surviving modernity: species loneliness in the age of nuclearism

poem prints installation

modernity and its associated others, industrialism, and capitalism, for example, created and creates new forms of global power, bureaucratic authority, and colonial empires. in its wake are poverty, unmet basic human needs for shelter, food, access to clean air, water, health care, education, and clean soil.

massive resource and human exploitation and environmental devastation have compromised many of the world’s peoples hope for a sustainable present and future. the failure of modernity to create its imagined utopia for all living beings has created despair, and left ruined landscapes – those places now empty of its indigenous life forms and myriad panoply of Beings. how is it to survive, the post-industrial society we have created for ourselves?

faced with unprecedented loss of Nature/Habitat, and living under the threat of nuclear omnicide, how can one find a place with which to belong? modern western society, created under the theology of Manifest Destiny, is now moving toward a collective philosophy, from Earth as resource-commodity, to Earth as Mother.

surviving modernity is series of 98 panels (real estate signage), each with two photographs and one poem. each panel has a separate theme, such as Supernatural helpers in the natural world, water, bears, despair, domestic violence, modern saints, and the cold war, trash, hunger, destiny, among others.

each panel is a stand-alone reality; a view into human experience in a culture that has no canon, no dogma, no set of shared beliefs from which to navigate the 21st century disease from the misplaced (displaced) landscape – species loneliness.

the nuclear bomb, created with the science of breaking apart, came to be in a land where the canon, the set of indigenous beliefs, is concerned with keeping everything together, to create global harmony.

these photographs were all taken during fieldwork seasons into the american west (2005-2008), where i conduct oral narrative research with aboriginal people into their/our stories regarding the founding, creation, and maintenance, of the nuclear bomb or aboriginal Home/Lands.

i came to be in these places and each of these beings and places came to me. for that i am grateful.

annie ross