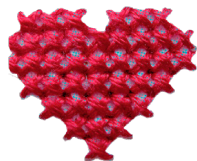


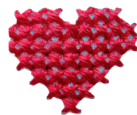
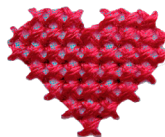
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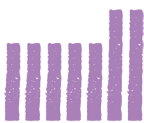


Love

OF
TEXTILES

4TH APRIL TO
28TH JUNE 2026




SUNNY BANK MILLS

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

For the Love of Textiles is an exhibition exploring the loving connections humans have with textiles.

Alongside the original work of talented contemporary artists, the exhibition also features precious cloth and garments from life's most significant moments.

On display are many items loaned from personal wardrobes and collections of friends of the Mills.

Although we don't know the names of the craftspeople behind many of the items on display, it's clear their beauty and sentimental value are something to be celebrated.

Opening times: Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-4pm. Closed on Mondays.
FREE ENTRY



Scan the QR code to read the artists' full statements.



THE COLLECTION

Here are the garments featured in the exhibition, kindly loaned to the Gallery by friends, neighbours, colleagues family members & textile guilds.



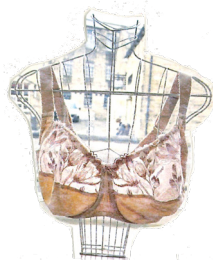
Jude's Burton
Wedding Dress

Loaned by Jude
Kershaw from
her personal
collection



Traveller
Wedding Dress

Loaned by a local
family through
Leeds Gypsy
and Traveller
Exchange



Kathryn's Magic
Bra

Loaned by
Lucy Adlington
from History
Wardrobe's
collection



Peggy's Silk
Wedding Dress

Loaned by
Lucy Adlington
from History
Wardrobe's
collection



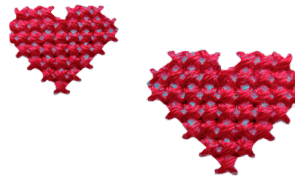
Traveller
Bridesmaid Dress

Loaned by a local
family through
Leeds Gypsy
and Traveller
Exchange



**Thahmina's
Wedding Outfit**

Loaned by
Thahmina Begum
from her personal
collection



**Eilidh's Family
Tablecloth**

Loaned by Eilidh
Gilmour from
her personal
collection



**Handmade
Wedding
Slippers**

Loaned by Sarah
Buckroyd from
Castle Howard's
former collection



**Nana-Essi's
Ghananian
Wedding Fabric**



Loaned by
Nana-Essi
Casely-Hayford
from her personal
collection



**Ndidi's Wedding
Outfit**

Loaned by Ndidi
Nkwopara from
her personal
collection



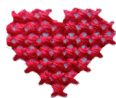
**Fiona's Wedding
Dress**

Loaned by
Fiona Gell from
her personal
collection



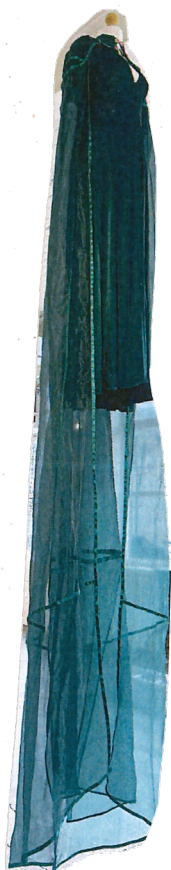
Heather's
(People's)
Princess Dress

Loaned by
Heather
Rothera from
her personal
collection



Edwardian
Wedding Garter

Loaned by Sarah
Buckroyd from
Castle Howard's
former collection



Jess' Wedding
Cape & Dress

Loaned by Jess
Sweet from
her personal
collection



Ndidi's Wedding
Guest Outfit

Loaned by Ndidi
Nkwopara from
her personal
collection



Sim & Kim's
Wedding Outfits

Loaned by Kimrin
Bharath from
her personal
collection

KNITTING & CROCHET GUILD COLLECTION

The Knitting & Crochet Guild are a UK-based charity dedicated to hand knitting, domestic machine knitting and crochet, run by volunteers and supported by subscriptions and donations.

"Community is at the heart of our ethos and we aim to bring together enthusiastic yarn creatives from across the globe. We are passionate about taking our crafts into the future while respecting the traditions and skills of the past.

We look to encourage, inspire and be inspired by amazing makers at local level through our branches and the wider Guild community. We are here to facilitate learning new skills and about the history of knitting and crochet."



