

MESSIH, Amira
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Her work is still on display

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Amira's future looks picture perfect

By STEPHANIE INNES
Staff Reporter

It was three years ago that Amira Messih snapped *The Dreaming Window* — a picture that just recently opened the door on a promising career for the 27-year-old Mississauga photographer.

Messih was one of 1,500 artists from 70 countries to enter the Fourth Annual International Exhibition and Sale of Miniature Art at Toronto's Del Bello Gallery last spring. To her surprise, *The Dreaming Window* picked up first

place in the exhibit's photography category.

"It was in July that I found out I had won," said Messih. "I thought it was a real honor. I had entered hoping just to have some of my photos in the exhibit."

Messih entered five photos in the contest, and although her favorite was *The Red Rose*, it was *The Dreaming Window* that caught the eyes of the exhibit's five jury members.

"I think it was the colors in *The Dreaming Window* that made it

stand out," she explained.

Since graduating from photography at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Messih has concentrated her photographic efforts on hand coloring to enhance photos.

The Dreaming Window has a grainy look, which Messih achieved by "pushing" or over-developing the film. The photo is a careful blend of purple and blue hues, refined by the addition of color onto the print. Messih gave the photo its soft look during the actual picture-taking by putting gel on the camera lens.

"The soft, grainy look gives the photo a more romantic quality," she explained.

"Re-touching and hand coloring is my specialty," she noted. "It's an area I really enjoy."

Messih now works full time for Toronto photographer Dean MacDonnell, doing re-touching and production work. She has also done freelance work coloring black and white photographs for the Toronto advertising agency Leo Burnett.

For winning the contest, Messih received \$300, and her work is on display in the Del Bello Gallery, 363 Queen St. W., Toronto.

New gallery hosts shows this weekend

This weekend at the Artisan Centre, daily artist demonstrations will take place from 1 to 4 p.m.

Saturday features artist Gil Caldwell and Sunday's featured artist will be Lorna Bentley Wreford. The demonstrations are part of an ongoing series being presented by the gallery.

Christmas Eve the Artisan Centre will host a Carol Sing from 1 to 4 p.m. with Linda Gaelyn Smith and Brian Smith. Everyone is welcome to join in the festivities.

The Artisan Centre is situated at 265 Enfield Place directly behind the Sussex Centre.

