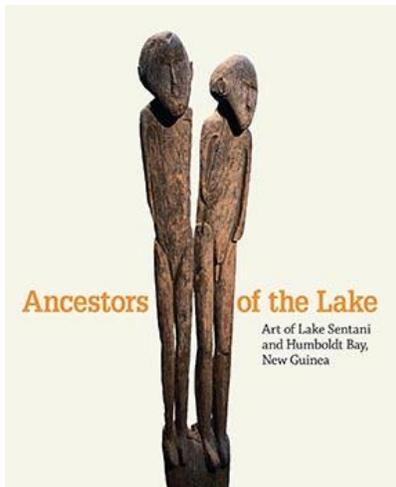


**Tribal Art Book Prize Awarded to Menil Exhibition Catalogue:
*Ancestors of the Lake: Art of Lake Sentani and Humboldt Bay, New Guinea***



Houston, December 13, 2011 – An international jury of art scholars and professionals has awarded the third annual Prix International du Livre d'Art Tribal (International *Tribal Art Book Prize*) to ***Ancestors of the Lake: Art of Lake Sentani and Humboldt Bay, New Guinea***. The Menil Collection published the book – which was edited by Virginia-Lee Webb – to accompany an exhibition of the same title (presented at the Menil earlier this year, from May 6 to August 28). The richly illustrated volume contains essays by Webb, Anna-Karina Hermkens, Philippe Peltier, Andrea Schmidt, Dirk Smidt, David van Duuren, Kristina Van Dyke, and Muridan Widjojo with

Anna-Karina Hermkens.

Founded in 2009, the annual award is bestowed by *Tribal Art*, an international quarterly established in 1994, in collaboration with Sotheby's. The award honors diversity and excellence of publishing in the field of tribal art.

Each year select monographs are judged according to a specific set of criteria relating to the quality of objects represented, photography, printing, layout, and text. Books must also make significant contributions to the current state of scholarship. This year's jurors included Bérénice Geoffroy-Schneiter and Alex Arthur of *Tribal Art* magazine; Marguerite de Sabran and Patrick Chaput of Sotheby's; Philippe Dagen, Université Paris I and *Le Monde*; tribal art scholars Bernard de Grunne and Bernard Dulon; and Germain Viatte, honorary curator of the musées de France. They described this year's winner in a group statement: "***Ancestors of the Lake*** is a stunning look at the region's distinctive art, such as its highly stylized wooden sculptures and decoratively and abstractly designed barkcloths. This beautifully illustrated volume brings together many of these important historic pieces for the first time, including the landmark collection of French writer and art dealer Jacques Viot, along with photographs by Paul Wirz. The

book also explores how European Surrealist artists found inspiration in the art of New Guinea, highlighted by rarely seen photographs by Man Ray of Sentani sculpture.”

The Menil exhibition – curated by Virginia-Lee Webb, an art historian specializing in non-Western art and a former curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York – presented this important body of art for the first time in more than 50 years.

Author: Virginia-Lee Webb

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