

*'I have known Martha for several years and have been impressed by her talent and dedication as a visual arts student. She has a keen interest in, and knowledge of art history and contemporary art, and I am confident that she will have a serious and productive career as an artist'.*

**Reg Mombassa** (Mental as Anything, Dog trumpet, Mambo illustrator.)

*Martha's songs are wistful narratives dressed in a beguiling, sophisticated and focused musicality that project an unaffected and refreshing sincerity.'*

**Nigel Westlake** (Composer, ARIA award winner, Miss Potter, Babe, Paper Planes)



I am both a songwriter and a landscape painter. I studied at the National Art School in Sydney, majoring in oil painting and won the drawing prize in my first year. I have performed regularly at AGNSW, MCA and other art spaces, I weave both art practices together in all I do.

Since 2016 I have been managing serious immune related health issues. Unfortunately this meant that I had to leave my studies just before completion and have since spent most of my twenties in and out of hospital. During this time I performed my music only when I was physically able. I worked on writing and recording my debut album 'Medicine Man' which features a 17 piece string section, and is now finished. I have also consistently focussed largely on my painting.

I have independently continued my visual art study whenever I can. I was invited to study one on one classes with with Euan Macleod.

I have attended short courses at NAS, and the Bret whitely studio and sketch every day.

I am frequently in touch with my old teachers from NAS who have kindly recommended recourses for me to continue my studies such as books and documentaries and to go sketching together. I am always striving to learn more.

I am currently working on writing and illustrating a children's stories project in collaboration with the legendary Australian composer Nigel Westlake.

I am also working towards a 'Works on Paper' exhibition at Annette Larkins Fine Art Gallery.

Essentially my art has been largely shaped by disability and the chronic pain which never leaves me. I paint to distill the essence of my experience of disability- and receive no greater pleasure than from simply sitting in the landscape, or being completely immersed and focused on a life model. In my art practise I am seeking to transcend my pain and inhabit the realm of my ideas. It is my expression and my meaning.

## **Education History**

### **Education: National Art School of Sydney**

#### **2019**

2014 - I studied a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Sydney's National Art School- receiving the drawing award in 2015. I received high distinction in Indigenous Art Studies, Printmaking and Drawing. I also did the Life Drawing course at the Brett Whitely Studio in 2019. (I frequently go to the National Art School life drawing club).

During my studies I took it upon myself to also study extra independent short courses at NAS these were:

2016- Contemporary watercolours with Gina Bruce

2015 - Ceramics course with Joseph Pertle

2015 - Etching course with Angus Fisher.

Before applying to Study at NAS I studied the 2012 - Life drawing course with Anthony Cahill.

In 2011 – I was personally invited to study as a student at the Sydney College of the Arts without needing to attend a formal interview after the head of painting viewed my work at their open day. I ended up studying at the National Art School where I was also accepted.

2011- I received a High Distinction in Visual Arts for Higher School certificate and passing with honours- my artwork was accepted for 'Art Express'. I was also chosen to give a talk at Hazlehurst regional Art Gallery and Centre.

2011- I received an ATAR of 94, taking English advanced and English extension, as well as history and history extension which I also received a High Distinctions for.

2011- I was my High Schools Vice Captain in year 12

2009- I topped my year in English for the year ten School Certificate.

### **Awards.**

2020- I received the Mayer institute quick response grant for continuing in my artist practice during Covid 19.

2020- received Australia Council and Create NSW grant to tour my debut album *Medicine Man* with a string quartet Nationally, with a focus on performing in accessible regional art galleries. We will be performing at artist studios such as Lucy Culliton studio.

2016 – I was awarded the Australia Council for the Arts and PPCA grant (for a recording my original songs with a 17 piece string ensemble (to be released later this year)

2014.- Drawing Award National Art School

2013- Finalist in the National Vanda and Young songwriting competition for original song 'Dust'.

2012.HSC visual arts final work selected for 'Art Express' Exhibition. The video that accompanied this project also won my High Schools 'V-Fest award.'

## Artistic Work

2020- I am currently working on a 'works on paper' exhibition for Annette Larkins Fine Art Gallery late 2020/early 2021. Covid permitting.

2020- In the process of writing and illustrating a body of children's stories with composer Nigel Westlake.

2020- August. A filmed performance at Phoenix Central Park art space with a string quartet.

2020- Working on a collaborative musical project with Chris Abrahams (from the Necks).

2020- Painted the album cover artwork for my debut album (of self-penned songs) recorded with a 17 piece string section. (This album 'Medicine Man' will be released in February 2021.

2015/2020- Independent painting workshops with Euan Macleod.

2019- I was asked to be the Artist in residence at Macquarie University.

2015/16- Independent painting workshops with Reg Mombassa

2016- Film project at the Cell block theatre of the National Art School of Sydney- filming two original songs with Paul Warren (Guy Warren's son) as part of the awareness of the importance of NAS.

2016- Artwork chosen by Dominik Mersch (Dominik Mersch Gallery) as part of 2016 Centenary Institute fundraiser in November.

2015- I sang and played my own arrangement of the 'Feels Like Home' campaign for Qantas. Randy Newman personally selected my version over the many well-established musicians, commenting that I '*meant it*, and made other people *feel it*'.

2015- I was personally selected for a Nationwide project of my own compositions touring Nationally with the Australian Youth Orchestra.

2014- I collaborated with Katie Noonan and others on the 'Songs that made me' tour with sold out concerts in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane.

Thank you for providing the opportunity of The Paddington Art Prize to Artists- I sincerely hope you are keeping well in these difficult times.

Warmest wishes,

Martha