

Mixed Media

a series highlighting area artists, crafters and their creations

Sarah Christianson, 'At a Crossroads'

By Linnea R. Nelson

"Growing up here has really had a big impact on my photography. Even though I live in California, I still photograph back here primarily, and do my major projects here. It's really a part of who I am. I want to photograph things that I know."

Sarah Christianson, a Class of 2000 graduate of Hillsboro High School, and native of the Cummings area, hasn't forgotten her roots while residing in San Francisco.

Her love affair with photography began at an early age, nurtured by the rich visual surroundings of rural North Dakota.

"I've always taken pictures. My parents would develop the film at Rex-all, and eventually I got old enough to drop off my own film and figured out how to charge it to their account," Christianson laughs.

Throughout high school the young photographer's interest grew, and after being discovered reading a book on photography during math class by the daughter of local photographer Gail Mooney, Christianson soon began working as an assistant at Mooney's studio, MoonShot Photography.

"It's funny how things fall into place and work out," Christianson reflects.

The following years took Christianson slightly further afield, to Minnesota State University - Moorhead, where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, followed by a master's in photography at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. In 2009, Christianson relocated to San Francisco.

There, she teaches photography and assists at an exhibition gallery, as a means of both exercising her related skills and supporting her individual photography projects. In addition, she does freelance work for other photographers.

Last fall the first of Christianson's major projects reached completion, in the form of a book titled "Homeplace," published by Daylight Books, which is based in Hillsborough, N.C.

Of the inspiration for the collection, Christianson stated, "I had graduated from MSUM and gone to New York to intern, and when I came back home I suddenly saw things a lot clearer. My grandma had moved to town and sold a farm house, and a couple of years prior, my parents burned down the original homestead where my great-great-grandfather had homesteaded after coming from Norway. I saw that my family history was changing and condensing, and the question became, 'After four generations, what's going to happen now?'"

"Homeplace" thus creates a narrative, told not only through Christianson's photographs of the farm area at present day, but also through the old maps, journals, and photos found in family archives. It is a personal, yet widely relatable story, Christianson feels.

Since then, she has been occupied with a project that tells a story with perhaps even heavier implications.

"At a Crossroads," funded by the San Francisco Arts Commission and recently premiered in that city, is a powerful visual documentation of the effects of the oil boom in western North Dakota.

"I was approached by North Dakotans for Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks. They really wanted to show people in eastern North Dakota what's happening," Christianson recalls.

The organization consequently sponsored "At a Crossroads: An evening with Sarah Christianson concerning the future of North Dakota," which was held at the Fargo Public Library on the evening of June 25. The lecture and slideshow presented many of Christianson's oil boom photos, and the questions her project has raised.

Pieces from the "At a Crossroads" exhibit will also be included in the Plains Art Museum's "The Bakken Boom: Artists respond to the North Dakota Oil Rush," a group show, in the spring of next year.

Despite the evident success of her work thus far, as practically any artist can attest, the path of artistic pursuits is hardly the easiest to navigate.

"The type of photography I do isn't necessarily the most commercially marketable. But it's very important documentation of life in North Dakota, so I'm applying all the time for funding. The other biggest challenge is just getting the word out and my photographs into the world. I have a really great love of North Dakota, and that's the driving force of what I do."

More information about Christianson's projects and samples of her work can be accessed at www.sarahchristianson.com.



Courtesy Photo
"Living in San Francisco, I've been able to go back and forth, and how I see North Dakota changes each time. I have that visual break, so each time I come home, I'm impacted more by the beauty of the landscape." This photograph, titled, "Natural gas flare, White Earth River Valley, September 2013," depicts some of the changes occurring on that landscape as a result of the oil boom.



Courtesy Photo
Sarah showing an aerial photo of a pad site at a recent sponsored event featuring a lecture and slide show of many of her oil boom photos. Pieces from this exhibit entitled "At a Crossroads" will be included in the Plains Art Museum's "The Bakken Boom: Artists respond to the North Dakota Oil Rush", a group show to be held next spring.

HATTON MEN'S CLUB

4th of July Celebration

Thursday, July 3rd

1 pm - 3 pm **Free Root Beer Floats** - Goose River Bank

7 pm **5K and 2.5K Walk/Run** - Register at Hatton Park
(for more info contact Fred Strand or Lisa Iverson)

9 pm - 1 pm **Street Dance featuring Helena Handbasket** - BLUE LINE BAR & GRILL
Ages 18 and above - **Cover - \$8 single/\$15 per couple**

Friday, July 4th

10 am **Hatton Men's Club Parade** Line up at movie theater lot
Parade in reverse procession

11:30 am **Kiddie Tractor Pull (Non-Sanctioned)** Ages 4-11
(F&M Bank parking lot on 7th St.)

Fire Truck Rides & Games - Hatton Fire Hall

Hatton Eielson Museum Annual Dinner - Hatton Community Center
Adults \$7 / Kids \$3 (Burgers, hot dogs, chicken, beans, potato salad, chips, watermelon, drinks)

2 pm **Demolition Derby** Register by 1:00 pm (\$4,000 Total Purse)

Pickup Derby - One heat of pickups
Adults \$10 / Kids \$5 (5 & under FREE)

SSR Pit Bike Giveaway - \$2 per ticket
(Sold at Derby Only - must be present to win)

Harley Giveaway - \$10 per ticket
(Tickets sold at area businesses, any Men's Club Member and at the Derby)
Winning ticket to be drawn at derby (Need not be present to win)

Saturday, July 5th

1 pm **Bean Bag Tournament**
Blue Line Bar & Grill
Registration 12 pm
\$5/person - Teams of 2
100% Payout, bar will match the pot

Summer Clearance Sale

			MSRP	Sale Price
2013	ATV 450	Green	\$5,999	\$4,999
2013	ATV 450	Red	\$5,999	\$4,999
2013	ATV 500	Red	\$6,399	\$5,299
2013	ATV 500 XT	Advantage Timber	\$7,399	\$5,999
2013	ATV 550 XT	eps	\$9,299	\$7,599
2013	ATV 550 XT	eps	\$9,299	\$7,599
2013	ATV 550 LTD esp	Sunset Orange	\$9,799	\$7,999
2013	ATV 550 LTD	Desert Red	\$9,799	\$7,999
2013	ATV 550 LTD	eps	\$9,999	\$8,199
2013	ATV 700 (core)	Red	\$8,999	\$7,199
2013	ATV 700 XT	eps	\$10,299	\$8,299
2013	ATV 700 LTD	eps	\$10,999	\$8,899
2013	TRV 700 XT	eps	\$10,999	\$8,899
2013	Prowler 550 XT	Tungsten Metallic	\$10,999	\$8,999
2013	Prowler 700 XTX	eps	\$13,299	\$10,599
2013	Prowler 1000 XTX	eps	\$15,999	\$12,599
2013	Prowler 700 HDX (demo)	Advantage Timber	\$13,999	\$9,999

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