



LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with Ian Roberts May 2016 Signature Artist Member of the Month

What is your #1 tip or advice for the beginning plein air painter? Creating anything entails interplay between seeing or vision and technique or craft to express it. I think beginners in anything often get too enamored with technique and don't listen enough to the vision of their own heart. I'm sure everyone has seen simple, even crudely, painted work they like and highly crafted work they find dead. What's pulling you to paint? How do you keep that alive during the process of learning enough craft to put it into form? I guess that is the trick.

What are your never-leave-home-without it "must have" palette colors? I usually have a dozen colours for plein air. But if I had to strip it right down I guess I could get by with titanium white, cadmium yellow light, alizarin and ultramarine blue. It seems sort of time consuming to restrict the palette that much.

Why do you choose to paint in the wild plein air rather than in the controlled environment of the studio? I just came back from 12 days camping in Death Valley. The campsite was a half hour down an untracked wash in a four-wheel drive. It was empty, and silent. And beautiful. I hiked a lot. You slow down out there in "the big empty". Your thought process unwinds and stills. That's why I like plein air painting. That connection to some bigger resonance.

What was your most hair-raising extreme plein air painting experience?
...not sure.

Living or not, which artists have had the most impact on your artistic journey? James Turrell's use of light I find extraordinary. Plein air painters try and recapture the effect with paint in two dimensions. But he uses the medium of light itself. Gerard David, the early Dutch painter. Such small quiet beautiful pieces. The Met in NY has several. And Velazquez. Best painter that ever lived.