



# LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

## LPAPA Plein Talk with Brenda Boylan November 2017 Signature Member of the Month

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

Follow the K.I.S.S design principle: "Keep is Simple, Stupid" or better yet, simplify the subject matter. There is so much information out there, that it can be overwhelming at first. More energy is wasted when a beginner plein air painter seeks to gain a photographic likeness of a scene, for example, putting in every blade of grass or leaf on a tree. How boring is that? When this happens, there is often more frustration than joy in the painting. So simplifying the subject matter helps bring out the first impression of the scene, which will in turn make for a better painting, as well as a joyful experience too.

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

I'd say this was a trick question because I work with pastels. But since the question is asked of me, they would be a dark blue, a mid toned earthy red, a vivid yellow and bold orange, and perhaps a medium violet. But since this question is geared for oil painters, and I use oils too, it would have to be Ultramarine Blue, Permanent Red, Indian Yellow, Cad Yellow light, and Titanium White.

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

I choose to paint outdoors because it is an experience that stirs all my senses. While outside I can honestly see the temperature of the light for what it truly is, interpreting the tone of the day more clearly than any photograph could provide. Being present in the moment with all the sights and sounds that the outdoors brings creates a rhythm and feeling into the piece, and is not found in a static studio setting. Painting outdoors always makes for a real experience unlike any studio painting session. Nature at your side, outside.

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

I'm pretty much a safe painter and haven't had many bad things happen, but I can recall one time people screaming or throwing bottles at me from a passing car while working on an urban piece. Luckily, I didn't wear noise reducing ear buds because I have to be aware of what is going on all around me while I am concentrating on my work.

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

I could go down an alphabetical list of remarkable artists who have influenced me, but the most impactful artist was my next-door neighbor Robert Guise. When I was a young girl, around 10 years old, Mr. Guise was a true practicing artist and he would often allow me into his studio to observe his artistic process. We'd discuss how to paint the face, eyes, and so many other subjects. He taught me a lot as a very young artist. I can remember his turpentine and oil infused studio and all the paintings he had crammed in his small working space. I so curiously wanted to be exposed to this unknown world, and so it was he who I could say helped spur me on to believe in my creative self. What I remember most about Robert was him declaring that when he was a small lad that he saw Halley's Comet, and he wanted to live long enough to witness it again. It happened in 1986.

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

Have fun and let go! Remember that it is only a painting and not to get too hung up on making everything so perfect. Sometimes when I "let go" of my control, the work often has more life and energy to it, resulting in something treasured and rewarding. Nothing beats rewards and gratification, right?