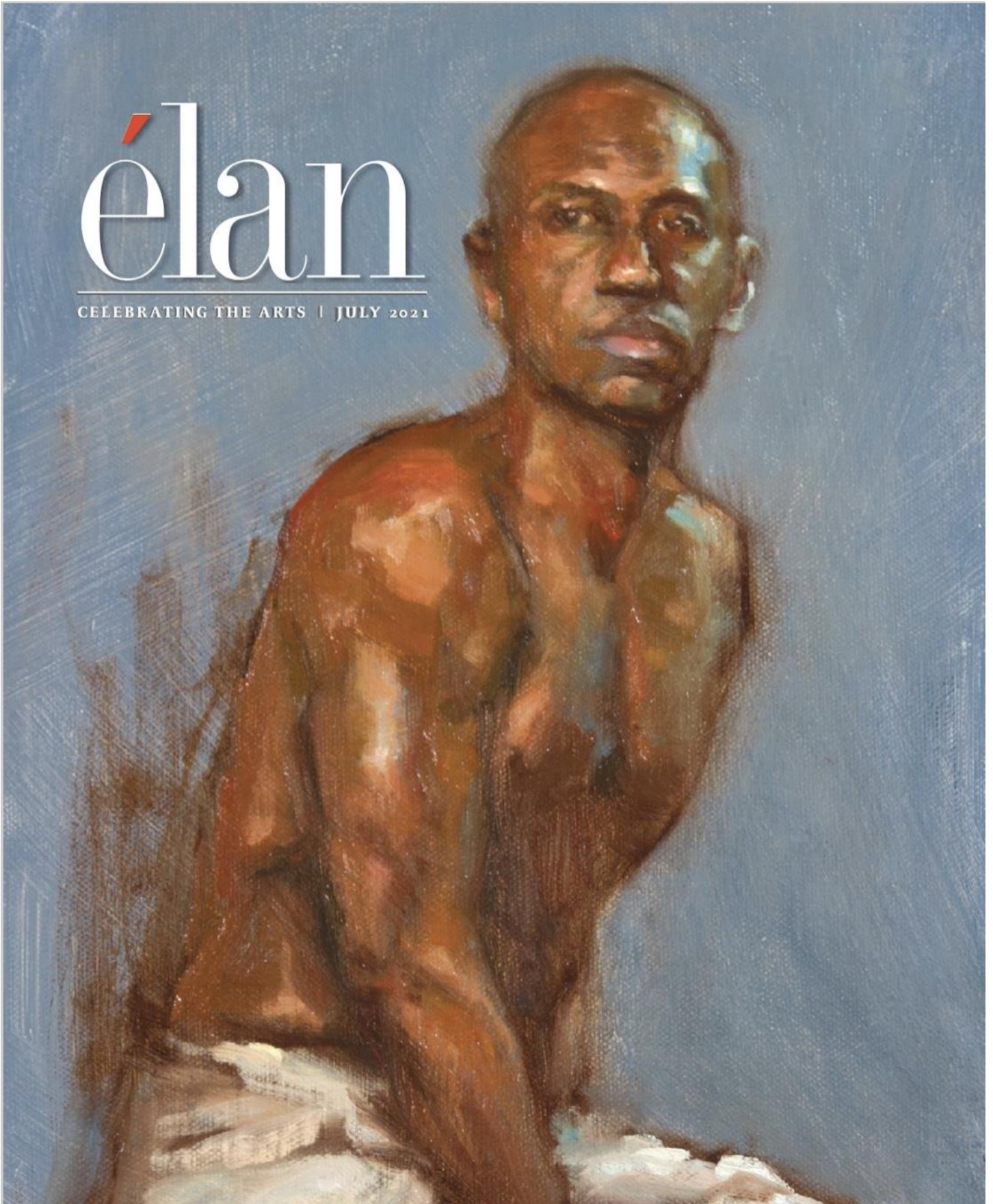


élan

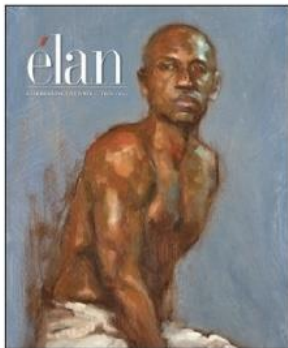
CELEBRATING THE ARTS | JULY 2021



CONTENTS

July 2021

CLARKE | DELANEY | LANDRY | STURDEVANT | TOLOSA



On the cover: "Edge," 20" x 10", oil; above: "Michael," (detail), 11.5" x 10", charcoal and white chalk on blue paper." Both are by Alison Landry; see page 18.

