



Media Release:

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MAGNT Supports Alola Foundation

The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) is lending a helping hand to the Alola Foundation for their upcoming forum, market and exhibition focused on the traditional Timorese textile, *tais*, at St Kilda Town Hall, Melbourne.

MAGNT Curator of Southeast Asian Art, Joanna Barrkman has been invited to speak at the forum on Saturday 6 September and will discuss the Timor-Leste textiles in the MAGNT collections, one of the most extensive collection of Timorese textiles in the world, that will soon be on display as part of the *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hand of our Ancestors* at the MAGNT.

“Traditionally *tais* were markers of identity and social status and were used for trading with other commodities, they were often exchanged at times of birth, marriage and death to strengthen clan alliances, but today *tais* are a popular form of gift to honour guests,” Ms Barrkman said.

“Many Timorese seek opportunities to create and sell *tais* as a means of economic development and it is anticipated that markets and exhibitions such as the Alola Foundation’s Timor Leste Textile Exhibition and the MAGNT international exhibition *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hand of our Ancestors* will assist to raise the profile of Timor-Leste’s *tais* and promote these wonderful textiles and craft of Timor-Leste.”

The MAGNT *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hand of our Ancestors* exhibition features several *tais* of extremely high quality produced in recent years.

The Alola Foundation, chaired by Kirsty Sword Gusmao (former first lady of Timor Leste), was originally created to raise awareness of the widespread sexual violence against women and girls in Timor Leste during the militia attacks of September 1999.

While still a key issue, today the Alola Foundation also provides a wide range of vitally important hands-on support for the women and children of Timor-Leste.

Ms Barrkman said the weavers who provide textiles to the Alola Foundation Shop in Dili, Timor Leste, make superior quality textiles, and the MAGNT Shop will stock *tais* and other crafts made by Alola and Timor Leste’s craftspeople during the exhibition in Darwin.

The Alola Foundation’s Timor Leste Textiles Exhibition, Forum and Market is on at the St Kilda Town Hall and The Gallery, 99A Carlisle Street, St Kilda from Wednesday 3rd September to Tuesday 30 September.

Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of our Ancestors opens at the MAGNT on 21 November 2008.

Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of our Ancestors
Arte no artesantu Timor-Leste - The art and craft of Timor-Leste

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Joanna Barrkman on 0408 833 892

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