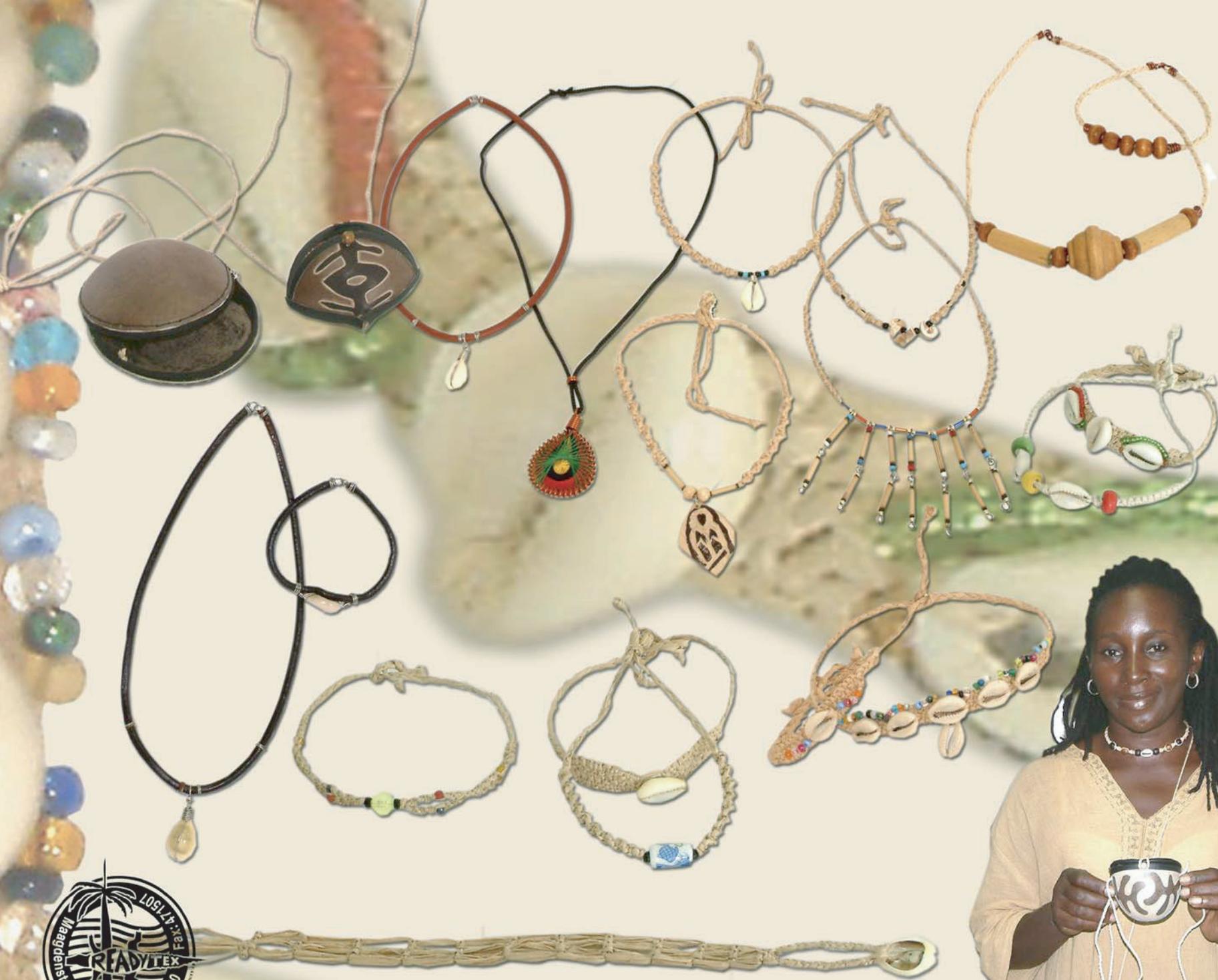


Tibisiri artisans:

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Artfully knotted **Tibisiri** from the branches of the Maurici palm combined with colorful beads or small pearly *kauri shells*, with special meanings, made into unique bijoux. This is the actual work that artisans Orrin Jardin and his wife Mavis Agosoe sell for the last 6 years at Readytex and chances are, they say, it will move your spirit.

When we are selling at fairs you can always **hear** the difference, explains Orrin. People are speaking Dutch as they come walking on and the moment they hold craft from *tibisiri*, *pamoni* (kauri)-shells or calabash in their hand they're saying: *I sab a san disi in sranan tongo*, the Suriname lingua franca. (Meaning: you recognize this thing) That's why I can say: We make crafts people can relate to.

But it doesn't make a difference who sees the bijoux, foreigners find it exotic and nice, the regional people like the local tibisiri straw it is made from and some still feel that kauri shells, that were used as money in ancient Africa, attract wealth. The shells are also used in sacred Afro Surinamese rituals to settle the spirit that is why it is called *Pa moni*, our father's= money. The off white Tibisiri straw is spun through a millennia old process to become very thin and so strong that 2 persons hammocks are knotted by the indigenous from Suriname and the Guyanas. From tibisiri Mavis and Orrin knot all kind of jewelry with beads and

shells in **macramé** technique, an ancient knotting technique existing more than 2000 years. Some beads have special meanings and names. For instance, African beads with different colours are *alakondre*- an eclectic spirit / personality, red beads *ingi boca* - the indigenous spirit, indigo blue beads, *watra ingi*, the water spirit, special black beads, *ogr'ai krara* against the evil eye, white and black stripes- *kromanti* for the sky spirit helping persons to oversee all.

As exceptional product Mavis demonstrates the multi-purpose bijoux **Four in one Tibisiri** made into a string with macramé and pamoni beads that is worn by making the ends into a knot at any required length. This way it can be worn as necklace, around the pulse the biceps or the ankle!

Smilingly Orrin recalls: I never forget the way I learned about macramé, in 1974. In Guyana, where I was born, as a teenager all my friends were either involved in music as I was, or crafts, or both. You could not live from music so they made either leather or tibisiri crafts. Cecil Sears saw me looking on for hours at him when he was making macramé. Picking up three straws from the ground he told me: *you want to learn what I do, the basics you learn from a book in one hour and if I teach you this personally, it'll take you only 15 minutes*. Thus was said and done. Orrin: I was 15 years then and from that moment on, I never

left the path of the crafts and became a professional artisan which I've been for the past 30 years, in Suriname for 25 years. And laughing: I suddenly realize that when I teach someone the basics of macramé, I always do and say exactly the same thing. Mavis laughs and nods: Orrin taught Mavis crafts when they started going steady, 16 years ago. Readytex is proud to offer you this range of specialty craft.

Elvira Rijdsdijk

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