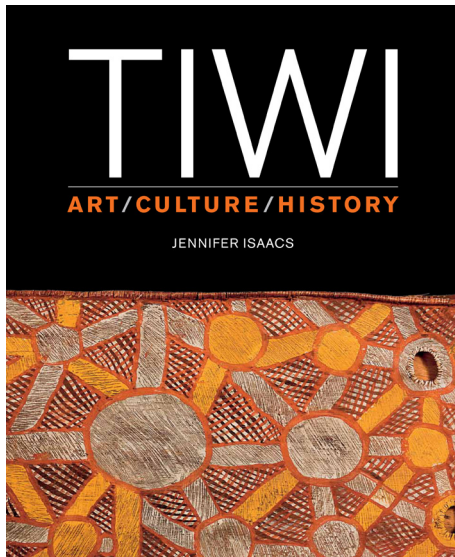


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Jennifer Isaacs will be available for interview throughout December.

For more information please contact **Olivia Blake** at MUP on 03 9342 0322 or 0406 998 030, or email oblake@unimelb.edu.au

TIWI Art. History. Culture.

by Jennifer Isaacs

The carved and painted Pukumani poles throughout the forests of Bathurst and Melville Islands, the land of the Tiwi people, have inspired Australian collectors, curators and artists for a century. Tiwi culture, history and traditional stories are vividly expressed through lines, patterns and colours, in carvings, and in their modern paintings, prints on paper and fabric, and pottery.

Tiwi is the remarkable story of the development of artistic expression on the Tiwi Islands and of the history and culture of the Tiwi people. Courageous and determined, for centuries the Tiwi held off intruders. The British briefly established a trading fort in the 1820s, but could not survive the isolated location and the intransigence of the Tiwi, and so departed. Then in 1911 a lone priest came ashore and, with a mission established and English education beginning, the Tiwi world began to change. The art forms were so astounding that ethnographers followed immediately and were succeeded by curators and collectors in the mid twentieth century, providing some of the spectacular, idiosyncratic carvings and bark paintings published here from Australian museum collections.

This is the first complete volume to bring together the strands of Tiwi history and cultural expression and provide the context for contemporary Tiwi art. It is a major contribution to understanding the Tiwi as a unique regional Australian cultural group, the Indigenous nation of the Tiwi Islands.

Descriptions of ceremonial arts, rare historical photographs, biographies of the artists, as well as actual historical events are interwoven with more than 800 images obtained through more than five years of research in public and private collections of art and imagery. *Tiwi* stands as a monument to Tiwi people and their current endeavours to 'keep Tiwi culture strong'.

Jennifer Isaacs is a prominent Australian writer, art consultant and independent curator. A pioneer in championing respect for Aboriginal culture, she is the author of seminal books on Aboriginal art, religion, plant use, food, medicine and oral history. In 2003 she was made a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of her work promoting Aboriginal culture and assisting Aboriginal artists. She has maintained a close association with Tiwi families and elders for more than forty years.

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