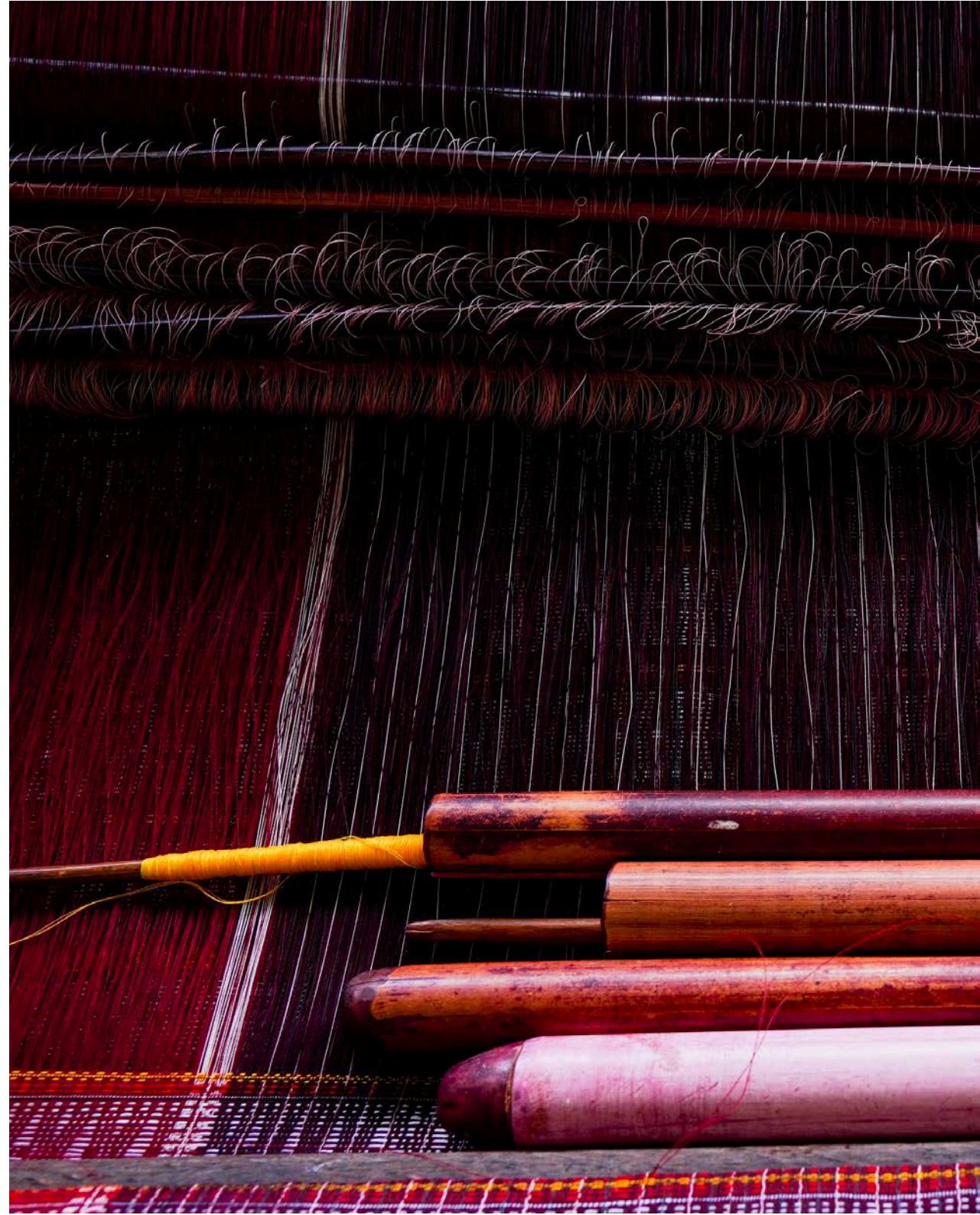


INVISIBLE MAESTRO

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

28 AUGUST - 18 OCTOBER
AUSTRALIAN TAPESTRY WORKSHOP



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WORKSHOP

CREATIVE VICTORIA



PROJECT
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Invisible Maestro showcases traditional handwoven tapestries created by three ulos weavers from Lake Toba, North Sumatra, Indonesia: Hirim Samosir, Anna Lince Siahaan, and Mastiar Nababan. Ulos is the traditional woven fabric of the Batak people, used in cultural and ceremonial events. The colours and patterns of the fabric signify different meanings and are often passed down to generations of Batak weaver women.

