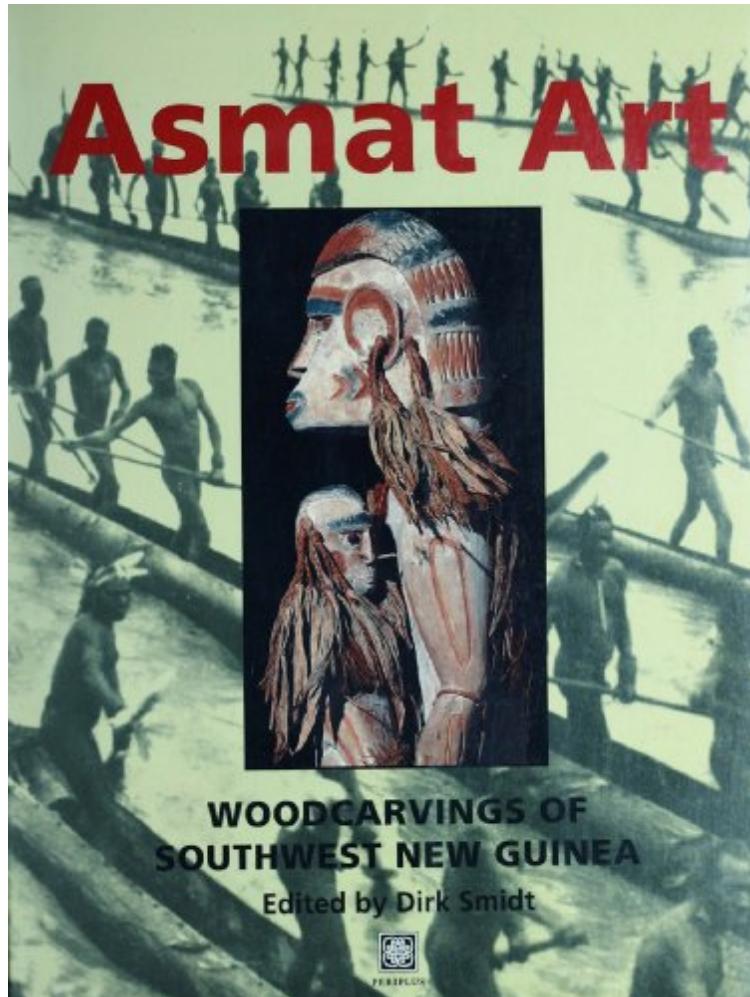


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Asmat Art: Woodcarvings of Southwest New Guinea

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0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful bookBy MNredWonderful book if ;you like Asmat Art.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Review of Asmat woodcarving art (West Papua/Irian Jaya)By James I. ColeHardcover Softcover with flaps, 12" x 9", 160 pages, 160 color photos of objects, 53 mostly b/w field photos. 1 x general map, 2 x very small regional maps. numerous figures of Asmat motifs. Bibliography. Edited by Dirk Smidt. Contributions by Adrian Gerbrands, Gérard A. Zegwaard, Gunter Ursula Konrad, René Wassing. Published by Periplus Editions and the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden in association with C. Zwartenkot, Amsterdam, 1993, Paperback 1999.A wonderful book on the woodcarvings of the Asmat in West Papua (aka Irian Jaya.) Includes mask costumes, shields, figure sculptures, Bisj sculptures, large carvings, drums, and canoe prows. A well-written and precise text in English throughout. The book contains excellent examples of Asmat art, and a nice

selection of field photographs featuring the peoples and places which created the art. See also : Time and Tide: The Changing Art of the Asmat of New Guinea Asmat: Myth and Ritual the Inspiration of Art. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. AWESOME! By Titanium Chef Very cool. One of the best books on the topic.

Asmat Art features the world renowned woodcarvings of the Asmat, former head-hunters who live in the western half of New Guinea. This book presents a full range of Asmat woodcarving art, but emphasizes the rare early shields and figure sculptures. Drums, canoe prowheads and the larger, more dramatic "objects" are also shown. Together with bisj poles, war shields are perhaps the most famous creation of Asmat artists, and these were carved throughout the region. It is in the design and construction of the shields that the variations in style region can most clearly be seen. Figure sculptures, of varying styles, are also well represented here, and a limited number of the huge ceremonial carvings, such as bisj poles and basu suangkus, have also been included. The cultural context in which these items play their part is described in detail in the introductory chapters. But it is not the intention of this book to be an ethnography. The focus is on the art pieces themselves.

From Publishers Weekly The elaborate woodcarvings of the Asmat, who inhabit western New Guinea's coastal swamps, make the spirit world tangible. Head-hunting--practiced until the early 1960s--and ancestor worship figure prominently in this fierce people's intricate art. Spectacular, phallic bisj poles depicting human figures one above the other embody Asmat warriors' promise to avenge the deaths of the people carved into the pole. Abstract motifs on war shields symbolize deceased relatives; the Asmat believe these shields give warriors supernatural support in battle. Canoe prowheads, paddles, figure sculptures, eerie mask costumes and "soulships" carrying spirit passengers all reflect the Asmat preoccupation with the netherworld. Smidt, a curator at the Netherlands' National Museum of Ethnography, leads a team of scholars, collectors and anthropologists in ably discussing Dutch colonial contacts, Asmat festivals, religion and motifs. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.