

Art Resources:

Sentimento: Immagini d'Italia

by Devon Pettengill / CASA

CAPTURING MORE THAN JUST THE SPLIT SECOND when

the shutter opens and closes, Patricia Houghton Clarke's photographs convey a deeper experience of the subject.

Her show, *Sentimento: Immagini d'Italia*, will be on display at Art Resources Gallery from November 8th through December 17th.

"There is a certain energy you pick up from things you photograph," Clarke shared. "It's like you're channeling it, like you're experiencing your subject on a much deeper level."

Clarke comes from a family of photographers. Her father was a photographer during World War II, and her grandfather was an amateur photographer for most of his life.

In addition to her own recent photographs taken in Italy, *Sentimento* will include some of her grandfather's images of the American Northwest, which she hadn't seen until this past summer.

"I had always known he had a dark room but I was never allowed in there and never saw his work," Clarke shared. "When I saw his work for the first time I could see the thread between us in terms of how we see things."

Clarke is a self-taught photographer who has been a visual artist all her life. Before taking up the camera professionally, she was a batik artist and teacher, and also a watercolor painter.

She uses both a digital camera and a Holga, a medium format Japanese camera favored by many artists for its vignette effect. The images in *Sentimento* were taken with the Holga.

"One of the things about the Holga that I really love is that it isn't immediate,"



Conversazione/Conversation, 2007, by Patricia Houghton Clarke

Clarke shared. "It becomes a much more slowed down and magical process. There is a certain element that you can't control, and that's what I like about it."

Many of Clarke's photographs combine images from more than one exposure, an effect that is sometimes intentional and sometimes a result of overlapping images on the film itself.

"It tells more of a story of what the experience was," Clarke shared. "It's a much fuller picture of what was going on."

Clarke describes taking photographs as something intuitive, in which she looks for composition and something that gives her an emotional

reaction.

Clarke has an emotional connection to Italy, and her upcoming exhibit is an opportunity for her to discuss without words the culture and beauty of the country where she once lived.

One of the themes of Clarke's work is to connect people to communities outside their own. She feels that art is a way for us to stay connected to our humanity.

Previous series of her photographs have featured Thailand, Laos, and the drag culture within the Santa Barbara community.

"I think Santa Barbarans on the whole are a very humanitarian community, and art helps people stay reminded of that," Clarke shared. "I think art, no matter what medium it is, helps us to feel something that is already going on inside of us."

The Art Resources Gallery, located at 512 E. Haley St, is open Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm & Sat 10am-2pm, and can be reached at 966-6923. The opening reception for *Sentimento* will be from 5-7pm on Sat, Nov 8th.



Patricia Houghton Clarke



Luce/Light, 2005, by Patricia Houghton Clarke