Hirim Boru Samosir belongs to the last generation of weavers from Parbotihan, Onan Ganjang, Humbang Hasundutan. Through her weaving, she has successfully supported her children's education and sent them to college. Now that her children have graduated and with the rising difficulty of purchasing yarn, she has begun to reduce her weaving activities.

Anna Lince Siahaan, a weaver from Meat village in Tampahan, Toba Regency, North Sumatra, has been practicing her craft since the age of 13. She left school to focus on weaving to fund her younger siblings' education. She continues to weave today and has chosen not to marry.

Mastiar Nababan, a weaver from Meat village in Tampahan, Toba Regency, North Sumatra, began her weaving journey after marrying and relocating to her husband's village, where weaving is a common practice among housewives. Initially, she took up weaving to support her children's education, but she soon developed a deep passion for the craft, feeling grateful for her talent and ancestral heritage. Mastiar has a daughter whom she is teaching her weaving skills, with the hope that she will one day continue the family tradition as her successor.

The three weavers present six types of Ulos including Ragi Hotang, an Ulos used in wedding ceremonies presented by the bride's family to the bride and groom. Sibolang is used in funeral ceremonies. Mangiring is used in ceremonies and significant formal events such as entering a new Batak home. Simarimjam Sisi is worn at ceremonies by upstanding members of the Batak community, its pattern and colours emphasise the wearer's identity and status. Bintang Maratur is an Ulos presented to new mothers and often used in birth and baptism ceremonies.

Alongside the three Batak women's works, Dian Aprilia, a textile artist based in Yogyakarta, presents a collage of Ulos fabrics. Dian's figure is a depiction of a dance pose at a celebration using Ulos Ragidup (a traditional Batak cloth worn for ceremonies or festivals). In creating her work, Dian adopts one of the stages in the sewing process: making patterns. This stage includes elements such as sketching, measuring, cutting, and composing the objects to be worked on. These steps determine important aspects like material, texture, and colour to support a composition. Through this project, Dian realises that she shares a similarity with the Ulos weavers, namely supporting her family through her sewing practice.

Through the photo and video documentation of Indonesian photographer Dewie Bukit, this exhibition highlights the lives of Batak women devoted to the loom. These weavers not only preserve their cultural heritage but also are the primary supporters of their families and communities. Since 2017, Dewie Bukit has been researching the Ulos weaving tradition, developing relationships with the Batak weavers, and supporting them in finding sustainable economic practices for their craft.

The Ulos Making Process

Mangani.

Organising or arranging the yarn, each strand is stretched lengthwise on the anian frame—crafted from wood and bamboo, with planks that can be adjusted as desired. The yarn is then wound, thread by thread, to create the base for the patterns.

Manotar.

After the mangani process, the finished base is carefully combed and straightened to align the fibers, ensuring a smooth, even flow during the weaving process.

The actual weaving process, **Martonun.**

The process involves interlacing the threads into a piece of fabric with a variety of intricate motifs or ornamental varieties. The time required to complete each piece varies, depending on the size and complexity of the patterns and shapes.

The Martonun process involves various tools that make up the whole weaving device:

- a. Pagabe
- b. Panggiunan
- c. Lidi
- d. Hatulungan or turak bambu
- e. Pamunggun

They serve the purpose of holding, separating and weaving the threads together; the construction of the weaving tool incorporates seating elements that make sure the weaver is sitting upright, allowing the weaver to maintain control and precision as each thread is woven.





1. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Unfinished Ulos (dark red), 2024
Handwoven cotton
100 x 72 cm
\$295



2. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Unfinished Ulos (bright red), 2024
Handwoven cotton
153 x 62 cm
\$350



3. Hirim Samosir
Mangiring (red with Sirat writing: "Horas Jala Gabe"
[Greetings to wish someone well]), 2024
Handwoven cotton
148 x 67 cm
\$380



4. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (red, white and yellow highlights), 2024
Handwoven cotton
198 x 88 cm
\$440



5. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (deep red, yellow and white), 2024
Handwoven cotton
203 x 87 cm
\$440



6. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (red and gold with bead trimmings), 2024
Handwoven cotton
209 x 75 cm
\$440



7. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (yellow and white), 2024
Handwoven cotton
213 x 90 cm
\$440



8. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (multicolour), 2024
Handwoven cotton
208 x 87 cm
\$460



9. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (gold), 2024
Handwoven cotton
191 x 87 cm
\$440



10. Hirim Samosir
Mangiring (with Sirat writing), 2024
Handwoven cotton
156 x 43 cm
\$295



11. Mastiar Nababan
Simarinjam Sisi, 2024
handwoven cotton
176 x 65 cm
\$380



12. Hirim Samosir
Bintang Maratur (green), 2024
Handwoven cotton
147 x 47 cm
\$350



13. Anna Lince Siahaan
Sibolang, 2024
Handwoven cotton
168 x 48 cm
\$350



14. Dian Aprilia
Di Pesta, 2024
Fabric collage
182 x 92 cm
\$1200



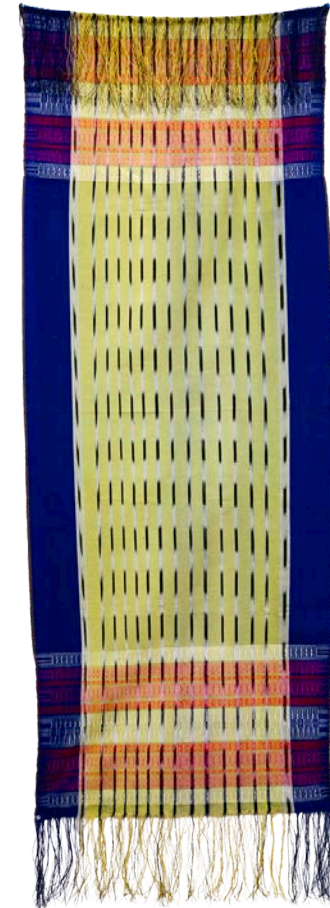
15. Hirim Samosir
Mangiring (red tassel), 2024
Handwoven cotton
153 x 43 cm
\$295



16. Hirim Samosir
Bintang Maratur (yellow), 2024
Handwoven cotton
146 x 46 cm
\$350



17. Hirim Samosir
Mangiring (with Sirat writing: "Horas Jala Gabe"
[Greetings to wish someone well]), 2024
Handwoven cotton
153 x 75 cm
\$380



18. Anna Lince Siahaan
Sibolang, 2024
Handwoven cotton
161 x 51 cm
\$380



19. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (with tassels tied), 2024
Handwoven cotton
200 x 86 cm
\$440



20. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (green and gold), 2024
Handwoven cotton
200 x 76 cm
\$440



21. Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Ragi Hotang (white), 2024
Handwoven cotton
217 x 85 cm
\$440



22. Hirim Samosir, Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Naturally dyed Ulos (pink), 2024
Handwoven cotton dyed with Sappanwood/Brazil wood
162 x 65 cm
\$295



23. Hirim Samosir, Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Naturally dyed Ulos (yellow), 2024
Handwoven cotton dyed with peppermint gum leaves
162 x 65 cm
\$295



24. Hirim Samosir, Mastiar Nababan and Anna Lince Siahaan
Naturally dyed Ulos (teal), 2024
Handwoven cotton dyed with silver wattle over natural indigo
200 x 81 cm
\$295

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