



4A TALKS //

Crossing Threads in conversation with Con Gerakaris
as part of *Holding Patterns: Crossing Threads*
Sunday 16 August 2020 | Haymarket, Sydney

Listen to the podcast ep [here](#).
Watch the video [here](#).

TRANSCRIPT



CON GERAKARIS Good afternoon. Welcome to 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art. My name is Con Gerakaris, I'm the assistant curator here and co-curator of Holding Patterns, this is our current exhibiting artist, Crossing Threads.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Hey, guys, how are you? I'm Lauren.

KASS HERNANDEZ And I'm Kass.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ And we are the sisters behind Crossing Threads. We're super

stoked to be here for part two of Holding Patterns. And to, I guess, share what we've been working on during this uncertain time and be able to share our art with you guys.

CON GERAKARIS So just to begin, I'd like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the Traditional Custodians of this land, and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging and say sovereignty is never ceded. So shall we begin?

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah, so I think we got some questions come through, but I guess before that we can take you through the work. So we're here in Haymarket and I guess it's always a great time, a great opportunity to be able to share our art in person and I'm really thankful to Con for having us on board. And so what we have here, and I guess we can talk to *The Divide*.



KASS HERNANDEZ Yes, so this large-scale artwork, titled *The Divide*, was hand woven by myself and Lauren has helped me in the production of mainly the proportions and the balance of the piece. But in a nutshell, *The Divide* celebrates the use of upcycling fabrics, so whether it be preloved denim, raffia and even vintage leather that we've hand cut. This is all very intuitive and we've also kind of highlighted our use of our interknot technique, which is practically intuitive knotting that we've then gone in and embedded other materials throughout it to create these chains that vary in thickness from very thick to the bottom and

graduates up into a relief. Lauren, did you want to say anything about it?

LAUREN HERNANDEZ I think this piece, *The Divide*, most of you may recognise this piece to be a really, I guess, iconic of our work and it's no doubt been a design that we're constantly drawn to, to recreate. For those who don't know, this is actually the fifth iteration of *The Divide* and I guess one of the most unique things about handmade and making is that no two pieces can ever be alike. The fibre curation that goes into this piece is so unique that we just can't source the same fibres again or replicate it to a tee. I think one of the interesting things is — when I watched Kass create this piece and stopped by her studio and see it come to life — one of the interesting things is the proportion of indigo into the more neutral colourway. What is the meaning of *The Divide*? Kass can you share how that first design of *The Divide* came about?

KASS HERNANDEZ Well, *The Divide* came up really from a difficult time in my life where I was going through some quite challenging circumstances with the relationships that I was in. This kind of showed a manifestation of what I was going through. So all this dense texture, the overlapping nature of it and mainly just the concentration and thickness. For us, it's more like a metaphor of appreciating the duality of light and dark in life, and having the ability to be open enough to receive, whether it be the positive side and the humanity of people, but also being quite compassionate to yourself. So for me as a person, I've been a bit anxious naturally in my life, and weaving has provided that outlet for me to channel that and express that through fibre.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah and I think with that level of that emotional release into the work for this particular iteration of *The Divide*, the first thing I noticed and I said to Kass was - "Hey, there's a lot more indigo and there's a lot more darker... a bigger proportion, a ratio of the indigo and the darkness versus the light." And because I know my sister so well and I guess during that time in her life, I knew why. And it was literally your energy, that you were going through that time, that you manifested onto the loom and I could just see it come to life. I think that's just a really great thing, because it's not really from an aesthetic point of view that there's this dark into light, but it's also this, I guess, unearthing of what's really going on inside. Our pieces are somewhat, you could say, like a journal entry but manifested through fibre.



