

## Introduction

This book is primarily intended to present some of my images of the place where I grew up and where my interest and appreciation of art was formed. I hope that it also provides insight into the unique history and character of Troy, Lansingburgh, and the Capital District in general and into how my various life experiences contributed to the perspective I have developed on art and life. After all, images are an artist's form of poetry, and the images I choose to paint and the manner in which my painting presents those places are a reflection of my most intimate and enduring feelings.

I apologize for any inaccuracies, either historical or personal, which may occur in this book. I have tried to get the facts straight, but an artist's eye is not encumbered by the scholar's detachment. The stories are from my memory and, like most people, I tend to filter what and how I remember things. I have always been a romantic and I plead guilty to seeing my early years in the company of my wonderful parents and siblings through rose-colored glasses. My childhood and the relationships I formed with my parents, brothers, and sisters shaped my personality and defined my character. I learned how to handle life and deal with adversity, tragedy, joy, love and the difficulties of the life of an artist through the example and instruction of my family. My parents were never overbearing or hovering. They allowed me the freedom to pursue my curiosity wherever it took me and to experience life as it happened. An artist's life is difficult and demanding. My family inspired within me the fortitude and dedication necessary to cope with the stress

and uncertainty of a life committed to art. I can never adequately express the depth of my gratitude to them for all they have done to make my life rich and fulfilling in all the roles that are important to me—as a person, as an artist, as a brother, and as a son.

Furthermore, my upbringing was enhanced and reinforced by living in a historic community with many important lessons to learn and values to acquire from the history of the people and families who had lived, struggled, and triumphed in the same place where I was raised. There is a great benefit in continuity, and I benefitted from being part of the continuum of people produced in the crucible of the Capital District, where history, pride, pathos, and determination are evident throughout the communities that comprise this area.

I hope my recollections give some insight into how I became “the artist from Troy” and how growing up in that wonderful place shaped my perspective on life and art.