

# YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

## CALGARY HAINES-TRAUTMAN

This was a year of successful experimentation and adaptation for OI Youth and Family Programs. We began the 2019–20 fiscal year with the goal of expanding our programs and experimenting with new approaches in celebration of the OI’s centennial. When the coronavirus pandemic forced the closure of the physical museum space in March, we were determined to continue engaging with our audiences through high-quality programming, this time in a virtual realm. Throughout both the centennial and the coronavirus, Youth and Family Programs have continued to serve our audiences in exciting and engaging ways. As we look to this summer and the coming academic year, we are excited to continue this new work, adapting our approaches to ensure that we remain an accessible resource for local families and schools.

### FIELD TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

The OI hosted 2,490 K–12 students across seventy-five field trips this year, engaging students in the exploration of archaeology and the ancient Near East, despite several challenges. The 2019–20 school year was one of historic disruptions—a two-week-long Chicago Teachers’ Union Strike in the fall of 2019 impacted several weeks of field trips, and the closure of the museum and all Illinois schools in March due to the coronavirus pandemic resulted in numerous field trip cancellations for the spring. Of this year’s seventy-five field trips, thirty-seven visits serving 1,291 students were hosted in part or entirely by University of Chicago student facilitators. These field trips included the Junior Archaeologist program, which makes use of the Kipper Archaeological Discovery Center, Artifact Analysis, Ancient Innovators, and Time Travelers. Junior Archaeologist was once again the most popular visit type, with nineteen programs serving 555 students—over 25 percent of our K–12 visits and over 22 percent of K-12 students. In order to expand access to our field trip program offerings, we continued to offer the Field Trip Funding Application for schools to apply for free or reduced-cost programs. This year, six schools serving 243 students made use of this program.

Figure 1. Part of the Amplify Arts Learning Toolkit, the “Virtual Tours of the Oriental Institute Museum” packet contains information on OI resources and numerous lesson plans and extension activities for students.

#### VIRTUAL TOURS OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MUSEUM

Visit the Oriental Institute (OI) from home on your computer or mobile device! You can view online exhibitions, go on a self-guided tour, and even do a virtual walk-through of the galleries. Then, use the included worksheets to take a closer look at some of the artifacts you’ve seen and explore life in the ancient world.

#### OI ENCURATE TOUR APP

Explore the OI from home with interactive maps and customizable self-guided tours on themes like architecture, fashion in the ancient world, and highlights of the collections.

Learn more and download the free app for iOS or Android at [oi.uchicago.edu/encurate](http://oi.uchicago.edu/encurate).



#### THE OI ON GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE



See online exhibits on topics like the Book of the Dead, hieroglyphs, and the ancient city of Persepolis; plus, you can browse collections from the OI. You can also take a virtual tour through the galleries.

Explore at [artsandculture.google.com/partner/the-oriental-institute](https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/the-oriental-institute).

Adapted from The Oriental Institute Field Trip Planning & Exhibition Guide | [oi.uchicago.edu/visit/educators](http://oi.uchicago.edu/visit/educators)



We continued to partner with the Amplify Collective for multi-site field trip experiences on campus. Working in coalition with the Smart Museum of Art, Arts + Public Life, Court Theater, and Logan Center for the Arts, we planned and ran field trip experiences for students and professional-development opportunities for teachers. Due to the Chicago Teachers Union strike and the coronavirus pandemic, several planned multi-site field trips between the OI and the Smart Museum were canceled, but we were still able to host 173 students from three schools for these engaging, expanded visits. The OI also partnered with the Logan Center for the first time for a multi-site field trip; students enjoyed a matinee performance and pizza lunch at the Logan Center, then traveled to the OI for an afternoon tour. After the coronavirus shutdown, the OI partnered with Amplify to create an Arts Learning Resource Packet for teachers to access online. Through this packet, teachers can find several lesson plans and activities that incorporate OI resources like the IDB, Google Arts and Culture page, and Encurate mobile app (fig. 1).

Our field trip programs would not be possible without our University of Chicago student facilitators, who lead a variety of K–12 field trips as well as weekend family programs. This year, Catie Witt worked as the Education Program facilitator lead. Working with her were Education Program facilitators Andres Cruz LeLand, Kirsten Forsberg, Melaina Leung, Sophia Lubarr, Sarah Mason, and Stephanie Reitzig. Facilitators also contributed to an important project in summer 2019, re-

ABOVE: Figure 2. Public Programs Volunteer Joshua Beirich helps a young Mummies Night attendee remove the brain from our dummy mummy during a Mummy Simulation.