Simply Elegant _____ 14	Hot Wax _____ 26
Potter Marianne Tolosa	Encaustic Artist Lesley Clarke
by Barbara Mackay	by Joe Motheral
Faces and Figures _____ 18	Sharp Contrast _____ 30
Artist Alison Landry	Artist Ellen Delaney
by Janet Scharp	by Joe Motheral
Beauty in the Banal _____ 22	The Perfect Read _____ 40
Artist David Sturdevant	Slice of Life
by Pamela Leigh	Myrna Stuart





ARTIST ALISON LANDRY

Faces and Figures

"ART BECAME A FASCINATION" | BY JANET SCHARP

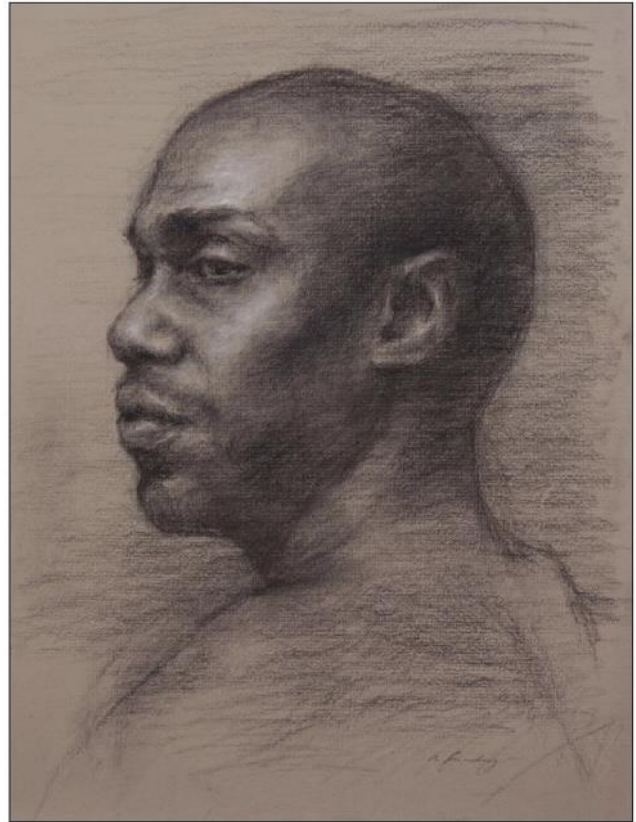
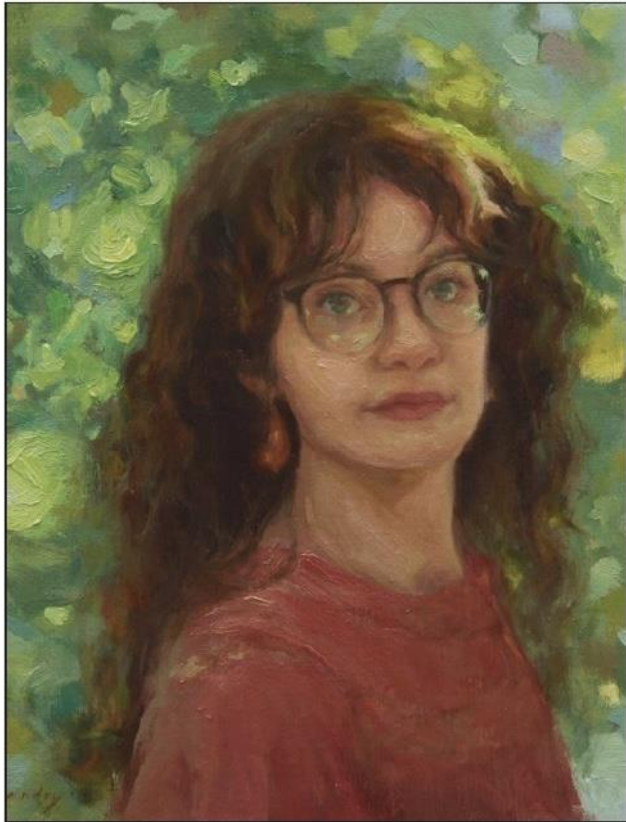


Alison Landry

In her early years, Arlington artist Alison Landry enjoyed her art classes until late high school, when she took a hiatus for more than 10 years to pursue other interests. A native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, she majored in French and Latin at Louisiana State University and spent a year in Paris as an exchange student, taking advantage of her time there to visit several other countries in western Europe. After graduation, she taught French in a Baltimore City school through Teach for America, an organization that places teachers in underserved communities for a two-year period. Alison stayed at her school an extra year after completing a Master's degree in teaching from Johns Hopkins University.

