

Dooʎʎǃᄁʎᄁ Zᄁᄁ DLʎᄁᄁET
The North Star Changes

Main Label written by Brenda Mallory

The title of this exhibition, *The North Star Changes*, is based on the idea that we perceive the North Star as permanent, but it isn't. The Earth spins on a precessional axis, which means it has a wobble, similar to how a spinning top begins to wobble as it slows down. Over thousands of years, the wobble points Earth toward different stars that assume the position and the name. Currently the North Star is Polaris. In about 12,000 years, it will be Vega. Artist Brenda Mallory's use of this title asks us to question ideas of absolutes and dominant ideas of truth.

Mallory (Cherokee Nation) is a hands-on maker of physical objects and installations that frequently touch on topics of Cherokee history and culture. She is interested in how disruptions—whether in families, communities, or ecosystems—result in adaptations over time. Her works explore these adaptations through repairs, mends, and the evidence of struggle to emphasize change and resilience. Her use of reclaimed or discarded materials is a kind of "making-do," a tool of survival; and some of the them, such as bullet shell casings or firehoses, come embedded with information that Mallory uses to create objects that are more than the sum of their parts. She "sews" together disparate materials like natural beeswax and soft cotton with crude nuts and bolts or hog rings to imply tenuous connections that refer to wounds or suturing. Though her sculptures are abstract, they tell stories, and Mallory gives us a window into the intent of her work through meaningful materials and carefully considered titles.

Mallory has received much recognition for her work as an artist. She has been awarded an Eiteljorg Contemporary Art Fellowship, a National Artist Fellowship from the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, and a Hallie Ford Fellowship in the Visual Arts from the Ford Family Foundation. She lives and works in Portland, Oregon.