

Stars Hollow

Patrick Cruz



City of Markham
Rouge Connection Pathway Public Art Competition

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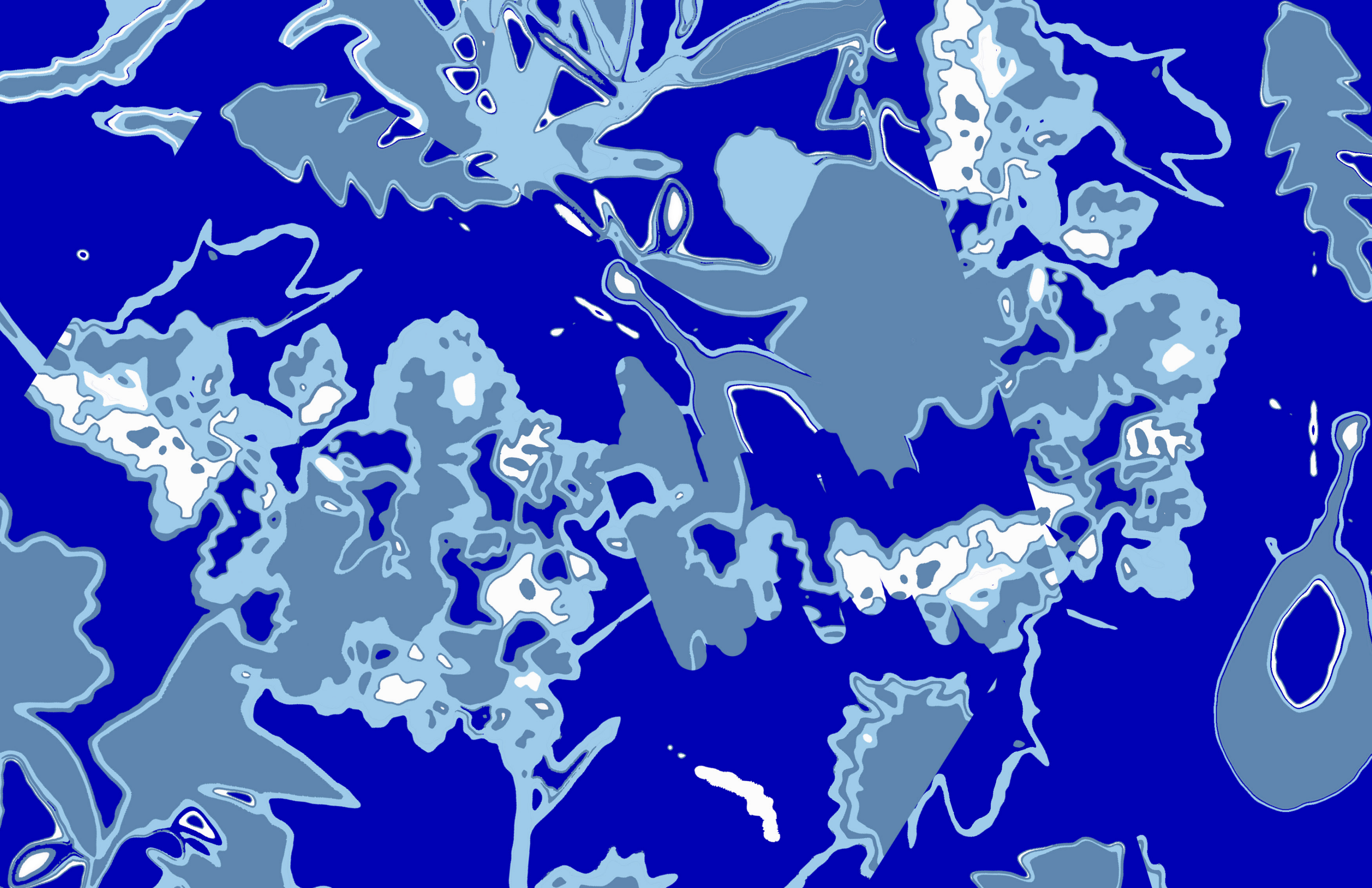
Stars Hollow is a digital time-based collage that celebrates the confluence between origin, presence, and continuity.

Linking Unionville’s heritage district and the Rouge River, the conceptual wayfinding path mimics the sinuous flow of the riparian corridor and the reflection of a blue sky, drawing the foliage of the nearby valley trail up toward Main Street through a magnified abstracted pattern.

