



## The Art of Travel

by Jay Koka

original paintings by Jay Koka

I've had the wonderful privilege of experiencing worldwide travel over most of my life and especially the past decade. I confess... I am a travel addict. I've visited every continent (except Antarctica) and experienced many climates and altitudes from sea level to 13,500 ft. For me, travel is best experienced with no prejudice: I am an observer of customs and cultures and it is not for me judge but rather to immerse myself in the location to the extent I can. I also feel that it is highly desirable to visit the locations that I depict in my art because I think it adds to the "feel" of the work.

As I have stated many times before, I am far more interested in the context of and the human interaction with the car than the car itself. I have owned many wonderful cars and motorcycles but their memories fade while my travel remains embedded in my memory. Cars are ...almost... everywhere and my profession means I am almost always on the lookout for new locations/settings for my art. I am no longer amazed at the highly exotic locations in which the most exciting cars can appear. My painting "Old Propaganda Posters" is an example of this as it is set in the old Chinese quarter of Hanoi, Viet Nam. (see detail of the image above)

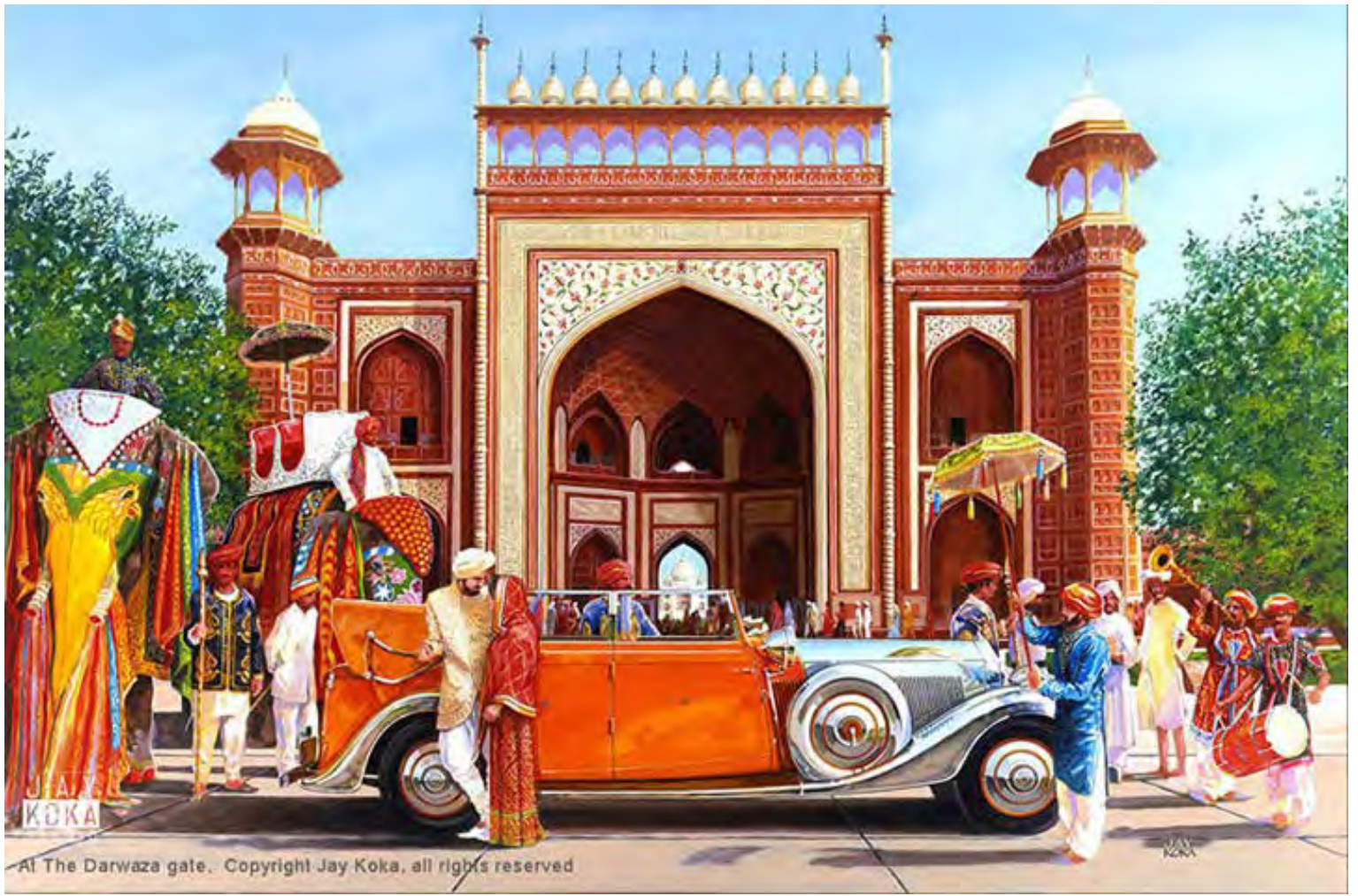
Often, the concept of introducing a car into the image is purely imagined from both a realistic and historic point of view. Calao, which is the harbor of Lima, Peru is an example. We were on a ship that had docked for a day in Calao and since I had already spent a few days in Lima, I had the opportunity to walk around and photograph the machinery of the facility... not realizing that this could well be viewed with suspicion... while the dock security guards followed my every step!

*("Calao" image below)*



Incredibly well-known locations have been depicted to the point where it is pretty much impossible to come up with a "fresh new look". For example, the world doesn't need another painting of either the Taj Mahal or the Eiffel Tower. I was determined however to record my visits to both locations and resolved this problem by relocating the point of view. In the case of the Taj Mahal, the scene "At The Darwaza Gate" is the last gate before approaching the Taj itself. You can only see the Taj in the dead-center of the painting through the last portal. Similarly, the Eiffel Tower is another much-depicted icon so I went to a side-street and present only its unmistakable "legs" in the painting "Pres de Champ de Mars". (Title: "Near the Champ de Mars", the Champ de Mars is the park in which the tower is located.)

*("At The Darwaza Gate" and "Pres de Champ de Mars" images below)*



At The Darwaza gate. Copyright Jay Koka, all rights reserved



Sometimes it is the challenge of the scene that captures my attention. "Place de la Concorde" in Paris features two magnificent fountains. My objective was to capture both the complexity and beauty of the scene. And sometimes the very act of collecting reference pictures can be quite exciting in of itself. Place de la Concorde is a massive turning circle at the foot of the Champs Elysees. Driving around in circles while aiming a camera and trying not to run into another car in 5 packed lanes of traffic is a challenge.

*("Place de la Concorde" image below)*



My website features all of my "travel" based art in a section called ["The Art of Travel"](#).

I will close with location-based art that does not include cars. "Seven Tuks in Bangkok" is, as the title suggests, the depiction of a "Tuk Stop" in Bangkok. The variety and uses of tuks in Asia is simply beyond description. Similarly, "Long-tail" boats are also in use all over the southern Asia coastline as captured by my work "Longtails in Phuket" with these fascinating boats at dock.

*("Seven Tuks in Bangkok" and "Longtails in Phuket" images below)*





"Longtails in Phuket", Copyright Jay Koka, all rights reserved

I continue my travels and very much look forward to my return visit to Egypt in 2022. While recognizing that so many have suffered, I am grateful that the COVID pandemic hasn't impacted my family directly. But I confess, our inability to travel has been painful!

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