

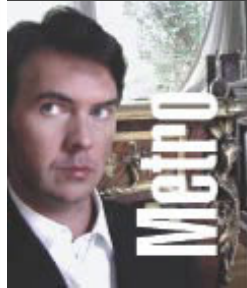


Food & Wine



March 2005

Wining & Dining



# Artist-at-Large

## None But The Brave

By Louis St. Lewis

People who make their living in the arts have my respect, admiration and sympathy. People who make their living in the arts here in North Carolina need to be awarded diamond encrusted purple hearts. As sophisticated as The Old North State purports to be, selling fine art is not for the faint of heart, and those dealers who set up shop are to be commended.



The folks over at Craven Allen Gallery in Durham have been in business for over 12 years, so they count as pioneers. The shop, located at 1106 1/3 Broad St., is intimate in scale and chock full of wonderful art. They also have the reputation of being one of the finest framers in the Triangle.

As soon as I walked in the door, my eye caught a delightful painting of a man pouring lemonade by local favorite Paul Hrusovsky, whose paintings get better all the time. There were several small works by Kathryn DeMarco, one of the masters of collage. What that girl can do with scissors would put Lorena Bobitt to shame. The new intimate scale of works such as Exactly where I'm at possesses a religious reverence with a liberal and healthy dose of sensuality. Diane Rodwell, Sue Sneddon, David Terry, you name them and they were there. Photography is well represented by the likes of Kolina Botera and her elegantly abstracted silver gelatin prints; **and the stunning landscapes of Antonio Bogaert, whose images of New Zealand are as finely crafted as anything Ansel Adams ever clicked.**

Showing for March at the gallery is a body of work by Steve McClure. His series, "Cruelty Makes Memories," is an intimate installation of 48 4-by 6-inch watercolors that all possess a certain melancholia: empty boxcars lit from within, shadowy gentlemen pondering monolithic stones. The works

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are well-crafted yet shadowy, mysterious, alluring. In McClure's portfolio I

found an interesting statement: "The artist's aim is the investigation of nature under the rack and screw." I couldn't have said it better myself.

### **WILHITE'S ELEGANT ABSTRACTIONS**

Congratulations to artist Alex Wilhite for his recent Durham Art Guild emerging artist grant. I'm not certain why Alex would be considered emerging. He arrived on the scene as a full-blown talent, but I'm certain the cash award will come in handy to buy a couple cases of Dom Perignon. Alex is a painter of serious merit, his elegantly formal abstractions are part Stella, part Op, part POP and totally hypnotizing. I don't think he will mind my saying this, but Alex is deaf as a post. One of my earliest encounters came at an opening for him at Somerhill Gallery where he brought along a savagely hip translator with a hot pink crew cut, multiple tattoos and ambiguous gender. Alex has a wit as sharp as his talent, and can cut his detractors to the bone without raising a sweat. Last time I talked to him he was busy scoping out galleries in Milan and Berlin where his funky meditations on color will certainly find an enthusiastic audience.

### **DOSTER, YOON at GLANCE**

Glance Gallery in Raleigh is always a fun place to stop by and see what's up. This month is no different with the great sculpture of Bon Doster on display. The large-scale metal entities dominate every space they inhabit. Doster has made a career and reputation worldwide with his considerable skills. Later this month, Jason Craighead returns with his always-popular paintings. These energized canvases harken back to the glory days of action painting and abstract expressionism, and collectors just seem to line up at the door. While you are in the gallery, check out the new work by Mia Yoon. Last time I sneaked a peak in her studio she was on the verge of a new breakthrough in both technique and style. That young lady is always up to something. go see for yourself.

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