

# katina gavalas —

## *in her threads*



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*In Her Threads* honours the strong women in my life, particularly my mother, sister, and both grandmothers, who became central figures after my father passed away when I was twelve years old. Their strength, creativity, and care continue to inspire me. This body of work transforms delicate, handcrafted heirlooms into symbols of resilience, paying tribute to the matriarchal legacy that shaped my identity and artistic voice.

My mother was a gifted and resourceful woman who made her own wedding dress as well as mine and my sister's. I hand-beaded both dresses. Growing up, we would choose images of dresses and she would create them. My sister inherited our mother's skills in embroidery and knitting, while I focused on design and sewing. Today, I sew for myself, my daughter, and my daughter-in-law.

My grandparents migrated from Greece to Australia in the early 1900s, bringing with them cherished embroidered heirlooms. Once used to decorate and protect furniture, these pieces are now integrated into my work to reflect cultural continuity, personal memory, and domestic ritual. By combining traditional embroidery with mass-produced fabrics, I explore the layered relationships that connect generations.

Through the printmaking techniques of collagraph, lino cut, and drypoint, I echo the textures and detail of these heirlooms. The act of cutting and scratching the plates mirrors the labour and love embedded in their creation. My use of wallpaper patterns, fabric, and stitch draws on childhood memories and my training in fashion design.

*In Her Threads* is a tribute to women's roles, rituals, and resilience. These works celebrate personal and cultural histories through the decoration of the female form, offering a space where tradition and identity are preserved and reimagined.