

## ***Alick Tipoti***

**Language: Kala Lagaw Ya**

Born in 1975 on Waiben (Thursday Island), Baduliag man Alick Tipoti became interested in art at a very early age. After initial training at the Thursday Island TAFE College, he graduated in Visual Arts at the Australian National University, Canberra. He started making prints in 1990 and is now one of the most prominent Torres Strait Islander printmakers.

Tipoti draws on the cultural traditions of his people, the Badu of the western Torres Strait, to compose the linoprints for which he is primarily known. Central to his creativity is his relationship to the Zugubal (ancestors) that directly inform his work, their words being translated into elaborate imagery. His work can be seen as preserving and documenting Torres Strait Islander culture for future generations.

Tipoti has made prints up to five metres long, the size of each corresponding to the level of detail he wishes to incorporate and the scale of the epic he seeks to interpret. Many of the larger prints present a series of scenes and figures that move the narrative across the entire print toward conclusion.

Since 1993 Tipoti's work has been included in national and international group exhibitions including the 9th Pacific Arts Festival, Belau National Museum, Palau; Out of Country, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Museum, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA (2004); and Islands in the Sun, Cairns Regional Gallery, Queensland (2000). He held his first solo exhibition at Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, in 2007; others followed in other states as well as at the Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London, in 2008.

Tipoti won the Shell Fremantle Print Award in 2001 and the 20th and 24th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award "Work on Paper" award in 2003 and 2007. In 2008 he won the inaugural Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award and the Slik Cut Award for linocut prints, the Non-Acquisitive Prize at the Fremantle Print Award and the People's Choice Award at the 25th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award.

His work is represented in the collections of the Cambridge University Museum and the British Museum, United Kingdom, and in various Australian national and regional galleries, including the National Gallery of Australia and the National Museum of Australia in Canberra, the Queensland Art Gallery and the Cairns Regional Gallery, Queensland.

(Author: Carly Lane)