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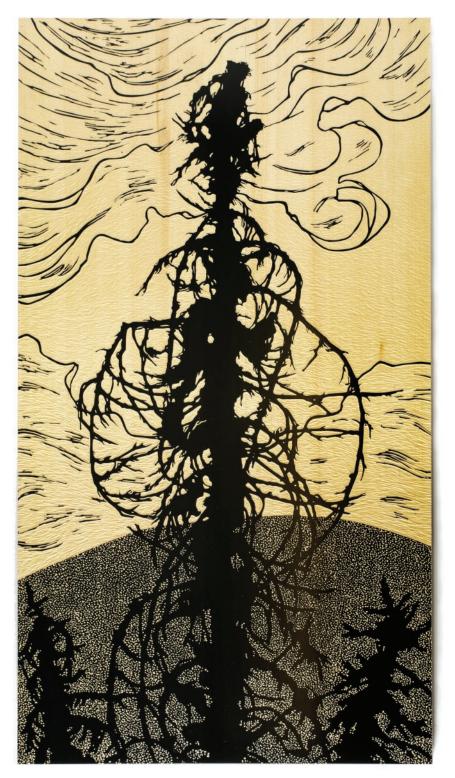
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The Trees in My Chest

Philip Metres

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The Trees in My Chest

Again, the dream: I need to leave, yet each door I open opens

another room, another door. The pen in open. Is this made

possible by someone whose traces hover in the absence? The seen

in absence. I'm aching for you, dear architect. The further back

through history we look, the more faces fade—a room in a house

we cannot see, nor imagine ourselves out of. December's advancing dark.

The ember in December. I can't breathe in this room I guest,

you ghost. The inverted asthmatic trees in my chest burn to bloom,

& must relearn each time to rise from the ground, & to return.

The urn in return. & the rue.

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Poet Philip Metres is the author of Shrapnel Maps (Copper Canyon, 2020), The Sound of Listening, and Sand Opera, among others. Artist Sara Tabbert works with carved wood, both as prints and as relief panels. Her studio is in her hometown of Fairbanks, Alaska.