

## Computage - Leslye Bloom

November 1 to December 6, 2006

Perspective Gallery, VA Tech

Leslye Bloom has always been special. She was one of the very few people allowed to earn Bachelors, Masters, and PhD degrees in Penn State's prestigious Art Education program. In addition to her traditional art studies she branched out into computers in 1967, becoming the resident graphic artist in Penn State's Computer Assisted Instruction Lab, working on a time-shared IBM 1100 with all of 16 kilobytes of memory. She thought she had died and gone to heaven when she got an Apple II in 1981 with 64 kilobytes all her own. That was when, as head of Virginia Tech's Art Education program, she began to integrate traditional and computer art.

As a pioneer in the field, she has had to invent many things, including the name for what she does. "Computage" combines the digital medium with traditional media. That synergy results in works that transcend the pure digital and the traditional. The art world can be surprisingly conservative, but over the past decade Leslye's work has become accepted into the mainstream, winning prizes in competition with the best of current traditional artists.

Leslye jokes that she has a "Make Art" button on her computer. In more serious moments, she says "Computers are easy. Art is hard." She may start with a computer image, often from a digital camera, but that is only the start. She'll "whack" the image in her computer, print it out, whack it some more with encaustic, watercolor, graphite, whatever to get the effect she wants. If she's still unsatisfied, she will photograph what she's done, copy that into her computer, and start the process anew.

This show presents examples of her recent work in three general areas: photography based works like *Daybreak*, works based on life drawing like *Weight of the World*. and — always with Leslye — pure whimsy like *Ducka Lisa's Finger Nails* and *The Dog Ate It*. Even her serious works have a whimsical touch. Each contains one impossibility. Can you find them all? Any of them?

<http://www.leslyebloom.com>

