

ATLANTA CONTEMPORARY

ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Atlanta Contemporary is proud to center artists and curators of the Indigenous diaspora and believes that land back is a call to action and this exhibition is the first step towards accountability to that effort.

The following statement is written by Miranda Kyle, Arts & Culture Program Manager of the Atlanta BeltLine, Inc., who with John Haworth, Director of Public Programs for the National Museum of the American Indian (Smithsonian Institute), acted as curatorial consultants for the vision behind the Summer 2022 exhibitions.

“Atlanta was a central hub for trade and transit long before there were railroads leading to and from a dot on the map called Terminus. Standing Peach Tree, or Pakanahuli in Muscogee Creek, was one of the major villages of Muscogean peoples at the time of early settler encroachment in the mid 1700’s. Pakanahuli, a vibrant trade hub and cultural center, sat at the confluence of Peachtree Creek and the Chattahoochee River, near what we now call the Paces neighborhood in Buckhead. The village descended from the great Southern Appalachian Mississippian Mound Culture’s vast, sprawling feats of architectural engineering and urban planning networking the Southeast. The Cherokee and Muscogee peoples inherited from their Mississippian ancestors the arts, culture and community that had thrived here for thousands of years.

“Among Native Americans, you don’t come from a place, you are of a place. Our name for ourselves is Kituhwa-gi, the people of Kituhwa. A connection to place designates who you are.”

- Tom Belt, Eastern Band of Cherokee[1] Indians

Similarly, people who now call Atlanta home do so through connections tied deeply to place (“I’m from Zone 5,” “I’m a Grady Baby,” for example) and significant cultural moments in time (“I marched with Dr. King,” “been here since before the Olympics,” “I remember when the BeltLine was railroad tracks.”) We know each other and are known by how long our families have been here, what schools we went to, what neighborhoods we live in. Our sense of time in place, as well as our perceived proximity to the old post downtown that marked the center of Atlanta, legitimizes our belonging to this City. However, we must acknowledge that our belonging is new, and rooted in oppression and displacement--a legacy that continues to this day.

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The conceptual spark that inspired this exhibition was action. In 2020, major cultural institutions in Atlanta and across the county began adding Land Acknowledgements to their websites and programmatic platforms. “Decolonize” became a buzzword and an adjective, instead of a verb. Empty platitudes to check DEI boxes. Atlanta Contemporary approached me with a request to interrogate what it truly means to do more than check a box, and we began this journey to turn an exhibition concept into a homecoming. When an institution built on stolen land can embrace the Indigenization of its spaces, and decenter itself in curation, we can begin to make actionable our commitments to Land Back efforts.

I am deeply grateful to Veronica Kessenich for her willingness to open Atlanta Contemporary’s doors to this first-of-its kind exhibition in Atlanta; to John Haworth for sharing his wisdom, encouragement, and network; and to Dr. Ashley Holland and Elisa Harkins for bringing their brilliant visions for the exhibitions home.”

- Miranda Kyle

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RETURNS: CHEROKEE DIASPORA AND ART

Luzene Hill

Born in Atlanta, GA. Lives and works in Atlanta, GA.

Brenda Mallory

Born in OK. Lives in Portland, OR.

Kade Twist

Born in Bakersfield, CA. Lives in Los Angeles, CA.

Curated by Ashley Holland

Gallery 2 + 3

On view June 11 – September 4, 2022

Curatorial Statement

For the Cherokee, our creation story is tied to our ancestral lands, which include what is now known as Georgia. We hold our origins and identity to these places, even if we no longer live there. Like other Indigenous groups on this continent, Cherokee understanding of self and culture has changed over time either by choice or because of necessity. And with that, so has our relationship to land. Migration has never been a foreign concept to the Cherokee, but as settler colonialism continues to impact the lives of Indigenous peoples on this continent, one result is a large Cherokee diaspora. Like our ancestors, who adapted and evolved in order to ensure survival of self and culture, so do contemporary Cherokee. It is in this reality of continuation that many Cherokee artists create their work.

