



# Artist-at-Large

By Louis St. Lewis

FLY ME TO THE MOON; TOP TEN OF 2005

I think the old adage "time flies" is very true. to me it seems to travel like the Concorde. Just the other day I saw a wisp of Warhol silver creeping into my luxurious locks as I leaned into the mirror during my morning ablutions. Thinking about time passing put me in an introspective mood about some of the best art I was privileged to view during the fleeting days of 2005. Here are some of my favorites, not in any particular order:

1. Jane Filer. Jane Filer is blazing hot. Her shows practically sell out before the doors open and everyone seems to love her. With her friendly manner and down home charm, Filer has made it to the top of the heap without even baring her claws. The purr of satisfaction from her collectors can be heard all over the state.



2. Margarita Leon had a show at Glance Gallery ([www.glancegallery.com](http://www.glancegallery.com)) in Raleigh that really left me spellbound. If you have never met Margarita Leon or seen her

art, you should. She is a lovely Venezuelan artist now living right here in North Carolina and helping to lift our art scene to a new

level. She works with sculptural forms often encrusted with broken ceramic tiles. The texture and colors she chooses show an amazing amount of sophistication. Her vocabulary of boats, ladders, birds, fish, etc. is at once playful and mysterious. Leon has an upcoming show at the Fayetteville Museum of Art.

3. Amy Levine. Levine is one of the most imaginative artists working in the South today. She has a unique and personal approach and isn't afraid to innovate. Her craftsmanship is perfect and she has an inner vision that is all her own. Her canvas tableaux are three-dimensional wonders. The next time you get a chance to drop by Beaufort Fine Art ([www.twogalleries.com](http://www.twogalleries.com)) down on the coast, you need not only go look, but go BUY.

4. "Fusion" at NCMA. This was the finest exhibition of art glass, by far, ever exhibited in our fair state. Lisa and Dudley Anderson of Wilson, Sonia and Isaac Luski of Charlotte and Francine and Benson Pilloff of Chapel Hill graciously lent works of artistic excellence that left many viewers giddy and faint with pleasure. Francine is one of my favorite people. She collects what she loves and has a sensitivity to line, color and form that comes through in each of her choices. And while there are many collectors here who are so insecure that they insist on only buying work in "New York" or some other fictional center of talent, Francine and Benson have the confidence to go looking in their own back yard and patronize local artists . The results are amazing.

5. Lynn Boggess is the greatest landscape painter I know. If you have ever seen his glorious paintings at Tyndall Galleries in Chapel Hill ([www.tyndallgalleries.com](http://www.tyndallgalleries.com)), then you are lucky, since they fly off the walls as soon as they arrive. Boggess sets up right in the woods, surrounded by frost, glistening streams, the changing leaves and



brings back documents so fresh, so full of immediacy that they leave you speechless. I love his larger works; they envelop you with color and overwhelm the senses.

Mark my words, he will go down as one of the finest Landscape painters of our generation, and I mean internationally.

6. Leslie Frontz

7. Harold Frontz. The next time you go to Wilmington, make the trip to Fountainside Gallery ([www.fountainsidegallery.com](http://www.fountainsidegallery.com)) to see the stunning images these two fine artists create. While I normally shy away from the academic in favor of the experimental, these two artists have such control, such mastery of technique that I am always charmed. Seascapes, landscapes, boatscapes, cityscapes, you name it, this couple can create it in lush oil or the immediacy of watercolor, and the sizes are often quite intimate and suitable for anyone's home.

8. Joseph Cave. Gallery C ([www.galleryc.net](http://www.galleryc.net)) always does well with this popular artist, and justly so. Cave's loose brushwork has an energy that animates each and every one of his works. The paint literally dances across the surface of the canvas and the colors are often rich and high

key. With several decades of experience under his belt, the paintings just get better and better each year.

9. Ellen Kong. I am in love with the ceramic work of this talented artist. The sculptures she creates show respect to her Asian heritage, but they are 100 percent original, innovative and imaginative. The clay, folded, molded, pressed and formed, takes on new life in a way I find miraculous. Her colorful glazes only add to the drama and sense of joy each of her works exhibits. In person, she is just what you would expect: enthusiastic, enchanting and engaging-just like her art.

10. Sally Bowen Prange. Prange is one of the most gracious artists I have ever met in my life-elegant, stately, charming. She is also a one-woman force of nature, a powerful and talented ceramicist whose works grace many public and private collections. Her searching intellect and talent led her to be

one of the great innovators of ceramic glazes and forms. When I was recently talking to curators at the Ogden Museum of art about her work, you could



literally hear them getting excited talking about her renown and respect in the ceramic world. She is truly a treasure, and she, like all artists, appreciates your patronage.