

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Durga Tattoo & Traditional Hand-Tapping Tattoo

Hand-tapping Tattoo: an introduction

Genuine traditional tattooing technique known as 'Hand-tapping' is known internationally and founded throughout the Indonesian archipelago, such as in various Dayak Borneo Kalimantan tribes and Mentawai tribe; as well as in other parts of Indonesia which already vanished, such as in Lesser Sunda Islands (known as Nusa Tenggara: Sumba, Rote Island, Flores and surroundings), Sulawesi, Nias island, some part of Papua and Batak tribe in Sumatra island.

Hand tapping tattoo has a distinct differentiation with those made with modern technique by either coil or rotary tattoo machine.

The pain caused by 'Hand-tapping' tattoo process also different. You would understand the difference once you have experienced tattooed by machine.

The attraction and interest of traditional tattoo philosophy, its tradition and culture, as well as a distinct interest in adventure would determine whether a person would be interested to have hand-tapping tattoo.

'Hand-tapping' tattoo process is very time consuming and requires a lot of patience. It also requires an intense and in-depth dialogue between the tattoo artist and the client compared to making modern tattoo with machine. During the making of 'Hand-tapping', you will go through a special journey back in time when hand-tapping tattoo still existed. The rhythm of the two pieces of wood for hours could be meditative, although you have to bear the pain during the process, but it would be an esthetic and spiritual experience in your life.

Hand-tapping Tattoo: how it works

It requires a solid teamwork during the making of 'Hand-tapping' tattoo. The tattooist or tattoo artist would control a shorter organic material stick that has a sterile need at the end in order to penetrate the ink into the dermis, which is the second layer of skin under the epidermis. The second stick will then be tapped manually, together with an assistant, called 'skin stretcher' who is responsible to stretch the client's skin so it is solidly spread.

The process is very time consuming and demands a high level of patience, concentration and accuracy from both the tattooist and skin stretcher. The high adrenaline level exerted during this process, caused exhaustion the tattooist and skin stretcher that can even last for 2 days afterwards.

What is *Titi*? – Term of tattoo in Mentawai language

Titi: is Tattoo in Mentawai language.

Mentawai tattoo designs were not created to be put on the body as single or stand-alone motive, but contextually designed for the overall body from face, neck, breast, back, ribs, stomach, limbs, hands, fingers, hip, buttock, thigh, and shin.

The overall motive and design are made of lines, dots, crosses and other geometrical, as well as simple symmetrical forms, but they form strong lines across the body and very much responding to each part of human body and its anatomy.

Each motive and element of Mentawai tattoo has a strong correlation with the way of living of the Mentawaian, its nature and animism religion, which is called *Arat Sabulungan*.

Arat: custom; *Sabulungan*: the spirits that inhabit foliage; *Bulu*: leaf (symbol of nature).

Titi is an identity or recognition for each person or each tribe in Mentawai and is an eternal outfit. *Titi* is a stage towards perfecting body and soul in order to achieve eternal harmony together with ruler of nature and ancestral spirits. In the religious concept of *Arat Sabulungan*, the three main rulers of the nature, namely: *Taikamanua* (ruler spirit of the sky), *Taikaleleu* (ruler spirit of the forest, land, mountain), *Taikokoat* (ruler spirit of the sea, river or water).

Sago is the main staple of food and the source main necessities in life in Mentawai. Based on this, some of the Mentawai tattoos were made of the sago tree concept. Likewise is the visual element that represented vegetation and animals are being adapted as *Titi*.

Titi motives for men and women are generally different, however there are some similarities. The difference is on the motive and form from several areas in Mentawai.

Only in Siberut Island among the Mentawai archipelago, which has the evidence of tattoo tradition. In main island of Sipora, North Pagai and South Pagai, as well in smaller islands, the tattoos are all vanished.

The terms of tattoo in different tribes in Borneo

Some tribes in Borneo call tattoo as "*Pantang*", "*Tutang*", "*Tedak*", "*Betik*", "*Purung*" and "*Tatu*".