Historian James Clifford, from whose book *Returns: Becoming Indigenous in the Twenty-First Century* this exhibition borrows its name, examines processes of cultural renewal through the production of art. Clifford seeks to remove the perceived, inherent contradictions of an Indigenous and diasporic life. So much of indigeneity is an inherent perception of an internal connection to the land from which one emerged; however, removal from our land does not make us any less Indigenous. Clifford states, “Diasporic ruptures and connections—lost homelands, partial returns, relational identities, and world-spanning networks—are fundamental components of [I]ndigenous experience today.”^[2]

Returns: Cherokee Diaspora and Art features the works of three contemporary artists: Luzene Hill (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians),

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Brenda Mallory (Cherokee Nation), and Kade Twist (Cherokee Nation). Each artist explores their identity – as a contemporary person, a Cherokee citizen, a human being in a global environment – in unique ways. They use art as a mechanism to not only celebrate but also interrogate their Indigeneity. It is in these interrogations, demonstrated through a variety of media, that the exhibition asks visitors to reexamine their own place on this land.

[2] James Clifford, *Returns: Becoming Indigenous in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 88.

Gallery 3 Right wall, right to left

1. Brenda Mallory
Further Function #2, 2019
Handmade cast paper, paint, nuts, bolts
27.25" x 42.25" x 2.25"
Courtesy the artist and Russo Lee Gallery
2. Brenda Mallory
Drivebelt Experiment #2, 2016
Rubber drivebelts, paint on wood, panel
46" x 20" x 1.5"
3. Brenda Mallory
At the Fringe, 2019
Waxed cloth, paint, nuts, bolts mounted on wood panel
33.5" x 74" x 2"
Courtesy the artist and Russo Lee Gallery

Curatorial Statement

The work of Cherokee Nation citizen, Brenda Mallory ranges from individual wall hangings and sculptures to large-scale installations. Mallory works with mixed media, using natural and found materials to create multiple forms that are joined with crude hardware or mechanical devices to imply tenuous connections and aberration. She is interested in ideas of interference and disruptions in systems of nature and human cultures. Mallory's tactile and geometric work is both installation and sculpture. It is an extension of herself, unspoken but strongly present, and the world around her. Often made up of multiple pieces able to exist on their own, the resulting work is

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multi-surfaced and immersive. Biological forms resembling spores, pods, and plant-like stalks are rendered through the marriage of harsh industrial metal objects and silky soft looking skins or fibers.

The work Mallory creates is much like the environment that we live in, both beautiful and dangerous. It is also like life and history, full of pain and joy. Her work is a representation of her self-realizations and personal history bared to the world. It reflects a diversity of identity by grappling with the hard parts and forging them together with the soft.

Center gallery wall, right to left

1. Brenda Mallory
Reformed Packings #19, 2021
Honeycomb packing sheet, paint, encaustic
49.5" x 20" x 1.5"
Courtesy the artist and Russo Lee Gallery
2. Brenda Mallory
Reformed Packings #19, 2021
Honeycomb packing sheet, paint, encaustic
49.5" x 20" x 1.5"
Courtesy the artist and Russo Lee Gallery
3. Brenda Mallory
Partitioning, 2017
Collagraph prints on kozo paper, thread, wax
30" x 95.5" x 3"
4. Brenda Mallory
Soft Focus #4, 2018
Waxed cloth, hog rings, welded steel armature
66" x 100" x 2"
Courtesy the artist and Russo Lee Gallery
5. Brenda Mallory
The Plural of Nexus, 2016
One-color lithograph on Rives BFK white
Printed by Frank Janzen, AP2
30" x 22"

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Projection Corner

1. Kade Twist
Demand Aggregation, 2016
Video
19:56
2. Kade Twist
Of the Smiles We Left Behind, 2016
Video
15:03

Kade Twist Curatorial Statement

Kade Twist is California-based Cherokee Nation citizen. His work spans multiple media – video, sound, interactive, text, and installation – and sources inspiration from the place and community in which it is created. A consistent theme within his art production revolves around migration, displacement, and the experience of a contemporary CWY in search of ways to create return through art in order to address the imbalance that separation from homeland creates.

