

Off the wall: Rothbart's photos document aftermath of Chernobyl

LINDSAY CHRISTIANS The Capital Times lchristians@madison.com | Posted: Saturday, September 19, 2009 5:00 am | No Comments Posted



An abandoned bus rusts away in the forest near Lyutezh, Ukraine, south of the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. Outside the 30-kilometer zone are thousands of small villages such as Lyutezh in Vyshgorodskiy raion, where the land was also contaminated by radioactive fallout. People continue to live here despite possibly higher incidences of diseases such as cancer, and many receive small government pensions for their status as Chernobyl survivors. © Michael Forster Rothbart Photography www.mfrphoto.com ☎ 608-242-1131 64 Lansing St, Madison, WI 53714 info@mfrphoto.com Photo by: Michael Forster Rothbart Date: 5/2007 File#: Canon 20D digital camera frame 6582 Photo by: Michael Forster Rothbart

Michael Forster Rothbart traveled to the Ukraine to photograph those still living near Chernobyl, where a nuclear disaster decimated the region in 1986.

Rothbart's photos show family life, employees who still work at the Chernobyl plant, a small, smiling girl in a pink coat surrounded by pigeons. Other images are more somber - an abandoned

bus, rusting in a forest where, Rothbart writes, "the land is still contaminated by radioactive fallout."

One photo shows a man, Vasily, displaying a tattoo of his wife. She died just before her 46th birthday, but Vasily remains, farming a small plot in Ikankiv - "the closest inhabited city to the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone," Rothbart said.

For Rothbart, Chernobyl tells a story about endurance and hope.

"The people of Chernobyl are not victims, mutants and orphans," he told the Madison Arts Commission, which is hosting the show through Oct. 30. "They are simply people living their lives, with their own joys and sorrows, hopes and fears. Like you. Like me."

If you go:

What: After Chernobyl: Photo Exhibit by Michael Forster Rothbart

Where: Madison Municipal Building ARTspace Gallery, 215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

When: On display through Oct. 30

Info: cityofmadison.com/mac; friendsofchernobylcenters.org

Posted in Visual on *Saturday, September 19, 2009 5:00 am* Updated: 7:30 am. Rothbart, Chernobyl

Give us your feedback:

Food

- Restaurants
- Dining Guide
- Salud!

Movies

- Show Times
- Top of the Queue
- Hey, Watch It!

Music

- Clubs Calendar
- Dane of My Existence

Arts

- Books
- Music
- On the Aisle

TV & Games

- TV
- Video Games

City Life

- Calendar
- Around the Bubbler
- Qs
- Seen
- Elements of Style

- Travel
- Home

General

- About
- Contact