



Ginny Runge, *Loropetalum*

## EBB & FLOW

Curated by Annah Lee, Block Gallery Coordinator

**AMY FRIEND** received her BFA in drawing from the Art Academy of Cincinnati in 2003. She has studied drawing in Florence, Italy and has received numerous awards for her artwork. Friend is a member of the Visual Art Exchange in Raleigh and frequently exhibits her work in the Raleigh area. [amydraws.com](http://amydraws.com)

**HOLDEN RICHARDS**, largely self-taught, has been a Getty Images contributing photographer since 2010. His photographs have been published in national and international journals and magazines. He has exhibited his work in group and solo shows throughout North Carolina. [darkroomprint.com](http://darkroomprint.com)

**GINNY RUNGE** received a master's degree in art therapy from Vermont College in 1980 and a BFA from The University of the South in 1977. She has received multiple awards for her watercolors. Runge's work is included in corporate and private collections including those of the Charlotte Observer and the Philip Morris Company. [ginnyrunge.com](http://ginnyrunge.com)

**ADAM GRAETZ** received a BA in Peace, War and Defense and a BA in communications from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2010. He has received national awards for his photography and film work. Graetz works extensively with Triangle-area artists and musicians. He premieres a new series of LED + video installations at Hopscotch Music Festival this year with his band Body Games. [adamgraetz.com](http://adamgraetz.com)

### To hear artists comment on their work:

Holden Richards	919.996.5389
Amy Friend	919.996.5390
Ginny Runge	919.996.5391
Adam Graetz	919.996.5392

### BLOCK GALLERY AND BLOCK2 VIDEO SERIES

For 28 years, the Block Gallery has served as a pivotal exhibition space in the City of Raleigh, connecting local artists to community through ongoing exhibitions and public outreach.

Gallery information, dates and times are subject to change. Any views or opinions expressed by artists and curators are solely of those individuals and do not necessarily represent the Raleigh Arts Commission.

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Image, cover: Holden Richards, *Durham County*



## EBB & FLOW

Block Gallery | September 5–November 15, 2013  
Opening Reception: Thursday, September 5, 5-7 p.m.

Photographs by Holden Richards, watercolors by Ginny Runge,  
and mixed media drawings by Amy Friend

Block2: *Into the Woods* and *Gaze of Native Dreamers* by Adam Graetz



The City of Raleigh



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Miriam Preston Block Gallery  
Avery C. Upchurch Government Complex  
222 West Hargett St.  
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## EBB & FLOW

### Block Gallery

“Nature is full of genius, full of the divinity; so that not a snowflake escapes its fashioning hand.”

- Henry David Thoreau

“I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty. In the wilderness, I find something more dear and connate than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The artists of *Ebb & Flow* channel the beauty of the world around us through the lens of nature. Personal struggle, sacred belief and the essence of time and place form the conceptual framework of three distinct and powerful bodies of work. Holden Richards utilizes vintage cameras and traditional wet room processing to create stunning photographs that capture the vulnerability of North Carolina landscapes. Ginny Runge’s precisely rendered mandala watercolors transform the essence of botanical specimens into spiritual pathways. Amy Friend’s mixed media drawings tell the story of the human condition through life-like bird imagery. Together, these artists present nature as a conduit to understanding the triumphs and complexities of human experience.

In our age of digital photography, Holden Richards’ decision to embrace film may seem old-fashioned. However, the crisp contrasts and depth of detail he captures could not be achieved through digital media. These black-and-white photographs celebrate the power and beauty of the natural environment while acknowledging the inevitable change and destruction of the landscape. The resulting images, though beautiful, contain a disquieting melancholy. As a native North Carolinian, Richards is inspired by the changing world around him. He walks the creeks and waterways of Orange, Durham and Alamance Counties, immersing himself in his subject before he snaps a shot. For example, for *Durham County* Richards waded into the water with his 1960s Hasselblad camera, through the dense outcropping of trees and over a massive system of underwater roots, to give the illusion of being present in the landscape for his viewer. The strong textural contrast between the smooth water and rough trees creates a stimulating visual experience that envelops the viewer, an effect heightened by the reflection of tree forms in the glass-like water and the absence of horizon line. Richards captures the essence of places. By focusing on water, he brings the ephemeral quality of the landscape front and center. As with the tides, landscapes are in an eternal state of flux.