OPPOSITE TOP: Figure 3. Friends and families compete to wrap their “mummy” in toilet paper the fastest during a Mummy Wrap Race at Mummies Night.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Figure 4. OI docent Rachel Mustafa shows a group of Mummies Night visitors the mummy of Meresamun during a Mummy Tour.

Photos: Steven Townshend.





ABOVE: Figure 5. Storyteller Jasmin Cardenas leads an interactive story about mummies around the world during Mummies Night. Photo: Steven Townshend.

vising the Ancient Innovators field trip program. As our newest program, we recognized areas for improvement and sought to enhance the learning experience for students. Sophia Lubarr, assisted by Catie Witt, led the revisions and testing of the new program format, which was debuted in fall 2019.

This year, the OI also began a partnership with Chicago Communities in Schools (CIS), a drop-out-prevention organization that connects at-risk students with opportunities for community engagement. Through CIS, the OI is able to offer free field trip programs to schools across the city, many of which have never before engaged with the OI. We look forward to continuing our partnership with CIS and expanding access to the OI for Chicago Public Schools students.

Several changes were also made to our online tour booking process. The software we previously used to process field trip and tour requests was retired in December 2019, and we transitioned to a new system that offers an improved customer experience and increased flexibility when booking. We also added a page on our Tours and Group Visits website for the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, in order to clarify their special position as a University-of-Chicago-affiliated K-12 group.

OPPOSITE LEFT: Figure 6. Museum Curator Kiersten Neumann answers a young visitor's question after leading a tour of the Persian Gallery during the Nowruz Celebration.

OPPOSITE RIGHT: Figure 7. A member of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, Houshmand Sharyari, explains the objects and symbolism of the *Haft-seen* table to a family at the Nowruz Celebration.

Photos: Steven Townshend.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Beginning the year of centennial celebrations, we sought to improve, expand, and experiment with our program offerings. Youth and Family's largest annual program, Mummies Night, was one of our first programs created with the centennial celebration in mind. Billed as "Mummies Night: 100 Years of Mummies!" we sought to bring the centennial theme into our annual celebration of mummies through an expanded program and centennial-themed activities. Despite a cold, rainy, and windy night, 482 attendees came to the event. With funding from the Office of the Provost through the Diversity and Inclusion RFP, we were able to achieve our goal of significantly expanding our program offerings while maintaining free entry. We continued our ever-popular features, including mummy tours (fig. 2), mummy simulations (fig. 3), a DJ, crafts, a photo-booth, games (fig. 4), and scavenger hunts. New this year was the "Cartouche Café," a free café with snacks on the OI's second-floor landing, created so that families could relax and grab something to eat during the event. We were also able to hire a children's storyteller, Jasmine Cardenas, who performed an original story about mummies in South America, created just for the event (fig. 5). These new features were a huge success, and we hope to be able to continue to offer these types of expansions in future Mummies Nights.





Figure 8. A parent and child enjoy a taste of Persian tea and sweets on traditional Persian tea house seating at the Nowruz Celebration. Photo: Steven Townshend



Figure 9. Dancers from the Chicago Persian School perform on the stage of Breasted Hall during the Nowruz Celebration. Photo: Steven Townshend.

Our second-largest program of the year, the Nowruz Celebration, was used as another opportunity to expand programming and experiment with new ideas as part of the centennial. We again worked with the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago and the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America to plan the event, and these organizations provided greatly appreciated funding as well. While attendance was somewhat dampened compared to last year due to concerns about the coronavirus, around 200 people came to enjoy tours (fig. 6), crafts, games, food, performances, and a traditional *Haft-seen* table display (fig. 7). In the spirit of the centennial, we expanded the usual Persian Tea House sampling station into a larger area on the second floor with more space for people to sit and relax (fig. 8). Adding to the festivities was a performance by the dance class of the Chicago Persian School and a screening of the film *The Spirit of Nowruz* (fig. 9). We also collaborated with the Middle Eastern Music Ensemble; eight musicians performed at the event and entertained guests with a forty-five-minute concert of beautiful Persian music (fig. 14). We are excited to continue to deepen partnerships with community organizations and build new connections with other groups through this new annual tradition.

We continued to offer low-cost family workshops throughout July through February, hosting 9 workshops for 167 participants (figs. 10, 11). Free drop-in programs ran from July through March, and then transitioned into on-line workshops in the month of May (figs. 12, 13). We offered a total of fourteen programs with an audience of 1,150 attendees. While plans for a special centennial edition of Junior

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Figure 10. Junior archaeologists dig into our simulated dig site in the Kipper Archaeological Discovery Center during a family workshop. Figure 11. Catie Witt leads visitors through translating a name on the Min and Riya stela during an Intro to Hieroglyphs family workshop. Figure 12. Children work together to translate the hieroglyphs on the back of the statue of King Tutankhamun during a What's Up, King Tut? family program. Figure 13. Families collaborate to recreate a life-sized Egyptian mural using a grid drawing technique at a One. Big. Egyptian. Mural. family program.





