

# SEARCHING FOR MOLAS

COLLECTORS DONNA AND MARK MORAN  
VISIT THE SAN BLAS ISLANDS



The two of us are dropped off at this remote airport. At first there was not a person in sight. This was the start of our journey in search of molas.



We were transported by dugout to Dolphin Island a small island behind the airport.



This bamboo hut was our home for four days. It contained two beds, a stand, and a kerosene lamp.



There were hammocks stretched between palm trees in front of our hut. We enjoyed the leisure they invited.



The Cunas live at water's edge on very small & beautiful islands.



This is a view of some of their homes.



Mark particularly liked the hammock in the shade of our hut.



We had our meals in this dining hall. The Cunas served us graciously. It was a comfortable situation even though they spoke little English and we spoke neither Cuna nor Spanish.



This is a view from within the island village.



On the left is the local grocery store. The store to the right is where the mola makers buy their sewing supplies.



This is a repair shop for small boat motors.



The school serves children from many of the small islands.



Chief Jeronimo and his sons huddle in order to decide which island we would be visiting next.



These are the Chief's grandsons. The toucan is their pet.



We also met the Chief's wife and her sister.



Animals roam the village freely.



This is Chief Jeronimo's daughter.



We saw molas that we liked very much and began to make purchases. The Chief's macaw seemed curious. It repeatedly found its way into our hut, as if to examine our selections.



Here Chief Jeronimo is piloting Mark to a snorkeling expedition site.



The Chief's son, Horateo, brings Donna to nearby Aligands to find more molas.



This is the local bank.



Of course swimming is a favorite pastime in the San Blas Islands.



This mola depicting the crucifixion has become part of our exhibition collection. The street in the background is typical of the kind found in the larger villages.



When visitors show up in the villages, the word quickly spreads and the Cunas hang their molas on fences. Here a teenager displays her novice skills. We were charmed. Her piece is now in our collection.



This young Cuna woman proudly shows a blouse which she helped to make.



The Cunas are a happy and loving people. Because they are also petite of stature, their blouses are generally quite small.



Our mission is accomplished and our stay has come to an end. The locals come to the airport to see us off. What a wonderfully interesting and rich experience this has been!