

## Tara Kennedy Bio

Textile Artists Tara Kennedy is interested in creating messages within her work originally being inspired by the unity of her mixed cultural heritage. The despair she feels of different cultures and religions suffering in conflict drives her to communicate important messages of acceptance, empathy and hope in her work. She feels it is possible through understanding these messages there could be more harmonious outcomes.

Her current body of work 'Hope Emerging', creates expressions of hope emerging from this pain. It is essential to her that the context of her work leaves an impression on the viewer, leaving them to contemplate and consider.

The materials she uses are chosen for their tactile quality, seeking to create a comforting feeling. They include yarns, threads and fabrics and involve techniques of knitting, wrapping, felting, knotting and stitch. Process is also significant and references therapeutic, meditative and calming practices.

She creates soft sculptures and wall hangings as well as detailed drawings. These drawings provide an alternative viewpoint and compliment her 3D work.

To encourage the viewer to engage with her work, she uses the imagery of cages, bundles and wrapped forms. The coloured yarns provide a metaphor to show the transformation from the blood spilt and pain of suffering through graduated tones to ivory conveying hope. Knots express tension, wrapped bundles convey unity and cages suggest protection.

Selected pieces from this collection have been exhibited at the James Hockey Gallery in Farnham, the Espacio Gallery and the Menier Gallery in London, St Marys Church in Purley-on Thames, The Old Fire Station Gallery in Henley-on-Thames, The Oxmarket gallery in Chichester, four of the knitting and Stritching shows in UK, South Hill Park Arts Centre in Bracknell and the Workers Gallery in Ynyshir, Wales where she won the People Choice Award in their Home/Hope exhibition.

Tara completed an MA in Textiles at the University for the Creative Arts in Farnham in 2018 and is currently developing her practice with new areas of interest. In 2019 she spent a month in Iceland on a Textile Residency and is in the process of creating a new body of work inspired by the incredible landscape, leading to an exhibition in 2022.

She is also part of Transition Craft Design, an art collective of MA graduates from the University for Creative Arts, whom she exhibits with several times a year, the next one being at the OXO Tower in London in 2022.