

Master of NOKEN Plaiting

Introducing another West Papuan Artist, Ms. Albertina Doropia

by Charles Roring

Two days ago, I visited a West Papuan artist who is an expert in Noken plaiting. Noken is a traditional Papuan bag. It is made manually of plant fiber or nylon strings. Every tribe in West Papua has his own motifs and plaiting styles. She is Albertina Doropia. Her neighbors usually call her Mama Doropia. She makes noken everyday. The nokens are sold in the market. It takes one week to make a nylon string noken. But if the material is of natural fibers, she needs around one month to make it beginning from cutting pandanus leafs, making the strings to plaiting the bag.

When I asked how she got the skill on noken plaiting she said that it came naturally into her mind. "I didn't study from anybody. I got it from my brain," she said. Ms. Doropia also teaches her relatives, Martina Pikey and Meliana Tekege. Although she has been making noken since 1987, she cannot sell a lot of noken. She has never received incentives, training or capital loan from the government. This widow works hard to support her family. Her husband passed away several years ago.

Ms. Albertina Doropia lives around two hundred meters behind the Roman Catholic Cathedral, Santo Agustinus in Manokwari, West Papua. When you visit Manokwari, don't forget to drop in at her house to buy some souvenirs she made.

If you are interested to buy her products, you can contact her daughter, who is now studying agriculture in Papua University, Veronika Doropia at her mobile phone: 085244761096

If you visit or know someone who wants to visit Manokwari, please, don't forget to drop by at her address which is behind the Catholic church, to buy some of her artworks :

Ms. Albertina Doropia
Jl. Brawijaya,
Belakang Gereja Katolik Katedral Santo Agustinus
Manokwari
Provinsi Papua Barat
Republik Indonesia

Please forward this article to those who are interested in supporting West Papuan people economically.

More artist profiles can be seen at
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Ms. Albertina Doropia was showing how to make a Noken, the famous Papuan bag.



A string bag with the Papua New Guinea flag



Another one ornamented with TIFA, the traditional Papuan drum