

MUSEUM EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Growth and expansion of educational services, while maintaining successful programs of long standing, were the watchwords for the Museum Education Program this past year. New staff members joined the Education Program, collaboration with other University of Chicago and community groups increased, and two major grants for public outreach provided the necessary resources to expand educational programming for two special audiences—Chicago Public School students and teachers, and the community's families.

SCHOOL AND TEACHER SERVICES

Developing curriculum materials for teachers and students has been a Museum Education priority since the program was founded in 1980. Over the years, resources such as teachers' kits, an art projects manual, a series of slide sets, a video presentation, and two Mini-Museum Loan Kits have enhanced the study of ancient Near Eastern civilizations for countless numbers of Chicago-area students. This year, information about these resources reached a new audience of teachers, when the museum hosted an Educators Open House in December. More



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than 150 teachers, most from the Chicago Public Schools, attended this event that highlighted the exhibit "Vanished Kingdoms of the Nile: The Rediscovery of Ancient Nubia." For many of these educators, this was a first visit to the Oriental Institute Museum and an introduction to the wide variety of programs and materials that are available for teachers and students.

Collaborative programming with educators at other institutions also took place this past year. The Museum Education Office was invited to join the DePaul University Citi-Leaders Program, a computer networking project funded by Citibank. Designed to develop and support excellence in teaching in the Chicago Public Schools, this project provided the Museum Education Office with computer equipment for communication by electronic mail with more than 100 Chicago Public Elementary and High Schools and several major museums. This means that the Education Office is now part of an electronic discussion group that can learn from and share information with educators all across the city of Chicago.

Collaboration with a neighborhood school also occurred this past year. Susan Buta, a chemistry teacher at Kenwood Academy, chose the Oriental Institute as the site for a series of student field trips. Her goals were to highlight the role of chemical processes in the ancient world and the uses of chemistry in the preservation of ancient artifacts. Laura D'Alessandro, Conservator; Charles Jones, Research Archivist and Bibliographer; John Sanders, Head of the Computer Laboratory; and Raymond Tindel, Registrar, joined with the Education Office and this innovative teacher to plan and present a program that introduced ancient science and historic conservation to nearly 200 Kenwood High School chemistry students.

Collaboration with the Chicago Public Schools is also at the heart of a major educational outreach project that began in January 1993. Supported by a generous three and half year grant from the Polk Brothers Foundation, the project enables the Education Office to join with elementary school teachers, administrators, and parents in a partnership effort to enhance and enrich the public schools' world history curriculum. The Center for School Improvement in the University of Chicago's Department of Education is also assisting in this joint project, which builds on a pilot outreach program begun in 1991 by Joan Barghusen.

The new Education Office outreach effort reflects the Oriental Institute's desire to make its world renowned resources on ancient Near Eastern civilizations available to a wide cross-section of Chicago Public Schools, whose students presently comprise less than 15% of the 20,000 young people who visit the museum annually. Over the next three years, the partnership will develop new instructional materials for classroom and museum use, create workshops and seminars for teachers, offer presentations in school classrooms by museum docents and graduate students from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and provide a sequence of visits to the Oriental Institute for each of the participating teachers and their students.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

The Museum Education Program offers a wide variety of public programs designed to attract and serve diverse audiences. Adult education courses have been an important aspect of public programming for many years. In 1993, a new one-session mini-course format was adopted to complement the eight-session courses

that are offered each quarter. This season, 325 participants took part in the wide variety of courses offered by the Education Office on Saturdays and weeknights.

