



CROW'S SHADOW INSTITUTE *of* THE ARTS

Emigrant Rd. Hawk

Hawks on the highway
Wind is in the trees
Marks across the Mylar sheet
Like the wind in the wheat stubble or
the shadow of the windblown branches
over the reservation's gravel back roads
the spirit moved
thus
Hawks
and a
lone old
Indian to watch them.

Rick Bartow 2004

Curator's Statement

Crow's Shadow has a tendency to leave a lasting impression on the artists who attend residencies there. Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Mountains range, on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, it is a world-class print studio known for its high-quality, hand-pulled lithographic editions. The location lends itself to introspection, reflection, and contemplation. The surrounding landscape is wide open, with vast fields of wheat and grass stretching north to the rolling hills of the Columbia Plateau, while directly to the south and stretching east to west, the Blue Mountains begin to rise above the expansive farm lands. Artists come from across the country to participate in the residency program, working with Tamarind Master Printer Frank Janzen to explore new approaches in their art production through printmaking.

It is normal for artists to respond to their surrounding environment, but at Crow's Shadow it seems to happen with a high frequency. Local artists such as James Lavadour and Vanessa Enos embody the Umatilla reservation that they grew up in, documenting the hills and fields in vibrant, sometimes abstract gestures. Other artists internalize their experience at Crow's Shadow, resulting in new forms or approaches to their art making.

Adam Sorensen's *Atoll II* was built in layers from the background forward, in a departure from his painting techniques of working top-to-bottom. The final print, an imagined landscape, is a meticulous explosion of color, achieved with the technical expertise of the Master Printer.

Place is important. Where an artist is from, where they have gone, where they are going. All have been central themes in art production for centuries. Crow's Shadow has a special way of bringing those ideas to the forefront. Even for artists coming from across the country to experience this landscape for the first time—or revisiting it after a long absence—the location seeps into their subconscious and finds its way to the page. Although she is Cherokee, and raised on the east coast, Kay WalkingStick's *Wallowa Memory* is a collage of the nearby Wallowa mountain range and a reconfiguration of traditional Columbia Plateau Native designs, patterns used for centuries by the tribal people of the region.

Rick Bartow was a frequent artist-in-residence at Crow's Shadow, the most of any artist we have worked with. He first collaborated with visiting Master Printer Eileen Foti in 2001 and then returned to work with Frank Janzen another three times between 2003 and 2013. His residencies were always an energetic affair, usually compressed into a week or less (most residencies last at least two weeks). Frank describes the experience as a printmaking boot camp. Rick would produce the key plates the first day—usually of birds or hawks he had seen soaring above the fields just outside the studio. Then the following days would be filled with Frank furiously printing the lithograph plate while Rick would stand at the ready, pencil or brush in hand, waiting to draw and paint on top of the freshly printed page. The results of these campaigns number in the hundreds of prints, each imbued with the spirit of Rick's hand, his wry smile, and the deeply emotional connection he had with nature.

It is this connection to Place that is so evident in all of the work that is in this exhibit of prints from Crow's Shadow. History and landscape, cultural survival and contemporary innovation, introspection and outward reflection; all of these ideas are found in the different artists' iterations of their prints. All of these ideas are like those hawks on the highway, listening to the wind and watching the world around them.

--Karl Davis, Executive Director
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