



Marita Brodie with one of her paintings.

## Brodie has hopes on locals

FIJI has some very talented artists but unfortunately they find it difficult to sell their products.

Marita Brodie, President of the Fiji Arts Club-Arts section says so because locals are not appreciative of art and find them expensive to buy.

"They would rather spend their money in the pubs then on a piece of art but if you actually add up all the money spent in a pub in a week or a month it could buy a piece of art," said Mrs Brodie.

Mrs Brodie of South Africa came to Fiji in 1979 with her husband Ross and children Shane and Tonya and have been here since.

She only became an artist four years ago and is unique in the sense that she produces her artwork in three dimensional sing leather.

This she said is just a hobby and she only sells it to buy

more materials for her works.

"I feel for the locals who are full time artists, who struggle to sell their paintings or artwork," said Mrs Brodie.

She said most buyers of art are tourists, expatriates but very few locals.

The only time artists get to exhibit their paintings is during the ANZ and Carlton Brewery art exhibitions.

During last year's art exhibition, three months after the coup, 48 artists exhibited.

This Mrs Brodie said was a good sign as some artists had already left the country by then.

Art materials in Fiji is very expensive, almost 100 percent more than Australia and New Zealand.

There are only three outlets in the capital city which sell art supplies- Suva Bookshop, Methodist Bookshop and Colormarket.

"But most of the time they run out of stock because they do not know the actual number of artists living in Fiji."

As for Mrs Brodie who uses leather for her work, she at times has to import them.

"My work is different, because you have to use the right piece of leather otherwise the outcome will be different," she said.

"And when I import it is usually expensive because of the numerous fees charged."

She said government could help local artists by waiving tax and duty on art materials.

"In overseas countries for example Vanuatu, they do not pay taxes or duties for art supplies, they buy the materials the same price in wherever it was imported from."