
Museum Education

Joan Barghusen

The 1983-84 academic year was particularly rewarding in terms of the response of teachers to the Museum Education Program initiatives developed over the past several years. The new programs and resources, combined with the regular outreach of program brochures and teacher workshops, have resulted in an increased awareness of the Museum on the part of teachers and an increased demand for its services, leading to a very active year indeed. This year the staff of the shared Education/Volunteer office assumed the responsibility of scheduling groups for Museum visits, a task previously performed by the Museum Office. Since this means scheduling

approximately 750 appointments throughout the year, our phone rang regularly—the positive side of this increased work load was the opportunity for Education/Volunteer personnel to work directly with the teachers as they planned their Museum visit. This fuller communication helped the docents to know the background and expectations of each group, enabling them to be more responsive to the needs and interests of individual classes.

A series of three half-day workshops, each one featuring a specialized topic of ancient Near Eastern history, culture and art, brought a total of more than 60 teachers to the Institute,

many who had attended workshops before, but some for the first time. Oriental Institute Ph. D. Candidates James Armstrong, John Larson and Peter Piccione participated in these workshops, each contributing slide lectures and gallery tours in an area of their special expertise.

Besides these one-session workshops, I participated by invitation in the 1983 Summer Professional Education Program of the Superintendent of the Education Service Region of Cook County, which serves the county suburban schools, providing 3-hour workshops each day for three weeks, to offer teachers of all grade levels a refresher course in ancient Near Eastern studies as well as an opportunity to learn about the resources of the Education Program.

Again, in response to requests, several workshops explaining the Museum resources and their application for teachers were given either at the Museum or on-site at Chicago Board of Education seminars, a meeting of Chicago Suburban Supervisors of Social Studies Club, and at individual school Teacher's Institutes. I was helped in these workshops by docents Cathy Chilewski and Diane Haines, who ably represented the Museum Education Program at Teacher's Institutes.

A further outreach to the educational community was afforded by the invitation to appear on the radio program "Curiosity Club," a thirty-minute interview sponsored by the Chicago Board of Education's Bureau of Social Studies on station WBEZ. Among that audience are teachers and students in their classrooms as well as the general listening public.

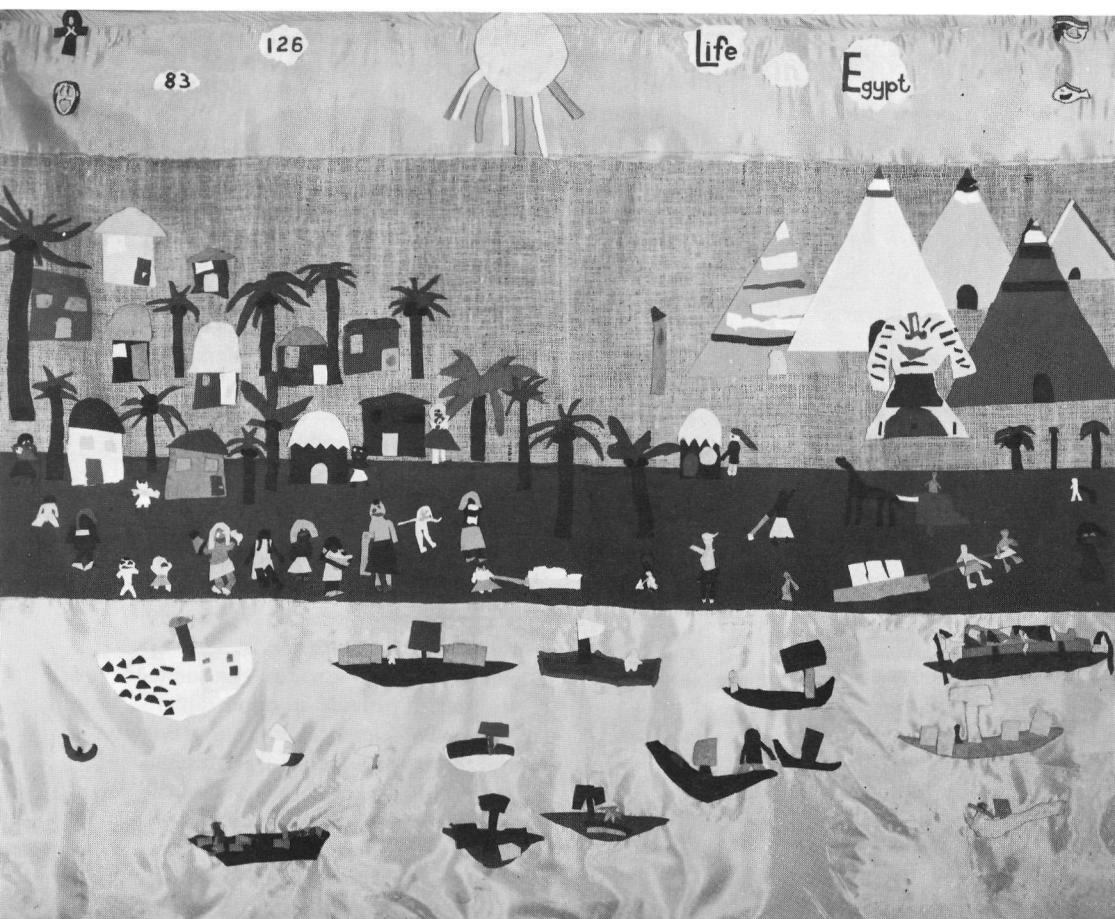
The educational program of the Museum is generously supported by the Illinois Arts Council. The elementary and high school Teacher Kits, used