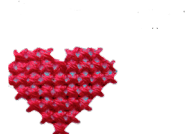
Hand Knit Baby Matinee Jacket

Donated to the Guild by Liz Gillet



Crochet Wedding
Dress and
Net Curtain Veil

Donated to the
Guild by Val Box



Machine Knit
Wedding Dress

Donated to the
Guild by Kate
Aggett



Harrod's Lace
Wedding Dress
and original label

Crowdfunded
purchase by
Guild members

THE QUILTERS' GUILD COLLECTION

The Quilters' Guild of the British Isles is a national membership organisation, formed in 1979 and made up of about 7,000 individual members, mostly from the UK, but also from Europe and other parts of the world.

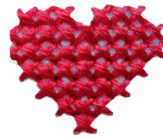
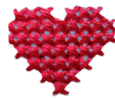
The Quilters' Guild is open to everyone and is run by its members, bringing together quilters in a spirit of friendship and learning. The Guild promotes quilt-making in all its forms across the UK.

As an educational charity we preserve the heritage of quilting and work to ensure a vibrant future for the craft.

Membership of The Quilters' Guild is open to people of all interests and abilities.



1930s Silk Baby Slippers



Christening Gown and Bonnet

Made by Eva Davies

ALENA GROM

Alena Grom is a Ukrainian artist and documentary photographer working at the intersection of conceptual photography and reportage. She explores themes of war, memory, and human resilience, documenting life in frontline and occupied territories for over eight years through photography, video, and text.



Mavky focuses on real women from the village of Horenka, Buchansky District, which was on the front line during the early months of the war in 2022. These women, members of the volunteer group *Horenski Mavky*, create camouflage nets and clothing under harsh conditions, providing essential protection for soldiers on the front.

Through their work, they embody courage, care, and community solidarity. The project connects Ukrainian folklore, especially the figure of the *Mavka*, with contemporary acts of selflessness and protection. Each portrait reflects female virtues: resilience, connection with nature, love, and unity, presenting the women not as victims but as protectors and builders of the future. The project references Andy Warhol's *Camouflage* (1986), exploring the tension between the anonymity of camouflage and the individuality of the subjects. Camouflage becomes a symbol of both vulnerability and strength, highlighting these women as guardians whose power is rooted in nature, culture, and collective care.

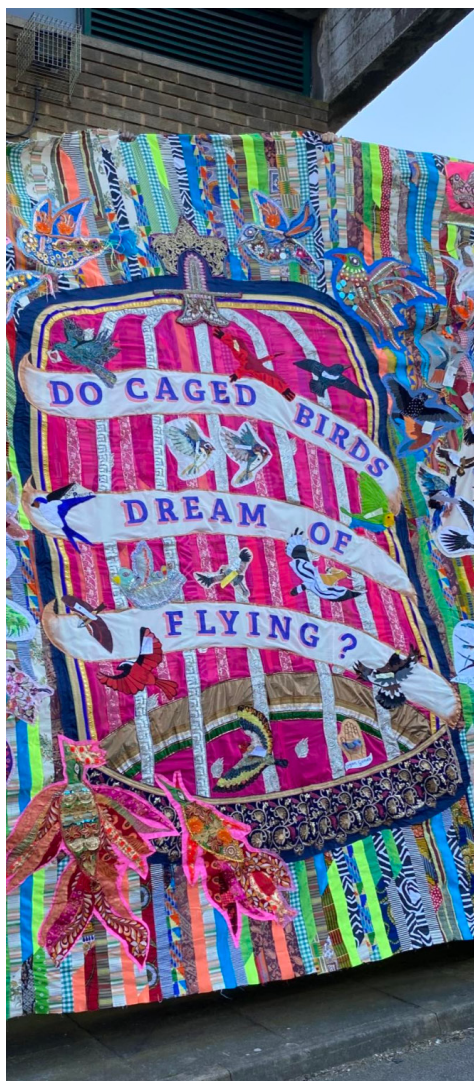
GRENFELL MEMORIAL QUILT

Like so many others, artist Jane Thakoordin witnessed the horrific Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017, with people pleading for help from their windows, flames consuming the building floor by floor, and the nation left frozen in grief, unable to comprehend how such trauma could unfold in plain sight.

The phrase *Do Caged Birds Dream of Flying*, featured on this section of the Grenfell Memorial Quilt draws inspiration from Maya Angelou's *Caged Bird*, in which she writes of a bird who sings "with a fearful trill, of things unknown but longed for still," and whose tune carries "on the distant hill," for the caged bird sings of freedom.

