

Hello, thank you so much for spending time with the work. My name is Melissa Haviland. I am an artist and educator that lives in Athens, Ohio. The piece that you're looking at right now is really the keystone piece for the show at the college in The Gallery at Penn College. So this piece is called You Can't Take It With You, which is also the title of the exhibition. I made this piece in 2018 in a very different way than I usually make work. A few times in my career I have made work like this. Usually my pieces are very preplanned, I see them deep into the future and I make them to be exactly what I assume that they will be. I come to them in what I would call sort of clinical ways: from reading, from writing, from seeing other people's art, sort of standard inspiration. But this piece, You Can't Take It With You, came from a dream initially. It came from a dream of me trying to stay afloat in a sea. It was a very tumultuous sea with waves, and floating around me were paper tea cups and paper boats. So basically like origami tea cups and boats.

And I had this dream pretty regularly right as I was newly a mother. So I have a son named Jude, and I started to dream about this piece sort of maybe when he was like five or six months old. There's a kind of consistency to motherhood that I didn't quite understand, and it was very intense, and all you mothers out there can understand. And I think this was just a way that I was dealing with it. I also, this was also a time period, culturally, that was pretty intense. This was when a lot of the migrant crisis stuff was in the news. People trying, you know, drowning when they tried to cross the Mediterranean sea; hoards of people moving from one country hopefully to another. And so I was also watching that and I kept thinking about how intense that experience must be for a family with children, or for those children who are alone; it was just very extreme.

And so I was thinking about this, like, wash of things, and then in that same time period, I was getting a lot of children's books and acquired a book called Teacup. It is this really gorgeous children's book that is about a boy who travels from his home, his place of, you know, that he's always lived, in a boat with very few possessions. But one of the things that he does have is a tea cup full of soil and a seed. And over his journey by sea to his new land, it's a long enough journey that the seed grows into a tree that he then plants in his new land. And I found this to be sort of tying both the migrant crisis and these dreams of the sea, together. And also, it just made me realize that we are all at sea.

There's all these times in our lives that we feel like we are just staying above water. And that's really what this piece is about. It's sort of like about that sort of chaos of life. And I have made work about teacups for many years. My last name is Haviland, and I've always connected it to the Haviland China Corporation to allow me, to allow that to be like a lens to start thinking about objects, specifically fine China, and then tea cups. Tea cups to me are the most intimate of the China because it's the one that we put to our lips. So very, this piece is a slurry of all that. And so what you're seeing is a two sided screen print, printed in repeat print fashion, so similar to wallpaper. And I printed it on both sides so it could become this wave or object within the space.

I really was so inspired by this piece; it came together very quickly. I just rode it after I had the dream and just made it gutterly. And again, that's not exactly how I often work, so it was exciting to ride the wave of this piece. And I just went in and made the stencils over the course of a week and then started to print. And it's quite a feat to print a piece like this. It has three layers within the screen image, and then, and drawings of tea cups and paper boats that sort of lace through it. And then I took old wallpapers that I had printed when I was a resident at Anderson Ranch [Colorado] that are all sort of teacup themed. And I cut those and folded them into either paper boats or paper tea cups.

And that's what surrounds the piece. I like this piece in its speed that it came together, but also sort of how it's still, to me, very emotional because of all those ways that it, like I was describing, it sort of ties to culture and my current life. And, I like the way that it uses, it sort of stews in pattern as well. So maybe these patterns in our lives that keep coming up, certainly in mine, the tea cup continues to come

up again and again. And I really started, this piece also started me on the path of thinking about the color blue and stewing in the color blue. And also thinking about these waves or the idea of using the idea of being at sea as thinking about sort of the chaos of life, or sort of staying afloat; the intensity of emotions around us.