



BLOCK GALLERY

# plants, and birds, and rocks (and things)

APRIL 15 – AUGUST 23, 2024



Raleigh  
Arts

## **Artist Reception**

Artist Reception April 24, 2024, 5:30 – 7:30 pm

## **Stacy Bloom Rexrode**

*Curator of Exhibitions and Collections*

## **Scott Hazard**

*Guest Curator*

**Cover Image:** Julia Einstein, *Flower Icon: Chrysanthemum*, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"



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**An exhibition of artworks curated by Scott Hazard, a North Carolina-based artist, and City of Raleigh Artist in Residence for Nature Preserves.**

In the image and information (and misinformation) saturated environment we exist in, there is an ever-growing need and an innate call within, whether long-buried, latent, or thriving, to expand and improve our abilities to understand, experience, heal, protect and preserve the natural world we are a part of (and in turn heal ourselves). The artists in *plants and birds and rocks (and things)* explore themes in their varied practices ranging from explorations of the natural, cultivated and dystopian aspects of our cultures, societies, histories, and landscapes. For this exhibition, existing works reflecting the natural world were selected from each artist, and they were invited to create works that delve into notions of understanding, kinship,

integration, and reciprocity with the natural world. As Landscape often serves as a backdrop for human-centred activity – this exhibition flips this focus. The new works created for *plants and birds and rocks (and things)* highlight the sometimes under-noticed or unseen elements of the ecologies found at the four beautiful City of Raleigh Nature Parks and Preserves (Annie Louise Wilkerson, MD Nature Preserve, Walnut Creek Nature Park, Durant Nature Preserve and Horseshoe Farm Nature Preserve).

These spaces have been gifted or purchased by the City over the years and have become important refuges for plants, insects, fungi, and wildlife, along with citizens and visitors. They in effect behave like sponges to the effects of the developed land around them:



absorbing excess water during storms, pollution, displaced wildlife, and when we bring them, our own human stresses. Given the space and protection afforded by their status as preserves, plants, microorganisms, fungi, and wildlife thrive in these spaces. When we learn to better read, understand, and respect the land we inhabit, we also experience the physiological and mental benefits of time spent in natural spaces and can better thrive wherever we are.

~ Scott Hazard



Geddes Levenson and Annie Blazejack, *You Have Such a Soft Belly*, Acrylic on Panel, 48" x 72", 2023



Claire Alexandre, *Abundance*, acrylic on wood, 3.5' x 7', 2020





# Guest Curator and Artist

*Scott Hazard*

**Scotthazard.net**

 **hazardscott**

Scott Hazard is a visual artist based in Raleigh, North Carolina, U.S. His mixed-media works are a meditation how people engage, understand, and exploit the land and the cultural lenses through which we perceive, experience and engage with our environment.

He has exhibited his work at venues including CAM (Contemporary Art Museum) Raleigh; Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA), Winston-Salem, NC; Mixed Greens, New York, NY; Second Street Gallery, Charlottesville, VA; CONTEXT Art Miami, Art Silicon Valley; Adah Rose Gallery, Kensington, MD; Davidson College, Davidson, NC; and Artspace in Raleigh, NC. He is currently the 2023-24 Artist in Residence for the City of Raleigh Parks Nature Preserves. His work has been featured in a number of magazines and online publications, including Glamcult, WILD Magazine, Oxford American, The Washington Post, BOOOOOOOM, Juxtapoz, Hi-Fructose, and Colossal. He is the recipient of an Artist Fellowship in Visual Arts from the North Carolina Arts Council, Individual Artist Career Opportunity Grant from South Arts, and Professional Development and Artist Support Grants from the United Arts Council. Hazard was born in San Diego, California and received his landscape architecture education at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo. He earned a Master of Fine Arts with an emphasis on sculpture, photography and video at the University of Florida.