KASS HERNANDEZ And I think in actually creating piece what it's taught me is that it's okay to be uncomfortable and especially during this isolation/uncertain anxiety of Covid, it just makes it more comfortable for you to actually talk about it, which can usually be swept under the rug. That's very traditional of our Filipino roots. [Both Kass and Lauren laugh]

CON GERAKARIS I think the reason why this piece was included as part of *Holding Patterns* was, like it has been exhibited before and that's kind of how I came across your work. I was really kind of awestruck by this piece, but I think it kind of fits into the greater idea of the anxiety and sort of built up tension that everyone is kind of experiencing at this time. And the uncertainty that comes with having your routine shifted and having to find your own kind of new rhythms in your life. And I just think that the sort of wave and contours of this piece, and the sort of movement that's inherently ingrained in it, just really exemplifies that, especially like, moving horizontally you can clearly see the gradual change in colour. But even reading the piece vertically, with this sort of slash right in the middle of everything just comes down and builds up right here. So it tells, it really kind of tells the story. And then it's just this exhale and just like total release. So that's kind how I feel when I see this piece - it's calming on the left and right and then stress and release on the bottom. That's really why it kind of speaks to this show quite well.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Thanks Con! Yeah, it's been really refreshing to hear how the

people have engaged with the work when they're coming to visit and to hear what they've taken away. That interpretation, it really resonates with us as well. Like this body of chaos or organised chaos, you might call it that, it really is, like we've titled it interknot because it's just literally the interconnectedness of these chains overlapping. I guess one of the key things about this piece and about how interknot shows up in our other designs is that a lot of it is prepared well before we actually get onto the loom. So there's many hours and the laborious task of preparing all these fibres so they're ready to weave with. But the act of knotting and this boom, boom, boom for me, because I guess we can talk about what that represents for both of us — the sense of control and like structure, and navigating through control. Kass and I, energetically, I guess we're both really similar, having been brought up together and one of the key things is that we do butt heads a lot within our creative practices.

KASS HERNANDEZ We don't back down. [laughs]

LAUREN HERNANDEZ [laughs] Yes we don't back down, but we're quite control freaks. I'm going to openly say that. Totally. The level with interknot is finding that sense of control and navigation that we can physically see and having I guess that anxiety and that inner struggle you actually get a grasp on, just physically grasp on that, just makes us feel good. We find a sense of clarity in that. Funnily as it may seem, this being so chaotic, there's still a lot of clarity that we've come to face with assembling this into this structure.



CON GERAKARIS So these are newly creative works [Con gestures to *Seek, Consolation* and *Inward State*] by Lauren and Kass that are premiering in the exhibition as part of *Holding Patterns*. Would you guys like to speak about the works and how they came to be? It's quite a fascinating story.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah, so when Con approached us, you know, that was like maybe around, July or June? Around that time, about mid-year. So we were well into, I would say a few months had rolled passed since Covid came and really locked us down earlier in March. For those who don't know, we started 2020 with a bang with our first solo exhibition titled *DUALITY*. And as you can imagine, there were months and months of prep to get that all prepared and I guess a lot of self-inflicted expectation and pressure to pull it off. So when February came, super grateful that we had that attendance and active patronage throughout that month. Then March came and Covid came and I guess that's when the whole world, well I guess, from Sydney's point of view, we had to go into lockdown. We were physically burnt out. Emotionally, as well. That time apart to be by ourselves and that time away from each other was something that we saw as very timely and um, how would we say...? [laughs]

CON GERAKARIS Fortuitous.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah, fortuitous! I guess, you know, one of the more fortuitous things to come out of that time. We saw this break, where we actually spent more than six weeks apart and six weeks that we didn't talk to each other, as a necessary time to heal. So Crossing Threads have been operating for more than five years now. We're sisters, we're 13 months apart. So I don't know if you out there, who have siblings, it is a very difficult thing to navigate in terms of...

KASS HERNANDEZ Boundaries and having to know when to say no, and having to know when to say yes. But still be quite compassionate with each other. So these three artworks bring it back to the question, is that they're a portrayal or somewhat like a journal entry of our individual artworks, where we haven't been influenced by the other artist. Given this time apart, it was really just a free flow of how we were feeling at the time and how we were digesting the trauma, but also reflecting on what it means to be sisters, but also what it means to work collaboratively as artists.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ I think the time apart can always be really healthy. And what we've come to highlight in this time, is that we needed to learn to exist without each other. And what does that actually look like in this world, especially also in this time of isolation? We are literally next of kin, glued at the hip for the last 31 years that we've been around. This time to actually be apart and to let our minds go free and actually lean inwards was really crucial in healing ourselves so that we can actually show up for each other as a whole. The series of SAORI works - SAORI being that Japanese philosophy of free weaving - and also embracing the imperfection and highlighting the handmade nature of the weaving. This one here is titled *Seek*. I originally created this piece not knowing that this would be a duo. It was really an exploration of colour and texture and really embracing the opportunity to go, I guess, full throttle with whatever I had in my personal weaving stash. But also to use colours and textures in a new way that our previous practice didn't really allow us to because we predominantly worked with commissioned work. So this actually came out to be a nice duo.

