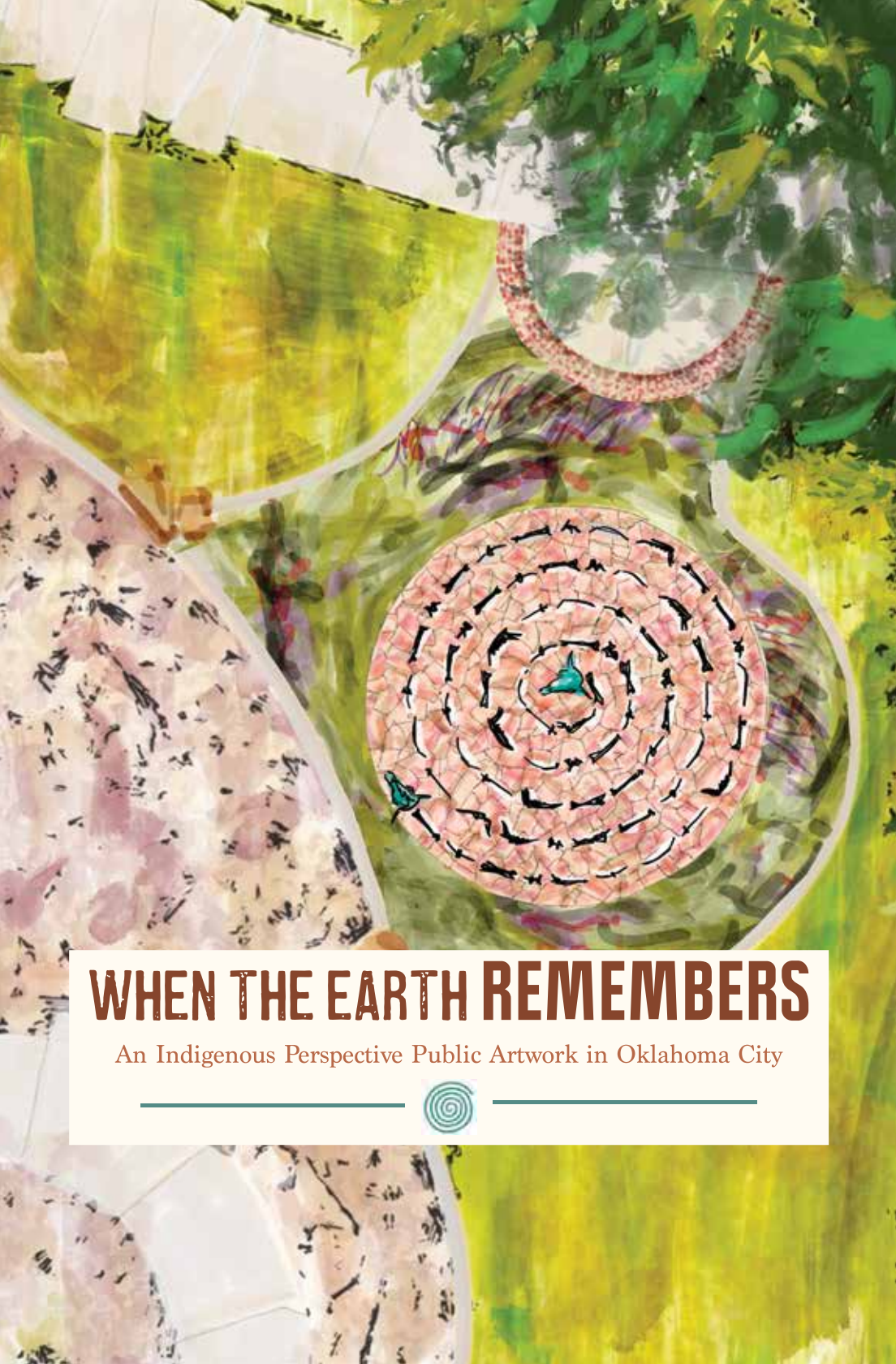




WHEN THE EARTH REMEMBERS

An Indigenous Perspective Public Artwork in Oklahoma City









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OKLAHOMA CITY · A SPIRAL OF MEMORY · INSTALL 2027



BONES OF THE PLAINS



**A PUBLIC ARTWORK COMMISSIONED BY THE CITY OF
OKLAHOMA CITY OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

'ONCE MORE THEY SCATTER US
FROM THE EARTH WHERE OUR
MOTHERS' SPIRITS DWELL.
BENEATH WANING SKIES, WE
CLUTCH AT FADING EMBERS OF
OUR HOME, HEARTS HEAVY WITH
THE MEMORY OF ROOTS TORN
FREE. YET EVEN AS STRANGERS
ON PARALLEL EARTH AND THE
FACSIMILE STARS, THE QUIET
ECHOES OF OUR ANCESTORS STIR
COURAGE IN OUR STEPS. A
WHISPER WE CANNOT IGNORE,
GRANDMOTHER, RISING LIKE
DAWN, CALLING US TOWARDS
THE HEARTH OF RECOLLECTION
AND LIGHT.'

