



LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with April Raber May 2017 Signature Artist of the Month

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

Relax, and don't be afraid to start making your painting mistakes. The more mistakes you make, the faster you learn.

If you could only have 5 colors on your palette, what would they be?

1) Lead White, 2) Hansa Yellow Light, 3) Cadmium Red Light, 4) Ultramarine Blue, and 5) Alizarin Crimson

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

Even before you start painting you get to walk around in the 3-D space that you are about to paint and fine-tune the composition in a way that can't be done from a 2-D rendering. *Should I move to the left to align those two objects, or move further way to let perspective render them close together?* That is your opportunity when you put yourself physically in the center of the context you are painting.

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

I found a homeless man asleep in the passenger seat of my car after loading my art gear in the back. I have napped there myself at times, so I was empathetic.

From a technical challenge, I will always remember the LPAPA Invitational about 8 or 9 years ago when it rained for the paint-out. I often paint sitting with my board horizontal, on my lap. That day I found out that water and oil really don't mix that well. I kept having to shake water off of the board, and fortunately most of the oil stayed put when I did. Actually, the rain added just a touch of blur that created a very appropriate interpretation to the finished painting that would have been impossible to replicate in the studio.

Living or not, which artist(s) has had the most impact on your artistic journey?

In school I was fortunate enough to work with Alex Daris and William Whitaker. The school had the largest collection of Maynard Dixon anywhere, so spending time with a fresh collection of Dixon every few months had a very lasting impression on me. From there, Nicolai Fechin had a big impact on me. Finally, thanks to Jeff Horn, whose example took away my fear of failure.

Any closing comments or advice you'd like to share?

Love the work, so don't let yourself miss the love, or the work.