



Melvin Edwards returns to The Aldrich's Sculpture Garden after fifty years with exhibition of Asafokra

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Melvin Edwards: *Asafokra* Opens at The Aldrich on April 27

This spring, Melvin Edwards' large-scale sculpture *Asafokra* will be on view as part of The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum's Main Street Sculpture program from April 27 to September 5, 2022. Since its founding in 1964, The Aldrich has activated its grounds with public sculpture and outdoor installations. Free and open to the public, Museum visitors can find *Asafokra* installed at 258 Main Street in Ridgefield, CT.

Asafokra denotes the artist's return to painted steel sculpture after working in the medium for roughly a decade. Consisting of three distinct elements, the work includes forms from the artist's visual vernacular such as a rocker, a disc, and a chain fragment. The work takes its title from the Ghanaian Twi language. Edwards explains, "It connects to the traditional society in Ghana, the Asafo society, the organization of younger men who are responsible to defend the community. The Asafo shrine complex is in the form of a fortress combined with human figures that are painted in symbolic or appropriate colors..." Paying homage to these traditions and colors Edwards unites his abstract reductive forms with African history and ritual.

The exhibition of Asafokra marks the return of Edwards' work to The Aldrich's Sculpture Garden after fifty years. From 1971-73, For Coco, the artist's first large-scale painted work to use the rocker form, was exhibited in the Museum's Garden.

Melvin Edwards: Asafokra is organized by Richard Klein, Exhibitions Director.

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