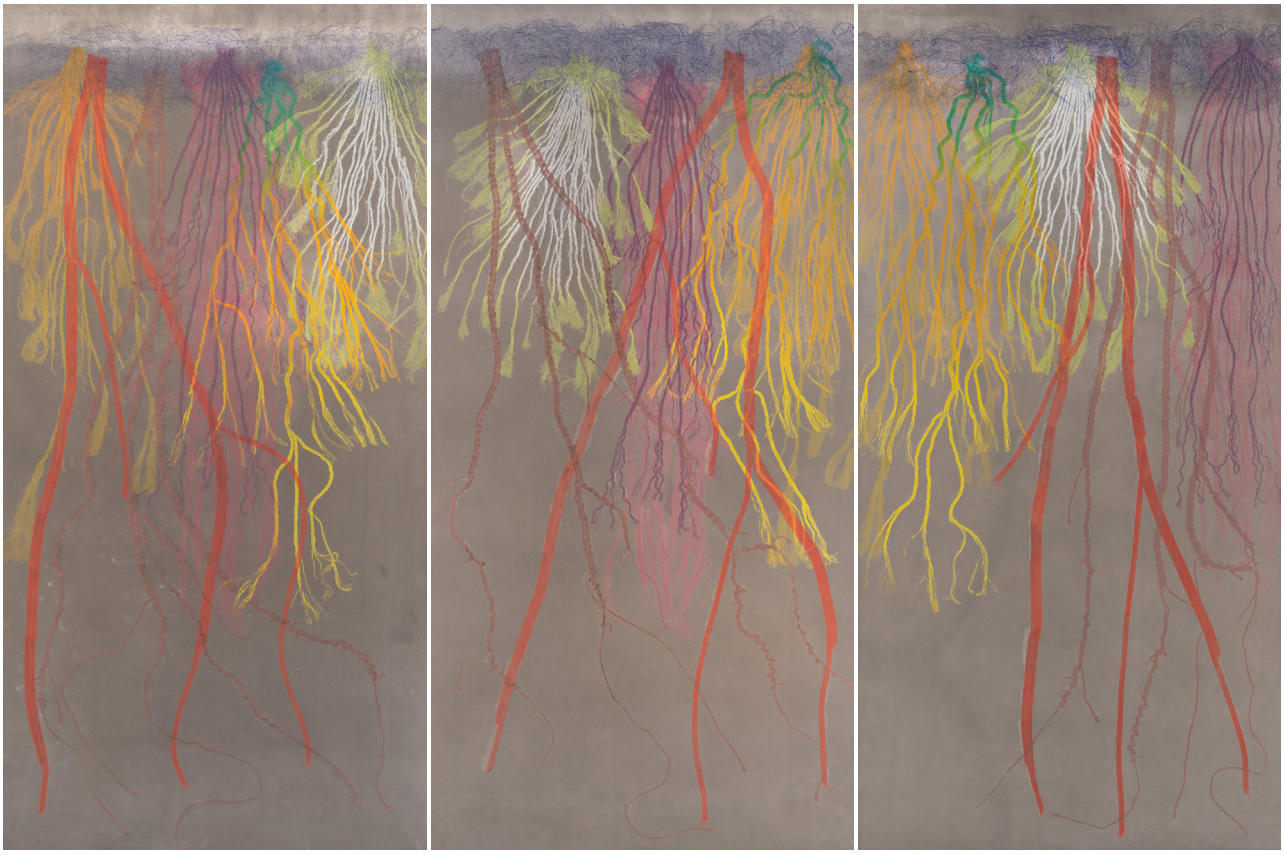
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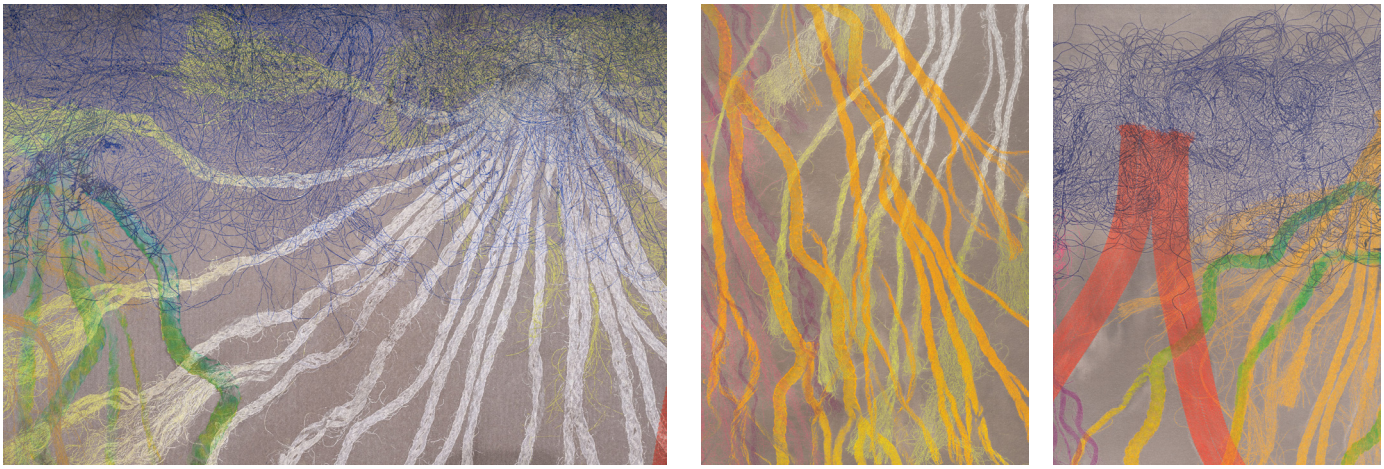
CAROLINA CAYCEDO | ISLAND PRESS NEW EDITIONS



