

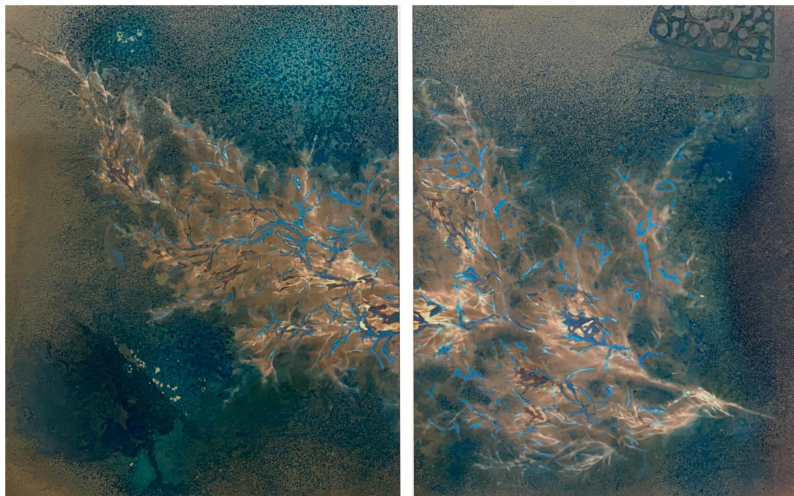


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Actinic Traces: Photographic Works by Laurie Beck Peterson on View Through October 31 at Adkins Arboretum

(RIDGELY, MD—September 2, 2025) Adkins Arboretum is pleased to present *Actinic Traces*, an exhibition of chlorophyll prints and phytograms by artist Laurie Beck Peterson, on view in the Arboretum's Visitor's Center Art Gallery from September 2 through October 31. A public reception will be held on Saturday, September 13, from 2 to 4 pm.



Evergreen, cyano-phytogram, diptych, 2024, 22" x 28"

Laurie Beck Peterson works in close collaboration with plants, sunlight, and time to create images that seem to levitate off their surfaces. Using the natural chemistry of leaves and the UV rays of the sun, her chlorophyll prints and phytograms capture fragile impressions of the plant

world. Chlorophyll printing is a sustainable photographic process that replaces traditional darkroom chemicals with living leaves and sunlight. Phytograms are

made by pressing plants onto light-sensitive paper or film, where their oils and moisture leave behind delicate, abstract patterns.

The making of these works is often invisible to the eye. Exposures take place over long periods, shaped by weather and light. Development depends on the plant's own cellular structure, and in the case of chlorophyll prints, the images continue to shift even after they are first revealed. Each work becomes a record of time and change, holding onto the subtle traces of natural processes.

"I create images that resist permanence and precision, favoring instead ephemerality, decay, and organic authorship," Peterson explains. "These works are not static artifacts; they are temporal surfaces, slowly fading, reminding us of our shared fragility and deep entwinement with the ecologies we often overlook."

For this exhibition, Peterson also explores new ways of presenting her work. Some phytograms are mounted inside clear acrylic boxes, while the chlorophyll leaf prints are displayed atop pedestals that evoke both scientific specimens and fragile jewelry. Other prints are illuminated from behind, their glowing exteriors recalling the experience of looking through a microscope into the hidden cross-sections of plants. These varied presentations highlight the dual identity of the images as both specimen and artwork, encouraging viewers to reflect on the interconnections between humans and the natural world.

Actinic Traces highlights Peterson's ongoing interest in impermanence, ecological awareness, and the role of natural systems in shaping images. Her work asks viewers to slow down, notice subtle changes, and see photography not as control over materials but as a partnership with the forces that sustain life.

Laurie Beck Peterson (b. 1962) is recognized for her innovative use of 19th-century photographic processes in contemporary contexts. Her work explores themes of impermanence, ephemerality, and the natural cycles of growth and decay. Currently a faculty member at the Tyler School of Art and Architecture in Philadelphia, she has exhibited nationally and internationally, with recent highlights including her selection for the Royal Photographic Society's International Photography Exhibition 164 at the Fox Talbot Museum, Lacock Abbey, UK. She is represented by UpStart Modern Gallery in Sausalito, California.

This exhibition is part of Adkins Arboretum's ongoing series highlighting regional artists whose work engages with natural themes. The Arboretum is located at 12610 Eveland Road in Ridgely, Maryland.

For gallery hours or more information, contact Adkins Arboretum at 410-634-2847, or visit adkinsarboretum.org.

A 400-acre native garden and preserve, Adkins Arboretum provides exceptional experiences in nature to promote environmental stewardship.

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