



## LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

### LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with Kristen Olson Stone December 2018 Artist Member of the Month

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

Paint regularly and paint from life as much as possible. Paint in all kinds of weather and at all times of day, even at high noon. You do not have to travel far to find the perfect painting spot, you can see beauty anywhere, even in your own backyard. To make it easy for yourself to get out to paint, prepare a small backpack or carry a bag filled with everything you need to paint with and keep it in a convenient place. I have a watercolor kit and oil kit. My watercolor set is so small that it fits in a purse, my oil set fits into a small backpack.

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

Rembrandt paints, Titanium White + 1) Cadmium Red Light, 2) Permanent Madder Deep, 3) Ultramarine Blue Deep, 4) Cadmium Yellow Medium, 5) Cadmium Yellow Lemon. I also love to paint with Ivory Black (ivory is a funny name for a black:), which is actually a blue and makes a great green when mixed with cad yellow medium

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

First of all, I LOVE nature and being outdoors! Painting “en plein air” combines my love of nature with my passion for painting. I make painting outdoors a part of my weekly painting practice, it breathes life into my studio work. Painting outdoors is delightful but also challenging as it forces you to work quickly which means you don’t have too much time to think and therefore paint more intuitively. I like what I see on my canvas when I turn my “thinking brain” off and paint with a more immediate, spontaneous flow.

Conversely, I find that painting in the studio benefits my plein air practice. I’m able to use my plein air paintings plus photos to develop larger paintings with more detail and more involved compositions. If you only paint small paintings outdoors and finish everything in 3

hours time, it will be hard to develop your skills beyond that point. I also know that if you only paint in the studio and never go outdoors, your work won't have the fresh, plein air look.

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

I've had a few:)

I was once painting out in the desert in Arizona with a group of artists. Suddenly, the artist on my left told me to freeze, he said don't even look down! After a couple of minutes, he said, now look to your right, I saw a big snake slithering away, he told me it was a sidewinder, a deadly type of rattlesnake.

I used to love to paint at a horse boarding facility in Northern California; I enjoyed the scenery and being surrounded by a lot of beautiful horses. Once, my easel was set up in the shade, and a horse came over, I was relaxed about him being so close as there was a fence between us. He seemed like a lovely horse who was curious about what I was doing, but while I was painting, he suddenly started to lick my wet painting!

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

Go to museums as much as you can. Go see exhibits and shows that are unlike what you usually would like to see. Seeing original art is always better than viewing images online.

Try to paint new and different things. I've often heard the argument from fellow artists that you should paint one thing and paint it well, and if you do this, you'll be known for something. That theory has never worked for me, I support the philosophy of learning as many skills as you can so that you can develop enough confidence in yourself to fearlessly draw and paint absolutely anything. I also think that if collectors like your style of painting, they'll be interested in a wide variety of subjects that you paint.

Painting a variety of things forces you to explore new techniques, try new materials, colors, etc. Keep exploring, keep learning, keep painting!