



Mola: Cuna Life Stories and Art

Maricel E. Presilla

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My little girls,
You will grow up and marry
a grown boy.
You will grow up....
I will look for molas,
Molas for the little girls.
--Cuna Lullaby

The remarkable Cuna Indians live on the San Blas Islands off the northern coast of Panama. Cuna women hold much of the power enjoyed by men in other societies. They select their husbands, pass property on to their children, and make a unique form of art called molas that depict every detail of their lives.

The spectacular fabric designs in vibrant tropical colors that appear on the front and back panels of molas give us a window into Cuna life. We may see a day in school, mythical birds, the story of Noah, jungle animals, or a girl's coming-of-age.

Author Maricel Presilla learned how to read molas when she stayed with the Cuna. *Mola* is her tribute to the women she came to know and the amazing art they create.

An *American Bookseller* "Pick of the Lists"

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