

Lynne Allen
lynneallen.com

Artist Statement:

My art making is a love affair with the forsaken. In material, this means the use of discarded remnants of culture, like rusted bottle caps, fish hooks, lead sinkers and old moving blankets. It also embraces neglected traditions, such as the use of embroidery, beading, and woven porcupine quills. Taking center stage, my subjects are those whom history would rather leave out: animals that have become extinct, Native traditions, the homeless, prisoners and myths about how the west was won.

My subjects act in concert with a variety of non-traditional players. Sculptures include Native American text woven into arrow bags, moccasins and wall hangings. Bullet casings, flattened bottle caps and fish hooks may stud the surfaces in conversation with beading or embroidery. Prints usually embrace a variety of techniques including etching, woodcut and lithography in sizes from the intimate to very large. They aim to tell the stories of animals, the unloved, and victims of injustice.

The matriarchs in my family have all been members of the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in South Dakota. I can trace my Native heritage back six generations to Wastewin (Good Women) in the early 1800's. As a visual artist I incorporate the passions that drive me personally into a bigger reality—the world is full of threats and rewritten histories. Here, I question the history as it has been written by the victors. I seek the voices of those who were left out, with the goal of creating a space where the viewer has a chance to imagine a world other than their own.

When I moved to Boston in 2006, I kept many of the packing blankets our belongings were wrapped in. It brought to mind something my grandmother told me, about classmates of hers who attended the Carlisle Indian School and who never assimilated into white society. She said when they returned to the reservation, they “went back to the blanket.” This statement drove me to print and stitch on those packing blankets as a way for me to return to the blanket myself, to reference the coming of the Europeans on ships and the construction of forts in what was once the pristine prairie of my forebears. They became a tableau of their history, and mine, quoted from the writing of my great grandmother; prophetic statements of what came to pass.

Biography:

Allen's work has been exhibited widely nationally and internationally and is included in collections at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art Library, the New York Public Library, New York; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, among others. Selected exhibition venues include the Whitney Museum of American Art, The North Dakota Museum of Art, The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, The Virginia Museum of Fine Art, as well as international exhibitions in the Guanlan China Biennial; the International Printmaking Biennial of Douro, Portugal; The Novosibirsk Print

Biennial, Russia; and the International Print Triennial, Tallinn, Estonia. Artist residencies include Senezh House of Artists, USSR; the Guanlan Printmaking Base, China; Caversham Press, Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa; Grafikenshuis, Mariefred, Sweden; the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, VA; Byrdcliffe Artist Residency, NY, as well as artist workshops/lectures abroad (Iceland, Poland, China, Slovenia, South Africa, Russia, Sweden, Japan).

Honors include two Fulbright Scholarships (USSR 1990, Jordan 2004-05), two Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Research Grants, a New Jersey State Council on the Arts Grant, a Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Grant, Diploma Award Tallinn International Print Biennial, and a Prilla Smith Brackett Award finalist.

Exhibitions:

- 2023 *Words Matter: 10 Works by Contemporary Native American Artists*,
Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond, VA.

- 2022 *Group Exhibition*, Musashino Art University, Tokyo, Japan.
- 2022 *Walk in Beauty*, Don Russeull Clayton Gallery, Kenneshaw State
University, MS (curated by Cynthia Nourse Thompson).
- 2022 *Animal Print* (invitational), Highpoint Center for Printmaking, Minneapolis,
MN.
- 2022 *In Translation: Prints Across Media*, Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center,
Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY.