

# MOTORCYCLE AS METAPHOR

Paintings by Wes Baker; Artist's Statement



My first ride was on an old Pan Head Harley; I was about seven years old. The sound and excitement of that machine will stay with me forever. In my artwork, the motorcycle becomes a metaphor for life and expression. My goal is to bring riders and non-riders alike into the realm of riding a motorcycle. I strive to capture the soul of riding. Most riders identify with the joy and the risk when we swing a leg over; we face our own mortality. Viewers of my work are invited to experience that world of the rider; to feel the motion, vibration, the danger, as well as the attitude that come from such physical and mental freedom. Viewers of my paintings can take away a philosophical view of life as a journey, and make the best of their own rides through life.

The formal portion of my education includes a BFA from Univ. of IL with scholarships at the Art Institute of Chicago and Northern IL Univ. Along the way, I produced graphic art work for the U.S. Air force while in the service, lectured on aviation art to the Experimental Aircraft Assn., produced illustrations for the E.P.A. and had work accepted into the juried Chicago Art Institute Rental Gallery (since closed). In my early art career, I was a sign painter and pin-striper, sold some paintings and got by. Then there were those 25 years donated to a career in the construction industry, which permitted me to feed my family.

A few years ago I picked up the brush again and combined my two loves, motorcycles and art. Recently, I have lectured about and demonstrated abstract art, won the President's Choice Award for "Riding with Diane," and served on the Board of the Elmhurst Art Guild. I am also a member of the Chicago Artists Coalition. The most important mission I want to accomplish is to communicate, through my paintings, how wonderful it is to ride.

The passion in these paintings is personal. The camaraderie along with the adrenaline for those who ride is almost magical. Riders face the threshold of eternity, seconds away from the next beyond, yet at the same time truly grasp the halcyon moment.

This is my art. I hope you enjoy what I see.

**Wesley R. Baker**

**Elmhurst, IL**

630.291.1048 / [wes.baker@fineartmotorcycle.com](mailto:wes.baker@fineartmotorcycle.com)

View some of my work online @ [www.FineArtMotorcycle.com](http://www.FineArtMotorcycle.com)