



# Art at Oxford Saïd

Hilary Exhibition

# Threads of Change

by Alice Kettle

22 January – 17h April 2020

# Alice Kettle: Threads of Change

## The Artist

In her role as Professor at Manchester School of Art, Alice Kettle has researched the meeting place of traditional analogue stitching skills and digitised contemporary methodologies. She has developed a unique practice, creating textile works which employ a combination of stitch techniques, bringing together the use of antique machines from early last century with hand stitch and contemporary digital technology.

Textiles offer a powerful medium through which to explore themes of cultural heritage, journeys and displacement. This exploration was central to Alice Kettle's ambitious *Thread Bearing Witness* project shown at The Whitworth, Manchester, and the British Textile Biennale in 2018 and 2019. Through this project Kettle connected communities and individuals across the UK with the making of three monumental works inspired by the strength, resilience and hospitality of refugees and asylum seekers. One of these, *Ground*, at 8 metres long, is being shown at the School as part of the *Threads of Change* exhibition.

In Kettle's recent practice she has extended her reach to beyond the UK, working with communities around the world. In 2018 for the Karachi Biennale, Kettle worked with groups of women in Pakistan to co-create a stitched piece. Kettle returned to Pakistan at the end of 2019 to focus on a series of portraits and work with expert stiches from villages and communities in the Sindh province. Individuals based in England: Asmaa from Syria, Monica from Iran and Susan from Uganda are also very important as contributors to these portraits, some of which are collaborative.

Oxford Saïd are delighted to have co-funded this project alongside the Arts Council of England's National Lottery Funding. The result is a body of work entitled *Within each other, portraits of ourselves*, some of which will be shown as part of *Threads of Change*.

Kettle is engaging with these groups and individuals as part of an on-going relationship to encourage sustainable practice and empower artistic creativity. She is passionate about supporting traditional stitch ancestral knowledge, alongside new and emerging techniques, as part of the rich vocabulary of stitch. By working with these communities and individuals she is encouraging the retention of their knowledge and their cultural and artistic identities. This communal way of working reflects the ability of stitch to intersect across divided spaces and connect with others through a common language of making. These new works create a quiet space for action where stitch can encounter what it means to be human. The works simultaneously explore individual and collective identity, divided and shared through social, political and economic circumstances.

Elsewhere in 2020 Alice Kettle is showing her work through the Candida Stevens Gallery at the London Art Fair in January. Kettle is an invited artist for "Untitled, 2020" at Punta Dogana in Venice curated by Thomas Houseago, Caroline Bourgeois and Muna El Fituri with the Pinault Collection from March to December 2020.

## **Background**

Alice Kettle (b.1961) is a pioneer of her art form, with an application and process that makes her a unique creator and maker of art. She describes her work like holding a kite, connected to the earth in real time and flying into the sky in her imagination. While she trained as a painter at Reading University, Kettle has been lauded by her contemporaries for *“her use of a craft medium, consistently and on an unparalleled scale.”* With curator Sara Roberts stating *“The scale of her work belies their component parts: individual tiny stitches, which combine to form great swathes of colour, painterly backgrounds incorporating rich hues and metallic sheen.”*

## **Abbreviated CV**

- Professor of Textile Arts, MIRIAD, Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University
- Visiting Professor Centre for Real World Learning, University of Winchester
- Fellow of the Royal Society of Designer Craftsmen
- Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts
- Honorary Member of the '62 Group of Artists
- Vice Chair, Making Space Havant
- Panel Member CraftNet
- Academic Trustee Royal School of Needlework

## **Education**

- Fine Art, BA (Hons) University of Reading
- Textile Art (Postgraduate Diplomat), Goldsmiths' College, University of London
- Manchester School of Art, MMU PhD student

## **Public Collections**

- Ararat Art Gallery, Victoria, Australia
- Belger Collection, Kansas City USA
- The Broadgate Club, London
- Calderdale MBC: Museums and Arts
- The Crafts Council, London
- Hampshire Museums Service
- Hove Museum & Art Gallery
- Liverpool International Slavery Museum
- Manchester City Art Gallery
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Museum of Decorative Art and Design, Riga, Latvia
- Museo Internazionale delle Arti Applicate Oggi, Turin, Italy
- Portsmouth City Art Gallery
- The Prudential Collection
- Southampton City Art Gallery
- St Mary's College, Baltimore, USA
- The Otter Art Gallery, University of Chichester
- The Embroiderers' Guild
- The Embroiderers' Guild, NSW, Australia
- The Whitworth Gallery, Manchester

### **Selected Public Commissions**

- 2016 Official gift for Chancellor Right Honorable Peter Mandelsson
- 2014 - 15 Map to the Future, Lloyd's Register, Marine Technology Centre, University of Southampton
- 2015 Official gift for VC Prof John Brooks, MMU
- 2014 All Saints Church, Andover with Kate Egan
- 2013 The Siphus Dog, Poems by Stephen Boyce, Cover Illustration
- 2012 Margate Welcomes the Boat Project, Cultural Olympiad project commissioned by Parrabola through ACE to make Sail for the Boat project
- 2010 - 11 Birth of the Motive in Clouds, School of Music and Drama, University of Manchester
- 2010 Wisdom and Lor, University of Winchester Design Award 2010
- 2005 - 7 Looking Forwards to the Past, The Discovery Centre, Winchester, RIBA Award, Public Art Award Commendation, City of Winchester Trust
- 2010
- 2005 Coeus Official Gift for Inauguration of VC, Manchester Metropolitan University
- 2001 Chagall Column, Paul Foster
- 1999 - 00 Australian Landscape Series - National Library of Australia, Canberra, Australia
- 1999 - 01 Gloucester Cathedral, three altar frontals for the High Altar

