



**SET 2: CLIMATE JUSTICE**

# **PRINT AGIT PROP**

**JOSH MACPHEE**



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Set 2

Climate Justice

A collection of

6 screenprints

3 offset printed posters

3 relief prints

1 risograph poster

1 spray paint stencil

All produced between 2000–2023

Edition of 4



**I** began producing political posters and prints in the mid-1990s. This was a simple pivot from designing materials for the punk music scene, shifting the same skill sets to bear on social justice issues. I initially worked on posters and materials for campaigns around political prisoners and challenging mass incarceration, but quickly expanded and began working with a diverse set of groups and issues, including housing struggles, immigration reform, labor unions, access to healthcare, environmental justice, police reform, right to the city, and more. Many of this print agit prop was produced in association with—and at the behest of—very specific organizations, while some of it I created on my own in hopes of contributing the struggles. Some of it I was paid for my work, others I donated my labor. Many of these posters were mass produced and widely distributed, used in public demonstrations or organized street art campaigns. All of the work speaks to the complex interplay between visual culture and social movements, and the unique place of the artist and designer in political organizing.







### ***Leaves***

2000, 24" x 36", spray paint  
stencil

My first work exploring ecology and the environment, I spray painted lush and detailed leaves across the landscape of Chicago in 1999–2000. The juxtaposition of this oversized, bright flora with the otherwise quite gray and urban streets was arresting, and also incongruous as the leaves themselves are created with toxic paint and chemicals.



### ***Rebirth***

2005, 19" x 25", screenprint

Rebirth, regeneration, hope...  
One of my earliest political screenprinted posters, designed in 2004, printed in 2005.



### *Winter in America*

2007, 9.5" x 25", screenprint

This print is directly inspired by the Gil Scott-Heron song of the same title. Like the song, it is about environmental degradation, but also a wide-range of other intersecting issues and problems in the United States, from poverty to settler colonialism to unbridled racism.



### *Plant Seeds*

2007, 11" x 17", screenprint

An attempt to simplify design and content to create the equivalent of a political street sign. This was one of a series of simple slogans and graphics spray paint stenciled onto wooden boards and installed on telephone poles in upstate New York. This screenprint edition followed that, and the image has again been reworked multiple times for other posters, as well as t-shirts and stickers.





*Untitled*

2007, 19" x 25", screenprint

Often called "Anarchy Hands," this—like many of my prints and posters—has had multiple lives as a t-shirt, print, and promo image for various events. I originally created the basic design as a watermark for paper I was making, then evolved it into a graphic, and then into these screenprints printed in 2007. The hands on each print are a different skin-tone.



*Tierra y Libertad*

2008, 18" x 24", screenprint

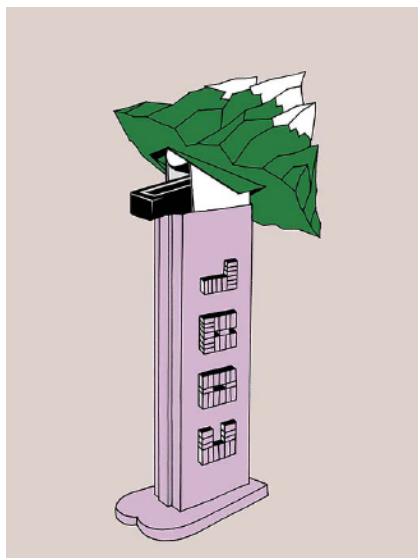
This is a reworking of my *Free the Land* design of the previous year. It was created for a live printing event in Mexico City, and part of a larger initiative to demand art as a human right for the people of Mexico. More editions have followed in the years since, but these prints are originals from that initial event.



### ***Grow Tall***

2009, 18" x 24", offset printed poster

I originally created this piece for Australian artist Tom Civil's *Breakdown Poster Series*, a collection of a dozen political posters printed in a newspaper and mass distributed. I liked it so much I decided to experiment with printing an offset run of 500 copies, my first attempt at mass production. For me the poster is about the overlapping of multiple issues, including environmental destruction, rebirth, solidarity, labor, and social organization.



### ***Mountaintop Removal***

2010, 19" x 25", screenprint

Coal and other natural resources are like candy to capitalism. Keep it in the ground and stave off the sugar rush. This print was designed and printed for the Justseeds Artists' Cooperative print portfolio *Resourced*.