By way of cyanotype printing techniques, Stars Hollow proposes a collaboration with the Rouge River watershed. Botanicals foraged from around the Rouge River and the Rouge Valley trail (such as dandelions, wild cucumbers, willow seeds, wood avens, meadow anemone, and bedstraws) express intricate UV-negative patterns grounded in a deep ferrous blue. The cyanotype sheets were developed using water collected from the Rouge River and its Bruce Creek tributary to create a collaborative and linked relationship with the land and the body of water. The resulting images were then digitally articulated to produce a surface-applied thermoplastic pattern. Once applied, Stars Hollow would animate the parking lot as a vibrant gateway and meeting point between Unionville’s rich ecological and cultural heritage, heightening the experience of place.

The title Stars Hollow borrows from the fictional town filmed in Unionville whose name supposedly emerged from the story of two star-crossed lovers. Similarly, the complex relationship between the emergence of modernity and the instrumentalization of nature has shared its complications and predicaments. Today we still find ourselves entangled in this negotiation between our roles as stewards and consumers of nature.

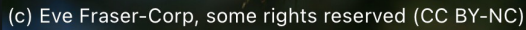
It is my hope that Stars Hollow will encourage viewers to slow down and create connections to the river and natural surroundings, and stimulate rumination of the settler and Indigenous histories that continue to story Unionville. The proximity of the Main Street stands as an emblem of today’s human domain while the more-than-human presence of the river and the forest remind us of our place within an ancient and thriving ecosystem. Through this piece, I offer a channel where these histories can be in conversation.





Wood Avens

Geum urbanum, also known as wood avens, herb Bennet, colewort and St. Benedict's herb (Latin herba benedicta), is a perennial plant in the rose family (Rosaceae), which grows in shady places (such as woodland edges and near hedgerows) in Europe and the Middle East. (Source: Wikipedia, [Geum urbanum](#), CC BY-SA 3.0)



Echinocystis lobata

Echinocystis is a monotypic genus in the gourd family, Cucurbitaceae. The sole species is *E. lobata*, commonly called wild cucumber, prickly cucumber, or balsam apple. It is an annual, sprawling plant that is native to North America. (Source: Wikipedia, [Echinocystis](#), CC BY-SA 3.0)



Echinocystis is a monotypic genus in the gourd family, Cucurbitaceae. The sole species is *E. lobata*, commonly called wild cucumber, prickly cucumber or bur cucumber. It is an annual, sprawling plant that is native to North America. (Source: Wikipedia, [Echinocystis](#), CC BY-SA 3.0)



