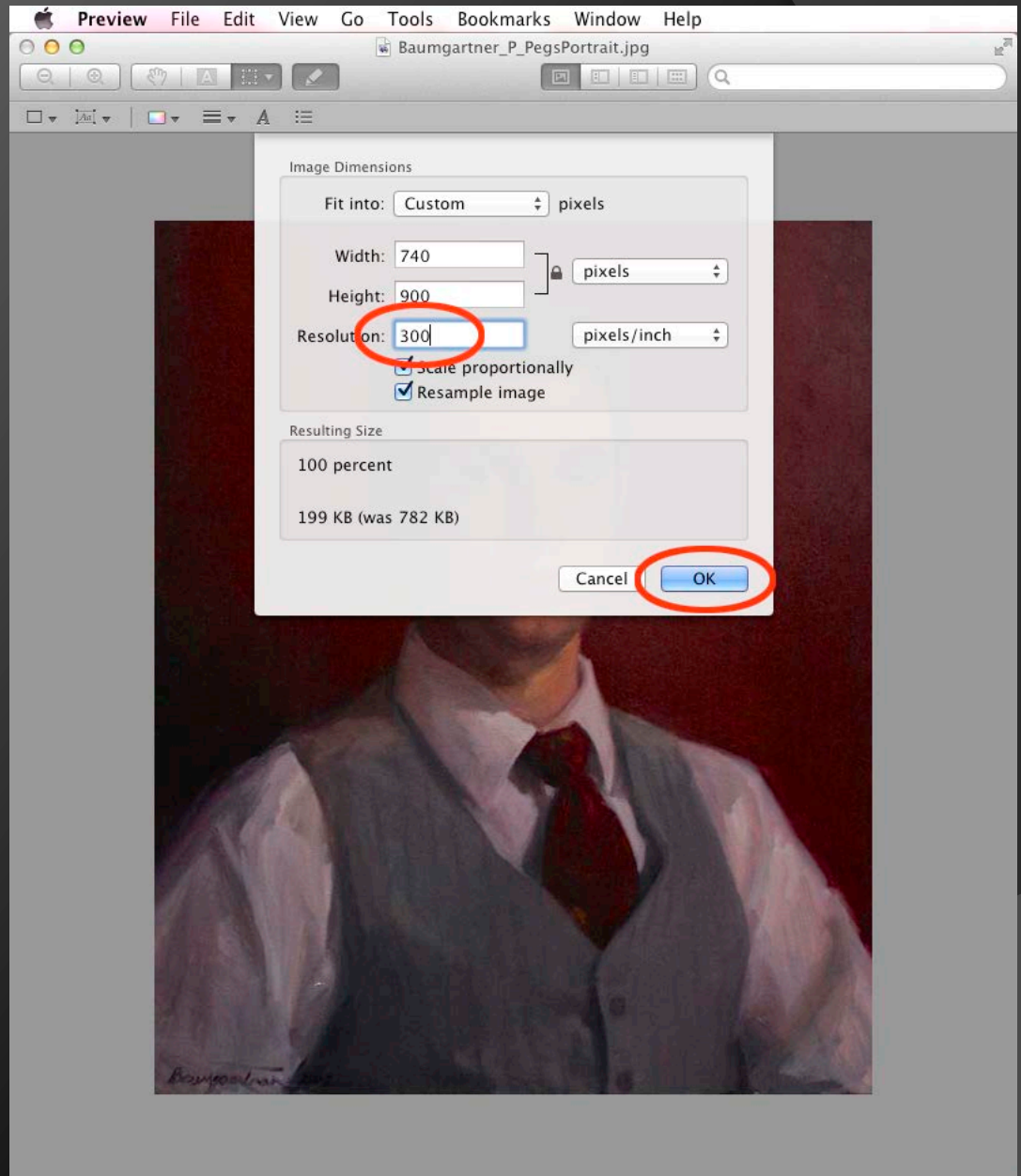- This is what you will see when the next dialog box opens.

# Resize the image.

- This is where you will reset the resolution. Depending on the competition you will either leave the 72 or change it to 300.

# Resize the image.

- In this case I reset the resolution to 300. Click **OK**.

# Congratulations! You've done it!