



LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with Suzie Baker 2018 Signature Artist Member of the Month

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

#1 Draw, draw, draw! Take a drawing course or work through the book *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*. Bring a small sketchbook with you everywhere and sketch what is around you.

#2 Cuz I just can't help but add a #2. Do color charts! The value (pun intended) of color carts can't be underrated. In addition to learning your palette and mixing colors, you would get to know the tactile nature of your medium and come away with an understanding of value too. I would love it if every beginner who took my workshops had at least these two things under their belt. They would be prepared to get much more from their workshop experience.

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

Titanium White

Indian Yellow

Should write a haiku,
of my love for this yellow.
Hey, look, I just did!

Ultramarine Blue

Quinacridone Red - This red can get to the hue of Alizarin with a little yellow and blue, but Alizarin can't get to the pink tone of quinacridone. (Almost a poem ;-)

Transparent Red Oxide

If you weren't so stingy with this question and I got a 6th color, I'd add a color that could give me a nice turquoise - like Phthalo

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

I do both. While the environment of my studio is climate controlled and predictable, lacking (mostly) in bugs with the only wildlife being one amazingly sedate cat, it also connects to my home and full of the distractions of daily life: computer work, laundry, delivered packages and many more hours of Netflix than are physically healthy to consume. Getting outside and painting from life provides an exclusive time to focus on painting. Painting en plein air allows me to see colors much more accurately. I enjoy the challenge of starting and completing paintings in the field. My studio works benefits greatly from plein air color studies that I use alongside photo references. The cat doesn't seem to mind me being there either.

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

My first ever plein air festival as an invited artist was to the Telluride Plein Air Festival. My husband tagged along to do some hiking. Long story short, he ended up in ICU, hospitalized for

over a week with High Altitude Cerebral Edema. He's fine now, fitter than ever but under strict orders to not participate in life-threatening activities while I'm painting! We have since purchased a GPS communicator for all hiking trips, which has helped out in a pickle a few times since. Ain't that true Paul Kratter! My husband attended Maui Plein Air with me in February. I requested he avoid volcanoes and sharks!

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

My high school art teacher Mr. Tracy who created a fourth year of art for me at Grant High School and my college professor Peter Jones who decided that his students would be trained to draw and paint representationally when many other universities had dismissed that sort of instruction as passé.

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

To my artist's buddies, I say; keep raising the bar, so I'm challenged to keep up the heavy lifting.

To collectors, I say; Thank you so much! You make it possible for us to do what we do.

To the aspiring artists out there, I say; set some achievable goals and work toward them, then set some more!

To all of us, let's work on the things that make for a great eulogy, not just a great resume.

Blessings, Suzie