



LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with Scott Hamill December 2016 Artist Member of the Month

What is your #1 tip or advice for the beginning plein air painter? Get outside and paint as much as you possibly can! Remember that Rome was not built in a day and that we all have a certain number of bad paintings in us. It's sometimes really difficult and frustrating but all it takes is that one brushstroke of beautiful gooey color to get you enthused again. Be patient with yourself and remember to take a deep breath and enjoy the view.

What are your never-leave-home-without it "must have" palette colors? I love painting with Rembrandt ultramarine blue, Windsor Newton cadmium red, WN cad yellow pale, and a titanium white. I can mix some beautiful clean grays with these colors and it really simplifies color mixing for me.

Why do you choose to paint in the wild plein air rather than in the controlled environment of the studio? When I'm outside I can see, hear and feel things that I can't in my studio. These things influence the way I paint. My brushstrokes have more energy and life when I paint outside. I'm usually really excited and happy when I paint outside and really grateful that I can create something beautiful while enjoying the outdoors. When all goes well these feelings show up in the finished painting and people really respond to it.

What was your most hair-raising extreme plein air painting experience? I like to hike and climb down cliffs to access vantage points close to the ocean that are really remote and most people have never seen. I've had rocks fall off of cliffs and land close to my easel and I've been hit with waves from the incoming tide a few times. I've had a squirrel drop an acorn on my palette which hit my cad red and splashed it all over my painting. That raised some hairs!

Living or not, which artist(s) have had the most impact on your artistic journey? John Crump has had the most impact on me and my art journey. Six years ago my wife Alice and I were on a trip to New Zealand and we stumbled into John's gallery in the south island. His paintings touched something in me that made me want to play with paint and make pictures. We bought a painting and he gave me one of his instructional DVDs. Since then John has been a constant inspiration and we've developed a friendship that has been a true blessing. I'm also very fortunate to have friendships with some amazing artists and count Kathleen Dunphy, Richard Robinson and Mike Bailey as my inner circle of friends who have kindly shared their wealth of information with me and helped me develop as a painter.

Closing comments.... I think it's important to recognize how lucky we plein air painters are. Whether you're a Sunday painter or professional artist to be able to express your creativity while standing outside in front of an easel is pretty special. I try to remember that each time I go out looking for that scene that makes me say "wow!".