



Cooking Up Some Art

By Nigel Brown, the Alchemist



Women's &
Children's Hospital
Foundation

SALA



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Nigel (aka the Alchemist) is a single father of two awesome boys, self-taught photographer, lover of science and willing student of life. He likes taking long walks in industrial areas (beaches are so last year), roasting tofu over an open fire, searching random haystacks for needles and dancing in hailstorms. Now, not all of that is true, and yet it epitomizes the man he is to the fullest. However, when it comes to creating art, that whimsical side melds with a serious and profound purpose.

"Having been in hospitals as both a patient and a father, I understand that they can be places of introspection, of worry and confusion. My work aims to give hope during these times through curiosity and the realisation that things are not always as they appear on the surface, inspiring people to re-examine what is possible when they look at life from a different point of view. The work itself is a series of bright colourful flowing abstracts that can be appreciated by children and adults alike. They are made from everyday household chemicals such as milk, oil, surface cleaners, detergents and so on. They resemble nothing like what you would expect from such boring utilitarian things and so I ask the question: What areas in your life, seemingly undesirable, can you transform to be something more?"



Image: *Bursting Through*



Image: *Velvet Vortex*

Nigel says his work was born from suffering severe depression. By experimenting with unconventional materials to create unworldly magical designs it has provided Nigel a gateway to a happier life -*"If I can provide that same gateway for just one kid doing it tough... I don't have the right words for what that would mean except to say... wow"*.

Nigel receives huge satisfaction exhibiting his artworks in hospitals, knowing that his art can in some small way help people who are suffering. *"The positive feedback he has received from a recent exhibition at Flinders Hospital fills me with joy and pride"*.

As well as creating and exhibiting, Nigel provides a service where businesses can hire his unique artworks for showrooms, office spaces or events.

To learn more about Nigel's art practice, visit: www.alchemist.net.au

Women's & Children's Hospital Foundation is pleased to recognise this exhibition for Mental Health Week 2020. This year the focus is Every Person, Every Community. Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. Let's take care of it together.



Image: detail of *In the Mix*

The Women's & Children's Hospital Foundation (WCH Foundation) raises funds in support of the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide, South Australia. The WCH Foundation is committed to ensuring that mums, children and their families have access to the very best in medical care, hospital facilities and support services at a time when they need it the most.

The WCH Foundation has developed a number of Arts in Health programs to integrate art into the life of the Hospital to improve people's health and wellbeing. We try to make the environment more 'child-friendly', making it look better and helping to make the time spent in hospital 'feel better'.

The Arts in Health program delivers a range of activities throughout the hospital across art forms such as: Visual Arts, Digital Media, Music and Performing Arts, Public Art, Literature and the Therapeutic Arts (Play Therapy, Art Therapy and Music Therapy). From providing pencils and colouring books in waiting areas, to managing Gallery spaces and art displays in the Hospital, collaborating with Hospital School on book week activities and working closely with the Play Therapy Team, the Arts in Health program delivers smiles and fun throughout the Hospital.

The WCH Foundation's Gallery program coordinates five galleries in the Hospital, providing a space away from the stresses of treatment to distract, entertain and inspire, improving the visual environment. The artworks displayed in the exhibition spaces come from a range of sources – internally from hospital staff, patients (women & children) and their families, through specific Arts in Health activities and externally from local artists and art collectives.

This exhibition was planned and exhibited on the lands of the Kaurna People, we pay our respects to the Kaurna Elders past and present and to the Elders of the lands this brochure reaches.

Cover image: detail of *River of Time*



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