Twist looks to storytelling and has used the CWY language and his own poetry to talk about Indigenous issues of displacement, both from a personal and global standpoint. Through multi-media installations and sculptures, Twist creates work that exemplify the definition of contemporary art while actively investigating the history and impact of dislocation on CWY communities and the resulting diaspora through a central theme of longing for home.

Center gallery

1. Kade Twist
Dhr̄ (atsilv), 2022
Multichannel video sculpture with sound.
LED video monitors, media players, propane tanks
Site-specific installation
2. Luzene Hill
Trace and Wounds, 2021

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Canvas, silk, wire, wood
142" x 84"

Traces and Wounds *Artist Statement*

“History is not something we can know directly; it is available to the scholar only as a combination of traces or wounds. It can be apprehended only through its effects.”

- Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as Socially Symbolic Act*

This work presents three numbers: 1492, 574 and 6956. The first - the year a wave of invasions into the Americas began. The second - the number of federally recognized tribal nations in the United States. The third - the average reported number of Indigenous women sexually assaulted each year in the United States, from data collected over a twelve year period.

Three panels with knotted cord abstractions of the *Inka khipu*, designate those significant numbers. Inka khipu the knots represent numbers, an amount, a sum. Unknotted strands and spaces indicate no number, zero.

These knots are the wounds. Shadows of the loose cords, viewed from the front, are the traces. On the back, the pull through of the cords create chaotic “loose ends”, reflecting the attitude of the U.S. government toward Indigenous people.

Unknotted strands symbolize the number of sexual assaults on Native American women that are not reported, not counted. Nationally, it's estimated, that only 16% of sexual assault are ever reported. For Native women I believe the percentage of unreported assaults is even greater. We can't know this number for sure – as we can't know history directly, knowing only the effects, seeing only the traces and wounds . . .

Gallery 2

Left gallery wall, left to right

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Luzene Hill

Now that the gates of Hell are closed..., 2019-2022

11 drawings, performers, and chairs

Site-specific installation

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Now that the gates of Hell are closed... *Artist Statement*

When I was a freshman in college a professor opened the first day of class by asking the young ladies on the front row to “please cross your legs”. They complied, quizzically, then he stated, “now that the gates of hell are closed, we can begin”.

Decades later, never having forgotten that class, this is my response.

The emergence of patriarchy obliterated matrilineal cultures, societies in which women had agency and sexual freedom – freedom of choice on so many levels.

Framing women as the guilty party has been a patriarchal tradition – from Eve to blaming female survivors of rape . . . she was drinking, she was flirting, she was wearing provocative clothing, *she was jogging in a park at 7:15 in the morning.*

This work challenges phallogocentrism and celebrates female sexuality and eroticism.

Artist Bios

Luzene Hill

Luzene Hill is a multidisciplinary artist, best known for immersive installations and performance collaborations. Through work informed by pre-contact culture of the Americas Hill advocates for Indigenous sovereignty - linguistic, cultural and individual sovereignty. Employing early autochthonous motifs she asserts female power and sexuality to challenge colonial patriarchy. Recent works, *Revelate* and *Smoke and Mirrors*, present evocative new ways of thinking about the past and the future. An enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Hill lives and works in Atlanta, GA. She has exhibited throughout the United States, as well as in Canada, Russia, Japan and the United Kingdom. Awards include: 2019 Ucross Fellowship, 2016 Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Fellowship, 2015 Eiteljorg Museum Fellowship and 2015 First Peoples Fund Fellowship. Recent residencies: 2020 Social Engagement Residency, IAIA MoCNA; 2020 Invited Artist Residency, Anderson Ranch Arts Center; and 2021 Invited Artist Residency, Township 10. Hill’s work is featured in Susan Powers’ book, “Cherokee Art: Prehistory to Present”, Josh McPhee’s book, “Celebrate

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People's History!: The Poster Book of Resistance and Revolution", and the PBS Documentary, "Native Art NOW!".

