



# LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

## LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with Toni Danchik May 2019 Artist Member of the Month

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

*Join a Plein Air Group, get a plein air painting buddy that you can go out and paint with at a moments notice. Pack light, have a "grab and run" bag or backpack with the most basic paint supplies that is always ready when the outdoors inspires you.*

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

*Cad yellow Light, Permanent Rose, Dioxazine Purple, Ultramarine Blue, Viridian, Titanium White*

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

*There is nothing more special than being outdoors and experiencing nature first hand. The sounds of the birds in the trees, insects in the brush around you, the changes in the light especially when clouds move in front of the sun, the fresh breeze blowing through your hair or the sun kissing down on your cheeks - all these elements contribute to the charm of the outdoor experience. The way you 'see' is so different than painting from photos in the studio. Outdoor painting forces one to stay focused to your first feeling of inspiration and original concept and design. There are always the awesome visual surprises when you place yourself in a scene and experience your surroundings. Color notes, especially in the shadow tones, are easier to discern when painting outdoors than when painting from photos. But most of all, being outdoors makes you feel like you are experiencing life to its fullest.*

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

*I was painting in a park all by myself and it was getting dark. I had a great time painting while listening to music on my cell phone. By the time I loaded up my car to go home, it was already dark... that is when I discovered that my car battery was completely dead, dead, dead!! Not only that, there was also very little battery life left on my cell phone, just enough to make one call to my husband, tell him where I was and a call to AAA. Fortunately my husband found me, but AAA could not find the entrance to the Park.... I realized then that you are vulnerable when you paint outdoors alone, especially in remote places and it is always a good idea to have a painting buddy.*

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

*My first visit to the Redfern Gallery and the original Wendt Gallery in Laguna Beach introduced me to the early California Impressionists. I remember standing in front of*

*these majestic paintings and being in total awe, I knew in my heart that one day I would love to be able to paint like these Masters. My very first workshop with a professional artist was with Jacqueline Kamin. I will never forget her words to me: "practice to make beautiful brushstrokes"! I remember visiting her gallery and being mesmerized by the Russian Impressionists that she represented. I had an opportunity to travel to Russia and have an up close and personal experience with the Russian Impressionist painters like Serov, Repin and Surikov. The pure color, sparkling light, and lively depictions of everyday life that characterizes Russian Impressionism made an impact on me as I choose the subject matter and narrative for my paintings. The art of Russian artists who came to the USA like Fechin and Sergei Bongart has also left deep marks in my heart. I was fortunate to take many classes and workshops with Jove Wang who had a tremendous impact in forming my artistry. Living here in California and being surrounded by so many great artists has all been part of my forming as an artist. Every year I would attend the LPAPA invitational to see the country's greatest artists at work and would always walk away with hope and inspiration.*

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

*We live in a time where we have access to great art and artists who each have their unique tools and techniques. We are fortunate to learn from them to build our skills, but never compare yourself to them. You are unique, use what you have learned as tools to unlock your uniqueness but never use it to beat yourself up.*