

## BIOGRAPHY

Lily Hope was born and raised in Juneau, Alaska to full-time artists. She is Tlingit Indian, of the Raven moiety. Following her matrilineal line, she's of her grandmother's clan, the T'akdeintaan, originating from the Snail House in Hoonah, Alaska.

Lily learned Ravenstail weaving from Clarissa Rizal, and Kay Parker, both of Juneau. She learned Chilkat weaving from Clarissa Rizal as well, who is the last living apprentice of the late Master Chilkat Weaver, Jennie Thlanaut.

Lily Has been weaving Ravenstail since 1995, and Chilkat weaving since 2010. Her most recent ensemble, Little Watchman, blends the two styles. She's also working on contract to finish a full-size Chilkat Robe for the Portland Art Museum, by late January 2017. Lily teaches weaving in the Juneau School District, and to independent learners. She also demonstrates and teaches internationally, and offers lectures on the spiritual commitments of being a weaver.

Her first Ravenstail ensemble (a collaboration with Clarissa Rizal), Copper Child, had a run of exhibits and shows, winning first place in Sealaska Heritage Institute's Juried Art Show, 2012. It is now in the permanent collection at Sealaska Heritage.

Lily lives just over the bridge in Douglas, Alaska, with her husband, author Ishmael Hope, [www.alaskanativestoryteller.com](http://www.alaskanativestoryteller.com), and four children.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

I weave to bring order to my thoughts, to converge with the realms beyond our seeing eye, and to help bring the past into present, and present into future.

I weave because it makes washing the dishes more enjoyable, the diaper changing more delightful, and the CD alphabetizing more meaningful (What? You don't alphabetize?). When I start my day weaving, I bounce when I walk, sing as I talk, and smile with everything. Weaving Chilkat is like breathing with the universal consciousness. All is well in the world when I'm weaving.

I come to my loom and close my eyes. I give thanks for the women who helped me learn: for Jennie, the last Master Chilkat weaver who taught my mother. I give thanks for my hands, and for the time and space to weave. I sit with this gratitude for some time and smile as I remove the embroidered shawl protecting my weaving from dust. I place my hands in the warp before finding my weft strands, and silently ask Jennie and previous weavers to help guide my hands today. I weave on wooden looms my father cut and sanded, fashioned after Jennie's looms. The header board runs horizontal to the ground, and my warp hang vertically loose. My warp is thigh-spun from merino wool (used to

be mountain goat, but my uncle hunters keep dying), and finely split yellow cedar bark. This spinning combination is rough on my hands, yet offers enough structure so I may shape eyes, u-forms, ovoids, and more, into my weavings. The cedar bark also keeps the moths away. I don't want to spend a year making something to let moths eat it.

My fine weaver strands of merino wool (formerly mountain goat) come in traditional black, natural/white, and blue and yellow for accent colors. Some days I'm surprised to spend three hours at the loom and manage only to get my braids "set" to start shaping an eye. Other days I fly across u-forms and circles. When my fingers forget how to move through the warp, I throw my arms up and clear my mind, saying, "Ok, Jennie, I need your help," I exhale and place my hands back in the warp. Every time, it's as though she were here, working right beside me.

That's what art means. It means our teachers don't die. It means the spirit of all things lives on in us, in our art. We have a responsibility to honor and carry on the teachings, to keep creating, to share our version of spirit with others, so when we pass, we've left the world more beautiful, through our weavings and through a joyful spirit.