ABOVE: *Prairie Root Portrait 1, 2, and 3,* Carolina Caycedo*,* 2026, Three-part relief print from paracord, sisal, jute, climbing, and cotton rope on dyed Evolon paper, 108 ½ x 54 inches.

The Los Angeles–based Colombian artist Carolina Caycedo is internationally recognized for her multidisciplinary artistic practice that addresses humanity's relationship with nature. Drawing on principles from environmental justice, traditional philosophies, and ecofeminism, Caycedo challenges us to understand nature not as a resource to be exploited but as a living entity that unites people beyond borders.

Caycedo's three-part relief print *Prairie Root Portrait*, produced through a residency and collaboration with Island Press and with assistance from Sam Fox School students, depicts the root systems of six perennial prairie grasses native to the Midwestern United States—plants that stabilize and enrich soils, boost biodiversity, and absorb water during floods. To create these prints, Caycedo inked a variety of knotted materials, including paracord, sisal, jute, cotton rope, and climbing rope to represent the long, intertwined roots of blue false indigo, compass plant, lead plant, prairie dropseed, rosin weed, and Indian grass. The ropes were first coated with oil-based printmaking ink ranging in color from purple, pink, and cinnamon to green, orange, and yellow before being printed onto Evolon paper. The impressions are incredibly detailed, revealing a plethora of intricate patterns, textures, and depressions unique to the different properties of the materials used. Each of the three panels is distinct, presenting various configurations of these roots that stretch down and snake across



ABOVE: details, *Prairie Root Portrait,* Carolina Caycedo*,* 2026.

the surface of the paper with dynamic moments of intersection apparent throughout. The deep brown of the background evokes a rich soil and was achieved through spray-dyeing with a brown-black acrylic. The scale of Caycedo's images is significant. At nine feet in height, the triptych is meant to approach the measure of the actual roots depicted, which can reach over fifteen feet below ground. Standing in front of the panels, one feels almost dwarfed by the enormity of these largely unseen root systems and the resilient biodiversity that they represent, inviting us to reflect on and reimagine our relationship to the natural world.

Prairie Root Portrait was informed, in part, by the artist's consultation with the Osage Nation Traditional Cultural Advisors Committee, as well as by conversations with St. Louis–based and regional plant scientists and other community members about relationships between humans and prairie ecosystems both past and present. With this work, Caycedo builds on her inquiry into plant life, mutuality, and abundance established with her *Plant Portraits* (2021–ongoing), a series of works on paper exploring the power of people and plants to care for and nurture one another. With *Prairie Root Portrait*, she examines not only what is visible above ground but also the equally crucial root-to-soil interactions happening below ground. In calling these bodies of work "portraits," Caycedo reorients the Western portraiture tradition, positioning plants as subjects with their own political agency while underscoring interdependence across species.

Essay by **Meredith Malone,** Nancy and Kenneth Kranzberg Curator and Senior Curator, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University in St. Louis

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Carolina Caycedo (b. London, 1978) is a Colombian multidisciplinary artist living between Los Angeles and Bogotá. Her artist's books, hanging sculptures, performances, films, immense satellite photo collages, and installations are not merely art objects but gateways into larger discussions about how we treat each other and the world around us. Exhibitions include Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis (2026); Counterpublic 2026: Coyote Time (2026); Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) (2026); Museum of Art Pudong, Shanghai (2026); 61st Venice Biennale (2026); Museo de Arte Miguel Urrutia, Bogota (2025); Tate Modern, London (2025); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2018); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2018). Caycedo is a recipient of United States Artists Fellowship (2023) and a residency at Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2024).

Island Press is a research-based printmaking workshop and publisher committed to education and innovation in contemporary print editions and artist projects. Visiting artists work side by side with the master printer and students in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis. The result is high-quality print editions of technical complexity created in a unique setting where artists and students share skill sets and ideas. Island Press was founded in 1978 and has collaborated with dozens of exceptional artists over the past 4 decades.

DIRECTOR *Lisa Bulawsky* | ***MASTER PRINTER*** *Tom Reed*

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