The background of the entire page is a collage of various bison bones and skulls. Some are in shades of brown and red, while one skull in the bottom right corner is painted a vibrant blue with red markings. The bones are scattered across the white background, some appearing as fragments and others as more complete pieces.

“When the Earth Remembers” is a site-specific installation in Oklahoma City designed to challenge the one-sided narrative of the Land Run Monument. Using cast concrete bison bones and bronze bison skulls arranged in a counterclockwise spiral, the artwork re-centers Indigenous perspectives by symbolizing the removal of lands and cultural resilience. By connecting the artwork with the land, visitors experience a reinterpretation of history that honors the significance of our homes, environmental balances, community collaboration, and the sovereign voices of Native Indigenous Nations.

Conceptual Background:

Emerging from the desire to acknowledge the ongoing impact of the Land Run on Indigenous nations—between nations of the Southeast, Eastern Woodlands, Great Lakes, Ohio Valley, Midwest, Plains, and Southwest—whose ancestral and federally assigned lands were systematically opened to non-Native settlement through legislative acts (Homestead Act, Curtis Act) and culminating events like the 1889 Land Run. Drawing on scholarship by Angie Debo (*And Still the Waters Run*) and Vine Deloria Jr. (*American Indian Policy in the Twentieth Century*), the project foregrounds Native experiences of dispossession and survival.



The spiral itself, a counterclockwise form, references our stomp dance and speaks to reversing or re-examining the celebratory pioneer narrative. While the Land Run Monument dramatically conveys the settler rush for “free” land, the artwork symbolically lays bare the cost of that expansion: dismantled nations’ sovereignty, the near-eradication of bison, and fractured ecosystems. By employing bison bones—long iconic of Plains life and spiritual practice—the artwork honors the memory of a keystone species integral to Indigenous subsistence and culture.

The piece also reflects Southeastern Woodlands traditions that many relocated nations adapted to life in Indian Territory—referencing cyclical, spiral-based cosmologies seen in mound sites or Mississippian iconography, and bridging Plains and Southeastern identities that converge in today’s Oklahoma.

WHY HERE

PUBLIC MEMORY IS BUILT IN PUBLIC SPACE.



THE SPIRAL



The Centennial Land Run Monument is one of Oklahoma City's most visible civic narratives. When the Earth Remembers does not erase that site. It asks the public landscape to hold more of the story - land, loss, survival, stewardship, and Native continuity.

An aerial photograph of a public art installation. On the left, a large black sculpture depicts a car and several figures. A winding white path leads through the landscape. In the center, there is a circular area with a mosaic of colorful stones arranged in concentric circles. The surrounding area is green grass and some trees.

A Collective Act of Remembrance

A living conversation beside the Centennial Land Run Monument.

When the Earth Remembers is a community-centered public artwork developed in response to the stories, histories, and living cultures of Indigenous Nations in Oklahoma.

The project asks how public art can widen civic memory by making space for Indigenous perspectives on land, stewardship, displacement, survival, and cultural continuity.

An aerial photograph of a park. In the upper left, a river flows through a green landscape. Below the river, there are dense evergreen trees. In the lower half of the image, a large, circular, light-colored paved area, possibly a plaza or a large fountain basin, is visible. It is surrounded by more trees and a curved path. The overall scene is a lush, green park environment.

Founded on a simple belief: meaningful public art should emerge through conversation, collaboration, and care.

This project invites Native Nations, Tribes, Communities, Cultural Departments, Artists, Culture Bearers, Educators, Ecologists, and Supporters to help shape an artwork that reflects the complexity of Oklahoma's shared history.

Participation can take many forms. Some may contribute artwork. Others may host workshops, share ecological knowledge, provide guidance, or support the project through funding and partnership.

There is no expectation of scale—only an open invitation.

PARTICIPATION CAN TAKE MANY FORMS.



