

Artist's Statement

Iowa does not scream its beauty, it whispers it. You may not see it from the window of a speeding car but the beauty is there, lurking everywhere. In the misty mornings. And the frosty Autumns. In the vast plains and broad horizons covered by endless sky. The beauty of Iowa knows no bounds; but it does help to slow down a bit and take a careful look, or you risk missing another glimpse of wonder and beauty.

The writings of Hamlin Garland have struck me much the same way: they contain depth and beauty that doesn't always reach out and scream at you. Careful reading yields unique insights and understanding. The harsh and stark world of life on the prairie is delivered in one breath only to be contrasted by Nature's grandeur and wonder in the next. The toil and tribulations of working the land are made real but so is the fun and enjoyment of the evening gathering after a hard day.

As I set out to capture images of Garland's Iowa these dichotomies of stark and harsh versus wonder and beauty were front and center in my mind. What might have seemed bleak and ordinary at first glance often revealed beauty and magnificence upon closer inspection. It was this search for the deeper beauty that kept me coming back to Iowa, the result for me has been a deep appreciation of the sublime of Iowa.

Jon Morris