Brenda Mallory

Brenda Mallory's mixed media sculptural works are comprised of a variety of materials including cloth, fibers, beeswax, and found objects. By creating multiple forms that are joined with crude hardware that imply tenuous connections or repairs, her work addresses ideas of interference and disruption in long-established systems of nature and human cultures. Mallory lives in Portland, Oregon but grew up in Oklahoma and is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. She holds a BA in Linguistics & English from UCLA and a BFA from Pacific Northwest College of Art. She has received grants from the Oregon Arts Commission, Ford Family Foundation, and the Regional Arts & Culture Council. She is a recipient the Eiteljorg Contemporary Native Art Fellowship, the Native Arts and Culture Foundation Fellowship in Visual Art and the Ucross Native Fellowship. She has participated in artist residencies including Ucross, Anderson Ranch, Crow's Shadow Institute of the Arts, Glean, Bullseye Glass, and Signal Fire Outpost, c3:initiative, and the Jordan Schnitzer Printmaking Residency at Sitka Center for the Arts.

Kade Twist

Kade L. Twist is a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and grew up in Bakersfield, California. Twist is an interdisciplinary artist, poet and co-founding member of Postcommodity. Twist is a 2015 US Artist Klein Fellow for Visual Arts, recipient of the 2007 Native Writers Circle of the Americas First Book Award for Amazing Grace. In addition to his creative practice, Twist is Associate Professor and Curriculum Area Head of Art+Social Practice in the MFA Fine Arts Department at Otis College of Art and Design, in Los Angeles. Prior to Otis, Twist served as a public policy analyst specializing in American Indian technology, healthcare and community development for 17 years.

Curator Bio

Ashley Holland

Ashley Holland currently serves as the Associate Curator for the Art Bridges Foundation. She is the former Assistant Curator of Native Art at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art in Indianapolis. Holland earned her doctorate in art history from the University of Oklahoma,

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Norman in 2021 with a focus on Indigenous identity, cultural memory, and issues of diaspora in Cherokee contemporary art. She received her MA in museum studies from Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis and BA in art history and religious studies from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana. Holland is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and currently lives in Rogers, Arkansas.

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YOU ARE HELESWV (MEDICINE)

Curated by Elisa Harkins

Project Spaces

On view June 11 – September 4, 2022

Curatorial Statement

Erasure is a violent act. The forced removal of the Muscogee (Creek) and Cherokee from the Southeast can be described as nothing other than genocide. When we think of the word erasure, it seems almost childish. It conjures thoughts of No. 2 pencil lead being rubbed by a pink eraser, hitting ctrl+Z to undo something on your computer, or deleting something on your phone. In stark contrast, the erasure of Indigenous people from Atlanta is anything but childish. How do you delete an entire society of people? By taking away their relationship to the land. According to Philip Deere, the Muscogee people are “those who possess herbs.”^[3] Our plants and medicines are a vital part of our identity. Our language, traditions, and ceremonies are held in these plants. These medicines are equally important to the Cherokee people, who were punished for planting seeds while they were marched along the Trail of Tears.

The title *You Are Heleswv (Medicine)* suggests that each artist and their embodied knowledge, which is presented in their work, is healing on a physical and spiritual level. The video *TOTSU (Redbird)* by Jeremy Charles (Cherokee) incorporates the Cherokee language, themes of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW), and Indigenous Futurism. Nathaniel Cummings-Lambert’s (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians) contribution, featured in Sliver Space, is a Deed of Cultural Easement at Atlanta Contemporary, which will grant the property to Cherokee and Muscogee (Creek) citizens for cultural use. Kalyn Barnoski’s (Cherokee) work stems from the great tradition of Cherokee weaving and basketry. Barnoski uses the theme of weaving in literal and metaphorical ways. Patrick Freeland (Muscogee), a Mvskoke gardener at College of Muscogee Nation, shows heleswv in vessels created by Cindi Wood (Muscogee) in The Secret Garden. Accompanying our Mvskoke plants are the poems *Stomp All Night* and *This Morning I Pray for My Enemies* by Joy Harjo (Muscogee), award-winning U.S. Poet Laureate. In Chute Space a ceramic sculpture by Raven Halfmoon (Caddo) serves as a reminder that when the Cherokee and Muscogee arrived in Indian Territory, they displaced other Indigenous people residing there, including the Caddo. This was part of the U.S. government’s design to create conflict and competition between tribes. Also