CON GERAKARIS You sound surprised. [All laugh]



LAUREN HERNANDEZ Well you just don't know! You aren't putting any pressure on yourself, I didn't know where this would end up. So I think this is like the most raw and authentic expression without any boundaries or any parameters.

KASS HERNANDEZ Which leads to my diptych, which is called *Consolation*. Now, this piece is quite a contrast to Lauren's one. For me, that six week period of not speaking to my sister, I found it really hard because I don't know, I just needed to be able to connect with her, given that we had been talking every day. So I kind of channelled my inner child where I was looking for nostalgia. This sherbet yellow whizz fizz kind of inspiration of being back at primary school and not having to worry about the certain pressures of adulthood so to speak. Also just using certain textures and fibres that I never had the opportunity to use, for example, this felted wool that I was lovingly gifted by an artist in Uruguay when I travelled there. She felted this wall and also hand-dyed botanically with the local artisans there. I just love how it kind of sets off the foundation for this piece, which is quite playful at heart. Trying to channel that - especially during isolation.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ This piece is titled *Inward State* - I guess it's quite literal when you

think about it that way. But this was actually the first few panels before *Seek* that you saw earlier that I had to go with weaving. I think one of the interesting things - hello Dad, if you're watching - is that he loves yellow, and for some reason, I was drawn to yellow at this time. I've always really wanted to use this particular fibre, and it shows up here [points to work]. One of the interesting things that I've listened to other people receive and respond to the work in this space is that they actually see landscapes and horizons and whatnot. It's really refreshing because I guess that's not what I really intended. I think that's just the beauty of how you can take in an artwork. But here, I really wanted to concentrate on isolated areas of texture and some breathing space and relief and then little playful pops here.

KASS HERNANDEZ So this concentration of colour, of this burnt orange -

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Well some might call it a little scab, which is quite fitting because that time away from Kass, it was really, I don't know for me I needed time away just to to think on my own and so that I could find myself again to then show up for you entirely and actually find myself. Whether that's like a signifier of healing, of like, knowing that that scab is there and overcoming that process. Yes.



CON GERAKARIS To put these works in context, they were woven separately. And I think that that's a big part of your practice — people would assume that everything is made together, given how you practise and given how you always present yourselves like Lauren and Kass Hernandez. So I think that's that's quite a crucial part of these works, and the fact that they were made — like did you both consciously make a decision to make works on the SAORI or did you just gravitate towards that while you were separate?

KASS HERNANDEZ Yeah, I think we naturally gravitated towards it while we were separate. The SAORI, with the act of sitting on the loom and throwing the shuttle and beating it down, is almost like speaking to someone. I can't speak to you [Lauren], so I had to physically sit with another apparatus to then channel whatever it was I was feeling.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Oh my god Kass! This is the first time she's ever used this analogy.

KASS HERNANDEZ Yeah and so given that we did consciously buy separate looms, because sisters can't share—

LAUREN HERNANDEZ We've shared enough in our lives! It got to the point where we saw it was necessary to invest into our own looms.

KASS HERNANDEZ Yeah. And then I think the beauty of when we did reconnect after the six weeks was to show on a scroll, like literally: this is what I've done without you here. And funnily enough, they both reflect each other and compliment as a body of work subconsciously, even though we didn't want them to.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Well, it wasn't really necessary that we didn't want them to, I think it's just that maybe we are somewhat connected in a way, subconsciously, that when these pieces are shown as a series and a body of work, there is some sense of cohesion, but still that sense of individuality with the pieces.

