

# Poem: *urohs* language

Emelihter Kihleng



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<sup>1</sup>  
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.

SINUOUS OBJECTS

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*<sup>2</sup>



Figure 42. Karly Tom with the *urohs* she sells at her store in Pehलग, Kitti, Pohnpei

Source. Photographed by Emelihter Kihलग, 14 December 2012

## Reference

Kihलग, Emelihter. 2015. '*Menginpehm Lien Pohnpei: A Poetic Ethnography of Urohs (Pohnpeian Skirts).*' PhD thesis. Victoria University of Wellington.

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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.