



LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with January 2016 Artist Member of the Month John P. Lasater IV

What is your #1 tip or advice for the beginning plein air painter?

Spend the first years satisfied with seeing large interesting value shapes in the scenes before you. Let the joy be in choosing colors for those shapes that astoundingly make it “feel real”, as if looking at a very blurry image of reality. This is the first level of seeing, and a great way of simplifying, from my experience.

What are your never-leave-home-without it “must have” palette colors?

My favorite color is "Transparent Oxide Formaldehyde Vermillion". Just kidding. I don't know, I guess the primaries meet most of my needs. Sometimes it's fun to paint with only complimentary colors like orange and blue.

Why do you choose to paint in the wild plein air rather than in the controlled environment of the studio?

I get energized painting outdoors. Generally, setting in the studio sucks the life out of me. I like to make value adjustments indoors, but I'd always rather choose colors outdoors. If I had spent the past 10 years filing away the information I've gained outdoors, I'd be in better shape, but I foolishly enjoy being reawakened to the truths of light every time I go out.

What was your most hair-raising extreme plein air painting experience?

I was painting in Indiana about 7 years ago, and an earthquake struck. As everything was bouncing around me I kept working, proving once again that life is secondary when we're "in the zone".

Living or not, which artists have had the most impact on your artistic journey?

Probably Monet. Hardly an artist in history was as observant as he was. The quality of his surface texture, and the childlikeness of his colors and shapes will always beckon to me, even if I explore beyond his artistic philosophies. And, to be as prolific as he was to his dying day continues to inspire me.

The attention to thick paint and organic design I see in the post impressionists and early modernists also excites me. Favorites are Gorky, Maurer, Klimt and Van Gogh.

Closing comments....

Thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to spending more time in the beautiful state of California. If you're interested in learning more about my technique and philosophy, check out my website, or order my recent plein air DVD at <http://lasaterart.com/store/>