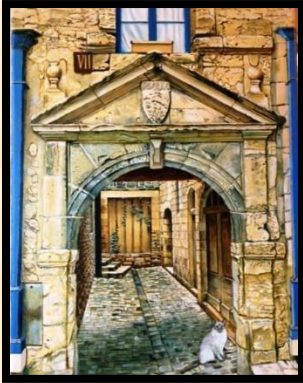


## ***L. Russell Eyerly***



When I was 12, my parents took me to Portland Art Museum to see a traveling exhibit of Vincent Van Gogh's works. Even as young as I was, I could see the visceral rawness and frenzied method of this artist. My eyes were opened. Although I had no desire to emulate his style, Van Gogh showed me what real art can be.

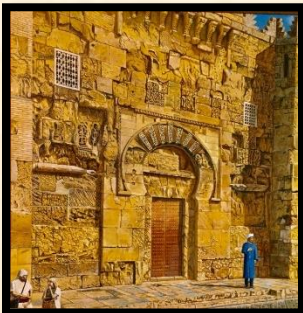
My uncle, Raymond Eyerly, was the first guy I knew that actually made a decent living by painting full time. His depictions of life east of the Cascades in Oregon, fascinated me. I used to watch him use his tiny brushes, to slowly turn a blank canvas into a world I thought I could walk into. As a teenager, I thought, "I want to paint like that someday!"

That "someday" was still way in the future. The only formal training I have had was a couple of terms of a basic painting course at the local community college. Otherwise I am self taught. I have painted sporadically since my early twenties, but like so many others, I knew that life as a full-time artist was a difficult one. Even Uncle Ray didn't go full time until he was middle aged. So I mostly put it on a back burner while I met and married my wife, worked for a monthly wage, raised three children, and made sure they got to college.



Since my retirement, though, my time became my own. After travel to a number of countries and taking thousands of photos, I decided it was time to get serious.

I am strictly a studio painter, using mostly smaller brushes. I started with oil paint, and still use it exclusively, having become very comfortable with the medium. I use lots of my photos for subject reference.



I am always looking for something "outside of the box". I have no interest in painting a rendering of St. Peter's in Rome. I would rather capture the backside of a medieval village church in France. Or the mud-daubed equivalent on a New Mexican reservation.

I hope I may spend many years in my quest.