

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## **Fabrics from Africa tell the *Tale of a Dog***

An exhibition of exotic fabrics from Africa is the final exhibition for 2009 at the NEW Gallery at the University of Tasmania at Newnham.

To be opened TOMORROW (16 December) at 6pm by Dr Rosemary Callingham from the Faculty of Education, the exhibition of fabrics made by the Kuba people from the Democratic Republic of Congo indicates the high esteem in which fabrics are held by indigenous African communities.

The NEW Gallery's Dr Robyn Glade-Wright explained that the exhibition's name, *Tale of a Dog*, relates to a routine method of mending highly valued fabric.

"When a person catches a garment on a stick or nail and moves, the fabric tears in an 'L' shape," she said.

"The patch needed is shaped like a comma and it reminded the Kuba people of the tail of a dog.

"The decorative potential of this form of appliqué developed from a few patches on early fabrics to complex designs with many interlaced patterns such as those shown in this exhibition."

Ostentatious displays of fabric in countries such as Nigeria are considered to be the highest form of artistic expression and in the Congo high-ranking people are identified by their extensive collections of fabric. These people have their fabric collections displayed after their death to affirm their high status.

*Tale of a Dog* runs until February 19.

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