

PROOF

DUANE SLICK

ISLAND PRESS NEW EDITIONS FALL 2020

Duane Slick's imagery is rooted in his Woodlands identity—specifically, Meskwaki/Ho-Chunk. Dozens of Algonquin- and Iroquoian-speaking nations inhabited the Woodlands area in what is today the Eastern United States and Southern Canada, including the Cahokia Mounds across the Mississippi River from St. Louis where this work was made. Though displaced, Native Americans remain a vital presence globally. In his studio practice Slick works through philosophical and metaphysical questions in defiance of observable phenomena.

Duane Slick visited Island Press in the fall of 2019 as the Arthur and Sheila Prensky visiting artist to create a multi-layered collagraph. Crafting a Consequential Narrative developed intuitively and in collaboration with Master Printer Tom Reed. It includes the artist's signature leitmotif: a coyote head. At the top, a bright red rectangle screenprinted on Okawara frames one coyote portrait. Another coyote on the left appears to have a radioactive green glow. Coyote is a trickster character in many Native oral traditions. Of this symbol Slick explains how in depicting coyote's shadow, he returns metaphysical autonomy to a folk art object drained of its original intention through capitalism.

The artist worked with a black and white palette for many years before choosing to introduce limited, symbolic colors of red and green. Together these four are the colors worn by Woodlands tribal dancers. Dynamic swirls of carborundum suggest woodgrain pattern. Snippets of foxtail grass lie around the periphery. The subtle contours of these stalks almost hide within a dense ecosystem. Further breaking up the space, several black bars of varying width relate to Slick's current paintings. Within two of these the artist painted a grayscale gradation in acrylic. This collage aesthetic is reminiscent of Robert Rauschenberg as well as George Longfish (Tuscarora), who mentored Slick in graduate school at the University of California–Davis, and Jaune Quick-To-See Smith (Salish/Métis/Cree/Shoshone-Bannock), whom the artist greatly admires. In this way he weaves together various threads of contemporary American art.



Above: *Crafting a Consequential Narrative*, 2020. Collagraph, relief, screenprint, acrylic, and chine collés (on Okawara), silver ink on Rives BFK White, 34 1/2 x 30 inches. Edition size 16.

The edition of 16 was completed in September 2020, seven months into the global pandemic coupled with much social and political strain. The title *Crafting a Consequential Narrative* refers to the uncontrollability of our current situations. New challenges also bring new perspectives to the past, and global events changed the way the artist thought about this work. For instance, foxtail grass spreads easily and is difficult to control—an apt metaphor for disease and disinformation.

essay by Andrea L. Ferber, PhD, Research Assistant for Prints, Drawings, and Photographs, Saint Louis Art Museum



Pictured above: Duane working in the shop at Island Press on collage elements for *Crafting a Consequential Narrative* in October of 2019.

Pictured below: Students in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts help to print components of Duane's print as well as the "helper prints" for the project.



ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Born in Waterloo, Iowa, Slick earned his BFA from the University of Northern Iowa and his MFA from the University of California, Davis. He taught at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe from 1992-95 and is currently a professor of painting at the Rhode Island School of Design. Slick has lectured at colleges and universities across the United States, and his work has been exhibited widely, most recently in a national touring exhibition titled *Native Art NOW!*, organized by the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis, and in *Culture Shift: Contemporary Native Art Biennial* at Art Mur in Montreal. His work is included in the collections of the National Museum of the American Indian, The Decordova Museum, and the Peabody Essex Museum, among many others. Slick is currently represented by the Albert Merola Gallery in Provincetown, Massachusetts.

MORE INFORMATION islandpress.wustl.edu | islandpress@wustl.edu | 314.935.8051

ISLAND PRESS

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 is project-driven and collaborative, tapping into the place where the artist's creative research intersects with the all of the

possibilities of the print studio. Recent artist projects include editions with Radcliffe Bailey, Chakaia Booker, Squeak Carnwath, Willie Cole, Henrik Drescher, Chris Duncan, Tom Friedman, Ann Hamilton, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Nina Katchadourian, Shaun O'Dell, Dario Robleto, Lisa Sanditz, Beverly Semmes, James Siena, and Paula Wilson.

Island Press was founded in 1978. Past visiting artists include Hung Liu, Jaune Quick-To-See-Smith, Joyce Scott, Juan Sanchez, Nick Cave, and many other great artists.

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