

# HABITAT artists' books

## *Meuse*

A habitat, whether it's literal or figurative, protects and nourishes. *Meuse* travels the liminal spaces between destruction and survival.

Letterpress print on Stonehenge paper

ARTIST:

**Joseph Lappie**

Davenport, IA

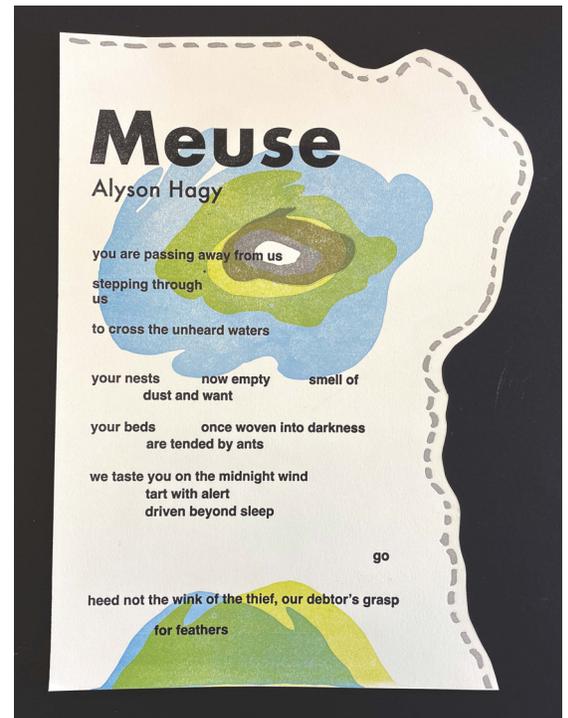
[josephlappie.com](http://josephlappie.com)

WRITER:

**Alyson Hagy**

Laramie, WY

[alysonhagy.com](http://alysonhagy.com)



### **Statement (written by Alyson)**

For me, the concept of “habitat” denotes both refuge and sustenance. A habitat, whether it’s literal or figurative, protects and nourishes. “Meuse” began with the poet C.D. Wright’s use of the word in its oldest English form to describe the form or shape grasses take around the body of a sleeping animal. Once I began to look at Joseph Lappie’s work and to travel in the dream spaces he creates for viewers, our “Meuse” too began to travel the liminal spaces between destruction and survival.

### **Artist’s Biography**

Joseph Lappie is a professor and current chair of Art + Design at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa. He teaches book arts, drawing, papermaking, and printmaking. He serves the regional community in arts-based demonstrations. His work has been shown nationally and internationally including the Des Moines Art Center, Figge Art Museum, & Katzen Arts Center, with artists’ books placed in special collections across the country including Yale, The Art Institute of Chicago, and the University of Wisconsin. He received a BFA in Painting and a BFA in Graphic Design at Ball State University and an MFA in Interdisciplinary Book & Paper Arts from Columbia College Chicago.

### **Writer’s Biography**

Alyson Hagy is the author of eight works of fiction, including the novels *Scribe* and *Boleto*. She has co-taught a course in Book Art at the University of Wyoming with Mark Ritchie since 2006 and has previously collaborated with H.L. Hix, Mark Ritchie, Margaret Cosgrove, Val Pexton, and Christine Tharp on multi-media exhibitions. She lives and works in Laramie, Wyoming.

**Content of text included in artwork**

*Meuse*

you are passing away from us

stepping through  
us

to cross the unheard waters

your nests now empty smell of  
dust and want

your beds once woven into darkness  
are tended by ants

we taste you on the midnight wind  
tart with alert  
driven beyond sleep

go

heed not the wink of the thief, our debtor's grasp  
for feathers