

Collectible Art Still on the Easel

Natural light and painting from life allows Linda Leslie to show the softer side of the figure.



While many artists try to find a way to separate their personal lives from their daily work as an artist, Linda Leslie sees no reason to make any such distinction and, instead, wants to live with her work so closely that her living room doubles as her art studio.

"For me, that's the only way to do it," says Leslie. "My house feels like a painting salon, there are paintings everywhere—some by me, some by other people, and an easel is the first thing you see when you come into the house. I was sitting for a portrait once for David Leffel and thinking about what I wanted and I decided that I wanted to paint in my living room with tall ceilings and French doors. The lighting is not ideal, but it's like living in your studio and I love it."

As Leslie favors a softer, more romantic approach to painting, her studio also echoes this sentiment.

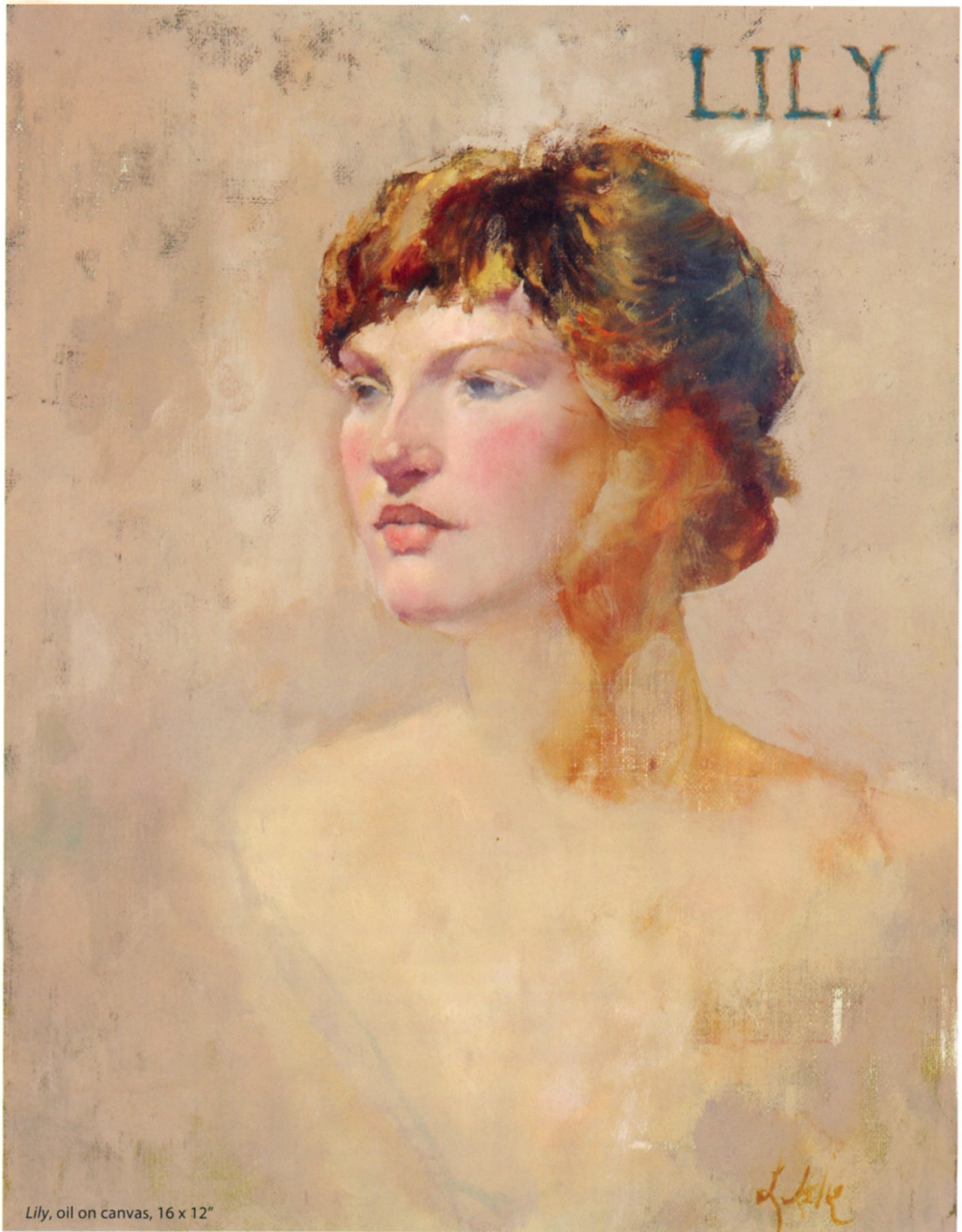
"It's a girl's studio," says Leslie. "There are velvet pillows, throws, pottery, a lot of paintings and nice furniture. It's located in the south part of Santa Fe and it usually takes me about 10 minutes to get to Canyon Road and the galleries."

Leslie spends most of her mornings at the easel and finds that the early hours is just a more suitable time for her to work.

