

Welcome to the *"Beautiful and Strange"* launch by Fida Mohamad

My name is Fida and I am the volunteer artist for the MDSI art group. With the support of Sana and MSDI, I have been in this role for over 10 years and I hope to continue in this role for years to come.

It was like yesterday when I would drag my kids with me so I could participate in painting classes. Then gradually became the one guiding the art group. Every Friday we meet, we learn, we create and we laugh. Every woman that has walked through the door has a story to tell and a talent to share. Every woman is unique and inspiring. The art group has grown not just as an art group but we have made friends and even family...

I truly love Friday's. I cannot wait to see all the ladies and see what they will create.

At our end of year event, which is held here at the art centre, we seal off the year with a wild creation, for example, last year we had the crazy shoes theme. Every student had a pair of shoes, which they decorated. It is full of fun and laughs. By the time February comes round we are all having withdrawals and are eager to start.

There is no limit to what the art group can do. There is no right or wrong. The atmosphere is welcoming and relaxed, that is why we are able to create such amazing work.

Art runs through my veins and keeps me focused and I believe the women agree. I am very proud of each and every one of them. You all have worked so hard and now let the people of Campbelltown City and beyond see how talented you all are.

I would like to thank my dear friend Leila, who is also a volunteer artist, for all her hard work and support. You are greatly appreciated. I would like to thank Sana for all of her support and enthusiasm. Without your hard work we wouldn't be here. I would also like to thank Karin for her support during all the years and a big thank you to Campbelltown Arts Centre for holding this event. You guys rock.

Thank you to everyone for coming. Enjoy.