



“If I,” an *Indian Country Today* Collage  
– for *Indian Country Today*, 1996 (acrylic and collage on canvas) by Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

If I am not a letter

ripped from a tree  
a headline, bold, clipped  
from pages

If I am not the phrase

“another attempt  
at ethnic cleansing”

If I am not the refusal

“to vanish from Death Valley”  
the *carbon-dated finger prints*, the *19,000-year-old*  
black hair

If I am not the one

with wildlife splitting  
rainbows weeping  
down my face, with shreds

patching deserts & mountains & fields

If I am not the voices

united and speaking  
torn from roots  
of this land,

then who am I?

and where?