

# KARA FLANAGAN

## Plainville

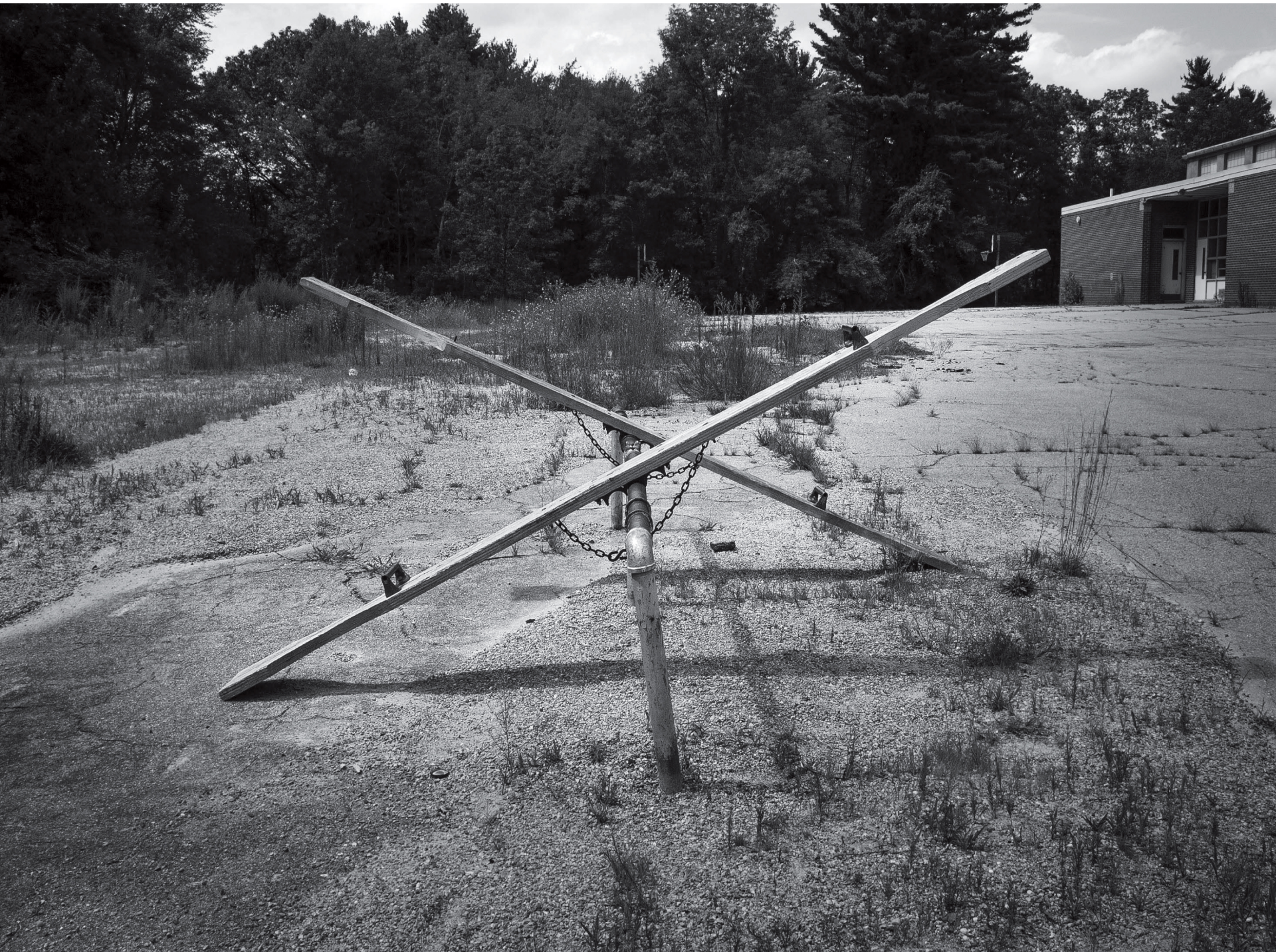
In my work I explore a dimension of my childhood that is usually not spoken of. I photograph sites that I inhabited as a child, many of which are abandoned today. These places refer to the psychological experience of being left behind by a parent and they bring back specific memories of events that occurred there. Additionally, the act of reexposure to the sites is a way of trauma intervention that is the core to this work.

When I revisit the sea-saw I used to ride, the elementary school I attended, or the church I got baptized at, I have both positive and negative associations: these places were refuges from my dysfunctional home and places of comfort but they also generated anxiety in reminding me what I sought refuge from and what I would be returning to. My dual interest in art and psychology make these sites particularly appropriate as a subject matter.

My photographs demonstrate the act of looking back. I have printed the images in black and white to produce a sense of skepticism. This is further emphasized by the geometric compositions, which suggest symbolic characters, like letters or numbers. I want to suggest a story to be decoded; however, since the characters are illegible the story remains a mystery. By making larger prints, it provides a way of inviting the viewer to invade the space.

The sense of abandonment has a personal meaning but can also transcend that, communicating with an individual viewer and recalling his or her own experiences. I want to provide a flashback into my personal history of abandonment and also invite the viewer to look back on their own childhood memories. My work encourages viewers to consider the act of recollection-- I hope that it helps enable viewers to retrieve their own early memories.

*Teeter-Totter*, pigment based archival inkjet print, 44" x 28", 2013



*Metal Slide*, pigment based archival inkjet print, 44" x 28", 2013



*Bridge Leading to Nowherseville*, pigment based archival inkjet print, 44" x 28", 2013

