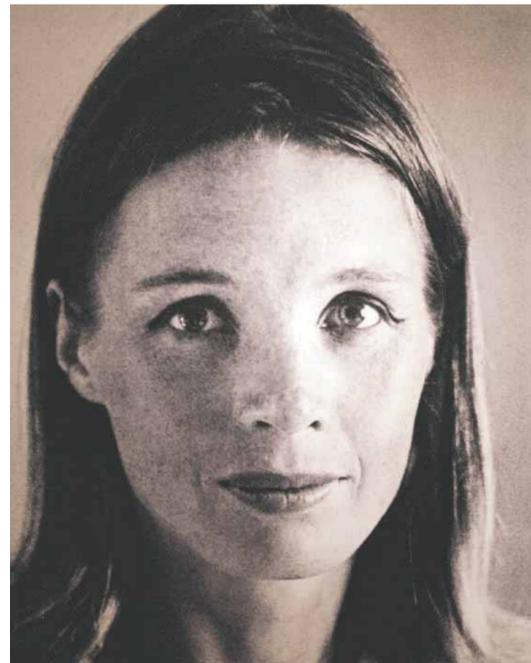


EXHIBIT



PHOTOS ABOVE AND AT RIGHT BY DAPHNE DOUGALL HOGG DE ZILERI

WIDE WORLD: An informal cemetery amid a coastline's desert hills in a photo titled "Between the wild sea and the serene sea." Peruvian photographer Daphne Dougall Hogg de Zileri often used Peru's empty expanses as backdrops for portraits of solitary subjects.



BEHIND THE SCENES: Daphne Dougall Hogg de Zileri, who died last month, kept herself in the background in art and journalism.

Quiet artistry, rooted in family

BY DAVID MONTGOMERY

Lima must have felt temporarily emptied of its artists and intellectuals the other night when all of them seemed to turn up inside an intimate gallery at the Embassy of Peru on Massachusetts Avenue NW.

Here was Mario Vargas Llosa in a black suit and with magnificent silver hair, opining about Occupy Wall Street: "It's very justifiable that there be a protest against the situation" as long as it is "legal, peaceful and respectable," the 2010 Nobel Laureate in literature said in Spanish.

There was Fernando de Szyszlo, the great abstract painter and sculptor, a genial sphinx with a perpetual smile and a red pocket



MARVIN JOSEPH/THE WASHINGTON POST

ADMIRERS: Novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, left, and Enrique Zileri, widower of Daphne Zileri, at the opening reception.

handkerchief.

Lost on no one was the bitter-sweet irony of the gathering of 100 or so visiting aesthetes and Washington-based expats: The shy artist in whose honor they had been summoned probably would have preferred that they not bother.

Her name was Daphne Dougall Hogg de Zileri, a photographer who died last month at 75 of complications from asthma. Her intentional lack of fame as an artist — even within Peru — stood in contrast to the high caliber of those who were in the know and who admired her work.

Seldom exhibited, rarely reviewed, she published two volumes of black-and-white photographs in the 1990s. "Soliloquios," or "Soliloquies," was a series of portraits of people alone, a meditation on solitude. She often set her figures against the vast and sometimes rugged terrain of Peru or within the equally monumental urban landscapes of world capitals.

"She was an artist who shunned publicity, the limelight, and who passed through life and art with an extraordinary discretion," Vargas Llosa said in remarks at the reception that opened the exhibit "Daphne: The Subtle Power of a Woman's Eye," which continues through Wednesday at the embassy.

'Shyness and audacity'

The day before, in the empty gallery, her husband and three of her five children who could make the trip helped hang the photographs. Like so many women artists the world over, Daphne Zileri's



UNIVERSAL HUMANITY: Daphne Zileri began by taking photos of her own children and then cultivated her sensibility by studying Henri Cartier-Bresson, Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange.

creativity started at home, with her family.

Sifting through photos, Enrique Zileri, a courageous magazine editor with a gravelly voice, has made discoveries about his wife of 51 years. What he now considers her best self-portrait was never published. He saw it only after her death: A young woman with big eyes meets the camera with a direct gaze.

"This is a photogenic, self-effacing photographer," Enrique Zileri said, seeming to relive his wife's beauty. "She had a blend of shyness and audacity."

A self-portrait that Daphne Zileri *did* publish revealed only her shadow, elongated by the sun on rippled Peruvian desert sand.

They met in 1959 at the old airport in Lima, when she was passing through to her native Argentina. They were introduced by mutual friends who happened to be Argentine flight attendants. The following year they were married.

Zileri was in the second generation of the family that founded and

ran *Caretas*, one of the oldest weekly newsmagazines in Latin America. In the 1970s, Peru's dictatorship at the time shut down the magazine several times for its pro-democracy editorials. Enrique and Daphne and their children were forced into exile more than once.

Daphne Zileri began taking snapshots of her children, the way parents do. But she cultivated her eye. Ansel Adams, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Frank and Dorothea Lange were on her bookshelf. She would accept wedding photography jobs to help make ends meet when the authorities periodically put the magazine on involuntary hiatus.

When the magazine would get back up and running, she was a stable background presence. "In the havoc of a small magazine was my mother, sort of the moon on her own orbit," says Marco Zileri, now editor in chief, while Enrique is president of the board. "With time I discovered that some of the good ironic headlines on some covers were from my mother."

Mounting the embassy exhibit is like watching the family photo album go up on the wall for Marco and his sisters Drusila Zileri, editor of *Ellos & Ellas*, a lifestyle magazine affiliated with *Caretas*, and Diana Zileri, who works for a Lima nonprofit on renewable-energy and poverty issues. Several of the photographer's subjects are her children.

The mystery that the exhibit attempts to address is, how did this woman take the inspiration that any mother has at hand and transform it into something approaching universality? What makes a picture of Diana as a child sitting on a dramatic desert dune outside Lima seem like a glimpse of the human condition?

In a farewell to his wife, Enrique Zileri wrote how hard it is for their duo to have become his soliloquy. Addressing the crowd at the reception, the voice of the old editor broke as he turned the microphone over to Vargas Llosa.

"They are photos taken in different parts of the world," Vargas Llosa says. "They are photos that express different cultures. However, there is in them an extraordinary unity. They seem to have been taken in a single place, among people from a single community. It seems that all the landscapes are a single landscape. In reality, the common denominator that brings closer these worlds and these different peoples is the extraordinary sensitivity that the camera had in her hands."

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