

Liz Gold Photographs At High Road Marketplace

Photos of days when snow cloaks the Santuario in silence and the sky is crystal blue or autumn's golden leaves are reflected in the Rio Grande near Embudo: these are the images that Liz Gold captures with her camera.

Her photos are colorful and at times subtle. The sun sets in brilliant orange behind an angel on a Chimayo hill, and to the side of the photo, almost out of view, Tibetan prayer flags. The photos capture the eye with first glance, and the mind with a second look. She has been doing professional photography only a few years, but has already caught people's attention with her stunning photographs of the Santuario and the pilgrimage, Ghost Ranch, and the Northern New Mexico landscape.

The landscape captivated her heart and her eye. Photography for her is a profoundly spiritual experience. One snowy morning when she was shooting at the Santuario, several people actually stopped her to comment on her contagious joy.

Gold tells a story about a Navajo elder who was describing his feeling for the land. He said that an Arab prince once hired a servant whose sole job was to remind him, every minute, to praise God. The Navajo said simply, "Some places are like that." Gold feels that her photographs are a way to capture a tiny piece of that feeling.

Gold lives with her partner, 5 cats and 2 dogs just a stone's throw from the Santuario, and she can often be found there, photographing her favorite subject, year-round. She and her partner care for an apple orchard, another favorite photo-

graphic subject. When not taking photographs, Gold is also a freelance writer. One of her specialties is writing social studies textbooks and biographies.

Gold has been struggling since she was 17 with two chronic illnesses, but she doesn't let them get her down. "I just feel doubly blessed on the days when I can get up and go outside with a camera," she says.

As she has pursued her passion for photography, people and organizations have stepped forward to offer their support. Gold works with a digital SLR camera bought for her by a lifelong friend who had faith in her work. Gold survived a bout of breast cancer three years ago, when she underwent surgery, chemo, and radiation. "My friend's mother died of breast cancer. She understood that I have to make every day count, and not wait around for a 'someday' that might never come." Gold says photographing the Santuario helped her make it through that experience. "For me, it was a form of healing. And a way of giving something back to the world."

"I've been really blessed. Another friend bought me a computer powerful enough for me to store and manipulate the images." Gold is grateful that it is possible to work digitally since her illness prevents her from working in a darkroom. Other friends have helped her buy materials and supplies to get started, as well as physically helping her to set up her studio.

Gold also benefited from a grant from an

organization in Los Alamos called Self-Help Inc. "They believe that, instead of giving handouts, it's important to give people the tools to raise themselves out of poverty." Self-Help bought Gold and her partner Debbie Denison, a painter, a special wide-format archival printer. Gold used the printer to print the photographs for the show.

Gold says she is also extremely grateful to the High Road MarketPlace, a cooperative art gallery near the Santuario in Chimayo where her work will be displayed. "They gave me the opportunity I needed to show my work to the public. The response has been wonderful. The High Road MarketPlace believed in me and helped me learn how to market and display my work."

Essentials

When: Opening Saturday, September 1, 2-5 p.m. Exhibit runs through September
Where: High Road MarketPlace, just north of the Santuario

Gold and Denison also show their work at a small gallery attached to their home, Acequia Madres Gallery, at 3 Santa Cruz Dam Rd. in Chimayo next to the fire station on Highway 98