The mandala has been used for centuries in many cultures as a means of prayer, meditation and healing. Marked by a circular form and intricate use of pattern, mandalas act as pathways to spirituality. In her *Mandala Series*, Ginny Runge seeks to create a sense of harmony between nature and the divine through the use of subtle colors and symmetry. During her studies at Sewanee in Tennessee, Runge became interested in the transcendentalist poets, such as Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson. The strong connection between God and nature that is outlined in transcendental thought continues to inform Runge’s artistic production, which points to the idea that everything originates from a single source. Runge’s process often begins with gathering botanical specimens from her garden in Chapel Hill, NC. She



studies and sketches the forms of the flowers, leaves and branches before arranging them into the alluring patterns that make up her finished paintings. Her process of careful observation mirrors the methodical experience of the viewer. Her complex designs encourage contemplation through the circuitous form of the mandala. In *Loropetalum*, Runge has painted the leaves and flowers of a Chinese fringe tree in a warm palette of purple, red and green. Color and form harmonize to create a beautiful symmetry, yet her choice to use watercolor results in subtle variations that elude the banality of mechanical perfection and encourage prolonged study of the image. Runge’s mandalas harmonize the cycle of life and the beauty of existence.

Amy Friend describes herself as a draftsman—a skill she honed while studying art in Florence, Italy, evident in the precision and fine detail of her imagery. She uses traditional drawing techniques on large, unprimed wood panels. In exposing her raw materials in her finished artworks, Friend allows nature to be an active participant in her art. The warmth of the wood dominates her color palette and the wood grain offers a textural pattern beyond the control of the artist’s hand. For Friend, the symbolic meaning of nature becomes a foil for her personal struggles and triumphs. The body of work on display at the Block Gallery is a means for Friend to seek balance between her impulse for freedom and exploration and her desire for stability. For example, *Depth of My Roots* depicts a bird tethered to a tree, trying to break free. The bird strains upward, exposing its vulnerable underbelly to the viewer as the string that ties it to the tree is pulled tight. Despite the fact that the bird is caught in a moment of struggle with an ambiguous outcome – will he break free or be snapped back to the ground? – the overtone of the image is triumphant, with the upward position of the bird, the soft pink flowers at the base of the tree and the vast expanse of negative space evoking a sense of freedom. While Friend’s images have a deeply personal meaning, the iconic struggles she depicts resonate with broader human experiences.

Characterized by the use of music, color and symmetry, Adam Graetz’s work challenges notions of context and authenticity. Graetz is particularly interested in the multifaceted relationship between nature and humanity. His work combines realism and abstraction with ambient music to create a mystical experience for the viewer. *Into the Woods*, which was shot as a music video, places the viewer in a dreamlike narrative. The viewer is taken on a first-person journey through dense green woods perforated by blue sky, which appears both as reflections in puddles and as the sky itself as the camera angle alternates. The startling appearance of a masked figure at the end of the video evokes a sinister and droll human presence in the otherwise uninhabited wilderness. Breaking from Graetz’s narrative work, *Gaze of Native Dreamers*’ lush aesthetic transforms vintage film through modern technology. Drawn to the ritual depicted in the vintage footage, Graetz amplifies this effect by applying gradient color mapping and the AfterEffects editing program to the original film, creating geometric patterns and repetition. Explaining the title, Graetz notes that the final effect of the video is more the result of the editing program than Graetz’s artistic choices.

Images (left to right): Adam Graetz, *Into the Woods*; Amy Friend, *Depth of my Roots*