It is very hard to collect these difference terms of tattoo since there are about 147 or more tribes and sub-tribes in whole island of Borneo.

It is also extremely difficult to collect and do some research about different kind of tattoo motives from different tribes since the tattoo tradition is collapsed and nearly vanished without trace.

The lack of old documentations is also a serious reason we face regarding to track the tattoo motives in Mentawai is also experienced when we try to learn and do some research about tattooing and the original motives in Borneo.

Durga Tattoo

Durga Tattoo focuses on custom tattoo with unique concept for each client, which provides a sense of art, culture and Indonesian tattoo tradition as an esthetic and spiritual experience.

Tattooing made by Durga is very much influenced by various Indonesian culture and tradition. The variety of culture and beliefs in Indonesian archipelago inspired him to use visual elements, concepts and ideas from its cultural heritage, decorative and traditional motives and ornaments, deities, legendary character, shadow puppet characters, and variety of Indonesian tribal designs.

Animism and Polytheism, which were the original religion in Indonesia, influenced a lot of Durga's art and design, as well as Hinduism, Buddhism, Shamanism.

Durga emphasizes on designs that are unique and individual for each client, using modern tattoo machines. He also continues the original tattoo tradition from Mentawai and Dayak Borneo Kalimantan, also learning traditional tattoo motives which almost disappeared from Papua, Lesser Sunda Archipelago (or known as Nusa Tenggara: Sumba, Rote Island, Flores and surrounding), as well as from Sulawesi, Nias Island, Batak Sumatera or designing Neo-Tribal custom motive.

Durga Tattoo is a regular visitor and stayed in the Siberut Island of Mentawai archipelago in light of Mentawai Tattoo Revival project – a non-commercial project realized independently to survive and revive the culture and tradition of Mentawai tribe tattoo from its disappearance. Furthermore, the project also provides tattoo workshop directly in the middle of Mentawai. Durga lives, works and learns together with a number of *Sikerei* (a indigenous elder of Mentawai) and their communities in Siberut to further enhance the tattoo culture and tradition in Mentawai. He would directly continue and complete the tattooing of *Sikerei* and their community members, to become *Sipatiti* (a professional tattoo artist in Mentawai) and to introduce it throughout Indonesia and internationally.

Durga Tattoo supports the tattoo tradition of Dayak Borneo Kalimantan tribes independently or in collaboration with Dayak Youth Community in Jakarta, as well learning and introduce them to Indonesian community and globally.

Biography of Durga

Born and grew up in Jakarta, after completing his degree in Design Visual and Communication from Indonesian Art Institute (Institut Seni Indonesia) in Yogyakarta, Durga lived in Germany towards end of 1990's up to mid 2000. Besides working in graphic design industry, he also continued his study in Master in Historical Art in University of Passau but not finished and worked for several years in Berlin.

The ideas and thoughts to become a tattoo artist became a reality when he lived in Los Angeles, California. While working as graphic designer and illustrator, he started to learn tattooing by him self through books and references.

Selected among a group of candidates, he was an apprentice under **Sua Sulu'ape Freewind**, a master in world's renowned tribal tattoo and traditional 'Hand-tapping' in his **Black Wave Tattoo** studio in Los Angeles. This apprenticeship got him started as part of a team of 'Hand-tapping' on Polynesian, Borneo and Native American.

When he returned from the US in mid 2008, up to today Durga lives and works as tattoo artist and established Durga Tattoo in Indonesia and travel to work in Europe regularly.

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Contribution or Published on Books:

- As one of the artist feature among 100 notable worldwide tattoo artist in the book of “The World Atlas of Tattoo” by Anna Felicity Friedman. Published by Yale University Press, New haven and London 2015.
- As one of the artist feature among 75 worldwide tattoo artist in the book of “Black Tattoo Art 2 - Modern Expression of the Tribal” by Marisa Kakoulas. Published by Edition Reuss GmbH - Germany 2013.
- Durga’s tattoo works documentations and some photo documentations in the book of “Spiritual Skin: Magical Tattoos And Scarification” by Lars Krutak. Published by Edition Reuss GmbH - Germany 2012.
- As one of the artist feature among 20 worldwide tattoo artist in the book of “Planet Ink - The Art and Studios of the World’s Top Tattoo Studio” by Dale Rio. Published by Voyageur Press – USA 2012.

