



1976 East German escapee at New Pacific Studio

Artist catches essence of Eketahuna

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A woman who escaped East Germany during the cold war hidden in the boot of a car with her infant son has been taking a very deep interest in Eketahuna.

Artist Marina Pruffer has been casually traversing the town, or sitting in a quiet corner of a cafe or the library with her sketch book capturing the mood of the town and the people who live there.

She is furthering her studies at the New Pacific Studio at Mt Bruce completing an artist's journey from the Berlin Wall to Masterton where she will do 10-minute informal sketches for \$40 each at Aratoi on Thursday, January 29 and Saturday, January 31, from 10.30am to 2.30pm.

People wanting one of Marina's unique, signed sketches can book a sitting by phoning (06) 370 0001. Marina believes art helps people and nations in their search for

identity and that "we are all responsible for our history". "I run a programme for young urban people called Art Instead of Violence "Wherever you live the arts can provide you with opportunities for growing, exploring and learning. "You can gain insight into yourself and your past - with all its positives and negatives - and be inspired with courage to create a better future."

"It was only after the wall fell that I really began to understand where my roots were."

Marina demonstrated she had plenty of personal courage in 1976 when the Cold War was in full swing.

She escaped from East Germany in the boot of an Opel Ascona with her 4-year-old son Ronald. If she had been caught "they would have taken my son away and put me in prison for several years".

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

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From 1992 to 1996 she put her graphic skills to work in the law courts, recording law suits against the former East German head of state Erich Honecker and his political cronies.

Her lightning, on-site drawings, collages, cuttings and comments are now recorded in nine leather-bound workbooks.

During her month at New Pacific Studios Marina is putting her skills to use meeting and recording people in everyday life in Tararua, Masterton and Wellington.

TOP: GERMAN graphic artist Marina Pruffer deep in conversation with Mike Lings whom she decided to sketch.

RIGHT: THE end result of Marina and Mike's encounter, a lifelike sketch.

PHOTOS: LYNDA FERINGA

