

# ESSEX FLOWERS

19 Monroe St  
New York, NY 10002

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## **R Blair Sullivan** *Meanders (a Fugue)*

April 20 - May 20, 2018

Opening Reception: Friday, April 20, 7-10 PM

Rearing its meaty head, Essex Flowers looks you straight in the eye and proudly presents our first exhibition by R. Blair Sullivan in the premier of *Meanders (a Fugue)*, a multi-media work composed on site at our Two Bridges storefront.

Meandering lines, present throughout nature, feature prominently in the patterns and textures that are the conceptual focus of the exhibition. Sullivan presents an ensemble of styles and techniques, while demonstrating a willful resistance against the concept of the artist style or brand. In a contrapuntal display, these works comment on times of reflection, uncertainty, and upheaval.

Our story begins with an apple head. He looks ridiculous: withered by years of furrowing his brow and pursing his lips at the bendy, curvy, and not so describable. Straight talk, straight walk, being an upright citizen and all that. Well, on the surface at least. He's spent years getting them over the barrel, and now's his time to enjoy himself! He's finally in control, I mean, even he's surprised at how much he's getting away with. He's got big plans, to make big money, and who cares how he gets it? All his friends have said, he's a good man.

Apple heads are a folk craft associated with rural America. Here, they are repositioned as grotesques of misplaced American romanticism. Talking Head takes aim at media and political personalities while Old White Men depicts a more common man, whose acquiescence is punctuated by a comical worm that curls around the apple stem. The worm—a meandering, hermaphroditic invertebrate—has anthropomorphic eyespots, while the eyes in the head have withered shut.

In the presence of extraordinary reality, consciousness takes the place of imagination  
- Wallace Stevens

In Moratorium Memorial, colorful silver-gelatin chemigrams depict candle flames. Using only black and white photo paper and traditional black and white photo chemistry, Sullivan achieves color by reversing the traditional development process. Because no camera is used to reflect an external world, these works exist as photographic prints that are also paintings.

candle flames, (apple)seeds, leaves, vulva, the shape when you bend one side of a piece of paper to meet the other, these are Lacrymiforms (tear drops). No geometry names this shape? We've completely humanized it. Anyway, this shape must be the most basic visual representation of gravity...a sphere falling or vapor rising.

 should be Isaac Newton's emoji, er, it could be an apple seed 

The meandering line is an emblem of the path of least resistance. In a time when resistance is touted, needed!?! Rivers change course, and those old meanders fill in and become meander scars. Resist or redirect? One feels a little less like a t-shirt on Canal Street.

Oh, and there's a Jordan Wolfson print that I found at a Salvation Army in Astoria for \$3.99.