

Ray Padre "Doc" Johnson

By Dr. H.R. Meier



International author, art critic and United Nations historian, Dr. Noel Brown, writes in his biographical presentation of Padre, that "he has truly lived the adventure of the renaissance man in our time."

In the 1990's our International award winning artist and author completed his internationally celebrated 13 year Faces of the Human Family project by actually living with the people as they lived in 149 nations. This also involved crisscrossing all 50 states of the USA through the years to listen, observe, enjoy and communicate with its people and cultural diversity.

Padre's resulting 500 portraits of the World that reflects the best in the human drama by capturing the open, trusting and accepting expression of the child in every facial image of all ages were painted on his centerpiece canvas of the human family and on 24 additional canvases representing the 24 geographical regions of our planet. This once of a kind ever project in the history of the world and his book, *Journeys with the Global Family*, that presents his world view philosophy of life and also excellent photo reproductions of his

award winning western, wild life and all his global portraits, were both featured at a very successful United Nations New York premiere opening and overseas premiere at Beijing China's Forbidden City Royal Palace site. It was the first time that an American artist was invited to exhibit and speak at this prestigious site in China.

Dr. Brown further writes; "To understand the natural spirit of freedom and breathing quality in Padre's unique forms of artistic creativity and written insights, you have to appreciate the influence that the following interesting range of life events and job descriptions had in shaping the quality in his present artistic and written accomplishments. Some of these include living the life of an authentic working cowboy with a number of major Wyoming and Montana ranching outfits, including the famous 450,000 acre Padlock Ranch on the edge of the Big Horn Mountains. He was also a blue collar worker in heavy construction and transportation, a very successful college athlete in the sports of football and baseball in which he was offered a bonus contract with the Dodgers, a hospital emergency room and operating room medical technician during the period of his medical studies, an ordained Lutheran Church in America pastor and a holder of state and national Leadership positions in government and human services. During and following his successful and fulfilling chapters in government service he completed the work on his doctorate in the combined academic disciplines of theology and cultural anthropology. Padre is also the recipient of many leading achievement awards in recognition of his art, humanitarian and written accomplishments.

In view of his extensive medical background, he was officially assigned for the first time in American military history to serve in an independent duty position as both the chaplain and in a leading field medical officer position with his Black Beret "River Raider" Assault Force One Special Forces unit in Vietnam's Mekong Delta Region. For his many successful life saving medical rescue mission efforts under some of the most impossible combat situations, during which he was twice wounded in two separate battles, he was very highly decorated with two Silver Stars, the Legion of Merit with Valor, the Bronze Star, the Vietnamese Cross and two Purple Hearts - becoming one of the highest decorated chaplains and medical officers in the history of the US military.

A year after his return from Vietnam, he was honored as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Americans. It was only the second time in the awards history, from its beginning in 1938, that this prestigious honor was given for one's military medical accomplishments in combat. In previous years this honor was given to such notables as John F. Kennedy, Henry Kissinger and many others for their national and global leadership accomplishments. An example in the area of classical music is that of the famous Leonard Bernstein. He was selected for his celebrated musical skills in writing and also directing the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Vice President Dick Cheney and Padre are the two Wyomingites to receive this honor.

Currently, Padre receives invitations to present his world view insights and art at International conferences, churches, colleges, universities and schools of all levels throughout the USA, Canada and overseas.

Dr. Brown concludes his biographical description of Padre's fascinating many lives journey with the following insight. He writes, "As we move on through the approaching years of rapid global change, I believe that Padre's exceptional ability to translate his insights of the human family and the meaning and purpose of our human existence through the creativity of his visual art, writings, refreshing humor and the spoken word, will not only provide a very important visual contribution toward increased understanding among the people of our planet but will maintain a unique historical significance as he leaves his enduring mark on the consciousness of each reader, viewer and listener."

Former political speech writer and patron of the arts, Dr. H. R. Meier, followed, researched and wrote about Padre's many lives journey until his passing in 2009. He wrote this 2008 reduced in size version from the larger version.