KASS HERNANDEZ Yeah, I think people who are close to us know who wove what, but coming from the reactions of the patrons that have come from the street not knowing us, it's actually quite cohesive in terms of aesthetic. Do we want to talk about the frames, framed format?

CON GERAKARIS For sure.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah. So we've been delving into SAORI weaving for maybe two years now. It's definitely been an evolution in our practice and a step away from the traditional frame loom which *The Divide* has been created on. I guess energetically there are still very different things, because with SAORI you are sitting down. It is quite stationary and can get quite tunnel-vision because you are so zoomed in, into the minute details. So we thought that, as much as SAORI embraces the imperfection, we thought there was a quite nice, I guess, duality of actually confining it into a ready made wall hanging, where it's a little bit more accessible and versatile and another great alternative to the traditional wall hanging. So we explored this panelling here, but then also saw the opportunity to showcase another layer where, when we have the exposed warp here for example, Kassie's playful leno lace approach, you can see the negative space there. And instantly when I'm holding this cloth up and putting it up against the wall, there's another opportunity to do something here and to play on that interplay of colour. So we've laid it with a contrasting fabric or linen. It just adds another sense of dimensionality and heroing those exposed warps and those areas of, I guess you could call vulnerability in the piece.

CON GERAKARIS So in terms of time frame for people who might not be familiar with how you guys work as Crossing Threads, you do dedicate one day a week for all your work, and possibly a weekend if you've got it. And so with these works, did you only work on them on that day or did you find yourself coming to it whenever you could as you were at home, all the time?

KASS HERNANDEZ Yeah, well, for me, luckily we can work from home in other

professions. And so that luxury of having more time at home meant that I could do one panel in one sitting. Weaving is such a good method where you can literally pick it up and put it down. I think you're quite different though—

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah, I guess I'm quite— but I think you can't really turn on the creative streak and that burst and sudden desire to like, let's go and let's weave! For me, it's been a little bit more like a gear changing exercise, because in my full-time profession, I am working in the creative industry. So when you actually weave, it's like, do I have that capacity and desire to do that? But it's actually been a really healthy escape to walk away from the screen and from pushing pixels to actually crossing threads. I don't know, I'm not like Kass, I can't do it all in one go. I need to walk away, move my body and like, break up that energy of always just being there. So for me it's quite different, it's quite staggered. I might grab 30 minutes here before I start my day or, you know, two hours in the night past midnight.

CON GERAKARIS Yeah, I guess it just came, it came out in a very different way to how you make this or *Under My Skin*. If we'd like to move over to that work.



LAUREN HERNANDEZ Now, this piece is titled *Under My Skin*. It's also been exhibited earlier this year, but it's also included here for *Holding Patterns*. This is our very first sculptural piece. And I guess what I mean by sculptural, it kind of steps away from the whole geometric rectangular format and here, we have this organic circular form. *Under My Skin* — it's definitely an exploration of how us as first generation Australians to Filipino parents have learnt to identify ourselves in this Western world and to redefine what that Filipino identity is.

KASS HERNANDEZ Yeah. So I think this is more like a declaration saying that I'm proud to be dark skinned. I'm proud to be a Pinay, a Filipina here in Australia. We're really unearthing our identity, because growing up in our childhood, we were very much

Australian. We never thought ourselves as kind of descendents of Filipino heritage until just recently when we're trying to rekindle that flame and that appreciation.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ So one of the most recognisable things, for those who don't know the Filipino culture — I guess this could also go for other Asian cultures — there is a sense of colourism in our culture and a desire and a beauty standard to be fair skinned or lighter skinned, and how light skinned people are deemed more attractive, more privileged, more entitled for upper class and for us to grow up in Australia and to have peppered memories of seeing whitening cream in our relatives' bathrooms, and then also SPF sunscreen in ours. There was a little bit of confusion and I guess difficulty in navigating what is authentic to us? What is actually deemed right or wrong? You know, is it OK to have this dark coloured skin or is it OK to have lighter coloured skin? What is that? And I guess when we went back home to the Philippines and visited our parents' province, one of the key comments was; 'Oh you're so itim' — which means you're so dark in Tagalog — and I'm like, "Yeah, this is our natural skin colour?" To receive those types of comments, it was a little bit disorientating as to knowing what is right or what is wrong and how we are perceived by others, in the Western world but then also in our Filipino context as well, by our family. Do they want us to be lighter skinned or not?