"I felt compelled to channel these emotions into one of the Grenfell Memorial Quilt panels after learning about Tuesday Greenidge and her team from the North Kensington community who created the Grenfell Memorial Quilt project, with a brave and bold ambition to create, by 2027, a quilt as long as the tower was tall - 220 feet.

A call-out on social media brought together 68 people from across the UK, each creating a bird to honour one of the 72 victims. As we reflected on the lives lost, we imagined them trying to escape a gilded cage – clad in deadly materials, constructed to appease the gaze of mansion and penthouse-dwelling neighbours.



HENRY / BRAGG

Henry/Bragg was an art duo made up of Julie Henry (born Cambridge 1956, died Epsom 2025) and Debbie Bragg (born Farnborough, Kent 1974).

They highlighted subject matters that meant a great deal to them, such as the erosion of working class culture and the human longing for escapism.

During the 1970s there was little opportunity to buy pre-designed football shirts. Instead fans would wear homemade jerseys or scarves, often painstakingly knitted by a friend or relative.

For *Dyed in the Wool*, Henry/Bragg invited a die-hard football fan from each of the Premiership sides to design a cardigan to represent their team. The response to this request was participative and home made.

What separates these cardigans from the cloned replica shirts of the standard football club merchandising is a sense of local identity. The colour and the stories behind the cardigans, knitted by the Women's Institute for the fans, bring out the narrative tradition; the novelist as opposed to the historian with only dry statistics.

Dyed in the Wool was commissioned by The Millais Gallery supported by Arts Council England in 2004 and has since toured to Berlin, Belgium, London and New York. It is now in the permanent collection at the National Football Museum in Manchester.



JACQUI MCASSEY

Jacqui McAssey is a Senior Lecturer in Fashion at Liverpool School of Art and the founder of GIRLFANS and Get Your Kits Out Festival.

Since 2013, Jacqui and co-lead Zoe Hitchen have developed GIRLFANS into a significant platform for celebrating and documenting the often overlooked presence of female and non-binary football supporters.

The Lionesses Touchline Coat draws on the cultural energy of football terraces, particularly chants, songs and clothing that hold collective meaning by reclaiming and feminising them to centre female supporters' experiences.

The garment, a nod to Arsene Wenger's Arsenal puffer coat, was commissioned for the England Women's Squad Announcement film ahead of the UEFA Women's EURO 2022, a tournament the England team memorably went on to win.

It is constructed from layers of used England scarves sourced from online retailer Classic Football Shirts. Integrated into this is a bespoke scarf with feminised lyrics from the 1998 England song, Vindaloo by Fat Les, designed by Jacqui and produced by Wildemasche.

The Lionesses Touchline Coat has travelled to both the UEFA Women's EURO in England and the FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia in 2023. These encounters were photographed for GIRLFANS England fanzine, published in 2026.



JOHANNA MARK

Johanna Mark AKA Medulla Textiles is a textile artist, sewing magical creations from her tiny studio located at the Lake of Constance, Austria.

"I studied Arts & Communication and Fashion & Styles at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna to become an art teacher, but the sewing-passion is something I got from my Mama. I grew up beneath a sewing machine and my biggest passion is and was always creating fantasy friends and crazy, glittery artsy stuff."



KATE TUME

Kate Tume is an artist living and working in Worthing, West Sussex. She is self-taught and works in a variety of hand-techniques including embroidery, embellishment, stumpwork and goldwork. Her work seeks to interrogate themes of grief, transformation and divinity.

Becoming widowed in mid-2021 catalysed a profound shift in her work. Despite always exploring ideas of memorial, the work now comes from a deeply personal place of processing her own grief, and aspires to create liminal places for the wearer/viewer to inhabit and feel their own responses.

The series of 8 wearable sculptures featured in *For the Love of Textiles* create a pantheon of deities, each representing a facet of profound love lost, each a deity of grief. Fascinated by the notion of Magical Objects, these are not just sculptures to be observed, but ritual objects to be worn, as humans have always done through millennia for such rites of passage. She sees these as tools for transformation; a room into which the wearer can go to become changed.

For Kate, they are also portraits – self – and of her husband.