both at school and in the Museum galleries, were developed in past years with the help of Illinois Arts Council grants and enjoy on-going popularity with teachers. This past year a series of ten slide sets and two Mini-Museum loan boxes went into full use with the aid of the current IAC monies; almost one hundred teachers used these new supplementary classroom materials in the first year of their availability. Illinois Arts Council money also supported the purchase of new films for showing to classes as well as in the general public programming, and aided the Children's Workshops and the development of a manual of art projects related to Museum objects. The art project manual, to be available in Fall 1984, is an extension of workshops for children and teachers that incorporated an art component into the Museum gallery study—for example, making a reproduction of the Megiddo game board in connection with a gallery tour on games and recreation. In order to test ideas that did not originate in the workshops, I worked for six weekly sessions with an after-school crafts group at the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, with the cooperation of their supervisor Karen Jonas and the Neighborhood Club director Irene Smith. The children came to the Museum for the gallery activity and we returned to their craft room for the art work.

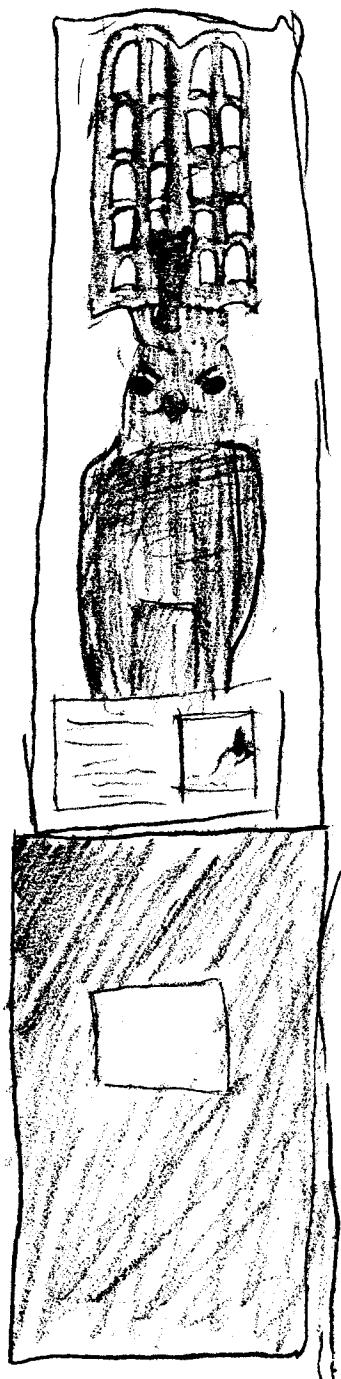
The 1984 Winter Children's Workshops focused on pots and pot-making in a 4-session series which received more responses from the public than children we could accommodate—another indication that we are successfully reaching new audiences. The workshops began with the always popular "Archaeology" workshop which takes the children into the galleries to see interesting and impressive archaeological finds, such as King

Tut's statue and the Assyrian winged bull-man, and then permits them to piece together pot sherds to get an idea of one of the tasks of an archaeologist. At subsequent sessions, they viewed pots in the galleries, learned about their uses, sketched their decorations, then made their own pots of self-hardening clay, returning the following week to paint and decorate them.

Instructions for this very successful art



As part of their study of ancient Egypt, second-graders at the Ray School created this mural tapestry.