Commission Works:

- Selected as one of 3 tattoo artists across Asia was commissioned to create Barong Dragon tattoo illustration for Guinness’ brand positioning "Together We Are More" “Guinness Beer Poster Campaign” in Southeast Asia - the International Ad Agency BBDO and Kult3D Pte Ltd 2015. Check: <https://www.guinness.com/en-gb/advertising/myth/> <http://creativity-online.com/work/guinness-asia-myth/46663> <http://creativity-online.com/work/guinness-asia-together-we-are-more/46669> <http://lbbonline.com/news/friends-search-for-a-secret-ski-resort-in-latest-guinness-film/>
- Hand Illustration for the book of “The World Atlas of Tattoo” by Anna Felicity Friedman. Published by Yale University Press, New haven and London 2015.

Contribution and Produce the Documentary Videos:

- 1st short documentary video of “Mentawai Tattoo Revival” with it’s title “Mentawai Tattoo Revival” - 2009
- 2nd short documentary video of “Mentawai Tattoo Revival” with it’s title “Kembali Merajah Mentawai” -2010

International Press and Publications:

- Reportage in Savage tattoo magazine - in-flight magazine (US), issue 127 2014. “The next wave: Indonesian Tattoo Movement” - by Lars Krutak.
- Reportage in Jetstar Asia magazine - in-flight magazine (Singapore), issue November 2013. “Freeze Frame - Indonesian Inker - Making His Mark”. <http://www.jetstarmag.com/asia>
- Reportage in Tattoo magazin - A Magyar Tetovalok magazinja (Hungary), issue#162 - October 2013. “Tribal - by Lars Krutak”. <http://www.tattooomania.hu/tattoo-magazin>
- Reportage in Tattoo Planets magazine (Netherlands), issue# 81 - September 2013. “Indonesische Artiesten - Traditional Tribal Tattooing”. <http://www.tattooplanet.nl/>
- Reportage on Durga in Rise Tattoo magazine (UK), issue #15 - September 2011. “The International Amsterdam Tattoo Convention”. <http://www.risetattoomagazine.com>
- Reportage on Durga in Tätowiermagazin (Germany), issue August 2011. “Tattoo Convention Amsterdam”. <http://www.taetowiermagazin.de>
- Reportage on Durga with five pages of article in Tätowiermagazin (Germany), issue April 2011. <http://www.taetowiermagazin.de>

