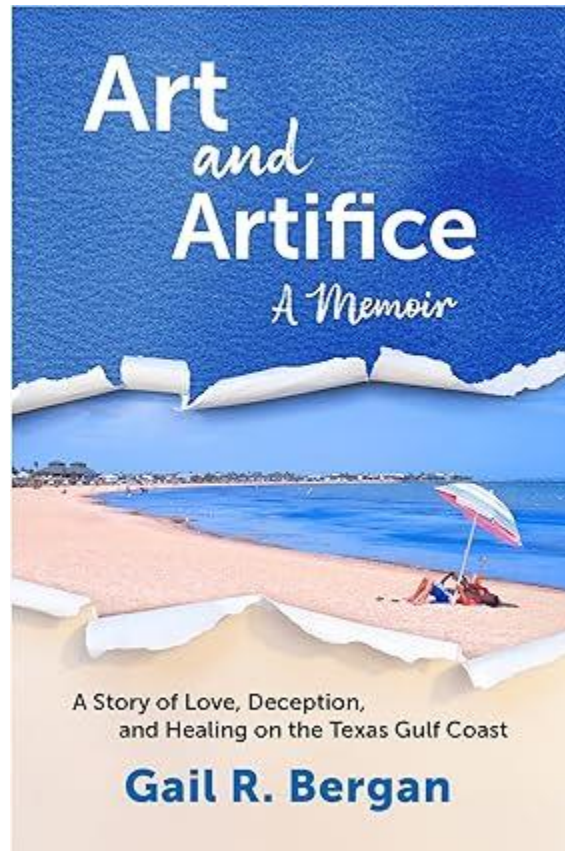


Arts and Artifice



By Gail R. Bergan

Reviewed by Elena S. Smith

Art and Artifice is a powerful exploration of love, illusion, and the slow, courageous journey toward self-restoration. In this compelling memoir, Gail lays bare the emotional devastation of a woman ensnared in a marriage built on well-concealed manipulation and deceit. Her story will resonate deeply with women who have struggled to reclaim their self-respect after enduring psychological and emotional abuse.

Through vivid, unflinching honesty, the memoir traces the protagonist's desperate hope for happiness—her refusal to see the mounting red flags, her faith in a love that was never real but rather a calculated act of “love bombing,” designed to control and confuse. What emerges is both a confession and a warning: a reminder

to women everywhere that vulnerability is not weakness, but trust must be earned—and self-worth must never depend on a man’s approval.

The story is relatable as many women’s hearts are eager to forgive and are open to another chance. Will it work in this story? You’ll have to read it to find out.

Reviewed by Linda Sonntag

Gail Bergen's memoir, *Art and Artifice*, tells a story of love gone awry because of marriage to a master manipulator. What begins as a promising relationship becomes a nightmare when Gail faces stonewalling, gaslighting, ultimatums and emotional abuse from the man she trusted with her dreams. But unlike many women in the clutches of a narcissist Gail stands up to him and eventually extricates herself from his toxic control. The sadness and darkness this story tells is offset by descriptions of many exotic places she visits as she eventually finds peace.

