

Wingate Studio



Pestvogel, 2016
six plate aquatint etching with
dry point, hard ground, soft
ground, spit bite, and sugar lift,
40 x 30.75 in, edition of 65

Walton Ford

Pestvogel is the 13th collaborative print between artist Walton Ford and Wingate Studio, published by Kasmin Editions.

The print depicts a small flock of Bohemian waxwings gorging on blackberries as a battle rages in the background. Waxwings are fruit-eating Eurasian perching birds. “Periodically waxwings break out from their boreal confines and undertake massive, sometimes continent-wide migrations...Such was the impact of these sudden, inexplicable arrivals that Bohemian Waxwings were once loaded with sinister import...Old names for the species included Pestvogel (‘plague-bird’) which is still the bird’s name in Dutch, as well as unglückvogel, pestilenzvogel, and todtenvogel in German-speaking areas (respectively, ‘disaster-bird’, ‘pestilence-bird’ and ‘death bird’). A widely recorded waxwing invasion during the winter of 1913/14 was later assumed to be a foreboding omen for the calamity that ensued the following summer - the First World War” (Cocker, Mark. *Birds and People*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2013, p 407).

Such violent and bizarre moments at the intersection of human culture and the natural world are the subject of much of Ford’s work. To quote the artist, “In this print I imagined what kind of imagery could accompany this fantastic belief, the idea that a small songbird could be responsible for a world war. Some of my work is a literal exploration in these kinds of fears and superstitions.”

Walton Ford lives and works in New York, NY, and his work is included in a number of private and public collections, including the *Minneapolis Institute of Art*, *Smithsonian American Art Museum*, *Whitney Museum of American Art*, and many others. Ford’s midcareer retrospective traveled from the *Hamburger Bahnhof Museum Fur Gegenwart* (Berlin), to the *Albertina* (Vienna) and to the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (Denmark) in 2010-11. Ford was recently the subject of a solo exhibitions at *Gagosian Gallery* (Los Angeles, CA) and the *Musée de la Chasse* (Paris). Taschen has issued three editions of his large-format monograph, *Pancha Tantra*.

Wingate Studio is based in the Connecticut River Valley, and under directors Peter Pettengill, James Pettengill, and Alyssa Robb, the Studio produces and publishes printed editions, books, and special projects with contemporary artists. Peter Pettengill and Walton Ford have been working together for nearly 20 years.

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