- Reportage on Durga for an article about Rites of Passage Tattoo Convention and Arts Festival in Melbourne by Skin Deep magazine (UK), issue#196 - March 2011. <http://www.skindeep.co.uk>
- Reportage of interview with Durga in Skin Deep magazine (UK), issue#192 - December 2010. "Artist Interview". <http://www.skindeep.co.uk>
- Reportage on Durga in Nordic Tattoo magazine (Norway), issue#38 - October 2010. "Ireland's Culture Festival". <http://www.tattoomagazine.no>
- Reportage on Durga in Total Tattoo magazine (UK), issue September 2010. "Traditional Tattoo and World Culture Festival". <http://www.totaltattoo.co.uk>
- Durga in video clip coverage of World Culture and Tattoo Festival in Cobh, Cork, Ireland - 10-11 July 2010. <http://www.tattoo.tv>
- Reportage on Durga in Bizzare magazine (UK), issue September 2010. "Tattoo Special - Back To Basics - Meet the spiritual inkers on a mission to bring tattooing back to its origins". <http://www.bizarremag.com/>
- Reportage on Durga in Tatouage magazine (France), issue#76 - 2010. "Festival de Cobh". <http://www.tatouagemagazine.fr>
- Reportage on Durga in Inked Australia/NZ magazine (Australia), issue#3 - September 2010. "Hand-Tapping special". <http://www.inkedaustralia.com>
- Reportage on Durga in Tattoo Planets magazine (Netherlands), issue#51 - September 2010. "Durga Tattoo". <http://www.tattooplanet.nl/>
- Reportage on Durga in Bizzare magazine (UK), issue August 2010. "Your Body Art - reader tats and body mods - Traditional Tattoo & World Culture Festival". <http://www.bizarremag.com/>
- Reportage on Durga in Tattoo Planets magazine (Netherlands), issue#50 - August 2010. "Tattoo Conventie Amsterdam". <http://www.tattooplanet.nl/>
- Reportage on Durga in Evening Echo newspaper (UK) - issue Tuesday, 13th July 2010
"Artist leave their mark at traditional tattoo festival". <http://www.echo-news.co.uk/>
- Reportage on Durga in Needles and Sins Tattoo blog "Redux of Traditional Tattoo & World Culture Fest, Ireland". July 2010. <http://www.needlesandsins.com/2010/07/redux-of-traditional-tattoo-world-culture-fest-ireland.html>
- Reportage on Durga Tattoo on the official video clip coverage of Sydney Tattoo & Body Art Expo 2010. <http://www.tattooexpo.com.au/>
- Durga in video clip coverage of Sydney Tattoo & Body Art Expo 2010 by tattooink TV. <http://tattooink.tv/>
- Photo reportage about Durga in Freestyle Magazine (Australia) 03.12.2010. <http://blog.freestylemagazine.com.au>
- Reportage on Durga in Australian Ink Magazine (Australia), first edition 2009, page 121. <http://www.australianink.com.au>
- Tattoo Arte Magazine (Spain), 45th edition in 2008 - international tattoo and body modification magazine published in Spain, Europe - in both Spanish and English editions. <http://www.tattooartemagazine.com>

National Press and Publications:

- Reportage in MALE magazine in male zone, issue 029 May 2013. <http://www.male.detik.com>

- Reportage in MAXXIM Indonesia magazine in features, issue March 2013. <http://www.maxximindonesia.co.id>
- Reportage in NYLON guys magazine, issue September 2012. Get yourself inked! <http://www.nylonindonesia.com>
- Reportage on Durga Tattoo and interview on Whiteboard Journal online media, June 26, 2012. <http://www.whiteboardjournal.com/news/specials/ga-durgat-tattoo/html>
- Reportage on Durga Tattoo in Esquire Indonesia magazine, issue 63 - May 2012. <http://www.esquire.co.id>
- Reportage and interview in Magic Ink magazine (Indonesia), issue 25 January 2012.
- Reportage on Durga in Media Indonesia newspaper, 9 Maret 2012. "Melestarikan Tato Tradisional". <http://www.mediaindonesia.com>
- Reportage on Durga in Jakarta Globe-an English language newspaper, August 2, 2011. <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/arts/jakarta-artist-taps-into-traditional-tattoos/456744>
- Reportage of interview with Durga in Warisan Indonesia magazine (Indonesia), Volume II issue#031 - January 2011. A bilingual art and culture magazine. <http://www.warisanindonesia.com>
- Reportage in Tempo Magazine (Indonesia), "Preserving Tribal Tattoo" in Lifestyle/Tattoo Trend. 12-18 April 2010 edition. <http://majalah.tempointeraktif.com/id/arsip/2010/04/12/GH/mbm.20100412.GH133216.id.html>
- Reportage on Durga during "Mentawai Tattoo Revival" event and video presentation in Magic Ink - Free Tattoo Community Magazine (Indonesia), issue#4 March 2010. <http://www.magic-ink.org>
- Reportage on Durga Tattoo in Indiefonica.com: Hand Tapping in Indonesia (an interview with one of its artists, Aman Durga). <http://www.indiefonica.com/articles/arts-culture/86-hand-tapping-tattoo-in-Indonesia-an-interview-with-one-of-its-artist-aman-durga.html>
- Reportage on Durga in Free! Magazine (Indonesia), 10th edition, 20th January 2010, page 23. <http://www.freemagz.com>
- Reportage on an event A Night With Dayak in Jakarta Globe newspaper (Indonesia) <http://thejakartaglobe.com/culture/a-night-of-dayak-culture/346888> December 2009.
- Reportage on Durga in Jawa Pos Newspaper - issue November 2009 of the event A Day With Dayak. <http://www.jpnn.com/berita.detail-54219>
- Reportage on an event A Day With Dayak in Jawa Pos newspaper (Indonesia). <http://www.jpnn.com/berita.detail-54219>
- Reportage on Durga in Tapian Magazine (Indonesia) July 2009 edition, pages 67-72. <http://www.majalahtapian.com>