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in Chute Space, Kyle Bell (Muscogee) passes on the knowledge of our Mvskoke foods, including sofky, which is considered a medicine that cleanses the inner parts of our bodies.

[3] Muskogee Creek Elder, 1929 – 1985

TOTSU (REDBIRD)

Lecture Hall

Jeremy Charles (Cherokee)

Born in Oologah, OK. Lives in Tulsa, OK.

TOTSU (Redbird), 2020

Video

10:30

Curatorial Statement

In the US, Native American women are more than twice as likely to experience violence than any other demographic. One in three Indigenous women is sexually assaulted during her life, and 67% of these assaults are perpetrated by non-Indigenous perpetrators.

The US declared May 5, 2018, as a national day of awareness in order to raise concern for the crisis and refocus attention on issues affecting Indigenous women. It hopes to improve relations between the federal and tribal governments.

In *TOTSU (Redbird)*, Jeremy Charles addresses the issue of MMIW (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women) in parallel worlds, hundreds of years apart from each other. The only language spoken in *TOTSU (Redbird)* is Cherokee. Charles worked with The Cherokee Language Department at The Cherokee Nation to provide translation for the piece. Charles spells that out by saying, “Television and film are a major cause in the diminishing of Native languages, including our Cherokee language. Our people have rarely seen or heard themselves in the media. Think of what that does to a culture — to never be seen. These days there are a lot of us who recognize that we have to make films in Cherokee, and cartoons, and make them high quality so that they compete head to head with contemporary English media. So that’s what I’m trying to do: to take this opportunity I’ve been

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given to create content in Cherokee. It's going to take a lot of us doing it, but that is the way forward.”

MATRILINEAL KINSHIP

Chute Space

Kyle Bell (Muscogee)

Born in Claremore, OK. Lives in Tulsa, OK.

HOW-TO: Muscogee (Creek) Foods, 2020

Video

06:11

Raven Halfmoon (Caddo Nation)

Born in Norman, OK. Lives in Norman, OK.

E'nah ti-ti II (Aunt II), 2022

Stoneware, Glaze

9x8x7 (approx.)

Mvskoke foods are an important part of church and ceremonial gatherings. Kyle Bell's *HOW-TO: Muscogee (Creek) Foods* shows the traditional camphouse style of cooking Mvskoke foods. Many of these dishes use lye and corn, which are considered medicines and cleanse the inner parts of our bodies.

Many Indigenous societies are matrilineal. This means that each child “belongs” to their mother and their mother's side of the family as well as her clan. The clan system provided a societal structure for many tribes and is still used to this day. Many people when formally introducing themselves will say what clan they belong to as a way of honoring and referring to their mother. All of Raven Halfmoon's work is influenced by this respect for Indigenous women. With the sculpture, *E'nah ti-ti II (Aunt II)*, Halfmoon depicts a stoic face with red cheeks. “The strongest women I know are Native,” she says. “They're very androgynous though. I don't glaze makeup onto them or give them crazy eyelashes. I'm not worried about making them beautiful—they're meant to be a powerful presence.”

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Kyle Bell

A Native American filmmaker from the Thlopthlocco Creek Tribal Town, Kyle Bell is based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. As a director, cinematographer, editor, and photographer, he strives to tell the stories of his people, “stories that don’t get told or whose voices are not heard.” His documentaries have earned him multiple awards and a Heartland Emmy. He was a 2019 Sundance Indigenous Program Fellow and a 2020 Tulsa Artist Fellow.

Bell is currently the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative Protégé to cinema legend Spike Lee. Kyle is working on a new documentary short to be executive produced by film director Kathryn Bigelow.

