



## LPAPA Plein Talk Interview with Jason Li March 2021 Signature Artist Member of the Month

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

Try not to do too much and focus on what captured your attention. I think plein air is all about how you can take something ordinary and turn it into extraordinary. It's a process of filtering and simplifying.

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

Yellow ochre, brown, red purple, viridian, and Prussian blue.

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

When I do plein air I am more open to be inspired. The movement, lighting, the temperature and even the sense of smell will trigger my spontaneous response that will translate to my artworks. In that situation, I tend to think faster, paint with more conviction, and more focus on what captured my attention. I like the most of the plein air is the freedom. That I can transform the scenery, channel my feeling and imagination by adding or subtracting the colors and objects.

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

One late fall afternoon, I was driving on the paved road in Palm Desert. Passed a dry river bed and saw a stunning scenery. I drove off the road and chased the sunset. The river rocks reflected the sunlight with the desert scape in the backdrop...

Deep into the desert, I drove slowly and tried to find a spot to set my easel, all the sudden the car could not move! There was a big rock caught underneath my car. The two front wheels were off the ground. My first reaction was calling AAA. But it was in the middle of the desert. There was no signal at all! The sun started to set, I never forgot that scenery. The golden yellow sky with the orange sun moving toward the horizon, the moon already came out from other side, the temperature started to drop, the eerie quiet surroundings...

I didn't want to spend the night with just a bottle of water in the middle of the desert. I quickly jacked up one side of the car and used my bare hands started frantically to dig into the sand. Finally, I was able to remove the rock. The sun was totally set at that time, only had a strip of the orange color at the horizon. I took the rock home and place at my front yard to remind me that experience.

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

French artist Eugene Delacroix, Paul Cezanne and American artist Andrew Wyeth

***Please feel free to add any closing comments and/or additional advice you wish to share....***

As an artist, I feel lucky and blessed to be able to do something I'm passionate about. My artwork is a gateway to express my emotion. I know it is a lonely and long journey. This journey is full of joys, self-doubt, highs and lows. I firmly believe this journey will take me to a place where I can be true to myself and I will enjoy every step of the way.

It is the great honor to become a LPAPA signature artist. I am so grateful to LPAPA for the recognition and encouragement.