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Mytinger Project, LLC

MEDIA CONTACT:

Michele Westmorland, 425-402-1949

Karen Huntt, 425-644-6915

Managers

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Michele Westmorland, Karen Huntt, and Wings Trust present:

## **HEADHUNT REVISITED**

Charting Cultural Change in Melanesia

An expedition to the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, May and June 2005

### *Westmorland, Huntt Return With Over 10,000 Images, 90 Hours of Tape; Descendants of Portrait Subjects Located*

SEATTLE, Wash.—Michele Westmorland and Karen Huntt, principals and photographers for Mytinger Project, LLC have returned from their two-month expedition to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. They departed the States on April 23 and returned home to Seattle on June 17. They logged over 2,000 miles by boat, shot over 10,000 digital images between them, and their film crew recorded over 90 hours of videotape and digital audio. They discovered five people who are direct descendants of portrait subjects in Caroline Mytinger's paintings made in the late 1920s.

With only minor mishaps—an injured hand for Karen and jellyfish sting for Michele—the two women and their team encountered cultural practices undergoing change. In Marovo Lagoon in the Solomon Islands they were privileged to ride in a re-created war canoe. They visited several sacred repositories of skulls in both the Solomons and PNG. On Guadalcanal they met a man who is one of the last to have ritual scarification on his face. They witnessed the building of a traditional sea-canoe in the Louisiade Archipelago, and the crafting of nearly extinct pottery on the southeast coast. A surprising discovery was finding four elderly women in the Central Province who are the last living examples of full body tattooing, and whose patterns match those of “Sarli and Wife.” Karen received a traditional tattoo made with thorns in the Oro Province. They commissioned the re-creation of a sacred headdress in Hanuabada, exactly like the one in the painting “Heera” and donated it to the National Museum in Port Moresby. Perhaps most gratifying was the discovery of five direct descendants of four paintings—“Marovo Lagoon Family,” “Yela Fisherman,” “Heera,” and “For the Dance.”

Michele and Karen are currently preparing for several presentations and conferences this fall in New York, Anchorage, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. They will speak at a U.N. function in September for the celebration of Papua New Guinea's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence.

Financial and in-kind contributions, tax-deductible under IRS regulations, are still being solicited. The expedition must raise an additional \$300,000 for all anticipated expenses. Checks should be made out to “Wings Trust-Mytinger Project,” and mailed to: Wings Trust, c/o Milbry Polk, P.O. Box 52, 236 Route 9W, Palisades, NY 10964.

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*Wing's Trust is a New York state non-profit organization. Wings Trust has received a letter of determination from the Internal Revenue Service stating that it is a not-for-profit organization under Internal Revenue code section 501(c)(3).*

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