

## **“Ana Esteve Llorens: Correspondence” at Las Cruxes**

**The textiles in this solo show map a negotiation between the weaver and her surroundings, a lattice charting stretch and slack over time**

REVIEWED BY MELANY JEAN, FRI., OCT. 12, 2018



*Untitled (Two Yellows Two Squares) by Ana Esteve Llorens*

The structure of a woven textile starts simply enough, the warp stretched taut vertically, like harp strings. But then comes the weft, and with it a slew of considerations and intricacies. At Las Cruxes, Ana Esteve Llorens displays a selection of deceptively simple weavings.

Las Cruxes, whose name conveniently references a crossing point, is a store and gallery where art and fashion intersect. It is impossible to ignore, upon visiting "Correspondence," the racks of clothing and shelves of goods. There is a main gallery display, an arrangement of a dozen or so framed textiles on an otherwise empty wall space, but elsewhere Llorens' works are tucked in between shelves and racks. Just larger than a square foot, in *Untitled (Two Yellows Two Squares)* the natural-dyed cotton threads form a tight tartan of squash colors, lighter butternut crossing darker pumpkin. The piece hangs next to iridescent bags and above a Lucite chair, by the fitting rooms. It seems to stand in resistance to the synthetic materials around it. The juxtaposition of textiles on hangers (clothing) and textiles hanging in frames (art) prompts the question of what differentiates the two.

There are the frames, for one, and they would be enough. Fat and squiggly, they trace the organic curves of the tapestry edges and constrain them, presenting the small textiles as charming and complete objects.

But, before they were constrained by the frames, the works were bound by the frame of their creator. Using a backstrap loom, Llorens anchored this batch of textiles to herself. The works map a negotiation between the weaver and her surroundings, a lattice charting stretch and slack over time. The pieces' structural integrity is anchored in personal perspective. Recalling Renaissance-era linear perspective grids, we understand from looking at Llorens' works that they are from the perspective of an individual, the creator. The yarn lines fan out at some edges and tighten at others, pattern lines warped like pages of a bath-bloated book. These distorted lines mark the creator as both a vanishing point and the point of origin.

Llorens is part of a much longer tradition of women artists and artisans who practice the art and craft of weaving. Anni Albers, blocked from other forms of creation at the Bauhaus due to the fact of her womanhood, said, "Fate put into my hands limp threads!" Though some textile artists consider a history of senseless relegation as something for which to compensate, Llorens approaches her textile work with no trace of apologetics. Though she has worked in larger scales, here the works are small, and the resulting plaids and gingham are unashamedly domestic. Her palette is the subtle vibrancy of natural dyes, and her materials are simple, stretched between herself and her surroundings.

Weaving starts with a set of parameters, the warp. Then the weft comes, ducking and bobbing until, finally, there is something that is neither of those things, but is clearly the result of both. Is it clothing? Kitchen linen? A work of art? It depends on how you frame it. At Las Cruces, Llorens gives her woven objects thick, white, doodle-like frames, and I want one for my home.

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Las Cruces, 1900 E. 12th

[www.lascruces.com](http://www.lascruces.com)

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