

Carmen Cicero In Carmen Cicero's recent paintings and watercolors, the artist takes a dash of what he calls "Italian romance" — flowers, water illuminated by the moon, *la bella notte* — combines this with an air of foreboding and a cinematic sensibility, and comes out with something at times resembling German Romanticism.

Inspired by the opening scene from the movie "Topper" with Cary Grant, *On The Road*, a watercolor, portrays a lone black car traveling on a road through a wooded landscape, the yellow light from its headlights cutting through the darkness. The trees present a cold, moonlit shade of green against the black sky. There are people in the car, at least one of them wearing a fedora, as seen in silhouette. A frame from some mystery/thriller/comedy, no doubt, but one can't help thinking of Caspar David Friedrich and the Romantic tradition of depicting man in the midst of a ghostly yet animated nature, in which he is a bit player.

Other watercolors support this reading. One shows a car shining its headlights into a pond in the woods at sunset. Another, *The Saboteurs*, has a carload of fedoraed figures heading across a white, nighttime snowfield — headlights leading the way, tire tracks trailing — while a factory is outlined against