

Press Release

Eliza Kentridge

Tethering

11 July - 9 August, 2024



Eliza Kentridge. Photograph by Eliot Gelberg-Wilson

Cecilia Brunson Projects is pleased to present the gallery's first exhibition with South African-British artist and award-winning poet Eliza Kentridge (b.1962, Johannesburg). Focused on the central role that embroidery plays in Kentridge's recent work, *Tethering* considers the ties between her artistic practice and domestic rituals, and the notion of family and parental homes as the anchors that reel in our scattered lives.

Both Kentridge's visual art and poetry are marked by childhood memories and close familial connections. Born into a Jewish family in South Africa, to anti-Apartheid lawyer parents, Kentridge moved to the UK in her twenties, and now works between her Wivenhoe studio and her father's home in London. Presenting a graphic and dreamlike visual world that often contrasts with that of her brother and fellow artist, William

Kentridge, her practice tends towards the intimate scale of domestic materials, mindful of the shared experience of many women artists and the invisible tether between identities of creator, mother, carer and homemaker.

*Tethering* centres around an expansive embroidered installation: a patchwork of teabags, brewed, dried, emptied and quilted together. Over this ground of marbled coppery and caramel tea tones are Kentridge's intricate embroideries, a constellation of imaginary figures and abstract symbols of botanical, cosmic and heraldic form.

Kentridge's debut collection of poetry arose from time spent with her mother during a long illness, provoking meditations on her childhood, and this installation forms a visual counterpart of sorts, a product of countless cups of tea shared with her 101-year-old father. Time spent with family is extended and commemorated by the slow, tender acts of embroidery and quilting.

Alongside this extensive and evolving installation are works of a much smaller scale. Napkins, collected over time from myriad places, including Kentridge's mother's home, serve as the artist's canvas. They are embroidered and appliquéd with words copied from cookbooks, or with circular outlines that recall the marks left by a teacup or wineglass, only rendered in bright thread and careful, deliberate stitching. Slow to make and yet spontaneous and gestural in form, they suggest a meditative state – a mind lost in thought in the comfort of home and familial companionship. The embroideries are an adornment of the everyday, and a register of time well spent in the care of loved ones.

Kentridge lives and works in Wivenhoe, UK, where she co-founded and runs Wivenhoe Printworks. She has exhibited in London, Essex, New York and Johannesburg. Her first book of poetry, *Signs For An Exhibition*, published in 2015, was joint winner of the University of Johannesburg's Debut Prize for Literature, and was adapted by composer Philip Miller for a song cycle which premiered at the Milwaukee Art Museum in 2022. Kentridge is currently working on a new collection of poetry with the provisional title *Dog Days, Dark Nights*.

*Events:*

11 July, 6-8pm - Opening view and talk with Rachel Spence

26 July, 11am-1pm - Artist walkthrough

*Enquiries & Press:*

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