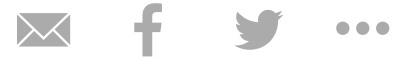




In my backyard: Iceland

By **Jamie K. White, CNN**

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London, United Kingdom ☀️ 17°



8 photos

Agnieszka Sosnowska cuts her hair in this self-portrait taken in eastern Iceland. She moved

1 of 8



Story highlights

Agnieszka Sosnowska has taken a series of self-portraits in Iceland, her home since 2005

She says the images show how she has acclimated to the country and the culture

(CNN)—A string of dead geese around her body, and a rifle on her shoulders. [Agnieszka Sosnowska](#) calls this scene -- photo No. 7 in the gallery above -- "closest to her spirit."

Standing barefoot in the dirt in a paisley night, the image might conjure up thoughts of "Little House on the Prairie" meets "Survivorman."

Sosnowska began experimenting with self-portraiture in 1989 as a student at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

As a younger artist, she said, her portraiture was beautiful yet static -- devoid of the substance she craved. With experience came maturity, and she eventually began to capture herself as "more of a woman -- sure of herself."

In the early 2000s, Sosnowska met her husband while snowmobiling on top of a glacier in Iceland. It was expensive and dangerous, an excursion she was hesitant to take. But she kept in touch with her tour guide, and in 2005 she married him and moved from the United States to a farm in eastern Iceland.



Photographer Agnieszka Sosnowska

Her move put a wealth of "substance" at her feet. Now her work shows us a story of a woman growing into her surroundings, acclimating to a strange culture -- a series that radiates strength.

"Icelandic women are very mentally strong," she said.

Her life in Iceland looks, well, brutal. But she allows her audience glimpses of her feminine and playful side, too.

In one photo, she stands holding a snowball in between walls of ice and snow -- in the fjord of Mjoi fjordur, her favorite place in Iceland. Although very beautiful to the eye, life there is

extreme. The region is home to about 30 people who are snowed in for several months of the year.

She teaches "down the road" at a small school of 38 students. Her class attendance is no more than 10 at a time. She involves her classes with her photography, and she says the students love the camera.

Social media

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She develops her photos in a darkroom her husband built for her inside their barn.

When she's not tending to her garden or lugging sheep across a meadow, she enjoys the warmth of her "snorkel hot pot" -- a hot tub she had shipped from Washington state as a honeymoon present. It makes rural Iceland

look more like a resort in Aspen.

Despite Iceland's surreal backdrop, Sosnowska says her pictures are simply her "growing in front of the camera."

Agnieszka Sosnowska is a photographer based in Egilsstadir, Iceland. You can follow her on [Twitter](#).

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