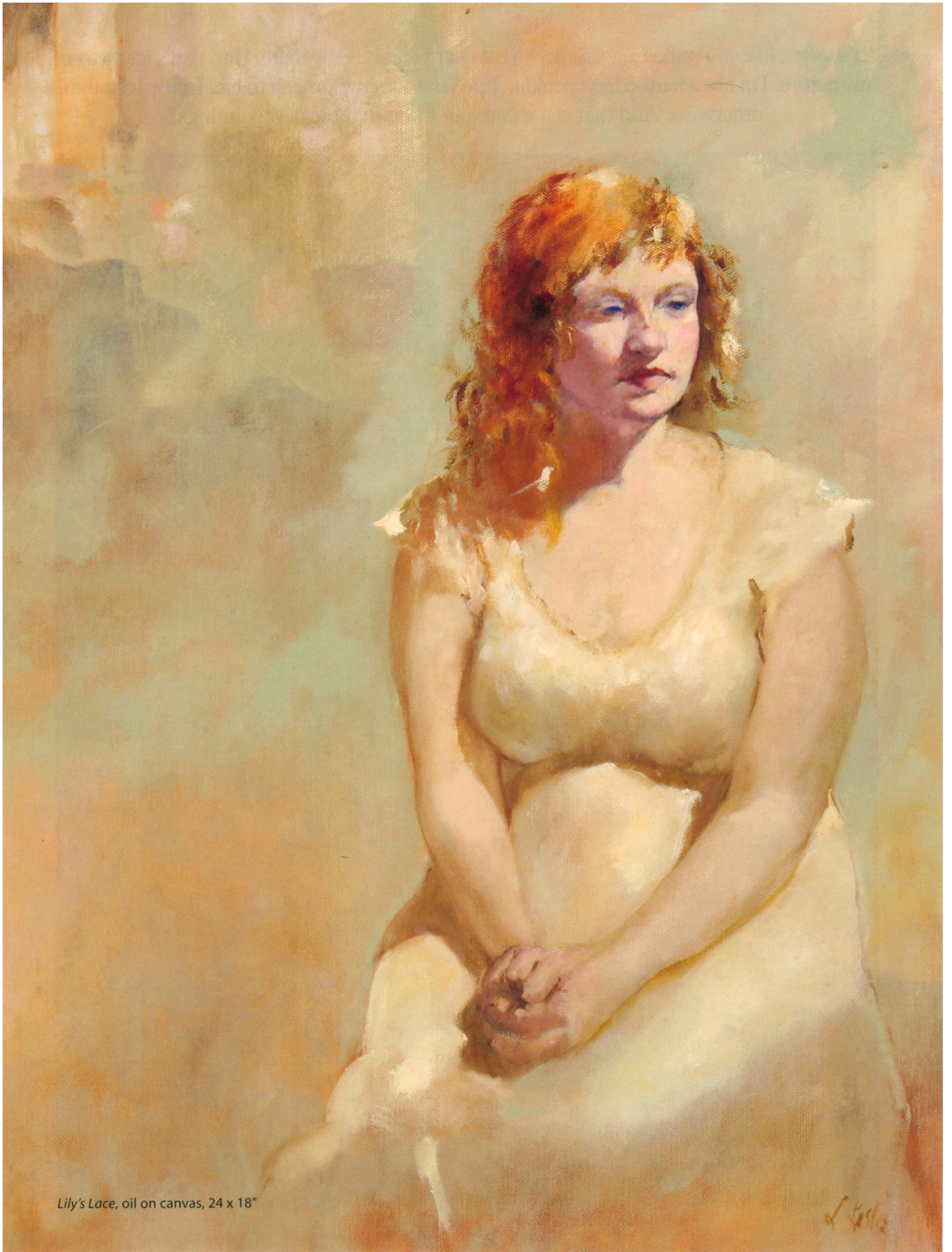
"That seems to be when my energy is the best," says Leslie. "And, I'm naturally an early bird and love to get up early and paint. I like everything in the morning."

Cinzia, oil on canvas, 20 x 16"

“It’s softer, like you pulled a gossamer shade over what is really there. But, that’s just part of my nature. I’m not a hard-edged person. I prefer a softer approach to life. Life is so tough, otherwise. And that just comes out through these new paintings.”



Lily, oil on canvas, 16 x 12"



Lily's Lace, oil on canvas, 24 x 18"

L. Kelly



Walk in the Garden (study), oil on canvas, 8 x 14"



“Linda Leslie is a romantic. She paints the intimacies of line and light and shadow and color in a face, a small landscape or casual still life. Leslie’s paintings are about a simple beauty that she reminds us exists. With the delicacy of her paintbrush she shows us this beauty in the line of an eye, a lip, the shadow of a tree, or a flower or a neckline. She loves seeing and painting what she sees and she is passionate about life.”

— Selby Fleetwood, Owner, Selby Fleetwood Gallery

Linda Leslie in her Santa Fe studio

There is also a difference with light in the morning as well. My studio has big windows with a southern exposure, so by 10 in the morning the light is just flooding in. I love the natural light, though, and love working from life as well.”

Strewn about her studio at the moment is a variety of paintings that will soon be sold at the Selby Fleetwood Gallery on Canyon Road. These paintings draw upon Leslie’s 30 years of experience of working as a figurative painter, a career that has included instruction at New York’s Art Students League and classes with Tony Rider.

“I seem to approach the painting in a fairly traditional manner but it always ends

up looking somewhat contemporary,” says Leslie. “So, I just naturally started to pursue that. I’ve been trained very traditionally but I also think that no matter what, your personality ends up coming out through a painting. So, I don’t plan it, but the paintings have a way of just coming out like this.”

Leslie feels that the style of painting that she has developed over the years tends to evoke more of a romantic and emotional way of looking at and understanding art.

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Leslie hopes that her collectors will be able to get to know her personality and character by first viewing these new paintings.

“The first thing that comes to mind is that it is important for me to be who I am,” says Leslie. “I want people to understand my own style and, basically, just want to be authentic. My father was a sculptor and architect, my mother a photographer and my sisters are all artists, so this is the only thing I’ve ever wanted to do.” ●