



Tivaivai: The Social Fabric of the Cook Islands (Artistic Traditions in World Cultures)

Andrea Eimke, Susanne Kuchler

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Quilts generically known as tivaivai have been produced by women in the Cook Islands, the Hawaiian Islands, the Society Islands and elsewhere in Eastern Polynesia since the late 19th century, where they were a substitute for bark-cloth but also used in ways deeply invested in the new context of Christian domesticity. In the Cook Islands, quilts are stitched to be given away at funerals, at weddings and other events marking stages of loss and severance in the life of a person. Although often kept for years in trunks far away from the homeland as a result of the migrant diaspora, the quilt and its threads connect those who have been parted. Written from both an anthropological and an artistic perspective, this book examines the visual and cultural characteristics that have made the Polynesian quilt one of the most stunning and captivating art-forms to emerge from the Pacific. It also offers a glimpse into the role played by fabric in the history of contact with Europeans although both traditions shared a common preoccupation with clothing, their understanding could not have been more different. Illustrated in colour throughout, with many specially commissioned photographs, the book will provide not only a unique insight into a culturally rich tradition but a visual feast to inspire both the quilt enthusiast and those interested in the broader field of fabric and textile design.

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