Based in Brooklyn, New York, Benjamin Edmiston’s artistic practice currently centers on imagery collected from the streets, specifically from architectural elements familiar to pedestrians living in the city. Railings, windows, steps, and shadows form a visual vocabulary that he further abstracts into lines and shapes through photography, collage, and drawing.

In the twelve-plate etching, *Untitled (12 Grid)*, Edmiston assembles twelve small drawings into one playful, patchwork image by printing several etched plates onto one piece of paper in a loose grid. The print is a product of Edmiston’s week-long residency during June of 2018 as the second biennial Emerging Artist Fellow at Island Press.

Edmiston brought with him from New York to Saint Louis a set of his deft Sumi ink drawings on found papers, upon which the final images are based. Working across upwards of twenty plates that were edited, arranged and re-arranged, Edmiston arrived at a single composition which feels much like an installation of twelve standalone works casually pinned against a studio wall. This effect is amplified by varied plate sizes among the twelve and tinted chine collé papers on several plates.

Primarily working as a painter and draughtsman, Edmiston often uses a practice of collage to resolve compositions prior to fixing an image to the page or canvas. This free-form, intuitive manner of working leads to an uninhibited flow—a directness and ease of image-making that applies naturally also to the realm of printmaking.

In his translation of architecture and space, Edmiston’s painting and drawing practice can be situated somewhere between the bright, playful abstraction of Stuart Davis and Romare Bearden and the soft, warm post-minimalism of Zarina and Richard Tuttle. Close looking reveals that the forms found in *Untitled (12 Grid)* are not calculated and hard-edged, but bear every sign of the artist’s hand. Rich etched linework can be found in several plates underneath inked blocky shapes created through aquatint, sugarlift, and softground.

Edmiston creates a solid rhythm between plates through combining diverse mark making with a limited range of color and form.
This balance is key as he embraces accumulation throughout his practice alongside the guiding principle that gathering a multitude of small pieces can yield a larger, richer impact than one grand gesture might. Like taking a walk and simply noticing the world around us, *Untitled (12 Grid)* encourages wandering from plate to plate in appreciation of wavering edges, subtle shifts in color, and a particular understanding of space.

Morgan Dowty
Curatorial Assistant, Prints, Drawings & Photographs Baltimore Museum of Art

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Above, left: Ben working in the shop at Island Press on one of the sugarlift plates for *Untitled (12 Grid)* in June of 2018. Right: some of Ben’s sumi ink drawings on found papers that were inspiration for the Island Press print.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:
Benjamin Edmiston is an artist living and working in Brooklyn, NY. He earned his BFA from Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, and received his MFA from Brooklyn College. He has shown throughout the United States and abroad including David Shelton Gallery, Houston; Cuevas Tilleard Projects, NYC; Charlotte Fogh Gallery, Aarhus, Denmark; Left Field Gallery, CA; Vox Populi Gallery, Philadelphia. His work has been published in ‘The Age of Collage: Contemporary Collage in Modern Art’; ‘New American Paintings #104’; ‘New American Paintings #93’.

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ISLAND PRESS
Island Press is a research-based printmaking workshop and publisher committed to education and innovation in contemporary print editions and artist projects. Visiting artists work side by side with the master printer and students in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis. The result is high-quality print editions of technical complexity created in a unique setting where artists and students share skill sets and ideas.

Island Press is project-driven and collaborative, tapping into the possibilities of the print studio. Recent artist projects include editions with Radcliffe Bailey, Chakaia Booker, Squeak Carnwath, Willie Cole, Henrik Drescher, Chris Duncan, Tom Friedman, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Nina Katchadourian, Shaun O’Hear, Dario Robleto, Lisa Sanditz, Beverly Semmes, James Siena, and Paula Wilson.

Island Press was founded in 1978. Past visiting artists include Hung Liu, Jaune Quick-To-See-Smith, Joyce Scott, Juan Sanchez, Nick Cave, and many other great artists.

DIRECTOR Lisa Bulawsky  |  MASTER PRINTER Tom Reed

Washington University in St. Louis
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