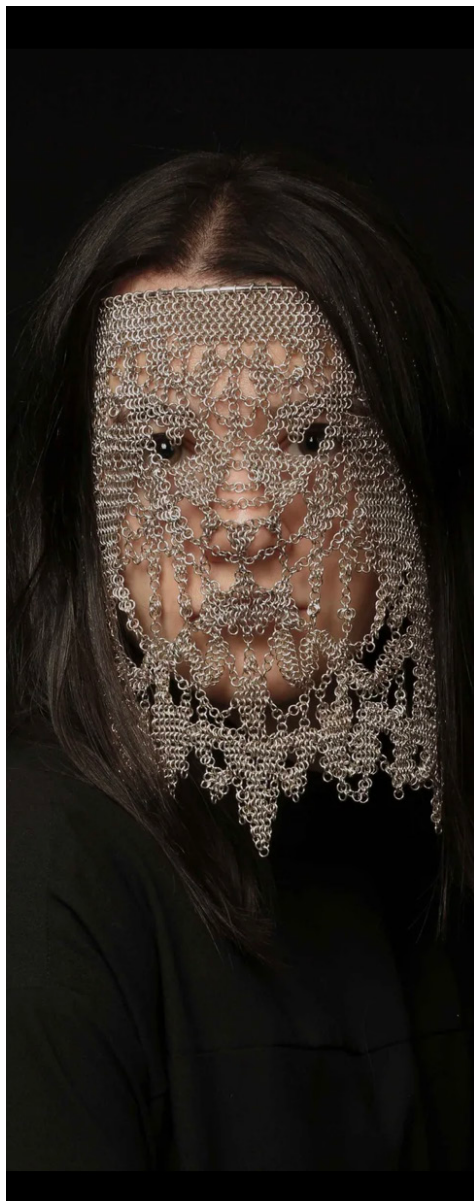
"This work is dedicated to Nicky Tume and our eternal love."

Photographs featured in the exhibition by Sam Winter.



KATHERINE JAMES

Katherine James is a Leeds-based artist. She is best known for her unique re-imaginings of armour, made by crafting chainmail into many different forms and materials to alter its symbolic values.



Her pieces are often highly time-consuming to create and can take weeks and in some cases months to complete. Her expression is not bound by scale and can take the form of body adornments and large-scale sculpture.

Traditional wedding ceremonies often dictate separate actions for a bride and groom to undertake, with the veil playing a prominent role in this process.

Through the chain veil, Katherine imagines how this item of adornment could be creatively altered to reflect societies' changing attitudes towards traditional roles within partnerships, as well as gender identity.

Katherine has created the veil from her signature chainmail-lace, the typically masculine symbol of armour has been crafted into feminine lace-like patterns. The piece unifies the opposing characteristics of each material, reflecting the nuance and complexity of our identities, as well as symbolising a commitment to a relationship free from gender-specific expectations.

MANYA GOLDMAN

Manya Goldman was born in Cape Town, South Africa. She came to London in the 1960s with her family, who were political refugees from Apartheid.

Manya has worked in several media including basketry, painting and printmaking, before arriving at her present practice working with hand embroidery.

Manya's work deals with family and relationships. She explores the territory of memory and questions concerning belonging and loss. In choosing to work in hand embroidery, she welcomes the slow unfolding of meaning. She uses fine silk and cotton thread which she combines as if mixing paint and with this palette she works to reconstruct or reimagine the sense of a moment.

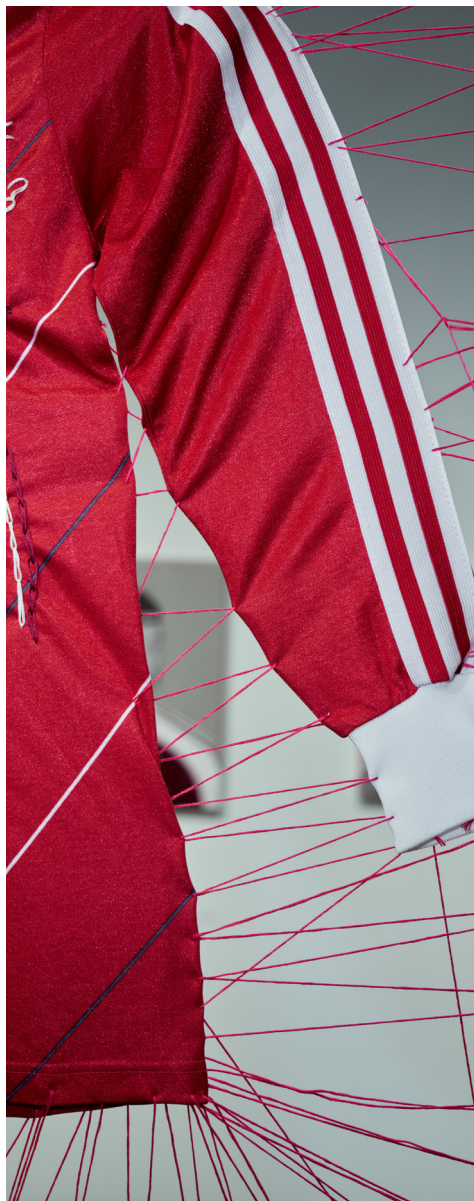
Her recent pieces deal with capturing the immaterial; ghosts fleeting through the mind, caught in a web of stitching. Family photographs are her starting point for exploration and recreation. The works behave as emotional sutures: to repair lost people and places; to bring them back to life.