KASS HERNANDEZ In the construction of this piece we actually wove our SAORI panels, which was the same method used for the frames that you previously saw. But we've incorporated the use of wire to give that structurality to it, where once you take it off the loom, we can then have that malleable aesthetic for us to then mould it. Lauren's used other upcycled artefacts underneath to create that protruding effect. We've also used wire that we've bound with natural hemp and jute to create these clawlike features that we can actually move around, and provide that organic feel. For us it looks like a shield. Almost like a shield of our identity to protect exactly what we value, but also almost like a declaration that we are proud to be brown and to be able to have a different interpretation of what it means to be part of the Filipina diaspora. Trying to make it accessible to know that, hey, we are still trying to find our roots, but it's OK.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah, and funnily the thing is, to find our roots, these claws, if you may identify that - we also see them as roots as well - is actually exposing them and showing them in full view and not having them, down and in the ground. But going back to our roots and unearthing that and redefining what that means for us moving forward and also for the next generation when we start our families as well.

CON GERAKARIS So obviously this one is quite different in terms of construction and aesthetics from the other works, and interestingly, when we were first talking, it's the only one, when you gave the credit lines, that is credited to both handwoven by Lauren and Kass Hernandez. So we had a question that kind of relates to this; there are many works that you create individually and inevitably you both influence each other in one way or another. Can you talk about any moments where either one of you has been inspired by a motif, style, or technique that the other had created? And what that experience was like?

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Let's talk about *The Divide*, the division.

KASS HERNANDEZ Yeah, so this division was quite intuitive, it came from a dream, so to speak, and I've always wanted to actually execute it in a certain way. Once I had provided that to Lauren, you then gave me a bit of advice as to how to better balance the piece.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Well, I think the key thing is that our tapestry pieces have always been quite rectangular and weaving from the bottom upwards, and then you reach the top of the frame loom. But this division and break in the piece, when you came up with this design in the first *Divide*, I thought that was very disruptive, literally, but also a defining moment. I was like, hey this is something new. And so this division across the five iterations of *The Divide* shows up differently in the piece. The angle of it, where it's placed to work, it all differs. This division is made up of black marine roping. Over time we've had to engineer and prototype: how does this actually work to retain the structural integrity of the warp. And so we've carried that into our other works. For those who may know our work closely, a recent piece is titled *The Traverse* that we've handwoven for the lobby of Vue Broadbeach. It utilises the same division as well, as well as another piece titled *Crevice*. So when we see the slash into the piece, like what Con just said, we feel like it's quite disruptive and it kind of shapes and reforms, I guess, the structure of like a tapestry which can somewhat traditionally just be rectangular or square.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ And I think the benefit of Crossing Threads is that we have this ongoing dialogue and bouncing of ideas that's birthed from a simple idea. It continually evolves without practice and our relationship as sisters too.



LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah. So I might grab like a bit of, you know, your ideas. I'll be like, hey I like what Kassie did here and I'll try to execute, but I just can't. And then you would try and do something that I might do, but you don't do it the same way - but that's the beauty of it. We've learnt to understand that we are still two very different people and also similarly two different artists, but still under that Crossing Threads umbrella. But with that, we are still very stimulated by one another. So having that time away, just like the six week break to create these panels has been really healthy for our relationship and therefore keeps us on our toes in terms of evolving our work and being open to new things as well.

CON GERAKARIS So one of the things that draws people into your work is your way of exposing the form and exposing the inherent materiality of tapestry, when I'm sure a lot of

people who would think of tapestries think of, you know, some Flemish tapestry where it recreates the sort of scene or a vista and the function, the thing that holds the the the piece together is hidden. But your work clearly shows that. And I really think that that's something that's quite interesting. That it really plays with dimensionality and texture and all that. We have another question. Can you speak about some of the unique techniques that have evolved over the years, such as 'interknot' and how it's kind of come to come to terms in your development? And I think obviously we're standing in front of this, which is so full of it.