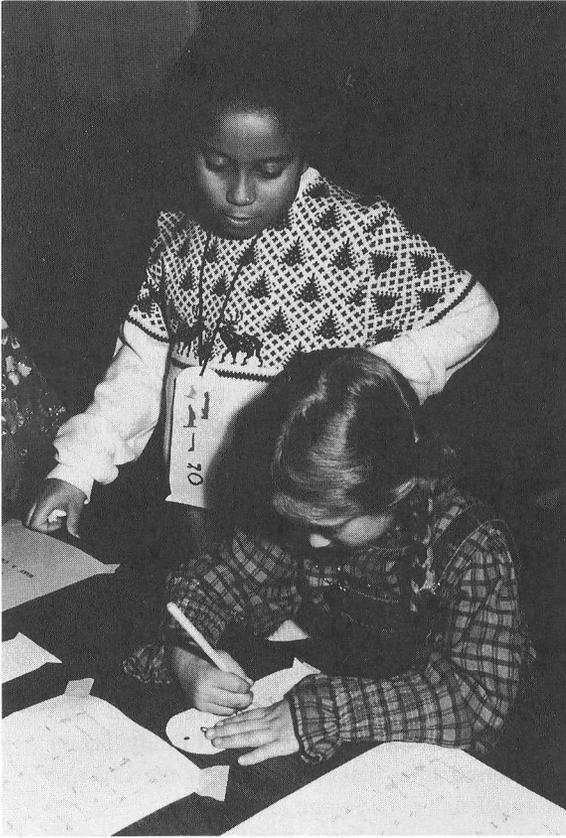
Frank Yurco's Egyptian history sequence, requiring six quarters to complete, ended with the winter quarter. Many students remained enrolled for the whole cycle. Other eight-week courses included Ancient Egyptian Architecture, taught by Emily Teeter; The Archaeology of Ancient Palestine, by James Armstrong; Guide to Giza or All You've Ever Wanted to Know About the Pyramids and the Sphinx, by Mark Lehner; Ancient Times in High Technology: The Computer and Archaeology, by John Sanders; Cleopatra's Egypt: The Ptolemaic Dynasty, by Frank Yurco; Ancient Egyptian Religion, by Frank Yurco; Hollywood on the Nile: Ancient Egypt and Egyptian Archaeology in Twentieth-Century Motion Pictures, by John Larson; Introduction to Cuneiform, by Billie Jean Collins; The World of Ancient Nubia and Sudan, by Bruce Williams; and Ancient Sailors: Navigation, Ship Building, and Trade in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean, by Frank Yurco.

Mini-courses included Gardens of the Ancient Near East, taught by Rita Picken and Mary Shea, and Masterpieces From Persia: Art From Ancient to Medieval Times, taught by Abbas Alizadeh, Paul Losensky, and special guest instructor Elsie Peck, Associate Curator of Near Eastern Art, Detroit Institute of Arts. Co-sponsored by the Smart Museum of Art, this mini-course complemented the Smart Museum's exhibition "Art of the Persian Courts: Selections from the Art and History Trust."

Hieroglyphs-by-Mail, always a popular offering, was especially sought after this year. Peter Piccione taught the course in the fall quarter, and Emily Teeter taught it in the spring. Students registered from places as close as the Chicago suburbs to such far flung spots as Canada and even Japan!

More informal adult education opportunities for the general public were available at Wednesday evening lectures and gallery talks offered by faculty, staff, and museum docents. Those who generously gave of their time included Debbie Aliber, Lanny Bell, Edward Castle, Laura D'Alessandro, Terry Friedman, Emily Teeter, Terry Wilfong, and Karen Wilson. In addition, summer special interest tours were offered by the docents every Friday morning during the months of July and August. Tours for drop-in visitors were also a regularly scheduled feature on Sunday afternoons. This year, when Valentine's Day fell on a Sunday, the docents developed a special tour called "Love and Romance in Ancient Egypt" that brought more than 200 visitors to the Oriental Institute Museum.

Participating in events at the University of Chicago has long been a part of the agenda for the Education Program. This year, the Museum Education Program once again offered gallery tours for the New Students and Parents Orientation Day in September. Museum Education and the Suq also co-sponsored a New Students' Open House, which featured tours, refreshments, and a special student discount on Suq merchandise. In October, the Museum Education Program participated in the University of Chicago's annual Humanities Open House, with docents offering tours that featured highlights of the collection. A special outreach program to the staff of the University of Chicago was a new feature this year; on Professional Secretaries' Day, Wednesday, April 21, all clerical staff members were invited to attend an after work program that included refresh-



Using a modified hieroglyphic alphabet, children learn to write their names in ancient Egyptian script. Hands-on activities for families are featured Sunday afternoons

version of ancient styles in a hands-on session at the Art Center. Additional outreach to the community's children took place when the Education Program participated once again in the annual 57th Street Children's Book Fair.