1: CULTURAL REPRESENTATION

Each cast bison bone within the spiral carries its own cultural identity.



2: COMMUNITY CASTING

Hands-on casting-workshops across Oklahoma in Spring 2027.



3: ECOLOGICAL COLLABORATION

Native plants, seed knowledge, land stewardship, and renewal.



4: DIRECT SUPPORT

Funding for outreach, materials, documentation, workshops, and installation readiness.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands working on a clay sculpture. The person is wearing a bright pink shirt. The sculpture is a hand with a long, patterned sleeve. The sleeve has a repeating circular or spiral pattern. The hand is holding a small, white, rounded object. The background is a blue surface with some brown stains.

ONE BONE,
ONE STORY.

CULTURAL REPRESENTATION

- Each cast bison bone within the spiral carries its own visual identity. We invite Indigenous Nations, Tribes, Communities, Cultural Departments, Artists, and Culture Bearers to contribute a line drawing, symbol, motif, or visual design that reflects their history, values, stories, or living culture.
- Selected designs will be hand-incised into individual sculpted bones before casting, creating a permanent record of Indigenous presence, memory, and continuity within the artwork.
- Together, these carved forms become a collective archive of cultural expression—each bone distinct, yet connected to a larger story of resilience, remembrance, and relationship to place.
- Artwork submissions for inclusion in the project will be accepted through **October 2026**.



CULTURAL REPRESENTATION

Artwork Submission:

Best Practice for translation onto the bones:

- Artwork submissions should be simple enough to carve and strong enough to carry meaning.
- Black & White line drawing/symbol/motif,
- Clear linework
- Adobe Illustrator/Vector Base

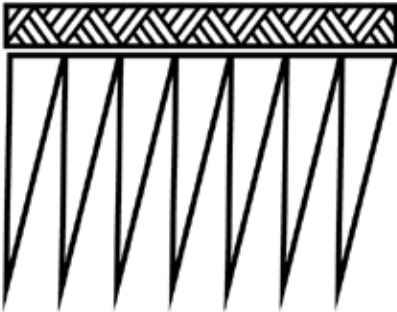
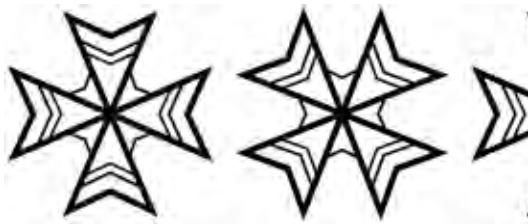
Email artwork and/or questions to:
karladdison@gmail.com



Design: Osage Nation
Ribbon Work Pattern
Humerus Bone



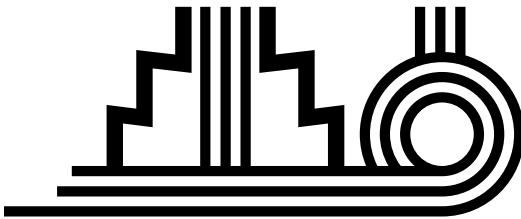
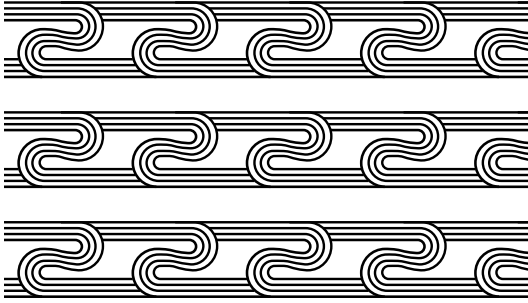
CULTURAL REPRESENTATION



Examples:

- **Top Image:** Artwork submission by Brent Greenwood (Ponca & Chickasaw) - Femur
- **Middle Image:** Artwork submission by Tom Farris (Cherokee Nation & Otoe-Missouria Tribe) - Lumbar Vertebra
- **Bottom Image:** Artwork submission by Wichita and Affiliated Tribes - Caudal Vertebrae