Participated International Events:

- The 24th International Frankfurt Tattoo Convention, 22nd - 24th April 2016, Frankfurt Am Main, Germany. <http://www.convention-frankfurt.de/>
- Organized the 1st Traditional Tattoo Camp, 5-6 December 2015 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
- Participate at "Tatoueurs Tatoués" - Tattoo exhibition at the Musée du quai Brandly from May 2014 to October 2015 in Paris, France.
- The 22nd International Frankfurt Tattoo Convention, 11-13 April 2014, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. <http://www.convention-frankfurt.de/>
- The 2nd Traditional Tattoo Expo, 28-30 June 2013, Damai Central, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.
- Australian Tattoo Convention 2013, 3-5 May 2013, Perth Convention Centre in Perth, Australia.

- The 8th International London Tattoo Convention, 28-30 September 2012, Tobacco Dock in London, UK. <http://www.thelondontattooconvention.com>
- The International Amsterdam Tattoo Convention, 3-5th June 2011, RAI Convention Centre in Amsterdam, Netherlands. <http://www.tattooconvention.nl>
- Rites of Passage Festival - Tattoo Art Music Festival, 28-30th January 2011, Royal Exhibition Centre in Melbourne, Australia. <http://www.ritesofpassagefestival.com/>
- Ireland's 1st Traditional tattoo & World Culture Festival. Marloque Inn, Cobh, Co. Cork, Ireland - 10-11th July 2010. <http://www.originalskin.ie/festival/>
- The International Amsterdam Tattoo Convention, 4-6th June 2010, RAI Convention Centre in Amsterdam, Netherlands. <http://www.tattooconvention.nl>
- 2nd Sydney Tattoo & Body Art Expo, 6-8th March 2010, Sydney Showground - Sydney Olympic Park, Australia. <http://www.tattooexpo.com.au>
- 1st Sydney Tattoo & Body Art Expo, 6-8 February 2009, Sydney, Australia. <http://www.tattooexpo.com.au>
- Pomona Body Art Expo, 4-6 January 2008, Pomona, California, USA. With Black Wave Tattoo team of Los Angeles, California.

Participated National Events:

- Guest hand-tapping tattooist at “the Body Art Festival 2014 #4” - the 10th Anniversary of Indonesian Subculture, 30-31 Agustus 2014 in Magelang - Central Java.
- One of the speakers for a public discussion of an art exhibition “Body Festival”, 20 July 2013 organized by Ruang Rupa at Ruang Rupa Gallery in Jakarta.
- Public screening & discussion of the documentary video “Kembali Merajah Mentawai” - “Mentawai Tattoo Revival 2”, 15 September 2012 organized by Magic Ink & DOK (Dapur Olah Kreatif) at Warung Tresni in Denpasar - Bali.
- Borneo Festival - Celebrating the Earth Day, 19-22 June 2012, Gandaria City Mall – Jakarta. Organized by WWF (World Wildlife Fund). <http://www.wwf.or.id>
- A Day with Dayak, 22 October 2011, Central Kalimantan Pavilion of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah - Jakarta. Organized by Dayak Youth Community. <http://www.dayakyouthcommunity.org>
- Pesta Seni dan Budaya Dayak se-Kalimantan IX (9th Dayak Art and Cultural Festival), 20-21 October 2011, at Taman Budaya - Yogyakarta.
- A Day with Dayak, 23 September 2011 at Usmar Ismail Hall-Gedung Pusat Perfilman Usmar Ismail - Jakarta.
- Public screening & lecture of the documentary video of “Mentawai Tattoo Revival”, 20th August 2011 at C2O Library - Surabaya.
- Bandung Body Art Festival 2010, BE Mall, Bandung - 18-19th December 2010.
- Unique Body Art at Suku Suku Tatau, Legian - Bali - 26-28th November 2010.
- Premiere Screening & Discussion of documentary video “Kembali Merajah Mentawai” - 24th November 2010. Blitz Megaplex, Grand Indonesia - Jakarta.
- Screening and Discussion of documentary video “Mentawai Tattoo Revival”, 22nd May 2010 at Rumah Info Dandelion - Bandung
- Screening and Discussion of documentary video “Mentawai Tattoo Revival”, 19th April 2010, together with Lecturers and students of Anthropology Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Andalas, Padang, West Sumatra.
- Screening and Discussion of documentary video “Mentawai Tattoo Revival”, 9th April 2010, on an event of Cultural Table at the Cultural Documentation Centre HB Yassin, Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta.
- Screening and Discussion of documentary video “Mentawai Tattoo Revival”, 25th March 2010 at Residence of Dolorosa Sinaga, Garuda Jakarta.
- A Night With Dayak, 13 - 14th December 2009, Goethe Haus, Goethe Institut, Jakarta, organized by DAYAK YOUTH COMMUNITY. <http://www.dayakyouthcommunity.org>

