

## Mike Elsass: Painting on Steel



**It's not about the usual,  
it's about the unusual**

**a unique medium  
a chemistry on metal  
a vibrant and explosive combination of  
passion, energy, light, color  
and moments**

**a process set to the music of imagination**

**discover an art form like no other –  
painting on steel with Mike Elsass**

**you won't know what hit you....  
and you'll never turn back**

*Jacquelynn Buck*

### ***About his Art*** (text by Anna Friedenberg)

Mike Elsass became a painter after a career and a dream to have time to dedicate to writing. Though mostly self-taught, Mike acknowledges Roger Sayre as his mentor. Sayre, a nationally renowned steel artist, showed Mike the possibilities of steel as a surface for acrylic and urged him to experiment with it.

Elsass explores the medium by sanding and rusting sheets of metal in search of new and different textures, then applies multiple layers of paint, shiny or opaque finishes. In the aging of the metals and its imperfections, Mike sees a mirror of the human condition. The fast drying quality of the acrylics allows Mike to work with motivation and speed on several pieces at a time, expressing, as in a musical crescendo, his spontaneity and deep passion for life.

Elsass is an en plein air artist who stops his wandering whenever the energy of a place attracts him, trying to absorb and then reinvent it. He is dedicated to landscapes that reflect the moment of the soul; his paintings have emotional and visual connections with places of choice and memories beyond the present. Mike visits and revisits the same sites time and time again; each place is seen with different eyes in a spiritual search we've been invited to share. A series is then born; paintings of similar sizes can be put together to create a chromatic experience of personal emotions.

Elsass expresses his awe for natural elements through color, with a spontaneity and joyfulness that are the main traits of his work. In his paintings, a memory of the horizon persists as a last thought before space dissolves.

A luminous universe opens in front of us, the changing effects reached by lighter and darker colors; by contrasting yellows and blues, reds and whites and other color combinations.

Elsass achieves a tri-dimensional effect in the tradition of chiaroscuro. Sun, sea, salts, and sand are as much a part of his technique as the paint. The light appears to us as an invisible energy permeating the essence of things. The paintings are no longer representations of sites; they become light, while matter and form gradually fade away. Elsass creates images from within by revisiting a space, a memory; we're offered a more universal view than we could receive by just gazing at the original scenes.

As his strokes become more determined and poignant, and the hues more subtle and complex, the transparency of the light is an indication toward a deeper pictorial ability and a continuous progression to greater artistic maturity.

Offered to arrange his multiple pieces ad libitum, we become a participant and not mere spectator, and through this more intimate connection we experience his enthusiasm of the artist and his joy of painting.

### ***Galleries***

A Muse Gallery, Columbus OH  
Art Alley, Birmingham, AL  
Art People, San Francisco CA  
Arte-Misia, Sedona AZ  
Cannery Art & Design Center, Dayton OH  
Carteret Contemporary, Morehead City NC  
Catherine Kelleghan, Atlanta GA  
Gruen Gallery, Chicago IL  
Handsel Gallery, Santa Fe NM  
Justus Fine Art Gallery, Hot Springs AR  
Malton Gallery, Cincinnati OH  
One Fine Art Gallery, Chicago IL  
Timmel Collection, Saugatuck MI  
Town & Country Fine Art Center, Dayton OH  
Wally Workman, Austin TX

### ***Painting on Location***

gulf coast - Ocean Springs, MS  
fall color - Quebec City, Canada  
Louisiana bayou - Lafayette, LA  
painted pony ranch - Sedona, AZ  
country gardens - Anna, OH  
little cities of black diamonds - Southern Ohio  
Arizona desert house of prayer - Tucson, AZ  
winter on "easy" avenue - Kettlersville, OH  
racetracks & monasteries - Louisville, KY  
hot springs spa - Hot Springs, AR  
canyon road - Santa Fe, NM  
springtime - Natchez-Trace, MS  
au sable river - Grayling, MI

### **Contact Mike at**

**937-266-3491**

**[www.mikeelsass.com](http://www.mikeelsass.com)  
[ville777@hotmail.com](mailto:ville777@hotmail.com)**