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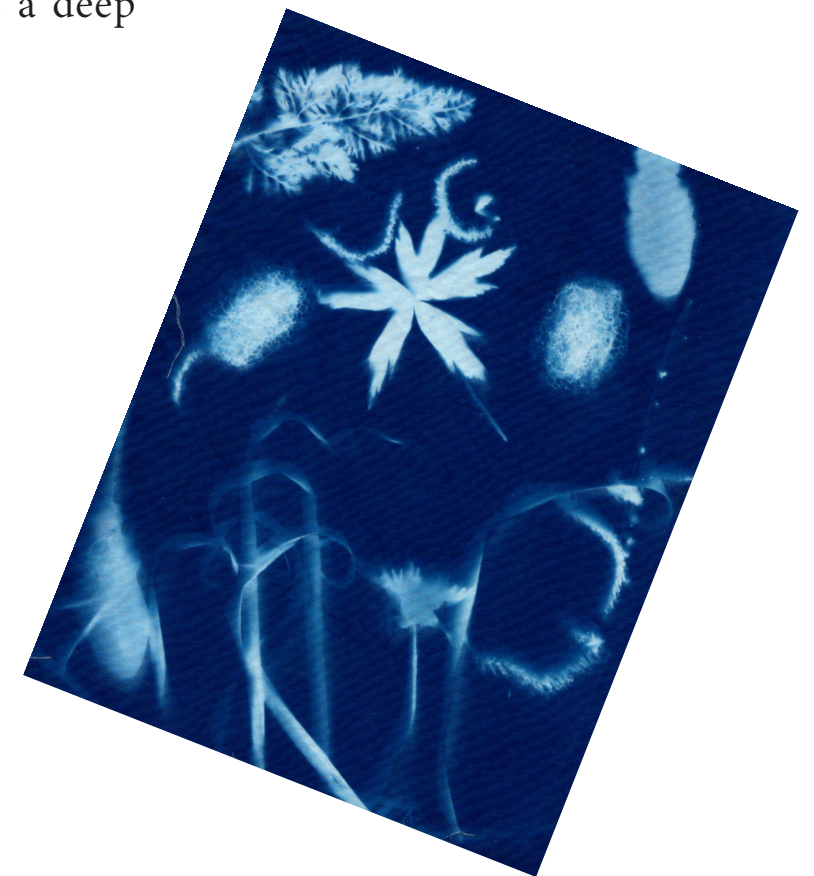
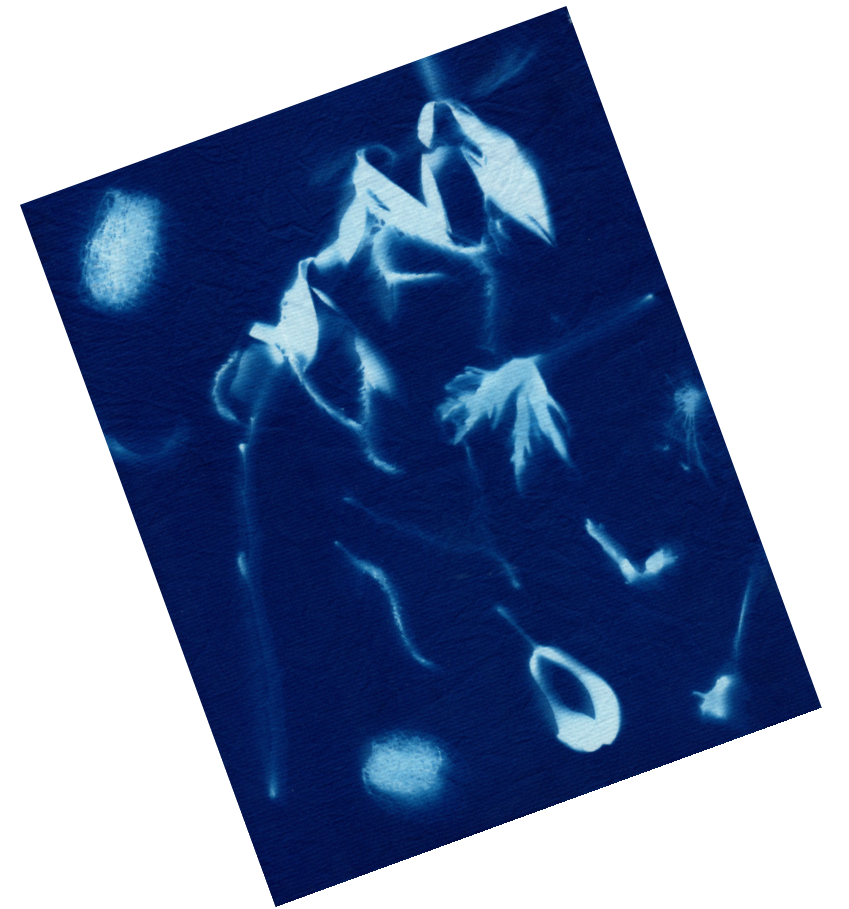


Anemone canadensis, the Canada anemone, round-headed anemone, meadow anemone, or crowfoot, is a herbaceous perennial native to moist meadows, thickets, streambanks, and lakeshores in North America, spreading rapidly by underground rhizomes, valued for its white flowers. (Source: Wikipedia, [Anemone canadensis](#), CC BY-SA 3.0)

The process begins with a walk along the Rouge Valley Trail, where I identify and gather a small sample of botanicals to feature in the prints. Some of these plants have been here since time immemorial, stewarded by the Haudenosaunee, Huron Wendat, ᐱᓂᓴᓶᑦ (Anishinaabeg), Seneca, Chippewa, and Mazina'iga-ziibing Misi-zaagiwininiwag (Mississaugas of the Credit) peoples. Some have arrived through successive colonial and migrant settlements. Today, they shape a diverse and abundant assembly.



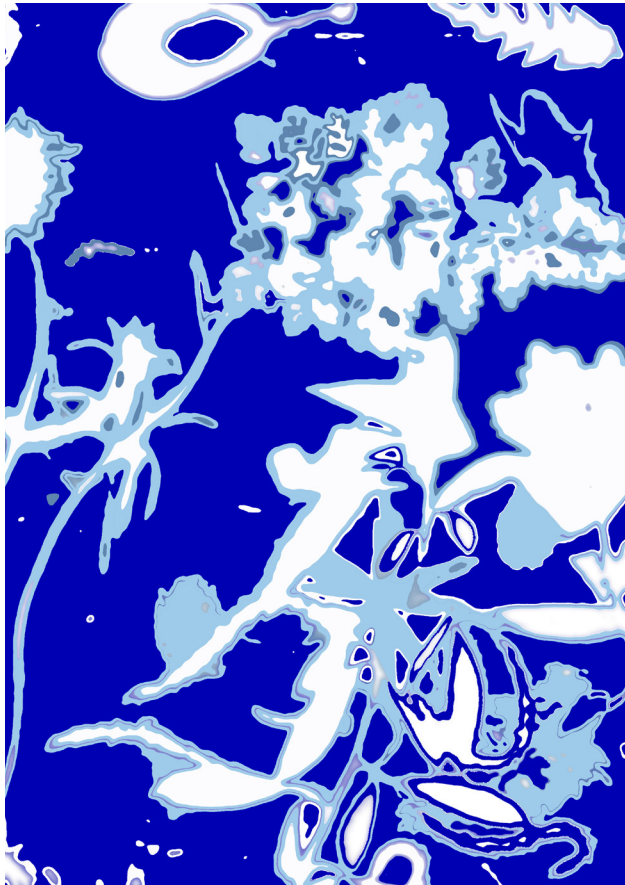
Cyanotype is a form of printing that animates our senses and our sense of time. Returning to the site of the Rouge Connection Pathway, I arrange the foraged plants onto pre-treated fabrics. This is swift work as the UV immediately begins its reaction with the light-sensitive iron salts. Then, a pause to enjoy the sun as it presses the botanicals' shapes onto the sheets. As the collected Rouge water rinses the fabrics, plant forms alight across a deep Prussian blue.



