

## The Boston Globe

### Interplay of Light

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"Any Given Moment" by Mary Armstrong at Victoria Munroe Fine Art

MARY ARMSTRONG: Any Given Moment

Mary Armstrong's wax and oil explorations of landscape and light at Victoria Munroe Fine Art explore deeper space than she has in previous work, but she always pops us back to the surface. She deploys layers and layers of pigment, then draws and smudges over it.

The title painting, "Any Given Moment" seems to capture a quicksilver change in the weather. The center is darkness, veined with light - deep green water, written over with gold, merging with the distant sky. It could suck you up. But along the sides and at the top, radiance explodes, with gold lines smeared over in pale pink - miracle clouds, infused with sunlight - and these dance over the surface of the painting, making the deep center seem yet deeper.

Armstrong reverses that interplay in "Near Here #2." The water we look down upon, while distant, bounces light back up to us - blue, written over with rivulets of red and peach. But dark clouds gather along the painting's surface, like dense puffs of smoke.

Darkness receding while light bursts along the surface suggests hope; distant light occluded by darkness has a gloomier message. My guess, though, is that Armstrong is more interested in how light and color affect the eye, and each other. How they affect the spirit is merely corollary.

At: Victoria Munroe Fine Art, 161 Newbury St., through January 21.  
617-523-0661, [www.victoriamunroefineart.com](http://www.victoriamunroefineart.com)