



TRIBAL CUT



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• CRAFT/PROFESSION

Marjorie TIAOU is a sculptor in wood. A native of the Lékinéy Tribe in the island of Ouvéa, she comes from a family famed for their wood sculptures. Marjorie's woods of choice for her large scale works are gaïac and rare local island woods such as sandalwood, and buni (the "chiefdom" wood only found in Ouvéa).

Marjorie masters all stages of sculpture in wood with virtuoso skill: seeking out and cutting to size windblown wood, making it ready for work (cleaning, peeling off the bark, sanding to remove fibres and sap), making a pencil drawing of the design, trimming off all surplus wood and finally using a grindstone and ever finer sandpaper to achieve a perfectly smooth finish.

The final stage involves carving all the fine detail using specialist wood chisels. The artwork then undergoes a last, extremely meticulous manual sanding before a colourless wax is applied to give it a subtle patina.

BACKGROUND

Marjorie was only 10 years old when her parents taught her how to make her first woodcarvings. She did a course in hospitality and catering and then studied gourmet cookery, but she always felt herself drawn back to woodcarving and finally decided to devote herself to it fulltime.

She has now worked as a professional sculptor in wood for 7 years and creates works to order or for exhibition.

You can view her work at her studio in Ouvéa, and also at local cultural events and festivals such as the Lagoon Fair, the Taro Fair and the Walei Fair, or at trade shows held in New Caledonia.

INSPIRATION AND ART/DESIGNS

Many of her artworks are adorned with symbols and emblems inspired by Kanak art but she is also drawn to nature.

"Nature is a key source of inspiration but I'm also very aware of other people and their ideas, something which leads me to work various other themes into my work", explains Marjorie.