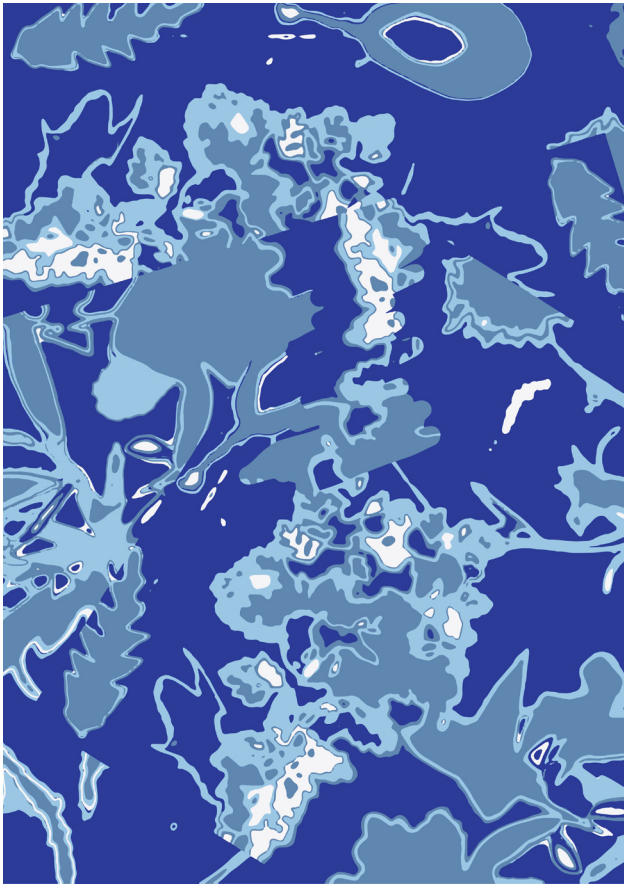
Process



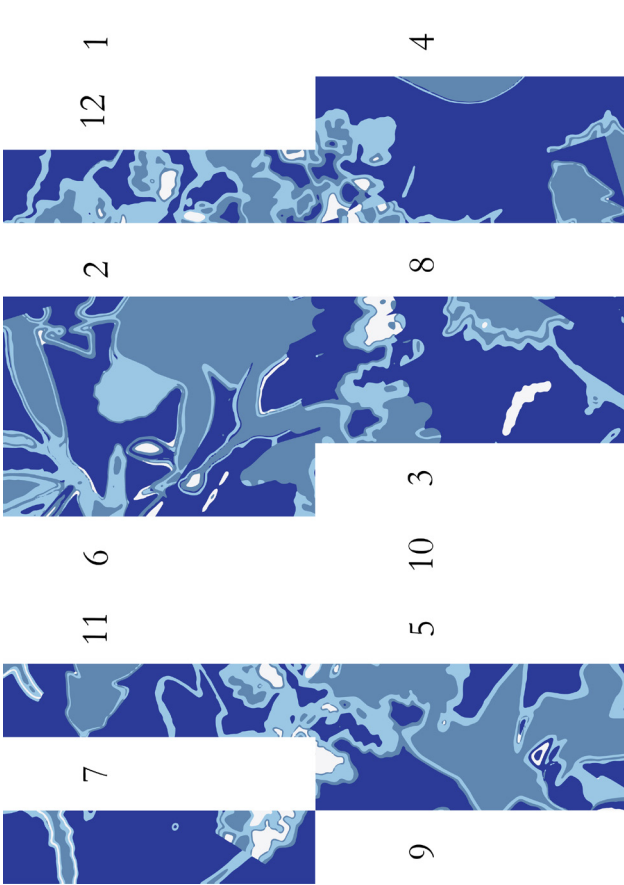
Three selected cyanotype prints are scanned...



