



Bridge Street (Sheridan)

I found Sheridan one day, driving through it to an ominous sounding gorge that Mill Creek goes through at nearby Buell Park that I'd heard about in my Paddling Oregon book. I knew just from seeing the old iron green entrance bridge, of which are much more common to Vermont small towns, that I'd probably put it on my list of future paintings to do for my master body of Oregon regional art paintings. Then when I saw the shabby buildings with outdated looking signs, a railroad crossing, and the background of yellow hills and dark green conifers that made it distinctly western, I knew this one was a winner.

However, this time the aforementioned main elements I wanted to include were spaced further apart, from front to back, than usual, so I had to use one of my more difficult methods I'd learned from doing my SE Belmont Street painting a year previous, of sitting in slightly different spots every few hours.

But, my usual goal when I find places like this still stood, which is to not gentrify the place but to bring out it's taken for granted beauty that was already there. Residents that I talked with didn't like how environmental laws had depleted Sheridan of its logging industry revenue, and those birds making nests in the railroad station eaves are probably a dirty nuisance in real life, but it can be the opposite in a painting.

Sure enough, a local resident saw it in progress and exclaimed "you make our town look so much better!" I replied "yes, that's what artists do."