

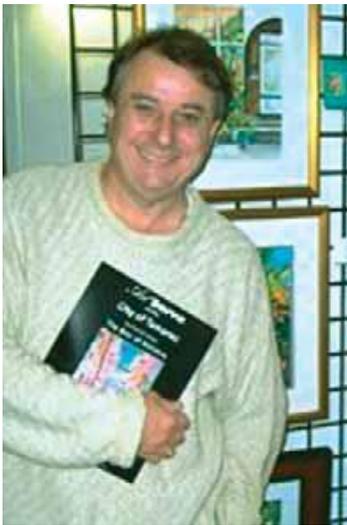
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

ARTIST PROFILE:

Timothy Leistner

By Susan Sherman



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Award-winning local fine artist, photographer and art therapist, Dr. Timothy Leistner, well-known throughout the United States for his brilliant watercolor landscapes and vibrant mixed media collages, has enjoyed numerous solo exhibitions garnering positive acclaim from art enthusiasts. Dr. Leistner brings a unique vision and passion to his art referring to his works as “surrealistic realism”. His subjects are often realistic yet painted within an imaginative new light. A mirror of his own life, his pieces are constantly evolving and changing, taking him to the most surprising places. “You can start the paintings, but you’ll never know where they’ll go. I paint visions that inspire me and they are continually adapting as I grow and change”.

Using bold colors as one of the essential elements throughout his works, he believes his pieces are reflective of his own images and experiences, invoking “energy, excitement, surprise and a quiet stillness”. *Rainforest Bouquet*, a favorite piece, is an example of a multi-layered collage technique which is actually a number of watercolor paintings with the “base painting” being a 22 x 30-inch painting of sunset colors with swirling oranges, blues, and

indigos. Green strips of paper are woven into the landscape forming a latticework, using layers of lime greens, sap greens, yellows, and blues representing the layers of the rainforest. Realistic flowers, butterflies and frogs are then added. The pieces of the painting actually cast shadows onto each other as light reflects on it. Another work, *On the Way to the Keys*, is an example of watercolor pointillism. In this technique, color water droplets form beads on the image and when dry create a dramatic and interesting pointed effect on the canvas. In this piece, Leistner works with a breezy, warm watercolor palette fusing shades of blues and greens. A Perryville, Ohio native, Dr. Leistner was encouraged early on by his mother who inspired him to convey his message to others through the visual arts. One of his proudest achievements has been working with mentally disabled children for the past 3 years in an art therapy program

called "Unlocking Children's Potential" in cooperation with the United Cerebral Palsy foundation. The educational and cultural arts coordinator of the program, Dr. Leistner supervises art teachers and therapists and works with the children as well, many of whom suffer from varying degree of disabilities from mild autism to more severe mental retardation. Favoring the hand over hand method in which he literally guides the students' hands with the paint brush, Dr. Leistner encourages the children

to work in mediums such as watercolor, pottery, and paper mache. Once a year the children's works are framed and displayed in a student exhibition called *Behind Our Eyes*. Here, teachers and parents can revel in the accomplishments of these gifted children. According to Dr. Leistner, the parents are overwhelmed with joy when they see the artwork framed. "So many of them don't get to have the 'normal' parenting experiences that we take for granted." The program has four locations — Pompano, Hollywood, Ft. Lauderdale and Miramar.

Dr. Leistner's paintings and photography have been exhibited in numerous galleries throughout the South Florida area. His most recent showcase, *Winter Chill* at the Music. Art. Love. Gallery in Dania Beach displayed a body of his works as well as his newest photography. The *Winter Chill* collection will have South Floridians yearning for a cozy fire and a nice cup of hot chocolate. "So many people miss the beauty and splendor of winter", says Leistner. Snowy, greeting card settings evoke

warm, quiet images of the natural beauty of Dr. Leistner's hometown and of days gone by. Working only in 35mm film, his photography, much like his paintings, came out of a love for the environment, most recently winning him a coveted first place award at the Annual Membership Holiday Showcase at ArtServe Galleries for his depiction of a frozen river entitled *Line Skating*.

Dr. Leistner has been a resident of South Florida for 17 years and has the distinction of being selected a State of Florida Residency Artist. His other highly notable achievements include planning and developing curriculum for an art distance learning program for the Arts and Culture Center of Hollywood and BECON Educational Television, teaching water color painting classes to adults in Ft. Lauderdale and serving as an adjunct professor for Florida Atlantic University. He's also illustrated three books and has a children's book in the works.

Leistner will open his own gallery in May 2007 called the Artist's Eye Fine Art Gallery, 38 South Federal Highway in Dania Beach.

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