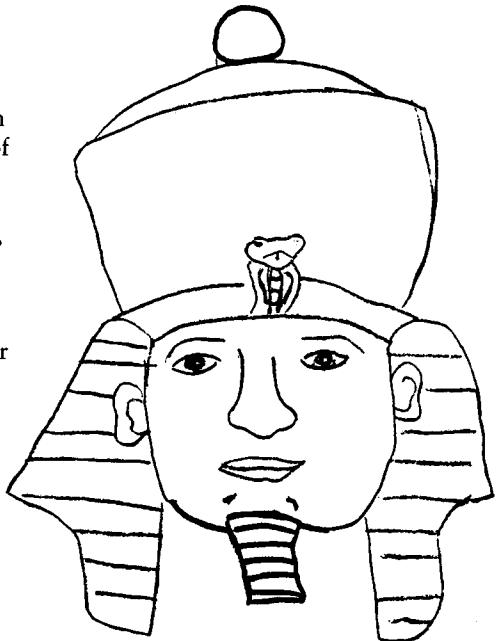
Kenji Takeuchi

project are also included in the arts project manual. Besides the instructions for the projects themselves, the manual includes background information about the object or category of objects so that each project will be seen in its historical and cultural context. The workshops providing material for this manual could not have been accomplished without the creativity and hard work of docents Kitty Picken, Roberta Rayfield, Debbie Aliber and craft consultant/workshop leader Joan Hives. Their participation and high good humor is in large measure the secret of success for the enormously popular Children's Workshops.

A highlight of this academic year was the award of a grant for \$9000 from the Illinois Humanities Council to co-sponsor a Summer 1984 Teacher's Institute for Secondary School Teachers. The stated intent of the Illinois Humanities Council to sponsor an Institute which offers "intensive study with scholars" and "time for careful and challenging study" was structured into a program to provide three weeks of intensive classroom, archives and Museum gallery study, followed by independent study and preparation of a paper, concluding with a seminar in which the participants share with each other the findings of their research. In addition to these academic features, the Summer Institute will provide an opportunity for teachers to learn about and preview many of the resources of the Museum Education Program. Over 60 applications were received for the 30 places available. The Summer Institute staff includes more than a dozen Oriental Institute scholars, bringing the teachers into contact with professionals in the forefront of research in the field of ancient Near Eastern Studies.

On the daily level, I continue to work with the docents who, on a typical school-day, offer an average of 3 tours, serving as many as 180 children each day. Most of these visits consist of a one-time introductory tour since the trip is expensive and time-consuming for most school groups. Local schools, however, can and sometimes do utilize the galleries for more extensive programs; such a program this year was the Ray School 7th grade project under the direction of Social Studies teacher,

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James Kujawa. Two social studies classes came weekly for a total of 8 visits per class; the docents and I developed special topic tours to give these classes an in-depth exposure to the gallery materials. Classroom materials from the Museum Education program such as the slide sets, were used at school in preparation for the visits, as were books recommended and lent by the Education office. The docents involved with this special project spent many extra hours in preparation—included were Wednesday afternoon docents Muriel Nerad, Lilian Cropsey, Jean Robertson, Mary D'Ouville, Thursday afternoon docents Elizabeth Spiegel, Janet Helman, Anita Greenberg, Laurie Fish, and substitute docents Rita Picken and Ida DePencier. Their special efforts made a successful program which Mr. Kujawa evaluated as of high interest and value to the learning of his students.

Other special efforts on behalf of the Museum Education Program were the visits by docent Mary Jo Khuri, a former nurse and long-time docent, to the patients at Presbyterian-St. Luke's Rehabilitation Center, where she presented a slide talk on the life and times of King Tutankhamun. The summer program of special interest tours continued this year with the children's tour on Thursday mornings and the adult special interest tours on various topics offered by docents who researched and developed themes related to Museum objects.

The Members' Courses, formerly under the supervision of the Membership office, were transferred this year to the Museum Education office, affording another opportunity to coordinate Institute educational opportunities of a more general nature with the Education program. For example, a teacher's workshop on Egyptian art was planned to occur before the quarter in which a Members' Course on that topic was to be offered so it could serve as a preview for those teachers who might be interested in the Course.

Undoubtedly the most exciting enrichment of the Education Program was effected when I visited Egypt as a member of the Oriental Institute tour. The opportunity to see first-hand the antiquities and to bring back numerous slides of the sites brings fresh materials and insights for the Education Program.

This academic year also marked the departure of Volunteer Chairman, Peggy Grant, to whom the Museum Education Program owes much inspiration and contribution of ideas and effort. Janet Helman, the new Volunteer Chairman, has interned throughout the year and moves into the responsibilities of the position with experience and enthusiasm. The Museum Education Program looks forward to the same mutual support and productive interactions with the Volunteer Program in the future that have characterized the two programs in the past several years.