KASS HERNANDEZ Yeah. So interknot came from experimentation. I still remember, we were on the way to Bathurst, which is in regional New South Wales, to visit our cousins and on this three hour drive, I was like - I need to do something with my hands. Sitting in the passenger's seat, with a bunch of fibres, locking it into the glove box and then I have this suspension and I just started knotting. And being the type of person who physically can't stand still or sit still for a period of time, it was really liberating to then see this random knot and intuitive chain come in form before my eyes. Unlike macramé, where it can be quite premeditated, I love the fact that you could literally choose any fibre and create a chain out of it. From that I was just continually making chains, and then once I gathered them all together, I just loved how they would just sit together. It's like an embedded seabed, which kind of shows how we are all connected in a way with each other, whether we like it or not, but also having the ability to know that we are grounded and that when things get really tough, we feel overwhelmed coming back to our roots always calms me straight down.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ We've been weaving for well over five years now and I guess in our most distinct earlier works, this whole technique showed up and we've just got to run with it because it's something that we're constantly drawn to. I think some of the times we may just knot freely not knowing where these chains are going to be integrated in and where they're going to end up. The notion of knotting and binding like what we alluded to earlier, we have this thing about control and to actually feel something and hold the reins to something and grasp, something to physically do that, it's somewhat quite therapeutic. It calms us down to see this restriction and tension and exert this anxiety inside and see it manifest in a fibre form. So you may have seen this technique show up in our various other designs and it's maybe resembled here, where it's very heavy at the bottom and then it graduates upwards into a relief, with exposed warps towards the top. Or you may see it actually crawling upwards in the design and it's a little bit more embedded than these free, unruly chains hanging below.

CON GERAKARIS You mentioned your father before, revealing another question that was a lot of your work explores your heritage. Have your family and particularly your parents had any reactions or views on your works that you didn't expect them to have?

KASS HERNANDEZ So we actually asked our parents about this because I wanted their two cents and they each provided us with quite honest reactions that are kind of embedded with the work ethic that they had to come over with. In the late 80s, they had to emigrate from the Philippines to Australia, with a need to create more opportunity and a more positive life to raise us in. I think with their work ethic and their sense that you need to create something out of nothing and things don't get handed to you. And Dad always says if you're going to do something right -

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Do it properly or don't to do it at all. [laughs]

KASS HERNANDEZ Yes. Even him coming to the gallery and saying, hey, dad, how was it, he's like, it's OK.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Hey Dad if you're watching! God bless you. He's a man of few words. But I think with this element of family and that family being such a key, notion of the Filipino culture that the birth of Crossing Threads and to know that their two daughters have joined together in adulthood in the moment in a partnership, let alone a business one an artistic one, it certainly has been refreshing for them. My parents, our parents are quite progressive. To dedicate our spare time and to actively and consciously show up for one another and to make this an ongoing commitment, we've been together for more than five years in this partnership, I think they've really proud. Mum - hi Mum if you're watching, part of her answer was also that she recognised that family and this connectedness and these relationships is so integral. It really is not just two threads that make up Crossing Threads. We have our partners, our brother, Dad - he's an architect, so he gets involved with the creation of our looms. Mum is super keen to get involved into weaving -

KASS HERNANDEZ But we're just like we just want to have some Filo food. [all laugh]. And our brother also — he's our oldest — has always been quite supportive.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ So I think when it comes to our heritage and how it comes through in our work, it really is about that work ethic, that commitment to family and also just keeping us grounded. Reminding us that there's more to this than just creating but actually being present for those important family occasions and showing up for one another.

CON GERAKARIS It's that grounding and that kind of energy that you draw from. How does that come into your practice and do you always find yourself having to push your artistic boundaries and kind of the medium or - how do you find that your always challenging yourself in your practice?

