



# LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

## LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with Dan Graziano April 2020 Signature Artist Member of the Month

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

*Edit and simplify - this is probably the most important thing to master for painting plein air. Learn to paint with an economy of brush strokes along with painting quickly and decisively. Take a few workshops from the best plein air painters you can find.*

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

*If I could only have 5 colors, it would be ultramarine, yellow ochre, burnt umber, alizarin crimson and titanium white. I usually have cad. orange, cad. red and sap green on my palette for convenience. I love manganese blue - it's a very potent color that I always like to have handy for sky, water and pops of reflections in glass and chrome.*

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

*I do about 50/50 studio and plein air painting due to the subject matter I typically work with (figures in activities, interiors, split-second moments I encounter in daily life). I love painting plein air for the ability to see true color and true light. Working from photo reference in the studio requires a thorough understanding of its shortcomings. Plein air painting will greatly improve your studio work as it sharpens your skills of observation and simplification as well as pushing one to paint quickly and decisively.*

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

*Not a hair raising experience - one time I hiked a long way out to a painting spot and then realizing I left my brushes at home.*

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

*The usual ones almost every artist brings up - Sargent, Wyeth, Thiebaud, Hopper, Diebenkorn - I have hundreds of artists I really admire for one reason or another. I'm also a big fan of the great twentieth century illustrators - N.C., Rockwell, Fuchs, Parrish,*

*McGinnis, Whitmore. Someone who made the most significant difference in the way I paint was Ken Auster.*

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

*Paint as much as you can - every day if possible - even if you only have an hour. There's no substitute for putting the time in at the easel. Paint small if you only have a short time (6x6, 5x7) or sketch in a sketchbook. Be fearless - take some risks and try new approaches to how and what you paint (what do you have to lose besides making a bad painting once in a while). Recognize that your art will produce both successes and failures. Visit as many galleries as you can and research other artists whose work you are drawn to for gaining new insights and inspiration. Take a workshop from an artist who you admire - and when you feel ready for it, enter a plein air exhibition!*

*And join LPAPA - the best plein air organization in the country!*