



## LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

### LPAPA Plein Talk Q&As with Marc Dalessio June 2020 Signature Member of the Month

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

I believe drawing is the most fundamental skill for any painter, including plein air painters. So learn to draw as well as you can, even if it's in a studio environment. That said, if you do fine yourself in a studio, try to work outside whenever you can, even if the results aren't great. I've also see artists spend too much time in the studio and then struggle when they face the complexity of changing light outside. So get used to that early on, and learn to use it to your advantage.

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

I only use ten colors: 3 yellows, orange, 2 reds, 3 blues and white. I couldn't paint with less. To answer your question though, I'd probably use ivory black, lead white, vermilion, yellow ocher, and alizarin, and I'd go back to painting portraits inside.

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

I find that working outside, where I have a crazy amount of information that I have to reduce down is much easier for me than trying to invent a landscape in my studio. If I paint a studio landscape it will take me a couple of weeks. The same size landscape, painted outside, will take me a few days. On top of that, the changing light and subject matter give me much more choice and it so often happens that something changes and becomes much more interesting and I can chase those effects. Not to mention I just like being outside as much as I can.

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

Once I painted with a group of artists in Kenya. We were on a large property that had a lot of wild animals and we weren't supposed to leave our compound without an armed guard to protect us from getting gored while we painted. There were a couple of times when the guard couldn't be there so we snuck out without him and tried to find safe places to paint. We all painted clumped up in a group but there were still times when we would hear something and all sprint back to the car. That was probably as scared as I've ever been out plein air painting. It's an interesting sensation to not be at the top of the food chain.

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

I was on track to be a portrait painter when I stumbled across the work of Joe McGurl, Donald Jurney, and Joe Paquet. Seeing their work as I was just finishing my training really changed my life and I slowly moved towards being a landscape painter. As far as dead artists, Isaac Levitan and Camille Corot are the two artists who most influenced my work.