Poem: *urohs* language

Emelihter Kihleng

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Figure 41. Evenglynn Andon with some of the *urohs* she sews and her sister’s drawings. This poem, ‘*urohs* language’, was written about Evenglynn

Source. Photographed by Emelihter Kihleng, 18 November 2012

*urohs* speak to her
late at night as
she sews on her Janome

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1 Machine-embroidered and appliquéd skirts made by Pohnpeian women from Pohnpei Island, Federated States of Micronesia.
the quiet doesn’t faze her
she listens
her world is visual, physical
textile spiritual
fingers red from kool-aid
*pwuh* in her mouth
she is in the zone
colours and patterns zip past
the *misihn hummzz*

*kisakis ieu*
they call it
her self-taught gift
for sewing
she watched her mother
continued learning at NMHS
even taught her elder sister
who draws their *mwahi*
they communicate in their
sisterly speak
signing, enunciating with lips
and mouth
she grunts then points
her likes and dislikes
combining and creating
her own unique patterns
she has an eye
for what pops

sisters sit together
at the dining room table
wearing *urohs* and bra
too hot for t-shirts
always at the head
her sister beside her
hands pushing fabric
faces concentrating
flower designs forming in bright green
pieces of red, black and patterned fabric
scattered across the table
mermaids and *serehd* sketches
on the tile floor
next to babies fast asleep
when she finishes a new one she likes
she’ll put it on
*ih likauih seli*²

Figure 42. Karly Tom with the *urohs* she sells at her store in Pehleng, Kitti, Pohnpei
Source. Photographed by Emelihter Kihleng, 14 December 2012

Reference


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² ‘She’ll wear it around.’
This text is taken from *Sinuous Objects: Revaluing Women’s Wealth in the Contemporary Pacific*, edited by Anna-Karina Hermkens and Katherine Lepani, published 2017 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.