Manya wants to take the viewer into their own memories, and through her personal history of displacement, produce a resonance with theirs.



NICOLE CHUI

Nicole Chui is a London-based embroidery artist whose “messy, brash, and disruptive” style subverts the traditional medium to explore identity, intuition, and emotion.



By visualising inner narratives through expressive stitching, Nicole’s practice focuses on the intersection of movement, sports, and community.

Nicole’s technical approach often moves beyond the hoop to challenge the boundaries of the medium. In her piece *Tethered*, she collaborated with a local maker to develop a custom frame that allowed for a more expansive, structural approach to layered stitching.

This interest in unconventional surfaces is further explored in *She’s A Keeper*—a centrepiece of her OOF Gallery residency—where she hand-stitched directly into a football. Developed in collaboration with TOMME Studio, the work reimagines the ball as a bag, blending domestic craft with the ruggedness of sport.

These techniques trace back to Nicole’s initial return to football in 2019, when she began hand-embroidering directly onto her goalkeeper gloves. This act of blending her athletic and artistic worlds remains the foundation of her practice: a brash, tactile subversion of sport and tradition through the resistance of the needle.

SARAH-JOY FORD

Dr Sarah-Joy Ford is an artist and independent scholar working through quilting to explore the complexities and pleasures of lesbian and queer communities, histories and archives.



"The portraits featured in *For the Love of Textiles* depict the two rabbits that inspired my recent exhibition *Rabbit in Bury Art Museum*, my white rabbits: John and Peter. The first white rabbit arrived shortly after I was born in 1993. A Christmas present from Great Aunt Beatie and Great Aunty Nellie.

I was a sickly child forever throwing up; onto myself, my belongings and those around me. The White Rabbit was often victim to these unfortunate emissions. My parents hatched a plan and made the trip to Mothercare to acquire the second White Rabbit. A twin. For several years I believed there only to be one White Rabbit, The White Rabbit. But one sickly night I discovered the ruse and realised that my White Rabbit had a twin. Shadow rabbits sharing lives – waiting and working in shifts.

Once I knew, I refused for them to be parted. The white rabbits have followed me everywhere ever since. My constant companions, my comfort and joy – my instant route home. These works are a love letter to them, to intimacies beyond the human."

John and Peter were lovingly restored by artist Angela Maddock for the Bury Art Museum exhibition.

ZOE BOSWELL

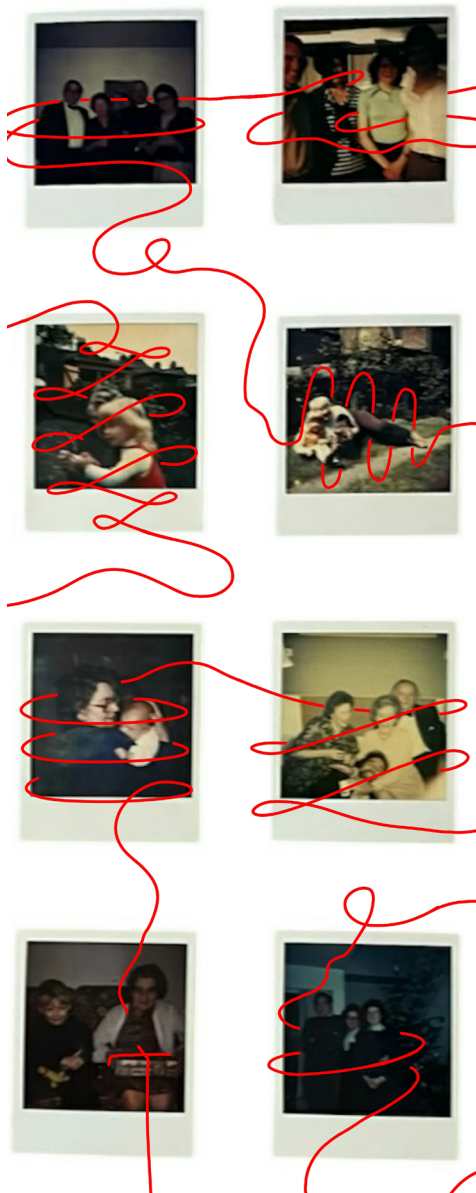
Zoe Boswell is a Leeds based artist working with contemporary embroidery as a fine art form. Her work aims to transform the mundane into works of art, employing vintage photographs, postcards, and everyday items.

