

Lesley Heathcote



Artists Statement

My paintings begin with the desire to portray a particular subject. An image comes into my mind and calls to me. I look through the many reference photographs that I've taken over the years most of which have been taken close to my home in Vermont. The photograph as a starting point for expressing my vision. A sense of wonder and appreciation for the beauty and intelligence found in nature guides and inspires me.

My paintings are done with soft pastels, a medium which has been used for many centuries. Pure pigment is mixed with enough binder to form a stick. When framed properly, pastels are one of the most permanent mediums. They are very sensitive to touch which allows me to build my work in soft layers with nuances of color. They also lend themselves to detail and have a strong tactile presence which helps me depict the textures and feeling of my subjects.

I begin by drawing from the photograph, making adjustments to create a strong painting. My goal is to capture the animal or scene accurately while bringing forth the emotional content of the subject, its beauty and poetry. I know I have succeeded when I look at a finished piece and can feel the magic that initially inspired me. I hope that viewers will experience a similar sense of wonder and that my work will help people open their hearts to the magnificence, intelligence and beauty of the natural world.