...digitally manipulated...

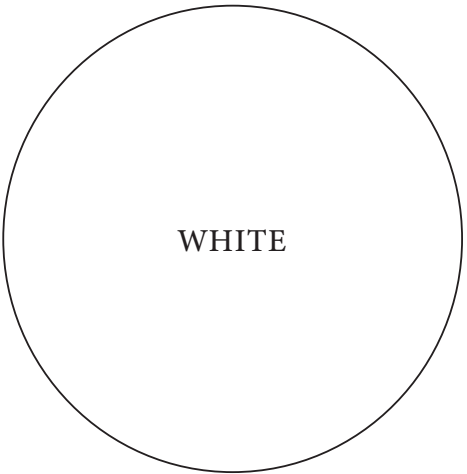
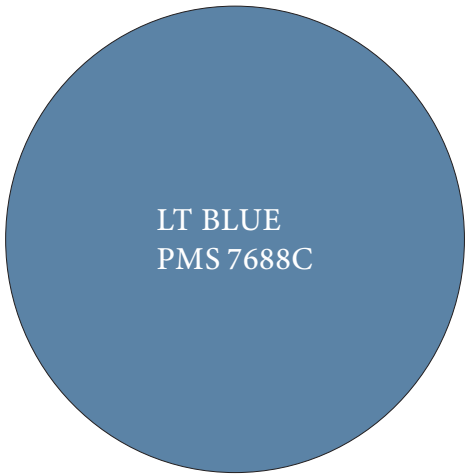
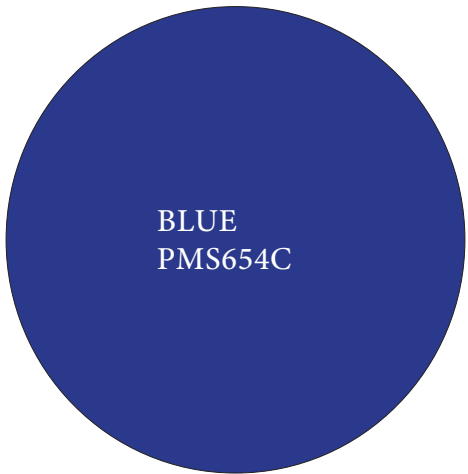


...re-coloured, collaged, and tiled to produce an abstracted pattern...



...and then segmented and composed along the path's course.

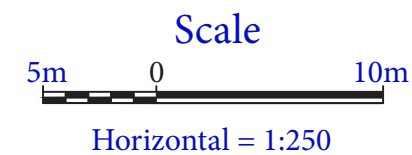
The print's colour palette reflects the Rouge River waters, a clear sky, and the cyanotype that brought these elements together in the pathway's design.



