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Artist in full plume

HAT A BOY! Mathias Kuage is no featherweight in the art world of his native Papua New Guinea. Now the artist is flying the flag in a London exhibition.

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art/travel

SX

Tribal artists showcased

IN his first London exhibition, Papua New Guinea artist Mathias Kuage is showing 12 paintings and drawings which span a period of 18 years.

Kuage was encouraged in his painting career by Ulli Bayer, a German art teacher who lived for some years in Papua New Guinea and became a second father to the artist.

The German teacher provided material and technical assistance which led to Kuage becoming one of the 13 major artists in his country.

The importance of traditional decorations such as feathers as intricate costumes is shown in Kuage's work, which is firmly rooted in his people's history and present troubles.

The artist's anxiety about the fighting in Papua New Guinea over copper mining rights is the subject of much of

BY CORINNA GILBERT

his work.

From London Kuage is travelling to Berlin to sign a series of prints, and from there he goes on to Beirut where he has been invited to make a large mural painting.

Rebecca Hossack's other gallery in St James has just completed an unusually fine display of paintings from the Lajamanu Aboriginal community.

The Gurindji people live on the edge of the Tamani desert, midway between Alice Springs and Darwin.



ABOVE: Image by Mathias Kuage.
LEFT: Lajamanu "Ngalyipi" by Ronnie Lawson, 1990.

MATHIAS KUAGEL: Art from the Papua New Guinea Highlands; Rebecca Hossack Gallery, Fitzrovia; 35 Windmill Street, W1. Hours: Mon-Sat, 10am to 6pm; Until August 6; Admission free. Tel: 071-409 3599

AROUND BRITAIN

Spa-town festivities

●THE elegant spa-town of the dandy Beau Nash — Tunbridge Wells, 40 miles south of London — will come alive this summer with a week of Georgian Festivities from July 30 till August 7. The clock will be turned back 250 years to 1744 as costumed characters engage in conversation and games of the period. There will also be music and dance; a gathering at The Swan Hotel Tavern and the exciting prospect of scandalous goings on in and around the tree-lined main street, The Pantiles.

Pub of the year

●WHERE'S the best pub in Britain? Answer: No Place. Members of the consumer-led Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) have voted The Beamish Mary Inn, No Place, County Durham (270 miles north of London) the national pub of the year. Judges cite it as community local — No Place is an ex-mining village — which won on atmosphere, character, welcome and beer quality. Landlord John Taylor serves No Place Bitter which is brewed specially for the pub and makes an ideal pub stop for visitors to the nearby Beamish Open-Air Museum, which has re-created North of England life as it was at the turn of the century.

Weekends in Manchester

●MURDER Weekends at Wigan Pier; Trace Your Ancestor breaks and

weekends themed on the Manchester TV soap *Coronation Street* are among the special hotel deals recently made available. The City and Cultural Breaks take place in and around Manchester — 197 miles north-west of London — this summer and autumn. As the City of Drama 1994, many of the breaks, which start at £19.50 per person per night, focus on the theatre. Historic mill towns, colorful markets and fascinating museums are among the places to visit. For information contact the Greater Manchester Visitor Bureau (061-242 2542).

Quest recreates medieval UK

●A NEW £1 million attraction allows visitors to experience the sights, sounds and smells of medieval England. The Shrewsbury Quest, in the town of Shrewsbury, near the England-Wales border, evokes the period of monk-detective Brother Cadfael, created by local author Ellis Peters. A part of the town has been recreated as it was in the 12th century — including a cloister walk and gatehouse — and visitors are invited to solve a series of mysteries as they walk around. Shrewsbury, 160 miles north-west of London, is a good base for touring pastoral border country, known as The Marches, with its half-timbered architecture and medieval castles. The Quest is open daily. Admission: £3.50 for adults; £2 children. tel: 0743 243324 for details.

