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Finnish American Rag Rugs: Art, Tradition & Ethnic Continuity



Synopsis

Finnish American Rag Rugs is about rag rug culture and the role of rag weaving in Finnish America. In a larger sense, it is also a study of how a craft can persist over centuries, reinforcing the culture, attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and values of an immigrant group that retains a strong sense of its ethnic identity. Finnish American Rag Rugs provides a history of Finnish immigration to and settlement in Michigan's Upper Peninsula alongside an examination of the tradition of rag weaving in the United States and the Nordic region. Although many other immigrants have a tradition of making rag rugs, Finnish Americans are one of the few groups to have maintained the culture of rag weaving since their immigration. In the process of studying this one activity of one ethnic group, the author uncovers new information about both the history of a ubiquitous form of fiber art and the beliefs and values of an understudied ethnic group. Illustrated with more than 200 color photos, Finnish American Rag Rugs is both informative and beautiful.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"In Finnish American Studies ... scholars have emphasized the study of institutions and movements. This is history outside of those institutions and movements. Finnish American Rag Rugs is unique because it writes Finnish American history that previously had been ignored in the rush to study institutions and events." -- K. Marianne Wargelin

Yvonne R. Lockwood is Curator of Folklife at the Michigan State University Museum and Associate Coordinator of the Michigan Traditional Arts Program. She is co-editor of the Michigan Folklife Annual and of Michigan Folklife Reader.

Fascinating read for me. The author covers the history of Finnish Americans and their traditional rugs in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. My mother, a Swedish Finn, grew up there and I remember visiting a family friend whose house was filled with looms, bags of rags and what seemed like a zillion rugs. My interest in weaving could very well have been sparked then. How I wish I could go back in time and sit by Tunie and learn from her! This book, which I know I will refer to time and again, is informative, beautiful and as close as you can get to sitting at the side of a master weaver of traditional Finnish rag rugs - unless you are lucky enough to have one in your family!

Wonderful book. A great addition to my library! Will get more into it in the winter months.

Excellent book for inspiration that is well backed up by plenty of factual and fun information. Pictures are great, text is highly readable, and content is very good. As a rag rug weaver and a weaving instructor, I am happy to have this book in my personal library for both my students' and my personal use.

Well researched and presented. An interesting look at a weaving community about which I knew little. As a weaver, it is always exciting to find a new group.

Learning to weave rugs with this book as a guide will help me get the techniques and details right. As a beginner I feel I need as much information as I can get, and this book is helping me.

What can I say. Michigan

Expanded study

I am not a weaver, but when I was a child my grandmother always had rag rugs on the floor and knew people weaving them. This was in Austria! When I read this book it was like a walk through a living history museum. Wonderful book.

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