

# Ka'ila Farrell-Smith

*Klamath, Modoc*

Waqlisi? Gao' Sassas Ka'ila. Noo' a Ewksik'inii, noo'a Modoc'ini. Utilizing painting and sculptural art forms, like basket weaving, I explore the space that exists in-between the Indigenous and western worlds, examining their cultural interpretations of aesthetics, symbols, and place. It is in this space I have been searching for my visual language: violent, beautiful, and complicated marks that express my contemporary Indigenous identity.

I am astounded at the mathematical complexity and beauty in the basketry of my ancestors. Once I began weaving, I discovered how heavily focused on process this art form is, which has greatly influenced how I approach painting. I have developed a system of layering marks and stenciling designs to create my own language, combining expressions, text, and color that reference contemporary influences, along with the traditional patterns found in Klamath basket designs.

I call these baskets "Failed Hats," because I have been trying to make a hat since I started weaving, but they end up taking on their own forms, so I follow that form. I do the same when painting, I start with an idea but ultimately the composition tells me where to go.

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***Pt'isap (Father) Basket, 2015***

Tule, cattail, sweetgrass,  
cotton cordage  
9 x 9 x 9 inches

***C'aagi Wanak (Young Son) Basket, 2015***

Tule, cattail, sweetgrass,  
cotton cordage  
6 x 6 x 8 inches

***Pk'isap (Mother) Basket, 2015***

Tule, cattail, sweetgrass,  
cotton cordage  
12 x 6 x 6 inches

***Y'ayn'a (Mountain) Basket, 2016***

Tule, cattail, sweetgrass,  
cotton cordage  
8 x 6 x 6 inches