



# Artist Personal Profile

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**SELAI BUASALA**  
Fijian Artist

Selai Buasala is 53 years old and hails from the village of Moce in the Lau Group. She has eight children, 6 girls and 2 boys and lives in Korova Settlement in Laucala Bay, Suva. The Island of Moce in the Lau Group is one of the Islands in Fiji that are renowned for Masi making. "My parents are both from Moce and my masi making skills were passed down from my mother at a very young age. I can still recall when my mother was at work, beating and printing masi, I sat beside her and watched very carefully, at the same time trying my best to grasp how the prints are carefully laid on the tapa cloth. Whenever she leaves her work I quickly take her place and try to experience the touch of her work."



"This was the beginning of my learning experience of masi making from my mother and she is my great inspiration of acquiring the traditional knowledge of masi making from the harvesting to the finishing stages and all what transpires to complete the product.

My mother was my great teacher and usually takes a watchful eye when at work and was scolded whenever I was at fault. I hated that, but later realized that this was the goodness and betterness of my work. She taught me every little thing she knew about masi making, from harvesting, to its beating and printing"

Apart from masi making, Selai also learned to weave baskets but was not really on to the skills but she thought that it was best to continue and focus on masi making which she recognized as very important of preserving and promoting that traditional knowledge as her cultural identity

"As a profession in this unique skill, it is a challenge in my everyday life as I began to progress to business venture with small retailers in the various Craft Outlets, Fiji Museum, Flea Market, and taking orders from public." And this has been ongoing to date as the main source of income to my family"



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resource person 

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