KASS HERNANDEZ Well, I think for us you can see us on both extremes. I feel like when I create I just want to go for gold and have no boundaries or restrictions. Whereas Lauren is very premeditated. I think it's as a result of within your line of work, there are boundaries that you are consciously aware of and have to operate between. So I think us having to compromise, like I'll literally dream of a work and Lauren is like, yeah you can execute it right, have you thought about this? How do you feel about that? I'm like, no, but we'll do it anyway. And so I think that's a really good complementary skill set to also kind of push the boundaries, but also know exactly where I stand within them.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ But I think also having that freedom to give each other to do your own thing. Yeah, because, yes, we are in a partnership, but there's a lot of time that we do work in a silo. I think that's where the beauty kind of surfaces. And then when we actually do actually do literally cross threads, it's a result of both of us coming together and that's a union that you can't plan for. I think when we try to force that and be like, let's do this, you do that, you do this and we kind of - it's certainly integral to the way you operate a business. But from an artistic standpoint, for you to go away and do your thing, for me to go away, to do my thing and then we come and share, I think that's where we just keep on -.

KASS HERNANDEZ And just choose the best bits, where there is synergy, where there is harmony, as opposed to that disruption that can go against the organic nature of weaving.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah. And I think also to have lives without Crossing Threads and a life on our own, to keep us evolving.



KASS HERNANDEZ And to look at her like a sister!

KASS HERNANDEZ That I don't have to work with. And just be like come over and have some food and watch Netflix. Which is really hard for us.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ It is really hard. But this time of Holding Patterns and Covid has definitely highlighted that we need to prioritise that time because if we can exist in the world as Lauren and then exist in the world as Kass, then I think that wholeness and that unique perspective will then push our work further. So we are not seeing the same things, but seeing things from a different perspective and offering different insights that stimulates one another.

CON GERAKARIS So how do you see your practice as a part of the greater weaving community and industry? Like what was your experience working with the Weavers Guild? Were they sort of expecting to see this kind of work? Were they kind of blown away? Did it shift their perception of what could be done?

KASS HERNANDEZ Oh, yeah.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Yeah. Well, I guess to give more context to Con's — so earlier in

this year, we showcased at the New South Wales Embroiderers Guild in Concord West, so hello to Gallery 76 and April and the team there. We were really fortunate to actually be given the opportunity to actually show our work because most of it's been online. So in terms of the weaving community and the fibre community, when we first discovered it over five years ago, it was a whole other niche, an untapped resource, but definitely one that we're like, wow, this actually exists.

KASS HERNANDEZ And yeah, I think to sum it up, it was a very good welcoming into a motherhood of mature, wise women who have been so well practised in the verse of embroidery that we just didn't really appreciate that until we met them and was literally like engulfed in their love and maternal nature. And for us to exhibit amongst them, we were really, really honoured because a lot of them appreciated that although our medium was slightly different, it still takes a lot of craftsmanship and appreciation and honing skills to kind of produce this kind of aesthetic. So, yeah, we love you, Embroiderers Guild!

CON GERAKARIS All right, Mariam, do we have any — so Mariam's operating the camera for us. Do we have anything from the audience?

MARIAM ARCILLA No questions, just a lot of really positive, enlightened—

CON GERAKARIS Heaps of love heart emojis. That's all we want.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Thanks guys for tuning in. Yeah.

CON GERAKARIS Well, I think it's been a stimulating discussion for all of us involved. Oh, yes. I should probably say that. This is on til 30th of August! So a week and a bit more.

KASS HERNANDEZ Yes.

CON GERAKARIS So get down if you're in the area. Otherwise, thank you for tuning in and keep supporting independent young artists in Sydney and Australia and all over the world.

LAUREN HERNANDEZ Thanks Con. Thanks, guys. Thanks for tuning in.

The recorded conversation between Crossing Threads & Con Gerakaris took place in 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art on Sunday 16 August 2020, as part of Holding Patterns: Crossing Threads at 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, 3 – 25 September 2020.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art acknowledges the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the Land on which this interview took place.

