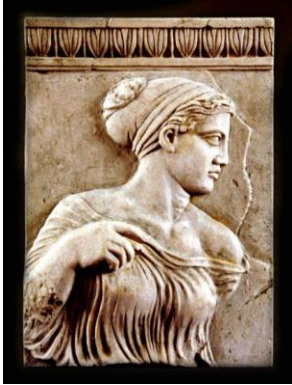


Aphrodite

Venus

Αφροδιτη



"Do you not see how mighty is the goddess Aphrodite? She sows and gives that love from which all we upon this earth are born."

(Nurse of Phaedra. Euripides, *Hippolytus* 450).

The Greek goddess of love, beauty, pleasure, and procreation. She was born from the *aphros* or 'sea foam' when the Titan god Cronus cut off the genitalia of his father Uranus, which seems a wildly horrific manner of birth for a goddess of such a delicate nature.

Her beauty was so overwhelming, Zeus feared the effect she would have on the gods. He married her to Hephaestus, god of blacksmith, craftsmen, sculptors and fire. Aphrodite was not pleased to be given to Hephaestus who was lame and not beautiful. He crafted Aphrodite's famous girdle, which when worn, made men and gods fall hopelessly in love with the wearer (she was able to loan it and its power to others).

Aphrodite interfered with both mortal and immortal men – she took Ares the god of war as a lover and bore him 3 children. She started the Trojan war with a 'who's prettier' contest, bribing Paris with the love of the most beautiful woman. During the battle, she was wounded saving her son and rather than return insult for injury, she ran to Olympus for comfort.

Her birth from the sea-foam, inspired the colors that I've used – aqua, green, the pink and lavender of the mother-of-pearl in a shell and the hint of white foam. I do not want to anger Aphrodite, but her willingness to put her own happiness before thought of any other leaves me seeing her as rather.... shallow. As intense as she could be, I was still moved to use pastels.

