



LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with Bill Cramer March 2018 Signature Member of the Month

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

There is no substitute for time at the easel. Confidence born of practice will lead to the work you're meant to do. #2: Hone your composition and drawing skills.

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

Titanium white, cad yellow light, cad red light, alizarin crimson and ultramarine blue (at some point, I'd probably wish I had some dioxazine purple!).

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

Being outside allows an artist to really observe nature, to see the effects of light and atmosphere and to enjoy all the other things that might not make it into the painting but are important to understanding the whole. No photo can do all that. Besides, it's nice to hang out with friends, jump in a creek or lay in the grass!

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

One time at Grand Canyon National Park, I hiked out alone to a fairly remote point at the edge of a massive cliff. I decide to take a break by hiking around and then I turned to look back at my easel. That's when I saw that the solid point I thought I'd been painting on was actually a diving board less than a foot wide jutting out from the rim about ten feet! As a long time rock climber, cliff edges don't really bother me so much, but that really got my attention! I always check now.

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

All my plein air painting friends have to come first – you know who you are! I've learned so much from them! So many other living artists as well. And the usual suspects like Sorolla, Sargent, Payne, Hennings, Wendt, Blumenschein, Bischoff... list keeps growing. The most? Josh Been and Edgar Payne.

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

Paint your paintings, and then go to museums, galleries, art exhibits, artist's studios and plein air events. Look at the work of great painters in person and not just in a book or on a computer screen. Soak up as much as you can!

<https://lpapa.org/plein-talk-bill-cramer/>

