

Agnieszka Sosnowska

Title

By documenting these individuals, I hope to reveal a way of life that will not be forgotten.

—Agnieszka Sosnowska

“**I** live on a farm in East Iceland where the landscape and the weather are infinitely changing. Nature is a constant to my existence. I document how people, nature, and the animal world are intertwined. Within these worlds, age and decay create a surreal world of rituals that to many may appear frightening or threatening. The rituals of farming and hunting are slow and labor intensive. By all standards they are not economically rewarding. What drives people to live completely off the land?

For years I have been visiting farmers and creating a visual inventory of their lifestyle. I use the camera as a tool to record a way of life that for many may seem lost. Fishing, hunting, planting, and gathering are considered pastimes for many—things to do while on vacation or hobbies. We live in time when the instantaneous has become the norm. Fast is never fast enough. The pace of farming is a slow evolution, dictated by nature, the economy, and sheer will. Farmers’ efforts are both noble and risky. Nature, diseases, and politics affect their efforts.

—Agnieszka Sosnowska

Agnieszka Sosnowska’s photographs serve as the antithesis to what has become the norm in contemporary photography — boring portraiture of uninspired people in uninspired environments. The style she developed while on a Fulbright Scholarship? in her native Poland in 1996-1997— photographing rural artisans—carries through today, but this time not as an outsider. She documents farm life, students, and most often herself. Rather than finding her subjects, she invents situations using props from her world to create compelling photographs.

In *The Hunt*, a reindeer carcass hangs from barn rafters, a woman approaches the upside-down carcass with a tray of knives, and a man, barely visible in the background, sharpens a hunting knife with steel. Sosnowska’s most arresting photograph, *My*

Belt, is a self portrait taken outdoors on the Icelandic plains with a rifle slung over her shoulder and four dead game birds hanging from her belt. She explains this fabricated situation, reenacting a hunting expedition of her husband. Sosnowska’s body of work is a compelling portrait of rural Iceland and the vision of a women committed to exploring the reaches of traditional agricultural societies while using the tools of an art form she learned at MassArt in Boston.

About the Artist

As a child growing up in Poland, Sosnowska spent many summers visiting farms of extended family members. Her early connection to a rural lifestyle influenced many memories as an adult.

Sosnowska received a BFA in Photography in 1995 from Massachusetts College of Art studying large format techniques with Nick Nixon, Barbara Bosworth, Laura McPhee, and Frank Gohlke. In 1999, she earned an MFA in Studio Teaching from Boston University. In 1996, she traveled to her native Poland to complete a Fulbright Fellowship to document the Tatra highlanders. Sosnowska completed an American-Scandinavian Fellowship in Iceland by documenting farmers in 2005. She has since immigrated to Iceland where she lives on a farm with her husband and teaches in a local school.

Her work has been exhibited at the Center for Fine Art Photography (Denver, CO); Wall Space Gallery (Santa Barbara, CA); Castell Gallery (Asheville, NC); Vermont Photo Place Gallery (Middlebury, VT); Academy of Fine Arts (Warsaw, Poland); Gallerí Bláskjár (Egilsstaðir, Iceland); among others. Her awards include first prize in black and white from the Worldwide Photography Gala Awards (New York, NY).

www.sosphotographs.com.



US/Mexico border near El Paso/Juarez, 2007.

David Taylor’s photographs are digitally captured with a medium format camera back and exhibited as 29 1/2 x 36 3/8-inch archival inkjet prints mounted on Dibond aluminum.



Border Monument No. 137, N 31° 27.385' W 111° 27.687', 2009.

Top: Border Monument No. 245, N 32° 34.420' W 116° 39.528', 2009.

Left: Border Monument No. 258 (San Diego/Tijuana), N 32° 32.072' W 117° 07.369', 2009.



Hayride
Date: 2011 ...more



Border Fence (under construction), Cañón el Padre, 2009.

