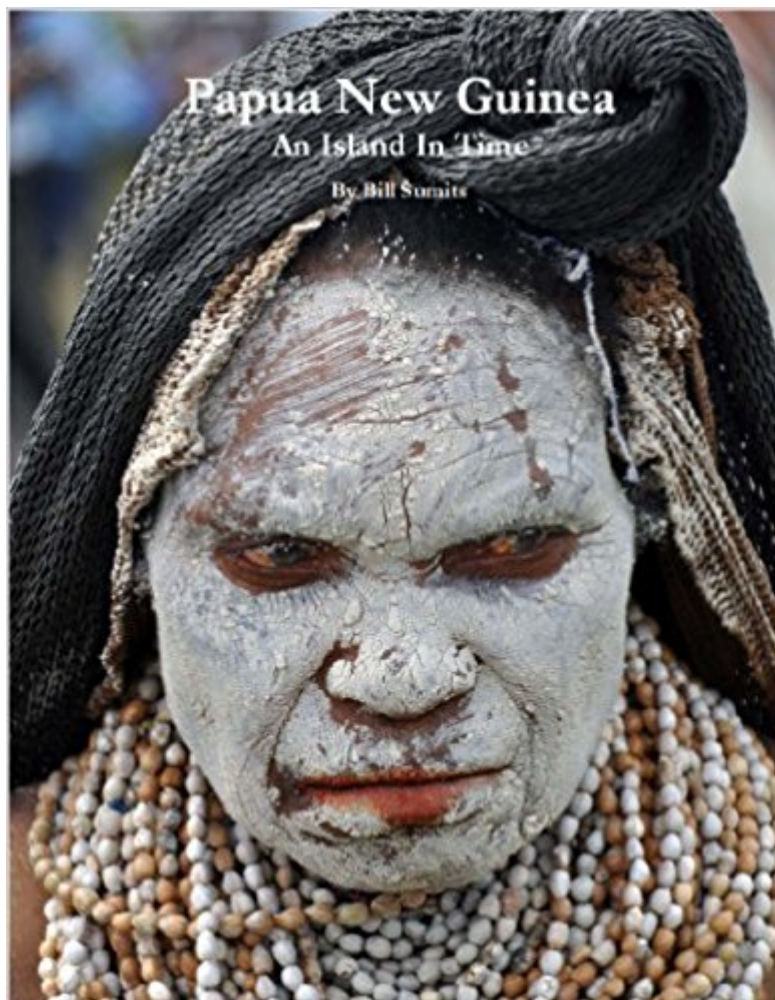


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# Papua New Guinea



## Synopsis

Photographic Journey through the various tribal cultures of Papua New Guinea, from the Sepik River basin to the Huli warriors of the Highlands.

## Book Information

Perfect Paperback: 72 pages

Publisher: William W. Sumits (July 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1467541486

ISBN-13: 978-1467541480

Package Dimensions: 10.5 x 8.2 x 0.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,742,234 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in [Books > Travel > Australia & South Pacific > Papua New Guinea](#)

## Customer Reviews

Bill Sumits has been taking photographs since the age of 8. He learned the art from his father. He first mastered the 4x5 view camera, but transitioned to medium format and 35mm as photography evolved. He was photographer, photo editor and yearbook editor at Georgia Tech and held summer jobs at Newsweek and LIFE magazines and in the LIFE photo lab. As photographers' assistant for some of the great LIFE Magazine photographers, Bill was able to hone his skills. He has had photographs published in Sports Illustrated and TIME magazine. He had a long professional career in technical and industrial photographic product sales, marketing and management, for the DuPont Company. His technical understanding of the graphic arts and reproduction process served him well in his job. With the evolution to digital imaging, Bill got out of the darkroom for good and DuPont got out of the photo business. Recently, international travel and interaction with a new generation of photographers have revived his interest in photography. Bill has published other books including TWA the Early Years about the early years of commercial air travel with photographs by his father, and Myanmar (Burma) in Transition

lots of colorful photographs

In this short volume (about 70 pages) the reader encounters the varied cultures and art-forms of

Papua New Guinean communities. Several hundred vibrant color photos evoke the creative outpouring of competitive "sing sings" on the island. These contests, based upon self adornment, decoration, costume, make-up and performance, have replaced traditional inter-group warfare with a non-violent means of conflict resolution. The author/photographer does a splendid job capturing not only the different traditions of bodily decorations in these communities, but the unique personalities and facial expressions of each islander. The result is a series of intimate portraits which never let the reader forget that the most interesting part of these elaborate displays are the people who create them. The photos are crisp, highly detailed, and beautifully lit. The New Guineans apply a variety of colored muds to their skin, conjuring up shades of the afterlife. Sumits' pictures capture the nuance, in both color and texture, of the natural materials used. The book is a pictorial study, but studded with several concise prose essays on the history of the island. Copious captions provide context for the images.

"Papua New Guinea: Island in Time" offers stunning photographic images of the peoples of Papua New Guinea and the colorful ways they continue to adorn themselves to express their beliefs. These cultures are still relatively untouched by modern ways. The photographer captures them during their elaborate preparation activities for festivals as they apply paint and decorate themselves with feathers, leaves, shells, moss, fur and bones to better compete during enthusiastic "sing-sings". The photographs provide glimpses into life in remote villages along the Sepik River and a first glance at young men just after an initiation ceremony involving crocodile-like scarring. Sumits' intimate portraits from the Highlands capture the grief of mud-covered widows, and the bravery of Huli warriors and wig men. The book, with its fine explanatory text, includes images of the art, masks, fauna and village life of Papua New Guinea.

Although this book has many great photos of Papua New Guinean tribesmen, the coverage reads like a standard tourist excursion through three areas of focus: the sing-sing, the Sepik River area and the Highlands Huli tribe. The simple captions only mention the Melpa, Huli, Sepik and Mudmen cultures, which is the standard coverage found in other travelogues on PNG. This book offers no further insight into the other estimated 700 different PNG tribes.

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