**#HoldingPatterns4A #CrossingThreads
@4A_au #4Acentre**

Images (top to bottom):

- 1) *Crossing Threads®; Holding Patterns: Crossing Threads®*; Installation view, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, August 2020. Lauren Hernandez (L) and Kass Hernandez (R) of Crossing Threads®, installation view at 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art: *Holding Patterns: Crossing Threads®*; photo: Kai Wasikowski for 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, courtesy of the artists.
- 2) Kass Hernandez of Crossing Threads® with the work *THE DIVIDE*, 2020, Alpaca, bamboo, canvas, cotton, cotton roping, felted Merino wool, hand cut denim, hand cut leather, hand dyed raffia, hand dyed Shibori, hemp, linen, marine roping, Merino wool, mixed natural fibres, Pima cotton. Suspended off a painted Tasmanian oak wooden dowel. Handwoven by Kass Hernandez. Image courtesy of the artists.
- 3) *Crossing Threads®, THE DIVIDE* (detail view), 2020, Alpaca, bamboo, canvas, cotton, cotton roping, felted Merino wool, hand cut denim, hand cut leather, hand dyed raffia, hand dyed Shibori, hemp, linen, marine roping, Merino wool, mixed natural fibres, Pima cotton. Suspended off a painted Tasmanian oak wooden dowel. Handwoven by Kass Hernandez. Image courtesy of the artists.
- 4) Kass Hernandez of Crossing Threads® with the work *Consolation*, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand dyed Merino wool, handspun upcycled yarn, hemp, leather, linen and mixed natural fibres framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Kass Hernandez
- 5) Lauren Hernandez of Crossing Threads®, *Seek*, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand dyed Merino wool, hemp, Japanese silk and paper, linen, mixed natural fibres and sari silk framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Lauren Hernandez. Image courtesy of the artists.
- 6) Crossing Threads®: (Back Right): *THE DIVIDE*, 2020, alpaca, bamboo, canvas, cotton, cotton roping, felted Merino wool, hand cut denim, hand cut leather, hand dyed raffia, hand dyed Shibori, hemp, linen, marine roping, Merino wool, mixed natural fibres, Pima cotton; suspended off a painted Tasmanian oak wooden dowel; handwoven by Kass Hernandez.

(Left Wall Right), *Consolation*, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand dyed Merino wool, handspun upcycled yarn, hemp, leather, linen and mixed natural fibres framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Kass Hernandez

(Left Wall: Right) Crossing Threads®, *Inward State*, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand dyed Merino wool, hemp, Japanese silk and paper, linen, mixed natural fibres and sari silk framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Lauren Hernandez.

(Left Wall: Left): Crossing Threads®, *SEEK*, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand dyed Merino wool, hemp, Japanese silk and paper, linen, mixed natural fibres and sari silk; framed in Tasmanian oak; handwoven by Lauren Hernandez, photo: Kai Wasikowski, courtesy the artist.
- 7) Crossing Threads®, *UNDER MY SKIN*, 2020, Bamboo, chenille, Egyptian cotton, hemp, Japanese silk, jute, leather, linen, merino wool, mulberry tussah, raffia and wire on galvanised steel frame Handwoven by Lauren and Kass Hernandez. *Holding Patterns: Crossing Threads®*; photo: Kai Wasikowski for 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, courtesy of the artists.

8) *Crossing Threads*®, *THE DIVIDE* (detail view), 2020, Alpaca, bamboo, canvas, cotton, cotton roping, felted Merino wool, hand cut denim, hand cut leather, hand dyed raffia, hand dyed Shibori, hemp, linen, marine roping, Merino wool, mixed natural fibres, Pima cotton. Suspended off a painted Tasmanian oak wooden dowel. Handwoven by Kass Hernandez. Image courtesy of the artists.

9) Kass Hernandez of *Crossing Threads*® with the following works:

(Left) *Crossing Threads*®, *Seek*, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand dyed Merino wool, hemp, Japanese silk and paper, linen, mixed natural fibres and sari silk framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Lauren Hernandez.

(Centre) *Crossing Threads*®, *Consolation*, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand dyed Merino wool, handspun upcycled yarn, hemp, leather, linen and mixed natural fibres framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Kass Hernandez

(Right) *Crossing Threads*®, *Inward State*, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand dyed Merino wool, hemp, Japanese silk and paper, linen, mixed natural fibres and sari silk framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Lauren Hernandez.

Image courtesy of the artists.