

# LewAllenGalleries

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## Ira Yeager: Portraits as Narrative

**Artist Reception:** Friday, August 19, 5 – 7 pm  
**Exhibition Dates:** August 19 – September 18, 2016  
**Gallery Hours:** Mon - Fri, 10 - 6;  
Sat, 10 – 5; Sun, 11 – 4 (August)

**LewAllen Galleries**  
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Ira Yeager, *Indian Portrait with Wolf*, 2015,  
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 48 x 48 in.



Ira Yeager, *Indian Portrait*, 2015-2016,  
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36 in.

**Santa Fe, NM** - Nearing the seventh decade of an extraordinary international artistic career that has given rise to diverse styles that include portraiture, landscape, still life, and mixed media assemblage, Bay Area painter Ira Yeager has achieved a level of esteem as a colorist, realist, impressionist and abstractionist that qualifies him today as one of the most accomplished contemporary artists working in the San Francisco/Northern California area. His work has been shown in numerous museum and public exhibitions and is widely included in leading private collections.

The twenty paintings comprising Yeager's new exhibition, *Portraits as Narrative*, on view at LewAllen Galleries during Santa Fe's Indian Market time, vividly illustrate the artist's remarkable facility with distinctive combinations

of historical content, realist imagery and slightly abstracted, even fanciful, elements. The son of a Pacific Northwest hunter, trapper, and merchant, Yeager grew up in the midst of Native American traders from Washington and Vancouver Island, an exposure that spawned his lifelong respect for and reverence of Native People, their culture and history as courageous and noble people with a vital place in American history. He has honored these aspects in fifty years of painting Indian portraits to which he now adds gripping narrative paintings that combine portraiture with wildlife, fish and birds that featured so significantly in his early life among these people.

In *Portraits as Narrative*, Yeager assembles atmospheric, textural layers of opacity and transparency that confer a unique ethereal luminosity to the work. Figural detail melts into dynamic smatterings of color and brushstroke, recalling the mystery and noble history of a people. Seeking to honor and

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commemorate his subjects, these narrative portraits capture a profound respect the artist feels towards people, stories, and ways of life.

After studying at California College of Arts and Crafts and San Francisco School of Fine Arts where he trained with such artists as Elmer Bischoff, Richard Diebenkorn, and Nathan Oliveira, Yeager evolved his distinctive techniques at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy, and then as a young artist in Santa Fe in the 1960s. He worked for many years in New York, Mexico, Italy, Greece, and Morocco, before settling in Northern California. His willingness to involve the idiosyncratic and exotic in compositional harmony with the classical and historic is testament to influences from close friends in the literary world including poet Alan Ginsberg and writer Tennessee Williams among others.



Ira Yeager, *Indian Portrait with Papoose*, 2016,  
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 60 x 48 in.

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Ira Yeager, *Indian Portrait with Papoose*, 2016,  
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 60 x 48 in.



Ira Yeager, *Indian Portrait*, 2016,  
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 in.



Ira Yeager, *Indian Portrait with Papoose*, 2015,  
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36 in.



Ira Yeager, *Indian Portrait*, 2016,  
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 in.