Raven Halfmoon: Flags of Our Mothers

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Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts
724 S. 12th Street, Omaha, NE 68102
bemiscenter.org/exhibitions/raven-halfmoon

Co-Curated by Rachel Adams, Chief Curator and Director of Programs, Bemis Center & Amy Smith-Stewart, Chief Curator, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum
Organized by Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts and The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

Flags of Our Mothers is the first major traveling exhibition for artist Raven Halfmoon. Her practice spans torso-scaled and colossal-sized stoneware sculptures, with some soaring up to twelve feet and weighing over eight hundred pounds. With inspirations that orbit centuries from ancient Indigenous pottery to Moai statues to Land Art, Halfmoon interrogates the intersection of tradition, history, gender, and personal experience.

Halfmoon, who was born and raised in Norman, Oklahoma, learned about ceramics as a teenager from a Caddo elder. Working mainly in portraiture, she hand-builds each work using a 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. She fuses Caddo pottery traditions (a history of making mostly done by women) with more contemporary gestures, often tagging her work as a reference to Caddo tattooing and ancient pottery motifs. Her works reflect stories of the Caddo Nation, specifically her feminist lineage and the power of its complexities.

For this exhibition, Halfmoon was commissioned by both Bemis Center and The Aldrich to create some of her largest works to date, including Flagbearer, a three-part stacked ceramic sculpture standing over twelve feet tall, greeting visitors at the entrance to Bemis’s building.

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