The Lost Nation Photographs

Sandra Dyas
Editor’s Note

The photographs on the following pages are excerpted from the series *The Lost Nation Photographs* by Sandra Dyas, Iowa City–based visual artist and lecturer at Cornell College. She writes:

Lost Nation is a small town in eastern Iowa close to where I grew up. Its name inspired this body of work. For me, “Lost Nation” is a universal feeling, a metaphor for the human condition. The black-and-white photographs—taken in various locations over a period of twenty years—are an exploration of place, loneliness, and the human spirit, evoking a message of both hope and hopelessness. Like photographer Robert Frank, who said he wanted to describe what it felt like to drive into “the sad American night,” I wanted to photograph people, places, and things that embodied the oddness and honesty of real life.
“HOPE,” Hope, Maine
“Broken Horses,” Jackson County Fair, Maquoketa, Iowa
“Emma with Sparklers,” Iowa City, Iowa
“China Shoes,” near Andrew, Iowa