



A Creative Life

WORDS — BELINDA BRACALE

Mariana Mezic is one busy mama. Her instagram bio reads: 'mama, artist, she-wolf and part time unicorn'. She divides her time between a farm and a beach house with her super squad – husband Matt and their four kids Kiki (15), Polly (13), Felix (6) and Gracie (3). If that isn't busy enough, she's also responsible for three dogs, three cats and four horses. Oh, and she's the talented artist behind the Adelaide Cabaret Festival's 2018 artwork.

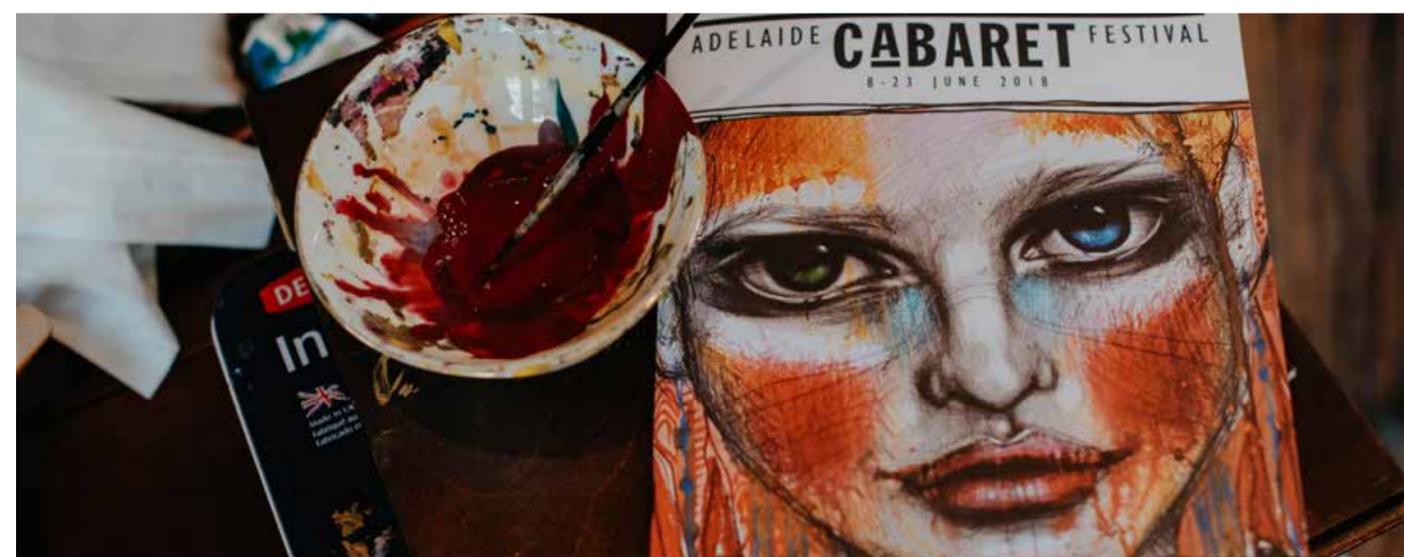


“The struggle is real at this end,” Mariana laughs. “Matt copes with the chaos far better than I do, he keeps a level head, I let my hot European blood takeover a lot!”

Coming from a large Croatian household, Mariana is all too familiar with chaotic and loud families. But when she fell pregnant at 30 with her first born, Kiki, the idea of parenting, or even having a big family, wasn't something she had planned.

“It was a happy possibility of perhaps ‘one day’ in my head. Then as the first two got older, the idea of a bustling household really appealed to me. When we moved to the hills we had two more because well, farm fresh air and no TV,” she laughs.

It wasn't long after the first two kids that Mariana started feeling the mum pressures of having it ‘all together’. However, over the 12-year age gap between the younger kids, she noticed the parenting landscape change.





In the spirit of juggling - and what mums do best - Mariana turns to her happy place - her art. It's a talent that gives her energy to be a stronger, happier woman, and often represents where she's at in her life.

"It's messy, it's colourful, it's crazy and intense. When I turn up to a white piece of paper, I'm not a mum or wife. I'm back to just me and I've found that so important to bring that back to mum life."

Inspired by life events, her artwork features fierce women as the hero - someone Mariana aspired to be. And something the Adelaide Cabaret Festival had their eye on.

"The divine Ali McGregor (director of Cabaret festival) found my work on Instagram. Her theme for the festival was eyes open, and when you view my work the eyes are the first thing that grab you," she explains.



"I feel I can be more honest and open about the struggles of motherhood now. Nobody was talking about that back then. I felt very alone, very isolated and no voice to be honest about how hard it all was," she admits.

"The climate is different these days. People are encouraged to openly discuss the trials and tribulations of parenthood. I mean, motherhood is a sloppy, icky, drippy, sleep-deprived mess of emotions and struggles - and the most beautiful, heavenly, heart-bursting, stunning journey you'll undertake."

And yes, the juggle is real.

"It's a constant juggle!" she exclaims. "One minute you're dealing with teenage dilemmas and dramas and the next, the 3 year old has lobbed a block at her brother's head."

"Dealing with a toddler and the constant demanding nature of them is polar opposites to dealing with the teens who go into themselves and become somewhat aloof. They do the eye rolling, suddenly have opinions and know it all."



"She kindly asked if I'd be up for doing a painting for them and I screamed YES! To go from hanging up loads of washing to presenting my work to a whole city is an absolute thrill to say the least."

Between the kids, farm and her artwork, it's easy to think Mariana 'does it all'. But she's quick to shut down that notion.

"Ha! By no means do I do it all. Something always suffers. Sometimes my motherhood suffers and I'm not nearly as present as I need to be and mother guilt kicks in. Sometimes my art suffers when I dive into motherhood and feel the pressure to be one of these baking/knitting/active supermums who have it all running smoothly. I struggle with balance and perhaps I always will."

"The only thing we have here in spades is love for each other and that's the only thing I will go into battle for, the rest is all a sloppy mess and I'm actually ok with that."

