

# The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

For Immediate Release

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## RAVEN HALFMOON: FLAGS OF OUR MOTHERS

June 25, 2023 to January 7, 2024

### Raven Halfmoon's first major traveling museum exhibition

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum is pleased to announce *Raven Halfmoon: Flags of Our Mothers* featuring new and recent works made over the last five years. This exhibition is co-organized by The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum and Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, where it will be on view May 18 to September 15, 2024. Commissioned by The Aldrich and Bemis Center, the exhibition will debut Halfmoon's largest works to date, including a three-part stacked ceramic sculpture standing over twelve-feet tall. *Raven Halfmoon: Flags of Our Mothers* will be on view at The Aldrich from June 25, 2023, to January 7, 2024.



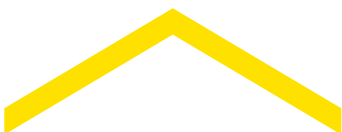
Raven Halfmoon, *Weeping Willow Women*, 2022, Stoneware, glaze, 72 x 70 x 46 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Kouri + Corrao Gallery

Halfmoon's practice ranges from torso-scaled to colossal-sized glazed stoneware sculptures. Several of her recent works soar up to nine-feet high and weigh over a thousand pounds. Their enormous scale and visual power oppose existing stereotypes and biases, creating new monuments that honor the artist's Caddo ancestors and traditions, including her elders who taught her ceramic techniques when she was a teenager.

Halfmoon's inspirations orbit centuries—from ancient Indigenous pottery, specifically Caddo pottery traditions, to the colossal Olmec stone heads in Mexico, the Moai statues on Easter Island, and the major earth mounds constructed by the artist's ancestors for a variety of purposes, including ceremonial. Fusing Caddo pottery traditions, a history of making mostly done by women, with populist gestures—often tagging her work (a reference also to Caddo tattooing and ancient pottery motifs), her works reference stories of the Caddo Nation, specifically her feminist lineage and the power of its complexities.

Halfmoon works mainly in portraiture, building each work by hand using the coil method. Her surfaces are expressive and show deep finger impressions and dramatic dripping glazes—a physicality that presences her as both maker and matter. Her palette is specific and matches both the clay bodies she selects and the glazes she fires with: reds, after the Oklahoma soil and the blood of murdered Indigenous women; blacks, which reference the natural clay native to the Red River; and buff creams. Sometimes she stacks and repeats imagery, creating totemic forms that represent herself and her maternal ancestry while also referencing the multiplicities that exist inside all of us.

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The title of the exhibition, *Flags of Our Mothers*, is a tribute to the matriarchs in her life and all the Indigenous women, who over many centuries have created and endured, keeping their stories and traditions present, active, and alive.

*Raven Halfmoon: Flags of Our Mothers* is co-curated by The Aldrich's Chief Curator Amy Smith-Stewart and Bemis Center's Chief Curator & Director of Programs Rachel Adams.

The exhibition will be accompanied by the artist's first museum catalogue, co-published by The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, and Gregory R. Miller & Co., including an introduction and interview with the artist by Amy Smith-Stewart, an essay by Rachel Adams, and a poem commission by Kinsale Drake.

Raven Halfmoon was born in 1991 in Norman, Oklahoma, where she presently lives and works. She is a member of the Caddo Nation, a federally recognized Tribal Nation headquartered in Binger, Oklahoma with a rich history of many thousands of years in the Southeastern region of the United States. Halfmoon received her BFA from the University of Arkansas, where she double majored in ceramics and cultural anthropology.

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