## **Fukushima**

2013, 16" x 20", reduction  
woodblock print

Although largely perceived as an isolated incident, the meltdown of the Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan after the March 2011 tsunami has caused a massive chain reaction of activities that have global reach. While people across Japan struggled to negotiate their new found radioactive reality, over here in the US people went about their days as if nothing had happened, with seemingly no awareness that the apocalypse is unfolding all around

us. Contrary to what seems to be more and more popular belief, the world is actually round, and problems that happen "over there" don't simply fall off the edge of the planet, but eventually make their way around it. As I was printing this, pieces of the Fukushima plant were washing up on the shores of California, with nary a mention in the press.

This is a five color reduction (or "suicide") wood block print, printed on handmade Japanese Kitakata paper. It was printed with master printer David Keister at Grand Valley State University in Michigan.



*Even the Worms Must Be Productive*  
2013, 12" x 19", screenprint

This print is a play on the French May 1968 graphic of the occupied factory. But now life itself is the factory—all life is mobilized towards the production of profit, and therefore even the worms are expected to function like a capitalist enterprise—vermiculture, the sales of worm castings, and more...



*Ken Saro-Wiwa*  
2017, 11" x 17", risograph print

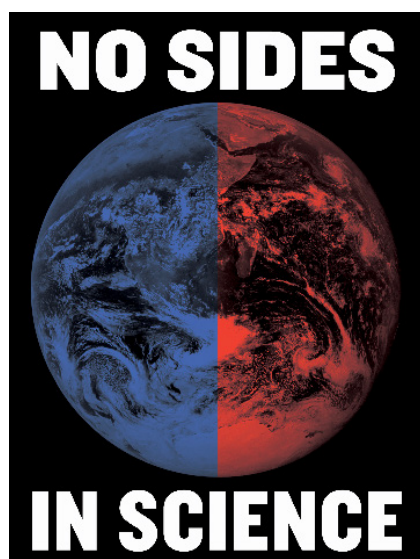
Like many in the US, I first learned of Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1995, when he was facing execution in Nigeria for defending the rights of his land and people, the Ogoni. Saro-Wiwa was hanged along with eight other activists—the government hoped to end the environmental activism of the Ogoni people against Shell Oil. But Saro-Wiwa's legacy lives on, and the Ogoni people continue to fight against environmentally devastating oil extraction in the Niger Delta. This print was designed and created for the 2017 Justseeds Community Supported Art campaign, which had the theme "Earth Protectors."





*No Sides in Climate*

2017, 18" x 24", double-sided  
offset print



*No Sides in Science*

2017, 18" x 24", double-sided  
offset print

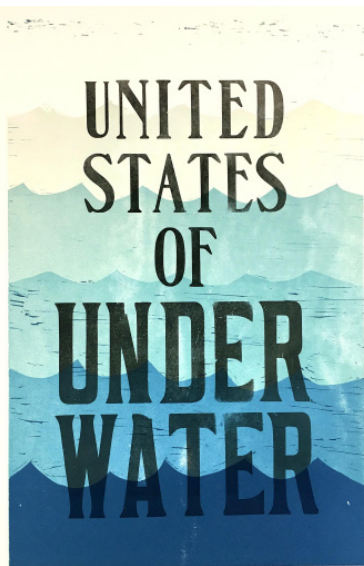
I produced these designs in collaboration with the Amplifier Foundation for use at the 2017 Climate and Science Marches. They were distributed en masse in both Washington, D.C. and at satellite actions. The idea is to convey that the need for science transcends political parties with as simple a graphic and as few words as necessary. These globe posters were included in an exhibition at the International Center for Photography in New York City.



### *No Sides in Science*

2017, 18" x 24", double-sided  
offset print

An alternative design created in collaboration with the Amplifier Foundation for specific use at the 2017 Science March in Washington, D.C. (and available for free download to use at ancillary marches around the US). The idea is to convey that the need for science transcends political parties with as simple a graphic and as few words as necessary.



### *United States of Under Water*

2020, 14" x 20", woodtype and  
linoleum block print

### *United States of on Fire*

2020, 14" x 20", woodtype and  
linoleum block print

I originally came up with the concept for these prints in 2017 when Puerto Rico was devastated by Hurricane Maria. I did a simple type-only letterpress version of Under Water as a demonstration for my Print Agit Prop class at Pratt Institute, which was fine, but the idea kept kicking around in my head until Mary Tasillo from Common Press in Philadelphia reached out to me and invited me to be a resident at the press



in February of 2020. I wanted to keep the focus on the typography and message, but add some simple imagery, and out of this thought process I came up with the idea of doing two interconnected prints and setting the type on and under reduction print waves and flames.



***Agua Para Todos***  
2023, 15" x 24", screenprint

A larger, screenprint re-designed version of the design I created for the Justseeds Wellspring portfolio in 2016. I originally created this graphic in 2010 for a call from Mexico City for images in support of water struggles. This new edition was printed by Repetitive Press in Toronto.

