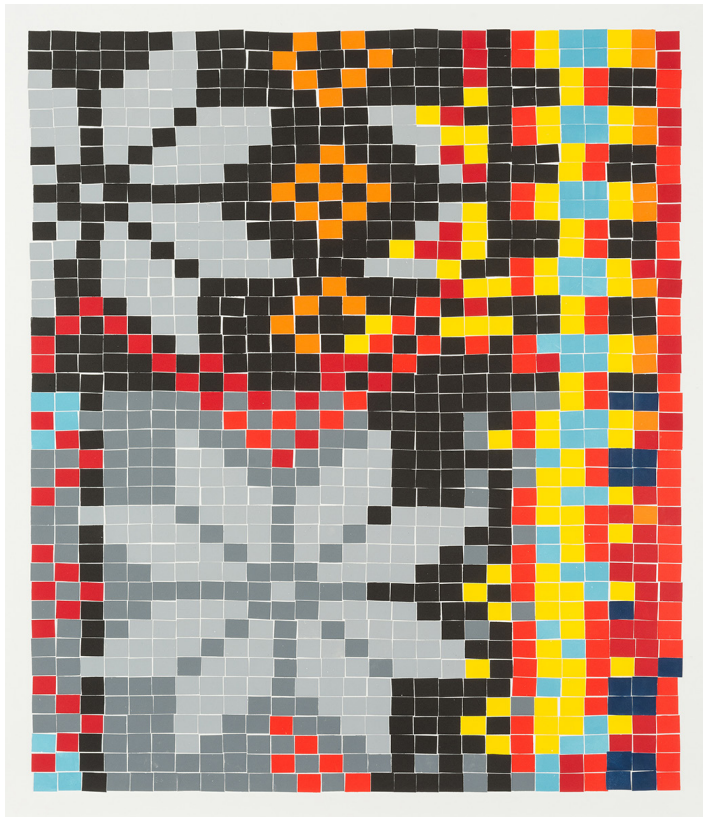


# PROOF

## LISA ANNE AUERBACH | NEW EDITIONS 2018

Artist Lisa Anne Auerbach is known for her knitted works that explore the intersection of personal style and political conviction. In her ongoing series of knitwear she integrates texts and images—including historical quotations, catchphrases, and polemical slogans often calibrated to the specificity of immediate political circumstances—into sweaters, skirts, scarves, caps, and banners. For Auerbach, her knitted works act as a form of self-publishing,

which complements her simultaneous production of zines, each a grassroots platform meant to spark conversation and feedback.



*Snowflake*, relief print from 1080 individually inked blocks, 45 1/2 x 39 in, Edition 14, published 2018.

In *Snowflake*, one of two projects created with Island Press, Auerbach translates a traditional knitting pattern into a large-scale print representing two snowflakes, one in full and one cut off on the upper left side of the paper. Each tile making up the pattern was inked and placed individually, resulting in less-than-perfect alignment from one tile to the next. This meticulous, additive process mirrors that of knitting itself, working stitch by stitch to arrive at a completed garment. With its slightly irregular lines, the printed pattern reads as supple rather than rigid or stable, further alluding to the properties of knitted attire. The use of the snowflake appears at first to be a benign motif, typical of many a cozy winter sweater, but for Auerbach the image also speaks to the tenor of our current political climate. As someone who grew up in the 1970s, she would often employ the term snowflake as a positive descriptor meant to highlight the unique characteristics inherent in all of us. In the lead-up to the 2016 U.S. elections, however, the word's meaning became twisted by the political right, with snowflake being used as a disparaging term for a person who is seen as overly sensitive and fragile. The snowflakes depicted in this print are gray, even dirty looking when compared to

the bright color palette employed across the rest of the pattern. However, Auerbach's use of various shades of gray in these snowflakes acts as a symbolic counterpart for a more nuanced position of contemplation and possible dialogue versus extreme polarization.

In her second project for Island Press, *Ten Truths Self Evident*, Auerbach creates a series of ten woodblock prints. Each print is made up of four-word phrases on fabric which are then strung together as a group in the form of bunting. The phrases are all rendered in a rhythmic grayscale and range from a tone of indignation ("This Is Not Normal") to exhausted pessimism ("Days Darker Than Nights") to disarmingly insightful ("Hurt People Hurt People"). The artist's use of bunting knowingly belies the mood of her texts. Bunting is a form that is often associated with festive occasions, often as a type of patriotic decoration in the service of nationalistic pomp and pageantry. The tone of the texts, combined with the use of grayscale, undercuts any evocation of a cheerful occasion or full-hearted patriotism.



The work seems to function more in the spirit of Tibetan prayer flags, which are traditionally used to promote compassion, strength, and wisdom. Notably mixed among the expressions of dismay, outrage, and disappointment on each print are those of grief, coping, and a call to action (like “React Reject Repair Renew”). When strung up across a room, the work alters its given environment, acting as both a decorative object and a series of pointed statements meant to provoke reflection.

The work relates to two of Auerbach’s previous series, the first called *Make America* that was produced during the 2016 presidential election. In four-word phrases painted in red, white, and blue—including “Make America Critical Again,” “Make America Feminist Again,” and “Make America Less Fucked Up Again”—Auerbach gave voice to the sense of frustration, disappointment, and outrage many Americans were feeling. The day after the election she then took this idea and parlayed it into a fundraising endeavor. Painting small grayscale works in gouache with similarly pointed phrases, Auerbach gives them away for free to any interested buyer who donates \$500 to organizations that are, as she explains, “working to mitigate some of the nasty promises of the President.” In keeping with this gesture, a portion of the purchase price of *Ten Truths Self Evident* can also be offset with a donation.

by Meredith Malone, Associate Curator, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University in St. Louis



*Ten Truths Self Evident*, 10 relief prints from shina plywood on 100% cotton bleached muslin strung with natural cotton cord, 9 x 12 in each, Edition 20, published 2018.



detail, *Ten Truths Self Evident*

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Lisa Anne Auerbach served as the Arthur L. and Sheila Prensky Island Press Visiting Artist in the fall of 2017. Her work engages ideas about self-publishing and other modes of communication. Her sweaters, publications, and photographs have been shown in galleries, cooperative bicycle repair shops, kunsthalls, on vacant desert lots, and in museums including the Whitney Museum of American Art at the *Whitney Biennial* in 2014 and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA in *Nine Lives: Visionary Artists from L.A.* in 2009. Her self-publishing ventures include *American Magazine*, *Saddlesore*, and *American Homebody*. Auerbach’s public commissions include a tile wall at Malmöfest in Malmö, Sweden; a path at Beloit College; billboards in Cincinnati, Ohio; and 1000 feet of wallpaper at the Beverly Center Mall in Beverly Hills, CA. Lisa lives and works in Los Angeles.

## IslandPress

CONTEMPORARY PRINT EDITIONS AND ARTIST PROJECTS

MORE INFORMATION [islandpress.wustl.edu](http://islandpress.wustl.edu) | [islandpress@wustl.edu](mailto:islandpress@wustl.edu) | 314.935.8051

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, Lisa Sanditz, and James Siena.

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