



MICHELLE COUTURE
Managing Editor

true talent LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

There was nothing to dislike about JoAnna Garcia. Her smile was warm. Her eyes were engaging. When she spoke, she was animated, sometimes using her hands to help tell a story. She laughed a lot. She was charming, considerate, humble. She enjoyed chatting. She was candid. Her answers were honest, direct and filled with descriptive detail.

A big-headed celebrity?

Not JoAnna.

Before our recent get-together at her family's longtime home, I had no idea what to expect from the Tampa native who stars on the WB's popular sitcom *Reba*. She has, after all, appeared on television and in movies for more than a decade (in hits such as *Party of Five* and *American Pie 2*), and is among the most well-established young actresses of today. But much to my delight, there wasn't a trace of ego or pretense. JoAnna, in fact, proved to be as delightful to be around as anyone I've interviewed.

In this edition of South Tampa Magazine, which serves as a tribute to those in the arts, JoAnna was the perfect choice to grace the cover. Her entertaining Q&A can be found on Page 20. Our other featured talents – Chase, a dynamic adult alternative musician who has been featured in *FHM* magazine, Justyn Farano, a painter whose works are both lifelike and spectacular, Dominique Martinez, who creates stunning pieces from steel, Misty Schroeder, a master of taking simple objects and creating art, and Tammy Dominguez-Leckinger, a functional art specialist who gives life and energy to everyday homes – have compelling stories of their own. And their amazing work is sure to catch your eyes.

All the best,
Michelle

(Right) This soft pastel painting by artist Elise Gres perfectly captures WB star JoAnna Garcia's beauty. Elise used the photograph below for her inspiration.



Elise, who combines technical skill with intuitive talent, left the practice of law to follow her dream of art. She has created museum-quality portraits for years and will also create landscapes and abstract art by commission.

**The Art Studio of Elise Gres,
(813) 263-7416.**



Elise Gres