

*Roman Fever*, Cate McQuaid, Boston Globe, October 26, 2000



Boston-born Wendy Artin went to Rome six years ago and, dazzled by the light, architecture, and the lulling pace of Italian life, never looked back. Her show at Gurari Collections celebrates the city and what she found there: her vision.

Artin belongs in Rome. She's a classicist, and spends her days wandering the streets sketching the old buildings and statuary, refining line and shadow. Many of the works on view here could have been made a century ago; some could have been made during the Renaissance.

The show is called "Aphrodite" after the many renderings of the bust of that goddess Artin has made. Light falls in from left or right or above, softening or accentuating Aphrodite's lovely features, as if Artin is presenting us with the many faces of woman.

Most of the works here are watercolors. Quick, wet sketches of models, sometimes many on a page, stand out. The artist had to work quickly, executing each in four or five minutes on a page already brushed with water. In a few quick strokes and blots of pigment, a body reveals itself. Such pieces are taut with an almost abstract energy, one line leading neatly into the next, carving out negative space, causing the figures to spring into view.

It's a lovely show, reassuring in its old-style beauty but still fresh, as immediate as the moment she applied brush to paper.