



Asialink is an initiative of the Myer Foundation and a centre of the University of Melbourne, dedicated to forging lasting networks between Australia and Asia.

MEDIA ALERT

Monday, September 29, 2008

Ta Teut Amarasi - Awakening West Timor textiles and print exhibit to tour Melbourne

Australians know little about their West Timorese neighbours but a couple of Australian artists from the Northern Territory have been working on an Asialink project in collaboration with a community of artists from this island in Eastern Indonesia.

Sanggar Uim Nima is a collective of textile artists from Nusa Tenggara Timur and masters of weaving and natural dying techniques. However, like many small communities, the tug of the city for its young artists combined with difficulty competing with mass-market techniques makes it difficult to sustain this arts community.

In 2007 Australian artists Winsome Jobling and Leon Stainer travelling to West Timor to impart their skills – fine paper and print-making. What ensued was a new form of art production for the West Timorese, whose weaving traditions are strongly apparent in the series of prints that were created, but surprisingly old community cultures also made a resurgence. One was the ‘malak’. Historically strategic leadership in wars in west Timor was provided by Fetors, ministers of the Raja. Each Fetor had a mark which was used to brand cattle and incised on trees to establish land boundaries, and as a seal on significant documents. These marks were stylistic characters known as ‘malak’ - now revived through the new print-making process introduced to the community through workshops.

Asialink’s Eastern Indonesia – Northern Territory Partnership Program Coordinator Sarah Robins says, “Ta Teut Amarasi is the result of cultural exchange conducted in Eastern Indonesia over the past two years. The response to this exhibition at the Darwin Festival was phenomenal and we are thrilled to present the show in Melbourne before touring it to West Timor later in the year. We believe the relationships established through this program have enormous long-term potential for the artists involved.”

Ta Teut Amarasi - Awakening
Launch: October 7, 6-8pm

at Sofitel Melbourne on Collins
Sofi’s Lounge, Level 1, 25 Collins St, Melbourne
19 September – 24 October

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