



CASTLE MUSEUM

of

SAGINAW COUNTY HISTORY

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Castle Museum Opens *Cloth As Community: Hmong Textiles in America*

SAGINAW, Mich. – Visitors to the Castle Museum of Saginaw County History can now experience the exhibition, *Cloth as Community: Hmong Textiles in America* opening June 16. The exhibition features 28 textiles – including flower cloths and embroidered story cloths (or *paj ntaub*).

Paj ntaub is one of the world's great textile traditions and illustrates how embroidery and design reflect the heritage of the Hmong culture. Despite its deep roots in the culture, this complex art was not widely known outside Asia until after the Vietnam War, when Hmong refugees arrived in large numbers to the United States, including mid-Michigan. The works illustrate the profound relevance of textiles as infrastructure in the Hmong culture, an art form that shifted as it adapted to fit new realities.

“The Hmong are a fascinating people, and their culture is filled with interesting history and traditions,” said President & CEO Jonathan Webb of the Castle Museum. “Many Hmong people resettled in the Saginaw Valley area making this a particularly relevant exhibit for the Castle Museum to share.”

Organized and toured by ExhibitsUSA, a national part of Mid-America Arts Alliance, this exhibition was first curated in 1999 by Carl Magnuson, a cultural anthropologist, working with a Hmong refugee community. ExhibitsUSA sends more than 25 exhibitions on tour to more than 100 small and mid-sized communities every year. Based in Kansas City, Missouri, Mid-America is the oldest nonprofit regional arts organization in the United States. More information is available at www.maaa.org and www.eusa.org.

The Historical Society of Saginaw County is committed to serving the community by telling the continuing story of the people of the Saginaw region through exploration, preservation and presentation of their historical and cultural heritage.

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Cloth as Community will be open to the public from June 16 to Aug. 11. For more information about this exhibit, please call 989-752-2861 or visit www.castlemuseum.org.