

## Architectural Foundation Gallery

# *A Sliver of Life*

By ERIN J. SMITH / CASA

### **N CAPTURING THE ABUNDANCE AND VARIETY OF THE ORGANIC PRODUCE**

available in Santa Barbara, artist Ginny Speirs breathes new life into an old form. Twenty-four of Speirs' recent still lifes featuring fruits, vegetables, and other botanicals are currently on display at the Architectural Foundation Gallery. The



Solo by Ginny Speirs

show, entitled *A Sliver of Life*, is on display through April 9th.

"I love the color, the lines, the form found in the vegetables. There's so much in even a radicchio leaf you might miss if you just walk by," said Speirs. "People often think

that still lifes are stagnant, but I strive to paint so it still has a life underneath. It can be exciting and vibrant."

Speirs grew up in Birmingham, Alabama. She knew she wanted to be an artist from age seven after winning a self-portrait contest at school. "It was so exciting to win," said Speirs. "I knew right then that I wanted to be an artist. I was lucky because my parents were supportive and nurtured my interest. My father, who was an engineer,



Ginny Speirs

was persnickety about drawing things the right way, and I also had an aunt who was an artist." Speirs began by taking art classes after school throughout her childhood and furthered her studies at Converse College in Spartanburg, South Carolina. After completing a BFA, she attended the University of Georgia at Athens, where she earned an MFA in painting and drawing.

It was also at the University of Georgia that Speirs met landscape artist Garrett Speirs, whom she later married.

Together they have two children, a son and daughter, and each work independently out of their own studios. "Being married to an artist means there's never a dull moment – and no wall space," said Ginny. She and her husband moved from North Carolina to the Santa Barbara area twelve years ago to be closer to family. "We loved the area and the weather – especially the fact that you can go outside so much," she said.

In addition to painting on canvas, Speirs has also worked with trompe l'oeil paintings on furniture and walls and created murals and theatre sets. She is also a member of the Art Council at Westmont and helps organize art-related events for



Tomato on Blue by Ginny Speirs

the Reynolds Gallery.

"Artists show us the beauty of the world around us," said Speirs. "They have other ways of seeing things and can make us feel better and happier. I love that art can preserve a sliver of time and keep it alive forever."

The Architectural Foundation Gallery is located at 229 E Victoria St. Hours are 9-2pm, Tues through Fri. For more information, call 965-6307 or visit [www.ginnyspeirs.com](http://www.ginnyspeirs.com).