

# Paradise @ Salon Rouge April 3- May 30, 2010



## Siv Grava

'I didn't quite know how to approach my experience of Vanuatu through paint. My first sailing experience and my first exposure of South Pacific islander culture.

These paintings represent the evolution over time of the process of coming to grips with this very foreign culture.

**Above ; Flower One Oil on canvas approx 35 x 60 cm.....\$450**

**Below; Ginger Plant flower Oil on canvas 60 x 70cm .....\$1,000**

How do you approach that landscape through paint? - from the sea much of the land could be north Queensland. The culture was new and rich and exciting to experience - but I had barely skimmed the surface and some of my early attempts with figures looked a bit thin.

We had visited the Port Vila museum. I had been fascinated by images of Lapita Pottery - the pottery that had come over the seas with the first inhabitants of Vanuatu. Over time the community had lost the ability to make the pottery - found now only in archaeological digs. I found this loss of a skill over time really interesting.

So I decided to see if I could run the patterning from the Lapita pottery through my paintings of Vanuatu in an attempt to put the landscape firmly into a local context.

Over time this evolved further - some of the patternings became less about the Lapita pottery and more to do with my own personal symbols. The paintings becoming more about me and my experience of the foreignness rather than intrinsic to the place itself.

The other influence in these paintings is a subsequent longer sailing trip. It is an interesting perspective - to view the world from a yacht. The view point is always at sea level. You are faced with an outsiders view - from a distance. This was especially apparent in Vanuatu - when the view seemed uninhabited, yet



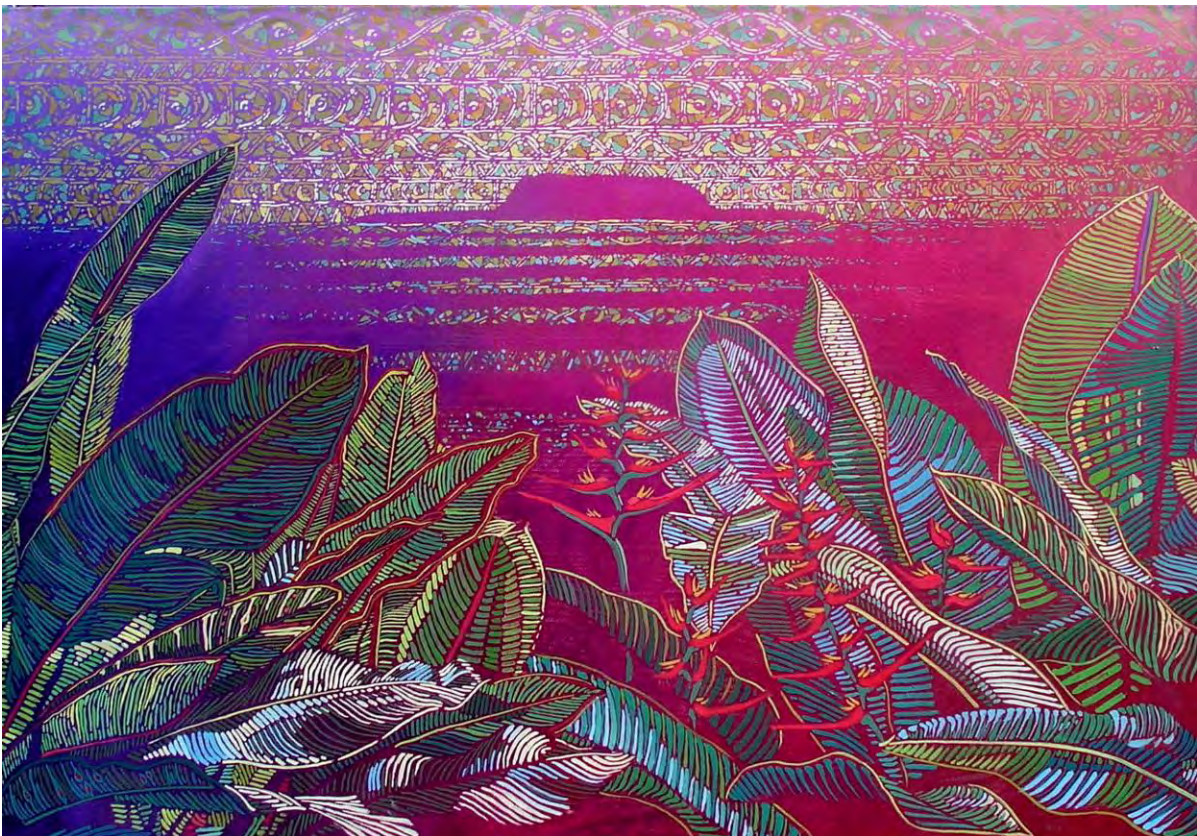


over time you realised that even the most remote areas often were teeming with a rich village life just behind the first row of trees. From a yacht the primary perspective is always as the outsider. And of course the sea. The sea surrounds you and is every changing. It is moody and ephemeral. So the sea itself becomes the primary focus in some of the paintings.

Towards the end, I felt like I was working primarily with light and water, the basic ingredients for life itself. Coupled with the patterning which had become to symbolise my experience, the paintings seemed to be about the very basis of life. Of what it means to be human in this world. ‘

Siv Grava March 2010

**Left ; Flower Two Oil on canvas 60 x 35cm .....\$450**



Hat Island Oil on canvas 80 x 120cm ..... \$2750



Outside Vila 80 x 120cm Oil on canvas .....\$2750

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To view work by other artists in the Paradise exhibition go to

[www.salonrougegallery.com](http://www.salonrougegallery.com)