For me, hope in online/hybrid teaching and learning environments is conceptualised through fostering meaningful human connections within an online community of learners. Looking through a sociocultural lens, human connections between student and lecturer are central to online learning relationships that create a sense of belonging, wellbeing and feeling of inclusion. From a student perspective, these relational experiences can encourage engagement, motivation and ultimately hope in their ability to succeed.

My artwork depicts the complexity of the human connections, the diverse ways they are experienced and the role digital technologies play in strengthening and sustaining them.

The artwork consists of three ceramic tiles. The tile on the left represents students, while the tile on the right represents lecturers. The central tile symbolises the connections that bring students and lecturers together, and the diverse ways that they experience a sense of human connectedness mediated by digital technologies. While a continuity of shape throughout the artwork suggests a shared purpose, the ripples, textures and patterns within the glaze and clay represent the unique experiences, perspectives and identities that students and lecturers bring to the learning relationship.

The woven material linking the tiles symbolises online relational pedagogy and the diverse, ever evolving digital technologies that dance together to foster interaction, care and belonging. In contrast to the ceramic tiles, the woven material is fragile and can easily be broken or worn away, symbolising how human connections need nurturing otherwise can be easily damaged or lost.