



Woven Dreams from Sacred Mountains



Textile Traditions of the T'boli and Blaan of Mindanao

January 9, 2021 • 11 am Zoom

The **Philippines**, with its archipelago of 7,000 islands, host approximately 134 ethnic/indigenous groups. On the island of Mindanao live the **T'boli** and **Blaan** of the province of South Cotabato, who offer some of the most artistic and sacred examples of material culture to be found.

Located atop the rainforest-clad peaks of the Daguma Mountain Range sits the heart and ancestral domain of the T'boli people, Lake Sebu; here the T'boli people have nurtured and preserved their deeply artistic traditions. The weaving of the abaca ikat fabric known as **tnalak** has become synonymous with the T'boli, as has their intricate beadwork, embroidery and brass work –much of which can be found richly decorating the wide array of stunning T'boli garments.

To the east is Mt. Matutum with its steep slopes and deep ravines which are home to the Blaan. Sister tribe to the T'boli, the Blaan weave their own treasured and rare abaca ikat cloth known as **tabih**. Often identified as the most skilled embroiderers in all of the Philippines, their spectacular heirloom garments can also be found adorned with patterns of hand-hewn mother of pearl beads.

Craig Diamond will explore the ikat weaving traditions of both the T'boli and Blaan as well as identify and discuss the various garments worn by both the men and women of these tribes. Diamond is a private collector, researcher and friend of the T'boli and Blaan. A finance and investment career for 32 years, his passion began as a Rotary Exchange Student where he first encountered the T'boli and Blaan in 1984. Over the years he has amassed a large collection of early arts and artifacts from the region while also promoting and supporting the talented artisans of today.

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