

## **Kimberly Brandel**

### **Artist Statement:**

My work as an artist/printmaker grapples with the effects of human activities on the natural environment. Human activities such as power generation, mining, logging, grazing, habitat destruction, and consumerism are having catastrophic effects around the world. Over the past three years, the Trump administration has dismantled most of the major climate and environmental policies that were put in place to protect human health and the environment. Trump calls the rules unnecessary and burdensome to the fossil fuel industry and other businesses. Every day, as scientists debate whether we are in the midst of a mass extinction driven by human actions, another animal is listed as threatened or endangered.

In my artwork, I focus on the effects to animals, often using them as stand-ins for humans. I use a variety of mediums including printmaking, collage, and drawing. My preferred artistic language is relief printmaking. I work representationally exploring how politics, societal relations, competition for resources, habitat destruction, air pollution, species extinction, and war are a function of overpopulation, misuse of power, and greed. I fear that people are largely unwilling to change their behavior and am compelled to make images that address my fears.

### **Biography:**

Kimberly Brandel was born in Washington DC and currently lives and works in Boise, Idaho. She led a peripatetic existence as a child bouncing with her family from the east coast to the west and back again. She received a BS in Biology from Portland State University and an MS in Forestry from Colorado State University. After completing her forestry degree, Kimberly spent 30 years working in natural resource management in the Pacific Northwest and the southern Appalachians. She worked with representatives from local communities, environmental groups, resource extraction industries, and elected officials to develop management solutions that met the needs of local communities and protected the environment. After she left federal service she returned to university to pursue a BFA in Visual Arts with an emphasis in printmaking. She expects to graduate from Boise State University in the spring of 2021. Kimberly's work is strongly influenced by the time she spent working for the Forest Service, specifically with efforts to protect threatened and endangered species in the face of strong political pressure to continue logging, grazing, and mining to support rural communities.

### Influences:

My work has been influenced by several artists and by my experiences working in rural communities dependent on resource extraction for their economic livelihood. Two artists that I particularly admire are Sean Caulfield and Karen Kunc. Caulfield's work resonates with me because it addresses the issues of trying to balance the needs for economic sustainability of communities with the necessity of protecting fragile ecosystems. His work is informed by his experiences living in the tar sands of Alberta in Canada. He understands the trade-offs for rural communities and seeks to present an alternative path that is sustainable. Caulfield's work can be seen at [www.seanculfield.ca](http://www.seanculfield.ca).



Sean Caulfield, *Prairie Landscape : Black Wind*, 2014, Linocut on kobo, 24 x 36in

Unlike Sean Caulfield, Karen Kunc's work is visually lush; color jumps off the page. Like Caulfield, Kunc addresses landscape in her work. However, Kunc's work is more abstract, using a visual language that she has developed throughout her career. Kunc deals with issues of endurance, vulnerability, growth, and destruction in her work. I am particularly drawn to her work about storms, floods, and fire because when I worked for the Forest Service I frequently dealt with both the destruction and renewal that resulted from fire and flood. Kunc's work can be seen at [www.karen-kunc.com](http://www.karen-kunc.com).



Karen Kunc, *Fire Formed, River Washed*, Color Woodcut, 2015, 11" x 48"