

About Rod Ewins

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I was born in Fiji, into the fourth generation of a family of settlers who first arrived in Fiji in 1875, the year after it became a British Crown Colony. My great-grandfather established a school for the children of the polyglot group of settlers in the fledgling colony, and my grandfather served in the colonial government as a [magistrate/district administrator](#), and my father was an accountant and sugarcane plantation manager for the Colonial Sugar Refining (CSR) Company.

During a lifetime of study in Fiji, Australia and England, my formal education has spanned art, music, science, education, sociology and anthropology. My professional career was as a practising artist, first painter and sculptor, then scientific illustrator, but latterly printmaker and writer, and university lecturer and administrator in the University of Tasmania. Over a period of years I was Dean of Visual and Performing Arts, and retired as Associate Professor and Head of the Tasmanian School of Art, Australia's oldest art school (now the [School of Creative Arts](#)). For a semester in 1980 I was also invited to be Visiting Professor in the Art Department of the University of Hawaii, Manoa.

My 30+ years of art practice [achieved recognition](#) with invitations to take part in a number of international exhibitions, and winning prizes in Australia and Spain. My work is represented in the National Gallery of Australia and several State galleries, and in public, institutional and private collections in Australia, Britain, USA, Canada, Japan, Spain, Brazil, Poland, and the Ukraine. Retrospective exhibitions of my work have been mounted by the University of Tasmania Fine Art Gallery in 1978, and by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in 1990. In 1997 the Australian National Gallery acquired my lifetime print archive, and pictures over 150 of the [works online](#). For over twenty years, in addition to my ongoing art practice and educational responsibilities, I have been engaged in formal research on Fijian art and material culture. I have undertaken seven field trips and [published](#) three books, a video, several book chapters and a number of articles on Fijian art. I formalised this research with a thesis on the social role of Fijian traditional art in relation to identity, for which I received my PhD degree from the University of Tasmania School of Sociology. The thesis spans sociology, anthropology and art in the type of cross-disciplinary fusion which has marked my career. It was [published as a book](#) in mid-2009. In 2014 I published [my most recent book](#) on Fijian traditional art.

I am not currently practising as an artist, my research is almost exclusively in the area of Pacific culture, with a particular focus on Fiji. I maintain an association with the University as a research University Associate, working primarily on the culture, society and history of Fiji and in particular the indigenous Fijian *iTaukei*.



Bev & Rod, Kinkakuji ("Golden Pavilion"), Kyoto, Japan April 2015

Having lived in the Huon Valley for over 30 years, in 2003 Bev and I moved to a seaside settlement on the Tasman Peninsula near the famous (and [infamous](#)) Port Arthur. Less permanently, I have lived for extended periods in Fiji, Australia (NSW, ACT and Tas), England, and the USA, and as an inveterate traveller I have visited every Australian State and over 30 of the 50 US States, and have spent at least weeks, sometimes years, in over 30 countries in North and Central America, Europe, Asia and the Pacific.

Last updated 20 Jan 2018