### **Solo Exhibitions**

- 2020 Within Each Other, Portraits of Ourselves, Candida Stevens Gallery
- 2020 Threads of Change, Saïd Business School, Oxford
- 2017 Threads, Winchester Discovery Centre
- 2017 More Threads, Candida Stevens Gallery
- 2016 Alice Kettle, Prazeres Gallery, Madeira Island
- 2015 Here and Now, Circus performance Alice Kettle, Circus and CAA Gallery, London
- 2014 Alice Kettle Odyssey, Pallant House Gallery, Chichester
- 2013 The Garden of England, The Queens House, The National Maritime Museum Greenwich
- 2012 Alice Kettle, ANU School of Art, Australia
- 2012 The Shape of Touch, Merston Gallery
- 2010 Telling Fortunes, Platt Hall, Museum of Costume, Manchester (catalogue)
- 2009 - 2011 Allegory Craft Study Centre, Farnham and tour (catalogue) Dorchester Museum; The Gallery in the Bay Cardiff; Farfield Mill Sedburgh; The Willis Museum Basingstoke
- 2009 A Pause in the Rhythm of Time, Belger Arts Centre, Kansas City, Surface Design Association, USA (Work acquired for permanent collection)
- 2006 Salisbury Arts Centre
- 2003 - 5 Mythscapes: Bankfield Museum, Halifax; (catalogue) mac, Birmingham; The Gallery, Ruthin Craft Centre; Southampton City Art Gallery; Hove Museum and Art Gallery; Brewery Arts, Kendal; South Hill Park, Bracknell; Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum; Grace Barrand Design Centre ,Surrey, Myles Meehan Gallery, Darlington; Harley Gallery, Worksop
- 2003 Featured Artist, The Knitting and Stitching Show, London, Dublin and Harrogate
- 2002 Newbury Spring Festival
- 1992 Salisbury Playhouse
- 1991 Galerie Filambule, Lausanne, Switzerland
- 1990 My Eyes, Your Hands, Brewery Arts Centre, Kendal
- 1990 Alice Kettle – Showcase, ICA, London
- 1988 Oxford Gallery
- 1988 Quay Art Centre, Newport, Isle of Wight
- 1987 University College Chichester
- 1987 Painting and Textiles, Oxford Gallery
- 1986 Oxford Gallery



**Alice Kettle**

*Dancing Lady II*, 2019 £ 660

Hand and machine stitch on printed fabric

With contributions from Susan

Kamara, Uganda

69 x 50 cm



**Alice Kettle**

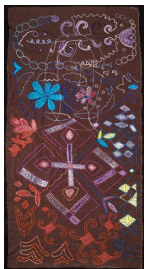
*Karachi Woman*, 2019 £ 1,500

Hand and machine stitch on printed fabric

With contributions by women from RLCC,

Karachi and Alice Kettle

86 x 58 cm



**Alice Kettle**

*Lady of Pattern*, 2019 £ 1,200

Hand and machine stitch on  
printed fabric With

contributions from Assma,

Syria

134 x 64 cm



**Alice Kettle**

*Pink Flowers*, 2019 £ 300.00

Hand and machine stitch on  
printed fabric. With

contributions from Assma,

Syria

40 x 37 cm



**Alice Kettle**  
*Portrait*, 2019 £300  
Hand and machine stitch on  
printed fabric. With  
contributions from Monica,  
Iran  
60 x 42 cm



**Alice Kettle**  
*Portrait of Mouti*, 2019 £2,200  
Hand and machine stitch on printed fabric  
38 x 28 cm



**Alice Kettle**  
*Portrait of Nel*, 2019 £4,500  
Hand and machine stitch on printed fabric  
84 x 60 cm



**Alice Kettle**  
*Singing Lady*, 2019 £660  
Hand and machine stitch on printed fabric  
With contributions from Susan Kamara, Uganda  
60 x 45 cm



**Alice Kettle**  
*Paradise Lost*, 2010 Thread on Blanket £35,200  
230 x 260 cm  
(AK026)



**Alice Kettle**  
*Suko*, 2011 £12,500  
Thread on Linen  
218 x 120 cm  
(AK029)



**Alice Kettle**  
*Sea Figure - Island*, 2016 £12,500  
Thread on linen  
196 x 120 cm  
(AK032)



**Alice Kettle**  
*Dancing Lady*, 2019 £660  
Hand and machine stitch on printed fabric  
With contributions from Susan Kamara,  
Uganda  
69 x 50 cm



**Alice Kettle**  
*Pakistan Portrait*, 2019 £1,500  
Hand and machine stitch on printed fabric  
With contributions from RLCC (RA'ana  
Liaquat Craftsman Colony), Behbud and  
Indus Resource Centre, Pakistan  
80 x 46 cm



**Alice Kettle**  
*Pakistan Portrait 2*, 2019 £1,500  
Hand and machine stitch on printed fabric  
With contributions from RLCC (RA'ana  
Liaquat Craftsman Colony), Behbud and  
Indus Resource Centre, Pakistan  
80 x 46 cm



**Alice Kettle**  
Ground, 2018 £45,000  
Embroidery, Thread on  
printed canvas  
300 x 800 cm  
(AK040)