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Women's Weekly

Feature

# Woman of the Week

## MARITA BRODIE

BY SYLVIA MITCHELL

Marita Brodie originally from Africa migrated to Fiji in 1979 and called Fiji her home.

She was a hairdresser by profession but recently retired and has been known by many as an artist in which she does leather collages.

In another word pictures that have been done totally by leather from Fiji and abroad. A mother of two Marita came about this art totally by accident.

She went to the leather factory one day and saw these leather pieces in the most beautiful shades and happened to ask whether people thought these strips of leather.

She found out that it was usually wanted and decided that something should be done.

Thus the leather collages happened.

The first in the world, Marita has established a new use for these leather strips and has produced a hundred and nineteen collages, many of which have been sold or donated to places such as the Blind Society.

"When I first took a collage to the Blind Society

the children were absolutely thrilled. It was the first time they had ever seen a painting through the use of their hands. I still get goose bumps thinking about it," says Mrs Brodie.

This art is entirely self-taught and the idea is all



Marita.

The time and effort it takes to make these pictures is long and hard but it is absolutely worth it especially with the range and originality of pictures that are completed.

One of Marita's pictures dubbed "Dedication to Hugh and Joe" is a picture of a street with a lamp post protruding from the picture itself, with the famous Fiji Bitter Beer bottle alongside

the road.

Coming from an artistic family, Marita has grown in new heights in leather collages.

"When I looked at these pictures I could not help but be amazed at the simplicity and innocence these pictures represented.

Marita's collages are all hand made, every little detail is cut and pasted right down to the leaves on the trees.

Her collages are appealing and imitate in appearance and to the human eye, ravishingly beautiful.

"Every picture is original and no matter how much you try, you cannot duplicate a leather collage, leather does what it likes," explains Marita.

So you can be sure of the authenticity of these pictures.

The materials that are used to make these collages are mostly Fiji bred.

"From the cow to the grass it eats so the leather factory, everything comes from Fiji, every thing is born and bred in Fiji, so it is a Fiji product," says Marita.

Marita has a special gift and to use it, so products from Fiji has allowed many buyers from overseas the privilege to see what Fiji has to offer the world of art.



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