Raven Halfmoon

Raven Halfmoon (Caddo Nation) is from Norman, Oklahoma. She attended the University of Arkansas where she earned a double Bachelors Degree in ceramics/painting and cultural anthropology. Her work has been featured in multiple exhibitions throughout the U.S. as well as internationally. Raven is currently based in Helena, MT where she is an artist in residence at the Archie Bray Foundation for Ceramic Arts. She is represented by Kouri + Corrao Gallery in Santa Fe, NM.

MY HEART IN THY MOUNTAIN LAND STILL HAS ITS HOME

Sliver Space

Nathaniel Cummings-Lambert (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians)
Born in Sylva, NC. Lives in Brooklyn, NY.

My heart in thy mountain land still has its home, 2022

PLA plastic, acrylic, epoxy, plywood, wood, soil, motor rotating stand
Dimensions variable

Curatorial Statement

VA (Tohi) is a Cherokee concept that means three things. Physical and mental wellness, moving at a peaceful pace, like a river, and balance. This is an idea that Cherokees find grounding, and some live their lives by. The Cherokee word for land is *SVVA* (Gatohi), which ends with the word *VA* (Tohi). In *My heart in thy mountain land still has its home*, Nathaniel Cummings-Lambert (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians) combines earth from Cherokee, North Carolina with 3D printed syllabary of *VA* (Tohi). The

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text that is etched into the sides of the triangular sculpture is from The Marshall Trilogy, which is a set of three Supreme Court decisions in the early nineteenth century affirming the legal and political standing of Indian nations. Additionally, Cummings-Lambert is working on a Cultural Easement, which will Protect Land and Create Access to Native American Cultural and Ceremonial Gatherings at Atlanta Contemporary.

Nathaniel Cummings-Lambert

Nathaniel Cummings-Lambert (Sylva, NC) is a Ph.D. student in Sociocultural Anthropology and the Culture and Media certificate program at New York University. He holds a BA in Religious Studies from Eugene Lang College, The New School and an MFA in Art from California Institute of the Arts. He is an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians located in Cherokee, North Carolina. His art has been exhibited at Southampton Art Center (2022), Alta Art Space in Malmö, Sweden (2019), Socrates Sculpture Park (2018-2019), and Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City, UT (2018). His films have been screened at the Asinabka Festival (2021), Engauge Experimental Film Festival (2019), Northampton Film Festival (2019), Milwaukee Underground Film Festival (2018), Cosmic Rays Film Festival (2018), Anti-Matter Film Festival (2011), and the Dorothy H. Hirshon Film Festival (2011).

I PRAY FOR MY ENEMIES

Secret Garden

Joy Harjo (Muscogee)

Born in Tulsa, OK. Lives in Tulsa, OK.

Stomp All Night, 2021

Audio Recording

4:01

This Morning I Pray for My Enemies, 2021

Audio Recording

2:50

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Patrick Freeland (Muscogee)

Born in Okmulgee, OK. Lives in Tulsa, OK.

Mvskoke Garden, 2022

Traditional Mvskoke Heleswv

Dimensions Variable

Cindi Wood (Muscogee)

Born in Fayetteville, NC. Lives in Okmulgee, OK.

Intents, 2022

Ceramic from Mvskoke clay

Dimensions Variable

This Morning I Pray for My Enemies

And whom do I call my enemy?

An enemy must be worthy of engagement.

I turn in the direction of the sun and keep walking.

It's the heart that asks the question, not my furious mind.

The heart is the smaller cousin of the sun.

It sees and knows everything.

It hears the gnashing even as it hears the blessing.

The door to the mind should only open from the heart.

An enemy who gets in, risks the danger of becoming a friend.

Curatorial Statement

Plants in Muscogee and Cherokee culture are considered sacred. Language, history, and ceremonies are connected to these traditional medicines. In *I Pray for My Enemies*, ceramic vessels with Mvskoke symbols created by elder Cindi Wood (Muscogee) hold a collection of these medicines cultivated by Patrick Freeland (Muscogee). Included in this Mvskoke garden are Awhanv (Red Willow), Hece (Tobacco), and Vlv (Red Buckeye).

