

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **The BankRI Galleries Present: Artist Ben Watkins at Pitman Street Gallery**

Artist's "Pangea" series on display March 7 through May 1, 2024

**Providence, R.I. (February 27, 2024)** – BankRI Galleries is pleased to present work by Rhode Island-based artist Ben Watkins at its Pitman Street Gallery March 7 through May 1, 2024. The gallery is located at 137 Pitman Street, Providence, R.I. 02906.

Born in Kentucky, Ben earned his BA from Murray University, and his MFA from RISD. Ben works out of his studio in Lincoln, RI as a furniture designer and sculptor. Employing materials such as wood, plaster, gold leaf, and glass, Ben's sculptures function as both art and design.

Ben's newest body of work is called, "Pangea." The word defines a concept geologists hypothesized of a continent that existed 200 million years ago when the world's land masses were joined. The work shown here, titled, "Sundae," is a light-hearted nod to this idea that we are all connected. In 2024, after our collective experience of a worldwide pandemic, we now understand how real this concept is, metaphorically and otherwise.

Built from a continuous line in reds, blues, purples, and yellows, Ben's carved reliefs speak to this idea of interdependence with elliptical markings and color blocks nestled against one, a supercontinent etched in glass. These works evoke both a wide view of the earth as a motley communal throng; and too, a micro one, recalling our biological protoplasm, the corporeal foundation of the breath and life we all share.

A quote from Virginia Woolf's "Moments of Being" that inspired Ben in conceiving this series further elucidates this idea of our kinship with one another and our embodiment of it, the world, (and its creativity) itself.

"Behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we—I mean all human beings—are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art. Hamlet or a Beethoven quartet is the truth about this vast mass that we call the world. But there is no Shakespeare, there is no Beethoven; certainly and emphatically there is no God; we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself."

With his multi-colored assemblages, in Ben's "Pangea" series we see ourselves as part of a whole; humanity as a fluid, ever-changing, but essentially perfect universal design. We invite you to see in these sculptural works "the whole world as a work of art" and perhaps within that, you yourself.

The Pitman Street Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. For more information, visit [BankRI.com](http://BankRI.com) or call the branch at (401) 456-5160. Ben Watkins is exhibiting additional works at BankRI's North Kingstown branch, located at 1140 Ten Rod Road, North Kingstown, RI 02852.

The BankRI Galleries are curated by Willamain Somma, an artist and arts advocate. For additional information and images, contact her at [willysomma@gmail.com](mailto:willysomma@gmail.com) | 917-374-3262.

**Attached image files: Sundae, 2023, Pangea IV, 2023, Pangea Color Studies: Patchwork (spring), 2023 and Patchwork (autumn), 2023, Ben outside his studio workshop in Lincoln, RI.**