A mutual friend introduced Alison to the man who would become her husband. Before settling down, they both quit their jobs and spent nine months traveling the developing world, doing extreme-budget backpacking. They traveled from Guatemala to the southernmost tip of Argentina, and then flew to Southeast Asia and China, staying in hostels and having, according to Alison, "a huge adventure."

After returning safely to the DC area, she began teaching French in Montgomery County schools. Within a few years, she and her husband welcomed a son, Michael, who is just finishing kindergarten, and a daughter, Lydia, currently enrolled in preschool.



"I'm not looking for a hyper-realistic finish; I like to be a little more disruptive, find nuances of color or expression."

—Alison Landry



When Michael was a year old, Alison began searching for a creative outlet and renewed her interest in art. After taking some open life-studio-drawing classes at the community center, she found that "art became a fascination." She attended more classes and workshops and studied art, artists and paintings, trying to learn everything she could. She especially credits Robert Liberace, instructor at the Alexandria Art League, for her progress after two years of his classes. "I've really pushed myself to get as good as I could as quickly as possible," she says. Today, she continues to take classes and workshops, including online ones from artists as far away as Colorado and Texas.

Alison sketches in charcoal and paints in oil, or occasionally watercolor; she specializes in portrait and figurative works. "I do enjoy sketching landscapes on location for studies, but that's not my primary focus," she explains. "I absolutely love studying people and their faces," she continues, "and I'm branching out into some larger compositions with people in an environment, incorporating a landscape within a portrait or figurative piece." In her paintings, she draws features from many photographs to get the expression she wants.

Alison recently completed several paintings in her "Fruitful" series, using the citrus trees in the backyard of her parents' Louisiana home as background. To her, the fruit of the orange, lemon and grapefruit trees resemble holiday ornaments hanging from trees. One painting



Page 18: "Reverie," 20" x 16," oil on linen

Page 19 from left: "Lydia," 10" x 8"; and "Ava," 14" x 11," both oil on linen

Opposite clockwise from top left: "Cathedral," oil on linen, 16" x 16"; "Moe in Profile," charcoal and white chalk, 16" x 12"; and "Michael at the Bay," oil, 18" x 24"

Above from left: "Lydia at 2," charcoal and white chalk on blue toned paper; and "Alex," charcoal and white chalk, 10" x 9"



of her sister, in particular, is titled "Cathedral" because, Alison says, "the colors of light shining through the leaves behind her almost look like stained glass, with yellows and lemon-greens and blues pulsating behind her and these grapefruit hanging like ornaments. It just reminded me of a beautiful, stained-glass cathedral."

"I like a drawing or painting with a really strong gesture... where there's a sense of movement too," Alison declares. Another painting she recently started, "The Sewing Lesson," shows her mother and daughter sitting outside on a bench while on a family vacation in the Smoky Mountains. She recalls, "The afternoon light is catching this gorgeous glow of colors, creating a rich color harmony that I was exploring. Beyond that, my challenge was to tie the figures of my mother and daughter together in a meaningful and interesting way."

Most of Alison's portrait studies are relatively small (9" x 12", 11" x 14", or 12" x 16"); she likes to go larger (18" x 24" or larger) for the figurative ones. She shares that "the work that I'm developing now, I really want the idea of a narrative, where there's a bigger story behind the painting, not just a pretty face, but something deeper that you can explore."

Alison has been strongly influenced by Degas and the post-Impressionists. "I loved their vibrant, expressive use of colors and fascination with the outdoors," she remembers; "I'm most excited by a painting that has impeccable drawing as well as color and texture: where

the painting is grounded in reality, the drawing and proportion are right where they need to be, and I can take liberties with pushing the color or edges, finding atmosphere or interesting texture." She clarifies, "I'm not looking for a hyper-realistic finish; I like to be a little more disruptive, find nuances of color or expression."

Alison started teaching art a year ago to a family friend who requested private lessons. When another friend asked her to help with a fundraiser for Active Minds, a nonprofit that supports mental health, she created a one-evening program on Rembrandt and the power of light and shadow, discussed some of his work, and demonstrated a charcoal drawing of one of his self-portraits.

Alison maintains a website of her work and accepts portrait commissions. She belongs to The Art League of Alexandria, the Portrait Society of America, the Oil Painters of America and the American Impressionist Society. She shows her paintings and drawings locally at the Art League Gallery and has submitted works to other local venues, including the Capitol Hill Art League show and the annual Herndon Expressions Portrait Competition and Exhibit. A charcoal drawing of her daughter, "Lydia at Two," recently was named a finalist in the Portrait Society of America's members-only competition. 6

Alison Landry | www.alisonlandry.com