



Ray Torrey, Lily Dale

Date
1995

Primary Maker
Bill McDowell

Medium
Silver gelatin print

Description
"The Lily Dale Assembly was founded in 1879 in Western New York as a retreat for Spiritualists. Today, all 150 residents of Lily Dale are practicing Spiritualists. In order to practice as a medium in the village one must pass a rigorous screening by the town board. In 1991 Bill McDowell began photographing and taping interviews at Lily Dale to document residents of the community who are mediums and Spiritualists both by conviction and occupation. A medium acts as a conduit for an astral entity that

wishes to 'manifest' itself on the physical plane, and mediums communicate through a 'spirit guide' which acts as an intermediary to other departed souls. McDowell's portraits reflect the mystical and enigmatic qualities of his subjects seen in the portraits of Ray Torrey as he looks reflectively up to the sky, or Kitty Osborn as she mediates in front of her home with a large satellite dish antenna looming in the background. McDowell's formal portraits range from the mysterious, to the devout, at times playful and even humorous, each unique to the subject." (SOURCE: Light Work, Syracuse, NY)

Dimensions
Image: 8 7/8 in. x 9 in. (22.5 x 22.9 cm) Sheet: 14 x 11 in. (35.6 x 27.9 cm)