**Left Image:** Scott Hazard, *Rock Profile - Witness*, Sculpture (Materials: wood, paper, text, UV resistant acrylic), 31.5" x 23.5" x 4", 2021

**Right Image:** Scott Hazard, *Heavy Rock 23: Silence Eludes*, Sculpture (Materials: maple wood, paper, hand-stamped ink text, UV resistant acrylic), 15" x 15" x 4", 2023



# About the Artists

*Claire Alexandre*

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

📷 [onlyclairity](https://www.instagram.com/onlyclairity)



Claire Alexandre, *Desert Child of Soil and Sky*, Desert soil and pressed plants on canvas, 20" x 22", 2021

Claire Alexandre is a queer Afro Caribbean artist, abolitionist feminist storyteller and student of ecologies who weaves autobiographical reflections with ancestral wisdom. Through mixed media paintings and street art, she elaborates detailed portraits that highlight the myriad of ways Black and Indigenous freedom has historically been and will continue to be intimately intertwined with a power of landscape literacy and environmental reciprocity.

"By exploring what soil pigments, botanical dyes and inks lend to my artwork, I seek to not only connect with ancestral artistic practices but also look at how time and colonialism materialize in the earth's layers and local floras."

"I consider my paintings portals that carry the responsibility of offering alternative versions of the world, ones that celebrate the leadership of Queer and Trans BIPOC femmes in this time of climate collapse."



## Annie Blazejack + Geddes Levenson

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

📷 [annieandgeddes](https://www.instagram.com/annieandgeddes)

Geddes Levenson and Annie Blazejack both grew up in Miami, FL. Their collaborative art practice grew organically from their childhood friendship. In 2013, while attending separate graduate schools, they formalized this collaboration and have been creating and showing work exclusively as a duo ever since. In their paintings and



Geddes Levenson and Annie Blazejack, *Night Stage*, Oil on Canvas, 36" x 42", 2021

installations, they explore the relationship between humans and ecosystems as climate change becomes increasingly inevitable. Blazejack received her MFA from The School of the Museum of Fine arts, Boston/ Tufts University in 2013, and Levenson received her MFA from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY in 2014. Notably, Blazejack and Levenson have installed solo shows at Ortega Y Gasset Projects Skirt Space, Brooklyn, NY, Lump Projects, Raleigh NC; Anchorlight, Raleigh, NC; The Carrack, Durham, NC; The Art and Culture Center, Hollywood, FL; Placeholder Gallery, Miami, FL; and The White Page Gallery, Minneapolis, MN. They have also shown at The National Liberty Museum, Philadelphia, PA; The Contemporary Art Museum, Raleigh, NC; Locust Projects, Miami, FL; and Norte Maar Art Space, Brooklyn, NY.

Together they experiment with painting as a way to conjure up impossible places. The world of paint is infinitely malleable, and they set loose a series of industrious explorers to manipulate their painted environment, opening portals, eating brush strokes, and merging with cosmic landscapes.

## ***Julia Einstein***

**Juliaeinstein.com**

**@ juliaeinstein**

Julia Einstein is from New England, and lived on the coast of Maine where the light and landscape inspired her work. She is currently Artist in Residence at Raleigh City Farm where she creates from her new home studio in the Warehouse District of Raleigh, North Carolina. She makes paintings with an artist's eye on nature in vivid compositions, elegant arrangements, and painterly surfaces. Her recent work is a delve into the natural world using a palette of bright, saturated color, and a sense of scale to supersize the smallest of plants from farm to easel.

"My studio practice is aligned with the growing season at Raleigh City Farm and is centered around creating community. The most recent project in conjunction with Raleigh Nature Preserves expands my study to the indigenous plants found in the Piedmont."