Expanded media coverage of public programming has served to widen the Oriental Institute Museum's circle of friends and visitors. Feature articles on the museum and its educational offerings appeared throughout the year in the *University of Chicago Chronicle*, *Hyde Park Herald*, *Chicago Parent Magazine*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, and *Chicago Tribune*. Quarterly press packets developed with the advice of William Harms of the University's News and Information Office helped spread the word. Aably written by Programs Assistants Terri Barbee and Kaylin Goldstein, these packets informed local media of all events taking place throughout the year. In the spring of 1993, the Membership Office and Education Program joined forces to create a new Oriental Institute brochure—a Calendar of Events that is now being produced each quarter. Every visitor can obtain a copy of the calendar in the lobby and take it home as a reminder of forthcoming events.

Sunday events for families received major media coverage this year. Begun as a pilot project by Joan Barghusen in 1991–92, Sunday afternoon family activi-

ments, a rose for every secretary, and—the highlight of the evening—a gallery tour entitled “Scribes and Secretaries of Ancient Egypt” offered by Lanny Bell.

Museum experiences for children have always been a major part of the Education Program's services for the general public. Summer special interest tours for children were offered on Thursday mornings in July and August, as they have been annually since 1982. Two winter workshops on Saturday mornings engaged seven-to-twelve-year-olds in craft activities related to museum objects. A third workshop was a parent-and-child program entitled “Jewelry for a Princess or Pharaoh.” Offered in collaboration with the Hyde Park Art Center the workshop invited children and their parents to see ancient jewelry on a tour of the museum's galleries, and then make their own ver-

ties were designed to give children and their parents the opportunity to create and to take home special craft projects related to artifacts on view in the galleries of the Oriental Institute Museum. Sunday craft activities continued this past season, under the direction of Education Program interns Amanda Geppert and Bridget Baker. Family programming was also expanded to feature a series of special events that included *Mummy's Night* on the Wednesday evening just before Halloween; *King Tut Weekend*, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb; *Discover Nubia Weekend*, with folk tales, music and dance presented by Sudanese Nubian performers; *Heroes, Goddesses, and Magic*, an afternoon of storytelling; *Chicago Day*, an annual event co-sponsored by many of the city's leading cultural institutions; and *Family Day*, a delightful afternoon of art, music, films, and hands-on activities jointly presented by the Oriental Institute Museum and the Smart Museum of Art. Close to 3,000 parents and children took part in these family events; many participants were visiting us for the first time.

Since January 1993, family programming at the Oriental Institute has been supported by a generous two-year grant from the Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust. Designed to nurture current and future generations of museum goers, the Family Programs Project is enabling the Education Program to plan, develop, and evaluate a comprehensive program of family activities at the Oriental Institute. Jerome D'Agostino, a Visitor Studies Consultant with experience at museums in several states, has been employed to determine what the needs are for family programming and to advise us on ways to create the most effective educational activities. A Ph.D. candidate in educational evaluation in the University of Chicago's Department of Education, Mr. D'Agostino has interviewed families visiting the museum about their experiences and impressions. Focus group interviews and telephone surveys will follow, to discover why families who live in the area do not visit the museum. Research results will allow the Education Program



Stonecarver Walter Arnold demonstrates ancient Egyptian carving techniques for the nearly 600 visitors who attended the joint Oriental Institute/Smart Museum Family Day in June

to plan and to implement more effective museum learning experiences that will inform and inspire young visitors and their families as they discover the fascinating world of the ancient Near East.

A new person on staff has much to learn and needs much support. Thanks go to faculty and staff for making me feel welcome during my first year.

Special appreciation goes to the docents for their genuine friendliness and their indispensable support of new programs and projects. Terri Barbee—now Special Assistant to the Women’s Board at the University of Chicago Hospitals—Catherine Dueñas, Terry Friedman, Janet Helman, and Bud Haas have spent countless hours sharing their knowledge and expertise with me. Their efforts ensure that the future of the Museum Education Program will build upon the firm foundation that was established in the past.