20 Polaroids investigates the concept of love as a verb through the exploration of connection. In this work, Zoe utilises hand embroidery to stitch directly onto vintage polaroid photographs and canvas. The piece explores the different bonds of humankind, from romantic love, familial love, the love of an animal, a group of friends or coworkers.

The piece uses thread to depict one line connecting not just the people in each photograph, but linking all of the photographs to one another. The continuous chain stitch illustrates the invisible ties between friends and family, to the complete strangers featured in the other images.

1942-2024 is a personal piece of work for Zoe. After losing her grandad in late 2024, Zoe found herself starting 2025 by working through grief. Their relationship was one of laughter, filled with love and happiness.

The sad and smiley face illustrations recreated on the embroidered photograph were in found birthday and Christmas cards that Zoe had saved from her grandad, spanning the past 10-15 years.



ZINE LIBRARY

Curated through an open call for artists across the UK & Ireland.



AYESHA HEATON

A zine about grief and making

A zine memorialising Ayesha's partner Dan through collaged portraits.



AYFP & KITTY SHORT

Key / Candle / Bug

A pamphlet of hand-drawn cross-stitch motifs.



EILEEN MORLEY

Pedal: Keeping Time and Keeping Moving

A zine reflecting on Eileen's relationship with knitting and cycling.



IRIS STOVELL

Textile Tales

A zine looking at the political and radical history of textiles, interpreting them through a new eye.



JANE HOWROYD

Woad: A Year of Colour

The outcome of a year-long community project, exploring the creative and historic potential of woad.



KAT ROSE

Textiles for Change

A zine documenting Kat's collection of textile protest materials.



LEIGH BOWSER / DR JIEUN KIM

Amazing Blood Ties!

A book about blood donation, featuring stitched illustrations by Leigh Bowser.



LIFENG LIAO

In The Mood For Love

A pamphlet drawn from Lifeng's personal love diary: fragments of a relationship tracing emotional experiences, reflection and transformation.



LORNA JEWITT

A-Z Guide to Dressmaking

A reworked book on the confusing nature of learning to make clothing, featuring a series of complicated shapes and diagrams.



MEGIJA PUTRASEVICA

The heavy burden of a backpack

A zine featuring poetry exploring friends, family and childhood - the things we carry with us every day.



SHIH TING SUN

Wound

A zine developed through an encounter with a book on wounds, featuring collage, embroidery and found images.



WEEF

I Remember

A zine about the significant textiles in Weef's life.



WOE IS SHE

Labour of Love / [...]

pathy

Zines exploring the human condition, love, heartbreak, longing and romanticism through textiles and film photography.

EVENTS DURING THE EXHIBITION



Scan the QR code to visit our Eventbrite to book your tickets and see full event listings during the exhibition.

DROP-IN CRAFT ACTIVITIES

Create a declaration of self-love textile banner, an activity designed for all ages by artist Saba Siddiqui.

"I see declarations of self-love as opportunities to remind me what I already know and love about myself and the way I am, but can so easily forget."

FREE to drop-in during Gallery opening times.



THREADS TEXTILE FESTIVAL



Sunny Bank Mills' annual Threads Textile Festival is back for its fourth year on 16th & 17th May – celebrating textiles through a series of talks, workshops and a market featuring 50+ textile stalls each day.

GRENFELL MEMORIAL QUILT DROP-IN

Join Jane Thakoordin, an afternoon of quiet contemplation and creation to remember the 72 people who passed in the Grenfell fire.

Sat 16th May | 15:00 - 17:00 | FREE

PHOTO EMBROIDERY WORKSHOP

Join *For The Love Of Textiles* artist Zoe Boswell at Threads - learning to draw with thread to add meaning, colour, and pattern to photographs.

Sun 17th May | 13:30 - 15:30 | £30