Julia Einstein, *Flower Portrait 2*, Oil on Canvas, 30" x 40"



## Janet Link

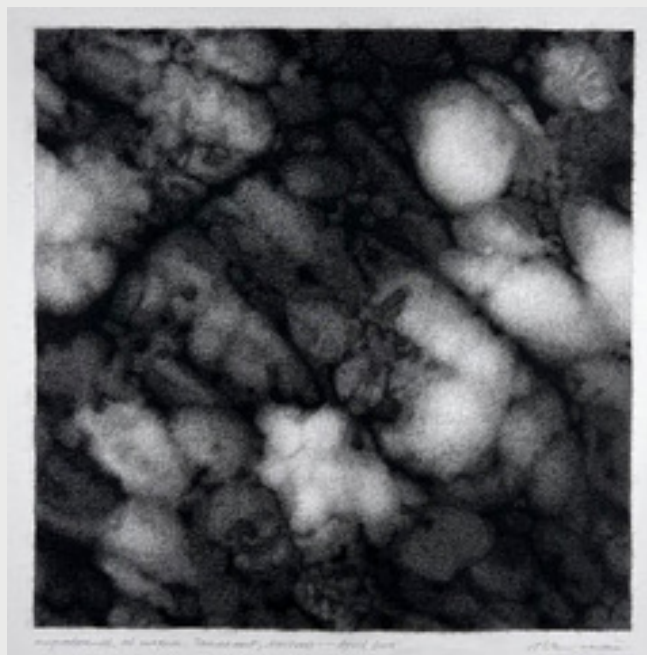
**Janetlink.com**

**@janetlink**

Born in 1962, Janet Link was reared in Raleigh, North Carolina in a family that valued and nurtured her constant desire to make things. In 1988 she went to Paris to study drawing and painting in a traditional atelier program with Ben Long and the following year received a BA in Art from Meredith College. During the years between undergraduate and graduate school, Janet worked as a studio artist in Raleigh and Oriental, NC. In 2004 she completed an MFA in Painting and Drawing at Louisiana State University, where she worked with Michael Crespo. Janet's professional life is devoted to the practice, teaching, and elevation of observational drawing. Her work can be found in the collections of the City of Raleigh and the University of Arkansas, and she has a national exhibition record, including shows in North Carolina, Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Toronto. Janet has participated in visiting artist and residency programs in Tahanaout, Morocco; Penland and Kinston, NC; Gatlinburg, TN; and Spring Island, SC. She has taught at the NCSU

College of Design, Penland School of Crafts, Arrowmont School of Crafts, Meredith College, Centre College, and LSU.

Link navigates with charcoal and graphite, laying down thousands of individual marks in an effort to capture a description of intangible things like light and air. Janet lives with her husband and two dogs in Raleigh where she works in the community of artists at Anchorlight.



Janet Link, *migration 26*, carbon pencil, 12" x 12", 2022

## **Raleigh Arts**

The Office of Raleigh Arts, a part of the City of Raleigh's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department, fosters and promotes the arts in Raleigh by administering the programs of the Raleigh Arts Commission and the Public Art and Design Board and supporting the Pullen and Sertoma Arts Centers.

## **Block Gallery**

Connecting local artists to the community through ongoing exhibitions and public outreach, the Block Gallery was dedicated in 2006 to honor Miriam Preston Block, a former Raleigh City Council member, and community leader. Greeting all visitors to the Raleigh Municipal Building at the Upchurch Government Complex in Downtown Raleigh, the gallery's marble walls, and elegant staircase provide an ideal setting for showcasing original artworks. Exhibits change every eight to twelve weeks.

## **Raleigh Arts Commissioners**

Aurelia Belfield | David Clegg | Toni Gadsden | Juan Isler | Clodagh Lyons-Bastian  
David Moore | Mary Silver | Jessica Todd-Marrone | Billy Warden | Greg Whitt  
Carl Wilkins | Patty Williams

## **Raleigh Municipal Building**

222 West Hargett Street

Raleigh, NC 27601




919-996-3610

M-F, 8:30am – 5:15pm

## **For more information, please contact:**

Raleigh Arts

919-996-3610

-  Raleigh\_Arts
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-  Office of Raleigh Arts

