

Portrait of My Mother

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This quilt honours the life of my mother, Emilda Lobo (b.1937 -), who was born in India, raised in Singapore, educated in India and Scotland, and worked in the Middle East, Africa and South-East Asia before retiring to England.

It acts as a personal and public restitution, recognising the dignity, the value and the beauty of her life while acknowledging how the British Empire framed and shaped both her experiences and her mind. It marks some of the moments of violence that she encountered in a structurally racist and misogynist world and also honours those incidents of resistance that a woman of fierce spirit was forced into by the injustices of her lifetime.

Finally, this quilt alludes to the power of understanding and intergenerational healing through family, symbolised by my mother's home and her grandchildren whose love and joy is a legacy and an affirmation.

The fragmentary design draws on the tradition of Gee's Bend quilts and alludes to the partial nature of understanding, memory, history and portraiture itself.

