

Adam Simms

Newfoundland

Unsettled



During the summer of 2012, I photographed the relics of 12 abandoned outport communities that fell under the 1965 resettlement act shortly after Newfoundland joined Canada as its 10th province. My intentions were to document the traces of what was left behind, to experience the atmosphere of places that once existed, and to explore the concept of home in relation to culture, identity and place.

The rugged Newfoundland landscape shaped and defined the livelihood of these communities; I envisioned large schooners in the harbour, fishing boats out to sea, colourful staggered houses, and a strong sense of community that depended on each other for survival. There was an overwhelming feeling of nostalgia as I envisioned what these places were like, and what the culture of outport Newfoundland would be today if these places continued to exist. It was impossible to be consumed by a romantic notion of space and time before thoughts of houses floating across the ocean to their new destinations, nature reclaiming the landscape, structures falling apart, and an immense sense of loss re-emerged the harsh reality.

I have dedicated my artistic practice to understanding the relationship between identity and place, and like other Newfoundlanders, I still consider Newfoundland to be home after abandoning the province many years ago. As memories of resettlement are embedded within all Newfoundlanders, I believe it is the process of abandonment of the outport communities that has shaped the Newfoundland identity and defined a sense of home that is intricately tied to place.













ADAM SIMMS is a Montreal-based visual artist whose practice is rooted in contemporary landscape photography. Inspired by the identity and landscapes of his Newfoundland origins, his work often constructs narratives that contribute to the understanding of culture and place-based identity.

Adam has produced several photographic projects such as *Unsettled* (2013), *Where Did you Come From To?* (2008), *Washed-up* (2009), *Sublime* (2010), and *Newfoundland* (2011). He has participated in solo and group exhibitions, as well as public art installations across Canada. Adam is currently working on a project focusing on the 1965 Resettlement Act of Newfoundland and how the abandonment of outport communities shaped and strengthened the sense of identity in Newfoundland.

Alongside his exhibition record, critics have written about his work in publications such as *Photographer's FORUM*, *The Montreal Gazette*, *The Montreal Mirror*, *Nor'Wester*, and *Fugues*. Adam is the recipient of several grants from The Provincial Government of Newfoundland and The Federal Government of Canada and was selected as a finalist in the *Best of College Photography 2011* by *Photographer's Forum*. To see more of Adam's work go to: <http://adamsim.ms/>.