Guide to the Mien Needlework Group Costumes MS.SEA.35

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Title: Mien Needlework Group costumes
Collection number: MS.SEA.35
Contributing Institution: Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries
Irvine, California 92623-9557
Language of Material: English.
Physical Description: 11.0 linear feet(12 boxes)
Date (inclusive): 2004-2006
Abstract: This collection comprises four traditional Mien costumes created by the Mien Needlework Group that incorporate imported fabric, silver thread, and silver metal adornments. It includes one adult male costume, one adult female costume, and two children's costumes.
creator: Asian Community Mental Health Services (Richmond, Calif.).
creator: Mien Needlework Group.
Access
The collection is open for research.
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Preferred Citation
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Date accessed.
For the benefit of current and future researchers, please cite any additional information about sources consulted in this collection, including permanent URLs, item or folder descriptions, and box/folder locations.
Processing History
Processed by Joanna Lamb and the Special Collections student staff, 2009.
Historical Background
Healing Stitch by Stitch is the culmination of a two-year project by the Mien Needlework Group, funded by the Creative Work Fund, a collaboration of the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, the Columbia Foundation, the Miriam and Peter Haas Fund, and the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund.
Many Mien refugee families that came from rural regions of Laos after the Vietnam War (1954-1975) found it challenging to negotiate life in the United States. Many suffered from depression and post traumatic stress disorder. Asian Community Mental Health Services formed the Mien Needlework Group to provide Mien women the opportunity to practice traditional arts, to express themselves creatively, and to support one another in adjusting to a new culture.
Since the inception of the group in 1992, its members have created more than 100 pieces of Mien embroidery that are available for sale, including quilts, handbags, and pillowcases. In 2004 the Creative Work Fund launched the most ambitious project undertaken by the Mien Needlework Group: the creation of four complete traditional Mien costumes.
Traditionally, it was important for Mien women to know how to embroider in order to make their own clothes as well as clothes for their family members. These Mien costumes (without the silver ornaments) were the daily style of Mien men and women. Today, they are worn only at weddings and special events.
Collection Scope and Content Summary
This collection comprises four traditional Mien costumes created by the Mien Needlework Group that incorporate imported fabric, silver thread, and silver metal adornments. It includes one adult male costume, one adult female costume, and two children's costumes. The embroidery style of the costumes incorporates both traditional and modern patterns.
The four costumes are made in the Northern Laotian style and include multiple pieces, such as pants, shirts, hats, turbans, and capes.
 Acquisition Information
Gift of Asian Community Mental Health Services, 2008.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Asian Community Mental Health Services (Richmond, Calif.).
Ceremonial costume
Embroidery--Laos

Guide to the Mien Needlework Group Costumes MS.SEA.35
| Box 1 | Adult male pants, 2004-2006 |
| Box 2 | Adult male shirt, 2004-2006 |
| Box 3 | Male turban, four sashes, and adult female jewelry, 2004-2006 |
| Box 4 | Adult female shirt, 2004-2006 |
| Box 5 | Adult female pants, 2004-2006 |
| Box 6 | Adult female cape, 2004-2006 |
| Box 7 | Child male pants, 2004-2006 |
| Box 8 | Child male shirt, 2004-2006 |
| Box 9 | Child female pants, 2004-2006 |
| Box 10 | Child female shirt, 2004-2006 |
| Box 11 | Children's hats, 2004-2006 |
| Box 12 | Sashes, two silver bracelets, 1 necklace, thread, 2004-2006 |