

kristen m. watson

the lost kingdom series

artist statement

A labyrinth of history, narrative, and oddity beckons within each ramshackle antique shop and junk dealer alongside the winding rural roads that join the sleepy, modest towns of the northeast Vermont. The abandoned barns and workshops of long retired farmers beg questions of Vermont's past and future.

What has been lost in the kingdom?

None of these images are manufactured. I photograph the objects as I encounter them. With the antique shop narrative portraits, searching out the image is largely an anthropological experience. I observe and record the subjects, all the while questioning how and why these unrelated objects from vastly different times and cultures came to occupy the same space. Soon I abandon objective investigation in favor of imagining their stories. The resulting narratives contained in the photo space are humorous, sad, and peculiar.

Complementing the narrative is Vermont's rugged and hoary barns with their striking beauty and vacancy. The earth is slowly reclaiming these abandoned spaces. There is a certain parallel between the abandoned barns scattered with rusty tools and the jumble of antique shops. They are abandoned, aged, and obsolete. Yet what they lose in usefulness they gain curious beauty. As I age I wonder, "Is this true for humans as well?"