Ray Johnson paints and sketches from an exciting and unusual range of background experiences which is not only unique to the field of art but to any other professional discipline. When you view his original works and prints, you immediately feel a romance and sensitivity to life and people which reflects a very mature sense of freedom and adventure. When I attended his first showing in Cody, Wyoming, many of the people I personally knew were portrayed in his work, not only with a very clear likeness and aliveness, but with an insight into their personality, which truly fascinated and involved my attention.

The events which have shaped his perception and the style and freshness with which he recreates the images of life on paper and canvas have been influenced through the following job and life experiences.

He first emerged into recognition by creating unusual portrait likenesses at the early age of ten and later as a high school and college athlete. After a change in vocational interest he entered seminary and was ordained a minister in the Lutheran Church in America. During his college and Seminary years, he worked in a variety of blue collar positions in industry and in the fields of transportation and heavy construction. He also served the field of medicine as an emergency room technician, and completed further graduate and doctoral studies at Minnesota Institutions of higher education.

Following a campus/community ministry in New England, he served as a U.S. Navy Chaplain. His assignments included a prison and hospital chaplaincy and a para-medical chaplaincy to a special forces unit in Vietnam's Mekong Delta. He completed his Naval service as a chaplain to the flight training squadrons and famed Blue Angels in Pensacola, Florida. During that period he entered a modified flight program.

During his Vietnam service, in which he was twice wounded, he became the 3rd highest decorated Chaplain in Naval history. For service to his unit, the Vietnamese people and the publication of his first book, he was selected by the United States Jaycees as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of America.

Following his Naval Service he left the active ministry and assumed a variety of leadership positions in Government Service, Mental Health, Crime Prevention, and Community Development work. During this period he worked closely with the urban and reservation Indians of our nation. He has traveled widely in all the continents, personally living with some of our world's more primitive cultures.

In 1974 he decided against an opportunity to run for a U.S. Congressional Seat and returned to the ministry as the resident minister to a new town experiment outside of Minneapolis, Minn. He is presently on a leave of absence from the church and for the past 2 years has worked as a ranchhand/cowboy in Montana and Wyoming. This has not only served to recapture the ranch experience of his youth, but also provides the inspiration for a new novel and his re-entry and exposure into the field of western, outdoor life and portrait art.

By James Barno – Multi Award Winning Western Artist featured in the November '80 issue of People Magazine.
CHUCKWAGON - 16 x 20 Oil, Limited Edition Prints. “Slow Movin’ Dreams” is the perfect mood title for this oil in which the cowboy artist is the other outrider on one of the last horse-drawn chuckwagon cowboy ranches left in our country. The viewer of this painting actually takes their place as one of the outriders in the early morning movement toward a new destination.

MY LAND
22 x 28 Oil.
Captures this majestic elk against the backdrop of an autumn mood. It also reflects the artist’s respect for and interest in outdoor life.
JOHN WAYNE
16 x 20 original charcoal, 14 x 18 Limited Edition Prints. The inspiration for this unique portrayal of Wayne had its beginnings in their personal meeting. It was this remembrance which takes the artist beyond photographed images to create a rare but almost unanimous response among art critics and friends that this is the best work of art they've seen in actually capturing his peak of mature age and true sense of his rough but gentle spirit in a single portrait image.

REDCLIFF
16 x 20 charcoal, 14 x 18 225 Limited Edition Prints. "The Old Medicine Man" comes out of his person to person experience with the subject and the insights he developed from his working relationship with the Indian communities in our nation. The eyes are the entrance to the soul of this Indian Patriarch. They speak a thousand words and interpretations.
ASPENS IN THE MORNING

24 x 25 Oil, reflects the romantic, esthetic, peaceful feelings which are so deeply implanted in the soul and personal expression of the artist.

Ray Johnson
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JESSICA 20 x 24 Oil, Jessica reflects both the artist’s love for children, and a delightful innocent curiosity and openness which every mischievous child radiates.

24 x 30 Oil, A portrait study of Lea.

22 x 28 Oil, A portrait study of Fred Puschman, friend and owner of the Gold Strike Lounge in Cody, Wyoming.
SEARCHING FOR STRAYS
16 x 20 charcoal, is an excellent likeness and portrayal of John Miller, friend and saddle companion of the artist and cow boss of the Carter Ranch, south of Cody, Wyoming.

THE BULLDOGGER
14 x 18 charcoal, expresses an art style and mood action which has occasionally characterized certain realities in the artist's life style.