

GALLERIES

When artist moms team up with their artist children, playful ideas are born

‘Offshoot Collaborations’ at Gallery Kayafas features the work of two parent-child teams who don’t usually collaborate

By **Cate McQuaid** Globe Correspondent, Updated February 24, 2022, 12:00 p.m.





“Akin Garment” is two shirts joined at the sleeves. In the photo, “Akin-Remove,” Mags Harries and Thyra Heder help each other into or out of the shirts. ©MAGS HARRIES & THYRA HEDERS

Collaborating entails letting go of control. Imagine doing it with your parent or adult child. The shared history may make the process all the richer — or all the more fraught.

“Offshoot Collaborations,” a playful, wry exhibition at Gallery Kayafas, features the work of two parent-child teams who don’t usually collaborate professionally — quilt artist [Clara Wainwright](#) and her son, [Dedalus](#), an artist and set designer, and sculptor [Mags Harries](#) and her daughter, children’s book author and illustrator [Thyra Heder](#).

“How does one make art with your mother?” Heder asks in a joint artists’ statement with Harries. “When your mother is the artist you have most admired throughout your life?”

The artists used a Surrealist game called [exquisite corpse](#). One person makes a

drawing and folds the page over to conceal it before passing it to the next. Blind to what came before, that person adds to the drawing, folds it again, and passes it on. So it goes, back and forth. It's a fun game that produces nonsensical drawings. Gallery visitors may make their own and contribute to the "Exquisite Corpse Invitational," also on view.



For "Metaphysical Elder Luge," Dedalus Wainwright designed a twisty maze of a luge run in gold and blue, and Clara Wainwright placed a fierce, snaggled-toothed dragon at the center. ©CLARA & DEDALUS WAINWRIGHT

The artists' exquisite corpses are delightful, such as a swivel-jointed, green-headed palm reader in the [Wainwrights'](#) "Fortune Teller (Furry Sweater)."

Working on theirs, Heder and Harries said in their statement, they discovered unexpected confluences of line and style. But the exquisite corpses turned out to be low-stakes, goofy warmups for more ambitious collaborations.

[Harries and Heder](#) designed garments and furniture and photographed themselves using them. The clothing is an image of partnership. “Akin Garment” is two shirts joined at the sleeves. In the photo, “Akin-Remove,” the two artists help each other into or out of the shirts. Their caring struggle is a metaphor for the tangled relationship between parent and child.

The Wainwrights designed versions of a fantastical “Elder Luge,” an amusement park ride for elders to “exit with style,” they write in their artist’s statement, culminating in a fiery cremation. For “Metaphysical Elder Luge,” Dedalus designed a twisty maze of a luge run in gold and blue, and Clara placed a fierce, snaggle-toothed dragon at the center, ready to breathe fire.

Collaborations mirror the relationship between collaborators. This show takes that mirror as its subject, evincing an ineffable bond.

“I think through our various experimentations,” Heder says in the statement, “we’ve both gotten a sense that our connection might exist deeper than understanding.”

OFFSHOOT COLLABORATIONS

At Gallery Kayafas, 450 Harrison Ave., through March 5. [617-482-0411](tel:617-482-0411), www.gallerykayafas.com

Cate McQuaid can be reached at catemcquaid@gmail.com. Follow her on Twitter [@cmcq](https://twitter.com/cmcq).

 [Show comments](#)

 [Show comments](#)

©2022 Boston Globe Media Partners, LLC