Scale Drawing



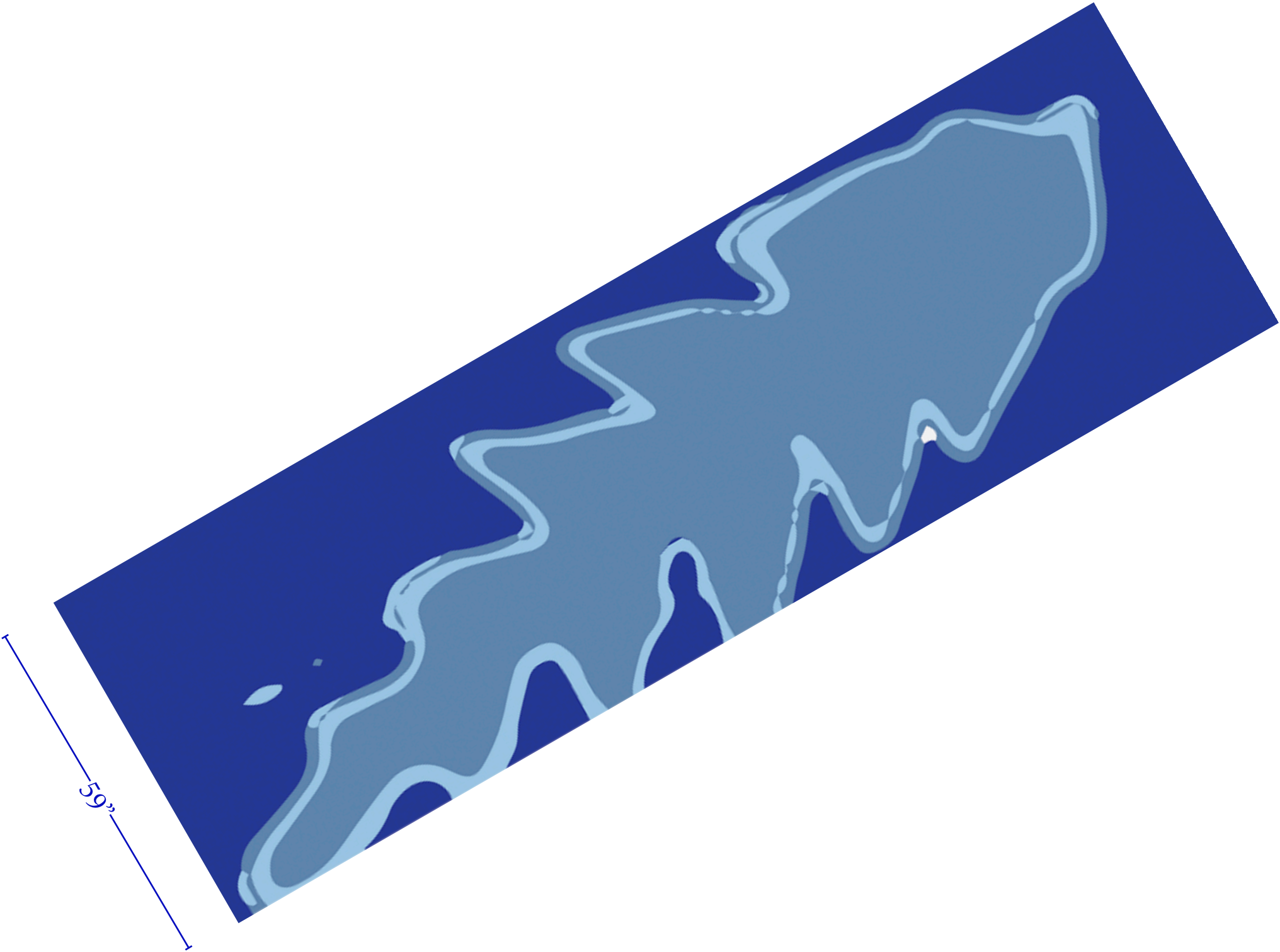
The East Lane



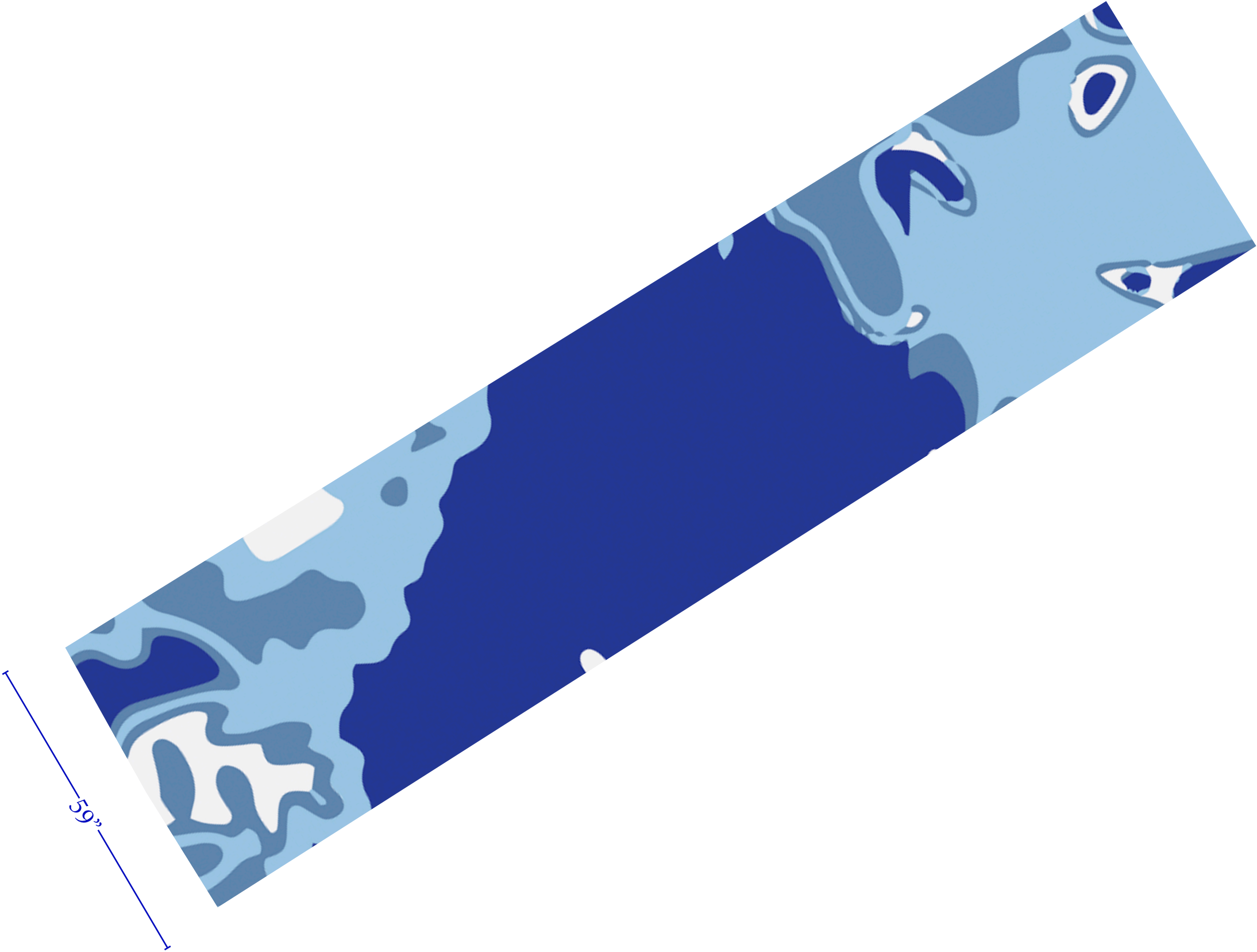


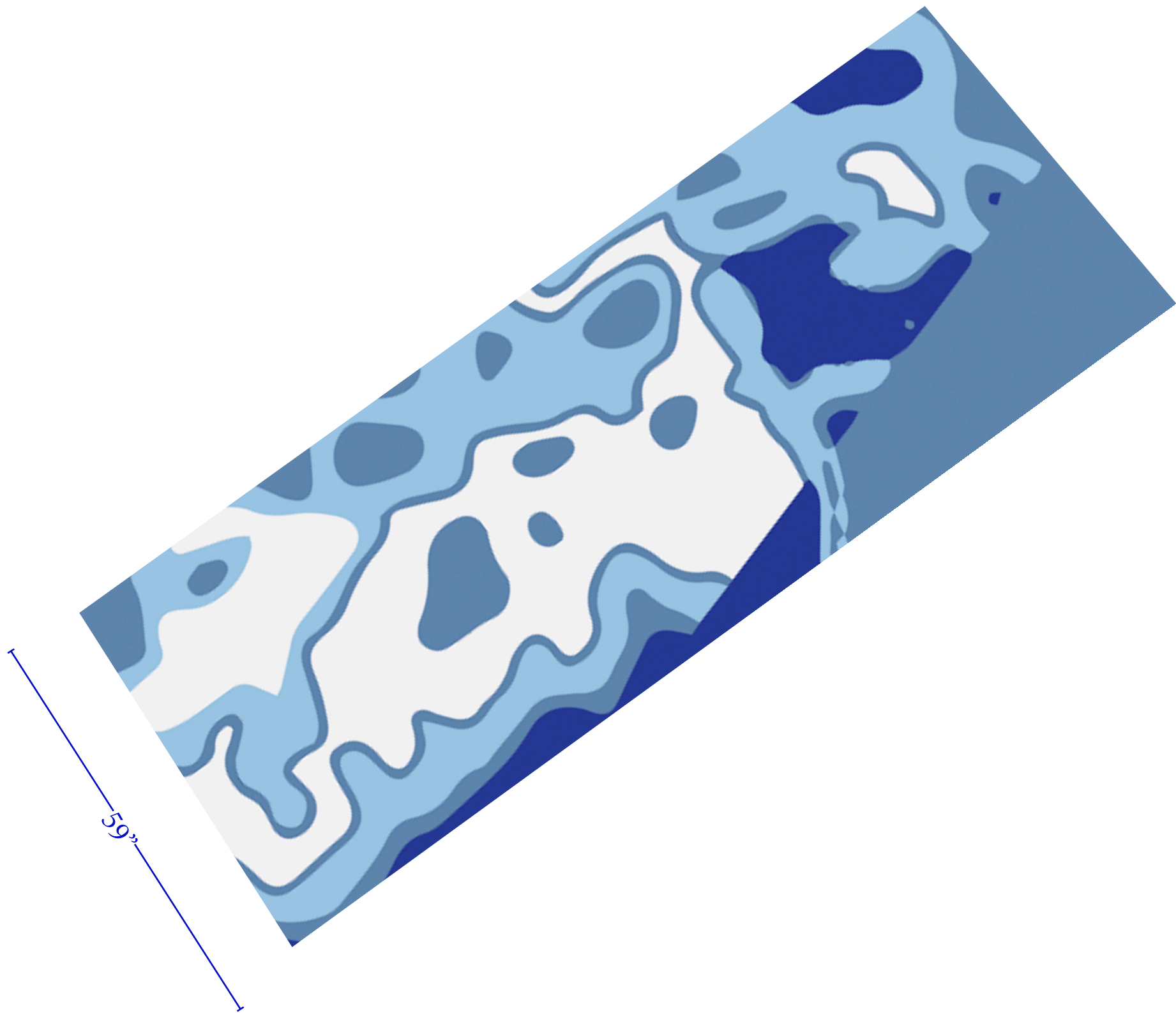
As digitized plant forms flow across the pavement, Stars Hollow creates a strong current between Unionville's revitalizing heritage district and the organic ecosystem that supports it.

