

Multnomah Arts Center exhibit to feature fine silks and tribal art



A Houaphon weaver completes a silk on a loom . (Photo courtesy of Above the Fray)

By KC Cowan
The Southwest Portland Post

One of the best things about traveling to distant lands is the opportunity to buy arts and crafts directly from local artisans. Often, you can purchase items either not readily available in the United States, or at a more affordable price than from a pricey boutique.

There has also been a strong movement in America during the past decade toward “fair trade” – that is, making sure the craftsmen get a good share of any sale price.

With this in mind, in 2007, Eugene couple Maren Beck and Josh Hirschstein

formed “Above the Fray: Traditional Hillside Art,” featuring the weaving traditions and cultures of the hill tribes of Laos.

The exhibit brings beautiful, handmade textiles and other crafted arts to collectors at reasonable prices, while providing incomes to the artisans.

Above the Fray has just announced its Pacific Northwest exhibit and sales events, and it includes a stop at the Multnomah Arts Center in November.

“Fine Silks and Tribal Art” will include a diverse array of hand-woven textiles and tribal art not listed on the couple’s regular website, including hundreds of fine silks and embroidered hemp and cotton fabric.

The show will also offer the intricate traditional silks of the Tai Daeng people of Houaphon Province, Laos, created using the discontinuous supplementary-weft technique.

Many items will be priced as low as \$15, and a percentage of each sale will be donated to the Mines Advisory Group, which identifies and removes deadly ordinances left over from the Vietnam War.

The Fine Silks and Tribal Art show will also display hand-woven baskets, jewelry, ritual and shamanic art, tools, and even toys made and used by the hill tribe people of Laos and Vietnam, each with its own traditions.

The Tai Dam of northwest Laos grow and spin their own cotton. The Katu people of southern Laos weave glass beads on poly-cotton. The members of Akha-Puli in northwest Laos are renowned silversmiths.

The show will also be educational, as Beck and Hirschstein run a slide show about the local artisans, and display examples of looms used to produce the textiles. Above the Fray owners say their artists weave more than fabric. They weave their culture and the values of their ancestors into patterns maintained from time before memory. By purchasing the products, you help keep these traditions alive in an ever-changing world.

Mark your calendars now: Above the Fray’s show, “Fine Silks and Tribal Art” takes place Nov. 13, 14 and 15 at the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. Hours are: Friday/Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Children can hunt for Easter eggs at Alpenrose Dairy



Children having fun at Alpenrose Dairy Easter Egg Hunt. (Photo courtesy of Alpenrose Dairy)

Alpenrose Dairy’s 53rd annual Easter Egg Hunt is back April 4, the Saturday before Easter. Chocolate eggs will be hidden across the Alpenrose grounds and kids can redeem sticker-wrapped eggs at the prize booth for a special prize!

Plus the world famous Easter Bunny will also be on site to meet all egg hunters!

The day’s excitement begins at 10:30 a.m. for kid’s ages 3-5 and 12:30 p.m. for ages 6-8.

This free event is hosted by Alpenrose on the pastoral setting of the 99-year old dairy and has become a special tradition for families since 1962.

The vast amount of acreage at the dairy makes it an idyllic setting for the hunt and families often make this an

entire day event by packing a picnic lunch.

“We love hosting the Easter Egg Hunt,” stated Alpenrose president Carl Cadonau Jr. “It’s our way of saying thank you to our customers, friends and neighbors who have supported us over the past year.

“Each year, I meet more and more second and third generation Alpenrose Easter egg hunters. It’s great to see how our event has become such an important family tradition here in Portland.”

Alpenrose officials are encouraging egg-hunters to arrive early since parking is limited. Alpenrose Dairy is located at 6149 SW Shattuck Road in Portland.

For more information visit www.alpenrose.com

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