- Pesta Seni dan Budaya Dayak VII se-Kalimantan (7th Dayak Art and Cultural Festival), 27-29 November 2009 at Purna Budaya - Yogyakarta.
- A Day with Dayak, 22nd November 2009, West Kalimantan Pavilion of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah - Jakarta. Organized by Dayak Youth Community.
<http://www.dayakyouthcommunity.org>
- Festival Kesenian Yogyakarta 2008 (Yogyakarta Art Festival), Fort Vredeburg, Yogyakarta. A solidarity participation by running tattoo workshop in SURVIVE tattoo both.

Coming International Event:

- Rock 'N' Ink Tattoo Convention, 2nd - 4th September 2016, Chemnitz, Germany.
<http://www.rocknink.de/>
- The 12th International London Tattoo Convention, 23th-25th September 2016, Tobacco Dock in London, UK. <http://www.thelondontattooconvention.com>
- Monster Ink Tattoo Fest, 8th-9th October 2016, Venray, Netherlands.
<http://www.monsterinktattoofest.com/>
- International Brussels Tattoo Convention, 11th-13th November 2016, Brussels, Belgium. <http://www.brusselstattooconvention.be/>

Working as guest tattoo artist in the past or coming future:

- **Kayon Tattoo Atelier** in Berlin - Germany, April 2016
- **Primitive Tattoo** in Warsaw - Poland, March-April 2016
- **FabINKognito Tattoo** in Lauffen Am Neckar - Germany, April-June 2014
- **Celtic Circle Tattoo Company** in Kalamunda, Perth - Australia, April 2013
- **Original Sin Tattoo Studio** in Antwerp - Belgium, October 2012
- **Amsterdam Tattoo Museum** in Amsterdam - The Netherlands, October 2012
- **Skin & Bone Tattoo Studio** in Copenhagen - Denmark, July 2011
- **True Body Art Piercing & Tattoo Studio** in Zurich - Switzerland, June 2011
- **Original Sin Tattoo Studio** in Antwerp - Belgium, May 2011
- **Celtic Circle Tattoo Company** in Kalamunda, Perth - Australia, February 2011
- **Monkey Tattoo** in Kuching - Sarawak, September 2010
- **Suku Suku Tatau Tattoo Studio** in Legian - Bali, November 2010

The next coming National or International events and working as guest tattoo artist in will be updated on: <http://www.durgatattoo.com>

Booking, overseas job, project offer, research, journey & tattoo event write to: info@durgatattoo.com

References

Website: <http://www.durgatattoo.com>

Personal Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/durga.sipatiti>

Facebook Fan Page: <https://www.facebook.com/durgatattoostudio>

On youtube.com: <http://www.youtube.com/user/durgatattoo>

On flickr.com: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/24513560@N03/sets>