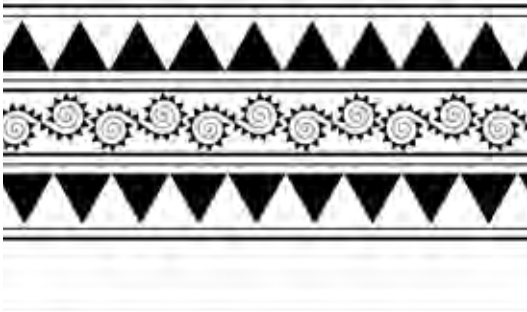
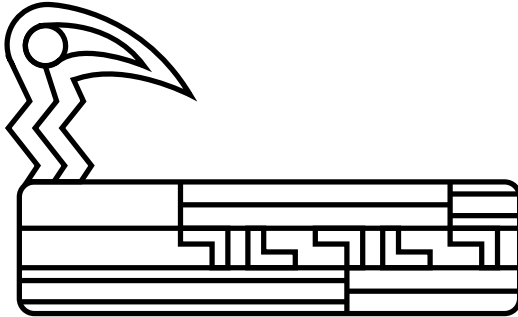
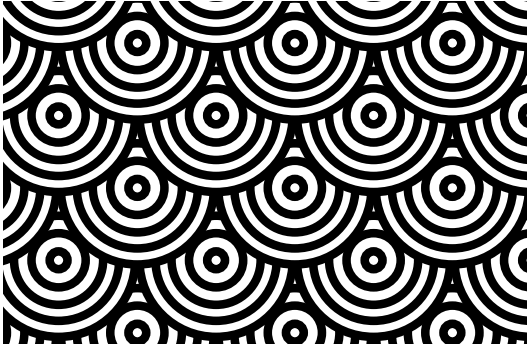
CULTURAL REPRESENTATION



Examples:

- **Top Image:** Atlas Vertebra (C1)
- **Middle Image:** The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma - Calcaneus
- **Bottom Image:** Cervical Vertebra

CULTURAL REPRESENTATION



Examples:

- **Top Image:** Humerus
- **Middle Image:** Manubrium
- **Bottom Image:** Artwork submission by Kristin Gentry (The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma) - Mandible, Jaw

MADE BY
MANY HANDS.

COMMUNITY CASTING WORKSHOPS

- In Spring 2027, a series of Community Bone Casting Workshops will be held across Oklahoma in collaboration with Native Cultural Centers, Tribal Departments, and community organizations.
- These hands-on gatherings invite participants to take part in creating the sculpted bison bones that will become part of the final public artwork. Through the process of making, teaching, and working together, each workshop becomes an opportunity to share knowledge, strengthen connections, and contribute to a collective act of remembrance.
- The spiral is around 200 linear feet, with a need of 350 to 400 cast bones for the final artwork.



COMMUNITY CASTING WORKSHOPS

- The cast bones created through these workshops will be permanently incorporated into the installation, embedding community participation, shared authorship, and living memory directly into the artwork itself.
- We would be honored to collaborate with your cultural center, school, museum, community program, tribal department, gallery, or community organization to host a workshop.
- We will bring the materials, casting supplies, and guidance. Host partners help invite 15-20 participants and provide a welcoming space for the workshop.



NATIVE PLANTS CAN CARRY MEMORY THROUGH LIVING SYSTEMS.

- The landscape is not background. It is part of the story.
- The story of When the Earth Remembers is not only about the displacement of Indigenous peoples—it is also about the disruption of ecosystems, wildlife populations, native plant communities, and the relationships that once connected them.
- We are seeking guidance on plant selection, cultural and ecological relationships, long-term care, and how the living landscape can carry memory forward.



HORTICULTURE KNOWLEDGE

- The installation will be surrounded by native plants and landscape elements informed by Indigenous ecological knowledge. We are seeking collaboration with Native horticulturalists, ethnobotanists, seed keepers, land stewards, cultural practitioners, and plant knowledge holders to help shape this living environment.
- Together, the landscape can become an extension of the artwork itself—a place where stories are carried not only through sculpture, but through the plants, medicines, pollinators, and ecological relationships that continue to sustain life. Through this collaboration, the site becomes a space of renewal, demonstrating how cultural memory and environmental stewardship remain deeply connected.



