

## **Matilda Nona**

### ***Biography & Artist CV***

Emerging as one of the most recognised and passionate multidisciplinary artists of Zenadth Kes/Torres Strait is *Matilda Nona* (1974). From Badu Island, hailing from the Tupmul (Spiny Butterfly Ray) clan, Nona is an exceptional and authoritative artist, as she imbues each work deeply in Culture, custom, history, and Lore. A mother of four, Nona lives and works on Badu Island and up until late 2023 was a member of Badu Art Centre.

Exuding a careful mastery of a number of traditional printmaking techniques, Nona works experimentally in this field; introducing unique pattern-making techniques in etching and monoprinting, and eco-dying in her other works on paper and textiles. In the footsteps of the many greats in Torres Strait linoprinting—with all luminaries of the school being male—Nona is a virtuoso with a pfeil, exacting intricate and immersive tableaux in her designs. Sometimes working large-scale, Nona is the only female artist to explore linocutting in such proportions. She has also ventured into bronze casting sculptural works, much like Alick Tipoti.

As a painter and weaver, Nona is famed for incorporating organic materials (such as traditionally-sourced ochres, sand and natural fibres) into such works—in ways where audiences can tangibly behold her's and her peoples' beloved land and sea, in the appreciation of her talent.

No matter the discipline employed by Nona, all her works are steeped in Women's Business (including themes of girlhood and womanhood) and maternity (including ceremony), as well as iconography drawing from the her peoples' land and sea ter-

ritories, including totemic animals, and depictions of the Cultural life and traditions of Badu Island.

In describing Nona, her agent, Jack Wilkie-Jans said, *“There’s something both comforting and unknowable about her strength... She’s a powerful presence to be close to—you know you’re with somebody who knows her Lore and has confidence in her practice (diverse and experimental as it sometimes is). She’s immensely joyful as well and this shows in the authenticity of her works and the generosity of how she shares with her audiences”*.

In Nona’s own words, *“Since around 2014, I’d been putting my artistic expertise to work. I’ve always had a creative mind, but earlier I had no time to explore this being a single parent. I’m excited to now be recognised in the contemporary Indigenous art sector and I still love working with other Badu Island artists, even now I work independently from the art centre.”*

Without question, Matilda Nona is one of the most exciting and collectible artists of her generation. She’s an artist who epitomises drives of love for her people and Country, and great respect for their collective ways of life and spirituality.

Tarnanthi Art Fair (online)	2023
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair	2023
Cairns Indigenous Art Fair	2023
Winds of Zenadth Kes	2023
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (online)	2022
Cairns Indigenous Art Fair	2022
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (online)	2021
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (online)	2021
Sydney Contemporary	2019
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair	2019
Cairns Indigenous Art Fair	2019
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair	2018

Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award	2018
Cairns Indigenous Art Fair	2018
<i>Dhibadhib</i> Touring Exhibition, Cairns Indigenous Art Fair	2018
<i>Badhu Koewbu Gidhal: Stories of the war from Badu Island</i>	
Australian War Memorial	2017
<i>Sageraw Thonar – Stories from the Southeasterly</i>	
<i>Season: Contemporary Expressions of Cultural Knowledge</i>	
from Badu Art Centre, KickArts	2017
<i>Sageraw Thonar – Stories from the Southeasterly</i>	
<i>Season: Contemporary Expressions of Cultural Knowledge</i>	
from Badu Art Centre, Australian Parliament House	2017
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair	2016
<i>World War II: Badu Stories</i> , Australian War Memorial	2016
Sydney Contemporary (KickArts)	2015
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair	2015
Cairns Indigenous Art Fair	2015
Gab Titui Indigenous Art Awards	2015
<i>My Island Home — Artists of Badu Island</i> ,	
Mossenson Galleries	2015
Cairns Indigenous Art Fair	2014

## **Collections**

Museum of Contemporary Art

Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra, ACT

## **Awards**

Winner, Best 2D Work — Gub Titui Indigenous Art Awards, 2023

Winner, People's Choice Award — King & Wood Mallesons First Nations Art Award, 2023