Playing on the speakers as you walk into The Secret Garden is Joy Harjo (Muscogee), the first Native American US Poet Laureate. The poems *Stomp All Night* and *This Morning I Pray for My Enemies* have been arranged into jazz compositions with Harjo on the saxophone. Vinyl text of the poem *This Morning I Pray for My Enemies* can be seen when you walk into the space. Together, the text, audio, vessels, and the plants create a celebration of Mvskoke embodied knowledge.

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Artist Bios

Patrick Freeland

Patrick Austin Freeland, Wind Clan of the Muscogee Nation of Oklahoma, serves as an educator and communicator, committed to action to promote the advancement of community and educational institutions through the integration of plural knowledge systems, employing excellence in design, and leading innovation through adaptation. Through interdisciplinary sciences, arts, and engineering, Patrick's vocation seeks to integrate living systems and contemporary knowledges as a means of addressing significant environmental challenges through cultural revitalization and community engagement. He currently serves as a Natural Resources Instructor at the College of the Muscogee Nation and leads the Mvskoke Cultural Gardens, which seeks to continue Indigenous Mvskoke traditional ecological knowledge, as well as to integrate modern agrotechnologies for synthetic-chemical-free food production, increasing biodiversity, and ecosystem restoration. Patrick is also the director for the Livelihood Knowledge Exchange Network (LiKEN) Knowledge Sharing Network: Centering Indigenous Knowledge Systems project, and leads the BuildingAFire.org website which offers freely available resources licensed under Creative Commons, to support Indigenous and non-Indigenous climate educators and students. Patrick continues to engage novel and creative endeavors which span the boundaries of healing and peace-making, community advancement through adaptive management, utilization of media and information technologies, and intercultural communication.

Joy Harjo

Joy Harjo is an internationally renowned performer and writer of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. She is serving her second term as the 23rd Poet Laureate of the United States. The author of nine books of poetry, including the highly acclaimed *An American Sunrise*, several plays and children's books, and two memoirs, *Crazy Brave* and *Poet Warrior*, her many honors include the Ruth Lily Prize for Lifetime Achievement from the Poetry Foundation, the Academy of American Poets Wallace Stevens Award, two NEA fellowships, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. As a musician and performer, Harjo has produced seven award-winning music albums including her newest, *I Pray for My Enemies*. She is Executive Editor of the anthology *When the Light of the World was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through* — A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry and the editor of

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Living Nations, Living Words: An Anthology of First Peoples Poetry, the companion anthology to her signature Poet Laureate project. She is a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, Board of Directors Chair of the Native Arts & Cultures Foundation, and is the inaugural Artist-in-Residence for the Bob Dylan Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she lives.

Cindi Wood

Cindi Wood is a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Fox Clan. She is an interdisciplinary artist specializing in sewing, painting, beading, basket-making, storytelling, music, and pottery. She attended Oklahoma State University and the University of Houston-Clear Lake and has a bachelor's and master's in biology, a master's in Instructional Technology, and one in Educational Management. She has taught in Texas and Oklahoma for over thirty years and is passionate about offering cultural arts to her students at the College of the Muscogee Nation.

Curator Bio

Elisa Harkins

Elisa Harkins is a Native American (Cherokee/Muscogee) artist and composer based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Because of a historic US Supreme Court decision in 2020, Tulsa is now recognized as being on the Muscogee (Creek) Reservation. Harkins is an enrolled member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, She is Bear Clan, and her Tribal Town is Coweta (Hope). Her work is concerned with translation, language preservation, and Indigenous musicology. Harkins uses the Cherokee and Mvskoke languages, electronic music, sculpture, and the body as her tools. Harkins received a BA from Columbia College Chicago and an MFA from CalArts. She has since continued her education at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Her work has been exhibited at Crystal Bridges, documenta 14, The Hammer Museum, The Heard Museum, and MoMA.

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