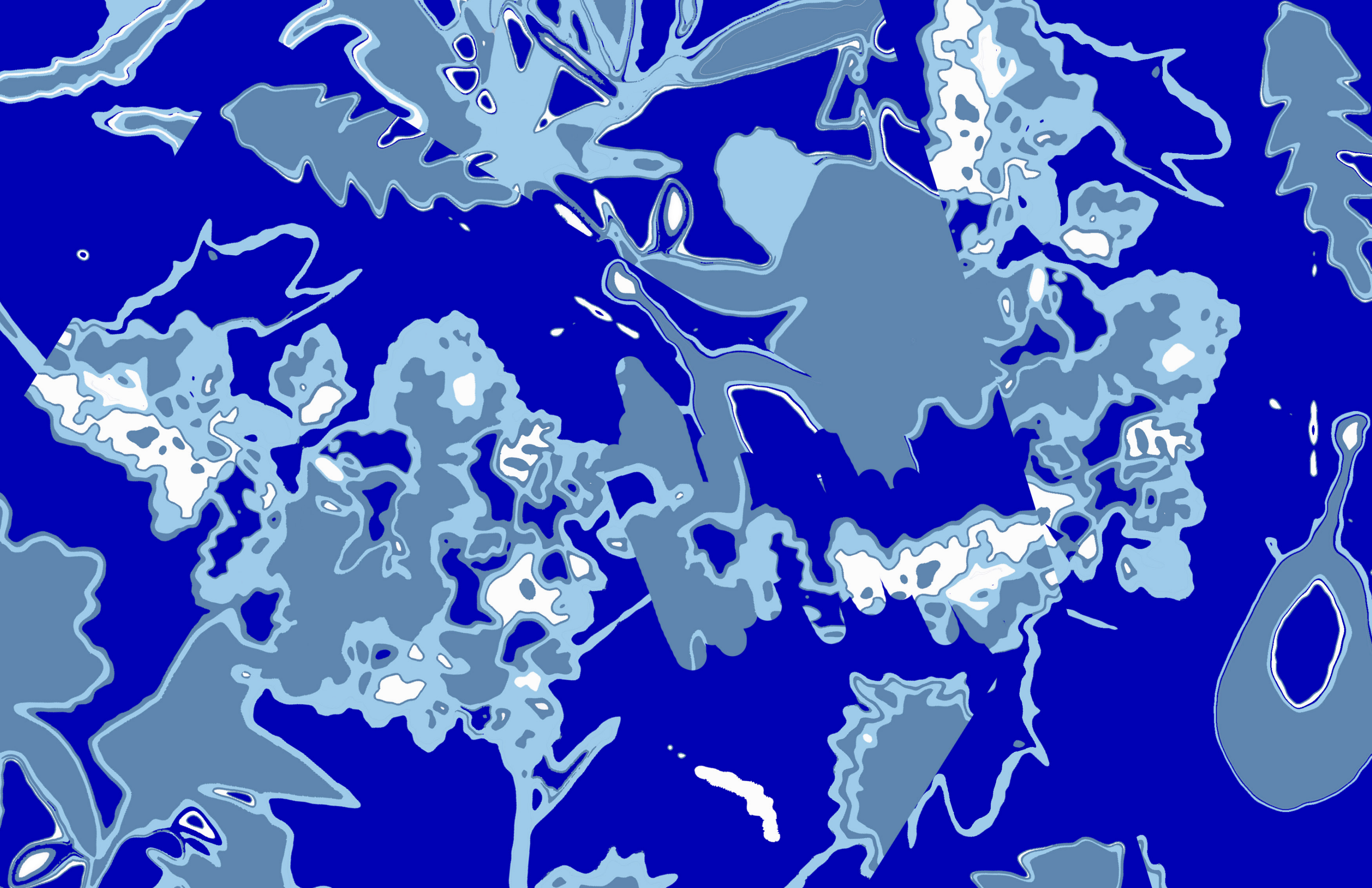
Sample Segment



Sample Segment







Thank you.