DIRECT FUNDING

- When the Earth Remembers is being developed through partnerships, community participation, and the generous support of individuals and organizations who believe in the importance of Indigenous storytelling, cultural representation, environmental stewardship, and public art.
- Contributions help support community casting workshops, cultural outreach, educational programming, ecological collaboration, material costs, and the creation of the final installation.
- If you would like to support the project, tax-deductible donations can be made through our fiscal partner, Allied Arts.
- Every contribution, regardless of size, helps bring this collective artwork and community effort closer to realization.
- Support through Allied Arts connecting via the QR code:



RECOGNITION LEVELS

OPTIONAL LEVELS FOR THOSE WHO'D LIKE ONE

\$1,000

BRONZE SPONSOR

Limited Edition Screen Print (from project drawings), Recognition on project donor list, Invitation to opening event

\$2,000

SILVER SPONSOR

Everything in Bronze, plus, Signed copy of Kulli (Artist Book), Small concrete cast bone (from same molds used in artwork)

\$2,500

GOLD SPONSOR

Everything in Silver, plus, Invitation to studio visit or private project presentation (in-person or virtual)

\$5,000

PLATINUM SPONSOR

Everything in Gold, plus, Limited Edition small sculpture: Bronze or Glass cast bone (numbered edition)

SUPPORT BELOW OR ABOVE THESE LEVELS ARE JUST AS WELCOME — EVERY CONTRIBUTION MOVES THE WORK FORWARD.

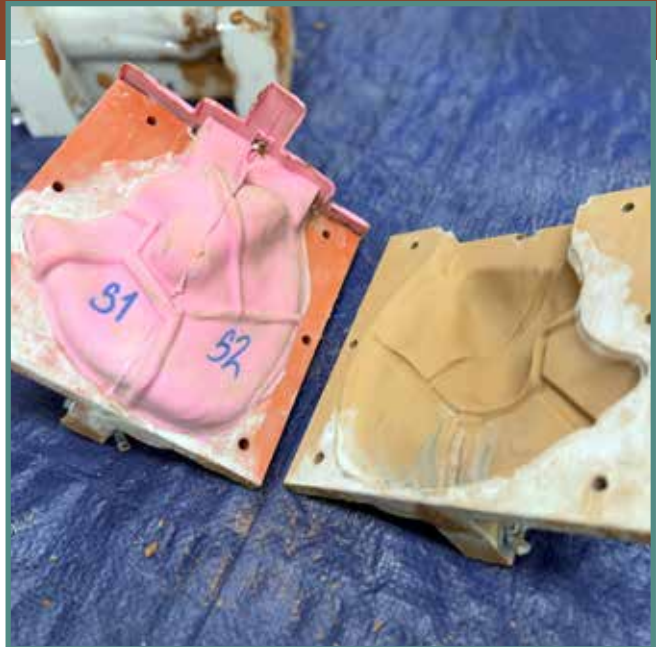
PROJECT TIMELINE

THE DELIVERABLES GIVE THE
OUTREACH URGENCY.



THE PROJECT IS ACTIVE AND STILL GROWING.

- Outreach is underway with Oklahoma Native Nations/Tribes/Communities and cultural contacts.
- Funding conversations are growing through Allied Arts, The Culture Hub Collective, civic partners, foundations, and potential corporate/community supporters.
- Sculpting and material testing are moving forward toward workshop readiness.



A PROJECT OF THIS SCALE IS BUILT THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS.

Join Us: Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs — City of Oklahoma City, Allied Arts OKC, OKC Parks, The Culture Hub Collective, The College of the Muscogee Nation, Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, Otoe-Missouria Tribe, Osage Nation, Chickasaw Nation, The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Cherokee Nation, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, Wyandotte Nation, Pawnee Nation, Kaw Nation, Brenda S. Golden (Muscogee Nation), Tom Farris (Cherokee Nation and Otoe-Missouria Tribe), Brent Greenwood (Chickasaw and Ponca), Don Narcomey (Seminole Tribe), Kristin Gentry (Choctaw Nation), Robert King (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma), Addison Karl (Chickasaw & Choctaw Nations), Gilcrease Museum, First Americans Museum, Red Earth Inc., Exhibit C Art Gallery, Structural Engineering Lab, The University of Oklahoma.



AN OPEN INVITATION

Participation can take many forms, and we fully respect that every Nation, Tribe, Community, Cultural Department, and organization has its own priorities, timelines, and decision-making processes. There is no expectation of scale—only an open invitation to contribute to a shared space of remembrance, presence, and cultural continuity.

If this project resonates with you, we would be honored to continue the conversation, answer questions, and explore how collaboration might take shape in a way that aligns with your community's goals and values.

Thank you for your time, your work, and your continued stewardship of culture, land, language, and knowledge.

With respect and gratitude,
When the Earth Remembers's Team

If you would like to contribute or partner with this project, please get in touch with us via our project page via the QR Code:

Contact:

Project Management

Lead Artist:

karladdison@gmail.com

addisonkarl.com



<< ARTWORK BY ADDISON KARL >>

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