

Entertainment & Life

Framingham photographer's photo earns director's prize in Cambridge show

By Chris Bergeron/Daily News Staff

Posted Mar 15, 2015 at 4:12 AM

FRAMINGHAM - Claudia Ruiz-Gustafson earned the director's prize in a nationally juried photography exhibit in Cambridge for her poetic self-portrait of enigmatic beauty.

The Framingham resident was recently recognized for her black-and-white image, "Seeing Through the Mirror of the Self," that she submitted to Photography Now, a show organized by the Cambridge Art Association.

The recently opened exhibit was juried by photographer Stephen Tournalentes of Framingham and is on view at University Place Gallery at 124 Mt. Auburn Street, Cambridge through April 17.

Taken as part of a series titled "Reflections," Ruiz-Gustafson's photo depicts an image of herself in a white, open-shouldered dress covering her face with a round mirror that reflects that image onto a second circular mirror framing the photo.

As a photographer, she said she's "obsessed" with using mirrors and water to reflect "not the physical body but the spirit."

A native of Lima, Peru who came to the U.S. to study in 2004, Ruiz-Gustafson said, "This (photo) is my story. It is also a story about being human."

She described her photo series as "an intimate exploration of my journey through life, a merging of the autobiographical and the universal (and) a metaphorical journey without a specific narrative."

Taken with a timer in the attic of her house, Ruiz-Gustafson's haunting photo suggests the fusion of the supernatural and everyday often found in the magical-realistic novels of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and other Latin American authors.

"My photos reflect my upbringing. It reflects every book I've read, all the music I've heard. My whole experience of life has affected my work," she said.

Ruiz-Gustafson studied at Universidad de Lima with Roberto Huarcaya, one of Lima's most renowned photographers. After graduation, she free-lanced as a photographer for a local newspaper and magazine.

She has exhibited her work at the Griffin Museum of Photography, Amazing Things Art Center, Nave Gallery in Somerville and UFORGE Gallery in Jamaica Plain.

After moving to the U.S., Ruiz-Gustafson studied art and photography at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and the New England School of Photography. She started a portrait and wedding photography business in 2005 but is always looking for time for her fine arts photography.

To learn more about Claudia Ruiz-Gustafson, visit www.claudiaphotography.com.

Chris Bergeron is a Daily News staff writer. Contact him at cbergeron@wickedlocal.com or 508-626-4448. Follow us on Twitter [@WickedLocalArts](https://twitter.com/WickedLocalArts) and on Facebook.