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EXHIBITION SHOWCASES NATIVE AMERICAN QUILTS

The beauty and traditions of Native quilting are celebrated in the exhibition!

Montezuma, KS -- **To Honor and Comfort: Native Quilting Traditions** celebrates the history and diversity of quilting in Native communities and pays tribute to the artists who continue to create within this expressive cultural tradition. The **Stauth Memorial Museum** of Montezuma KS is excited and honored to host this exhibition for a 12 week booking from **July 8, 2018 to September 30, 2018**. We feel very fortunate to be the only museum in Kansas chosen to host this amazing, historically important, quilt exhibit.

Of the various North American Indian art forms that resulted from contact with Euro-Americans, quilting is perhaps the least well known. Quilting in Native communities was first learned through contact with primarily Euro-Americans, who possessed commercially manufactured cloth and steel needles. Traders, missionaries, government agents and settlers all played roles in introducing quilting fabrics and techniques. It was not surprising that Native peoples -- already skilled at similar craft forms such as fabricating tapa cloth and hide garments, and embroidering with porcupine quills and moose hair -- became adept at quilting and began to use quilts for purposes unique to their own cultures.

Quilts have been used in nearly every Native community for everyday purposes such as bed coverings, shelter coverings, infant's swing cradles, weather insulation, and providing a soft place to sit on the ground. In some communities, quilts play important roles in tribal ceremonies, such as in the honoring of individuals and as fund-raisers. Native quilters get their design ideas from many sources. Some quilters use the design motifs of their specific tribe or clan or use patterns and colors reflecting close spiritual ties to the natural world. This exhibit examines how quilts and quilting -the ceremonies surrounding them, the society of the artists who make them, and the passing on of traditions through quilts - bind neighbors and families within and across generations.

To Honor and Comfort: Native Quilting Traditions includes 29 quilts from all over the country, including examples by Cherokee, Sioux, Navajo, Ojibway and Native Hawaiian quilters. Other components of the exhibit include hands-on activities, a listening station where visitors can listen to tape-recorded stories from some of the quilters, videos of quilting activities in two Native communities, and a series of panels with photographs and explanatory text.

Approximately 25 Kansas quilts will also be on display to enhance the exhibition and to showcase the talent and creativity of Kansas quilters.

Developed by Michigan State University Museum, **To Honor and Comfort: Native Quilting Traditions** is based on an exhibition originally created by Michigan State University Museum and the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, in collaboration with Atlatl, Inc., a national service organization for Native American arts (Phoenix, AZ). A board of museum specialists working in both Native and non-Native museums across North America were instrumental in helping to design this version specifically created to tour to smaller museums, in particular, tribal museums and cultural centers.

A companion book is also available. *To Honor and Comfort: Native Quilting Traditions* was edited by Marsha MacDowell and C. Kurt Dewhurst and published by the Museum of New Mexico Press in collaboration with Michigan State University Museum.

Founded in 1857, the Michigan State University Museum is one of Michigan's most popular natural and cultural history museums. The *Michigan State University Museum's Traveling Exhibition Service* provides affordable exhibitions for museums and organizations both in and out of Michigan. Over two dozen traveling exhibits are available and represent a variety of Michigan's natural and cultural resources.

Call 620-846-2527 for more information or to set up a tour for groups of 5 or more! Museum hours: **Tue -Sat 9-12 1-4:30, Sun 1:30-4:30**. We are closed on Mondays and all major holidays. Admission is free, but donations are gratefully accepted to help pay for the temporary and traveling exhibits we host each year! Check out our website at www.stauthmemorialmuseum.org for information about this and all of the exciting new exhibits coming to the Stauth Memorial Museum!

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