Archaeologist in May—focusing on the newer digital aspects of archaeology—were canceled due to the coronavirus closures, we had the opportunity to experiment with bringing our interactive, hands-on programs to people in their homes through Zoom. These programs were successful and well attended and will set the stage for more virtual programs in summer 2020 and onward.

Youth and Family Education also worked to reach our audiences in new ways and with new types of programming this year. In July 2019, we partnered with local author Malayna Evans for a special edition of the Secret of the Mummies program, featuring her new mid-grade chapter book, *Jagger Jones and the Mummy's Ankh* (fig. 15). In January 2020, Calgary Haines-Trautman hosted a Lunchtime Gallery Talk on the development of the latest youth program, *Nubia: Land of the Bow*, illustrating the theory and planning that goes into creating programming for youth audiences (fig. 16). To create more ways for visitors to interact in the galleries, we also planned to restart the Discovery Cart interactive in the galleries, which would allow visitors to touch real ancient pottery sherds and work with a volunteer facilitator to use archaeological thinking to learn about the artifacts. Over twenty volunteers signed up to complete a training scheduled for late March, 2020. Due to the coronavirus, these plans were put on hold, though the training resources are ready and the volunteers are eager to learn this new way to engage our visitors. We hope to be able to offer these resources again when it is safe to do so. In an effort to better serve one of our





TOP: Figure 14. Musicians from the Middle East Music Ensemble perform Persian music in Breasted Hall during the Nowruz Celebration.

Photo: Steven Townshend

OPPOSITE LEFT: Figure 15. Author Malayna Evans reads to a group of families from her newly released book, *Jagger Jones and the Mummy's Ankh* at a special centennial edition of Secret of the Mummies.

OPPOSITE RIGHT: Figure 16. Catie Witt shows a group of visitors replicas of Nubian artifacts during the second run of the Nubia: Land of the Bow family program.

BOTTOM LEFT: Figure 17. The cover of the new Museum Explorers Guide, a booklet that guides visitors through the museum with activities and interesting information about each gallery, presented in a fun, kid-friendly format.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Figure 18. A two-page spread from the Museum Explorers Guide, featuring information about the statue of King Tutankhamun and an activity about Egyptian hieroglyphs.

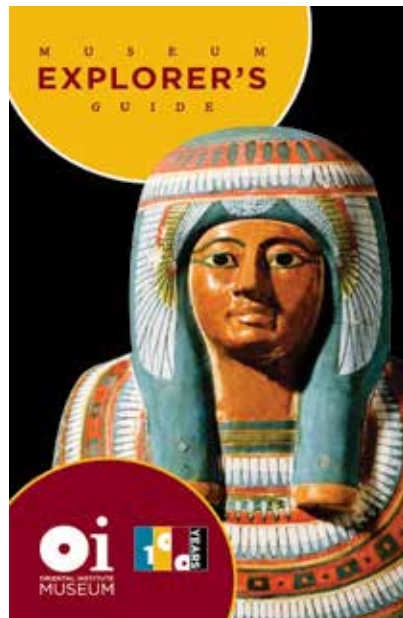




Figure 19. Children at the Millennium Park Family Fun Festival try their hand at making clay pots based on images of clay vessels from the OI's collections.

key audiences, we also created a special section of our website devoted to Girl Scout programs and patches, simplifying the process for Girl Scout troops to book private workshops and earn badges in our public programs.

As part of the centennial, we were also thrilled to publish and offer a new in-gallery resource for families, the *Museum Explorer's Guide*, which took the place of the previously offered Family Activity Cards. The guide aligns with the updates made in the Gallery Enhancements Project, and includes interactive activities and interesting information on each gallery, presented in an engaging, kid-friendly format (figs. 17, 18).

Our public programs would not be possible without our dedicated and talented Public Program volunteers. In 2019–20, we had four new Public Program volunteers join the Education Team: Joshua Beirich, José Hernandez, Samantha Suppes, and Theresa Tiliakos. Volunteers assisted with thirteen programs and served over 210 hours. We are excited to have Samantha Suppes continue her work with OI Education in a new role next year, as an Education Program facilitator.



Figure 20. A summer camp group and other visitors at the Millennium Family Fun Festival participate in a mummy simulation led by Catie Witt and Sophia Lubarr.

## OUTREACH

Outreach continues to be an important goal for Youth and Family Programs, and this year provided ample opportunity for the OI to share our resources and museum with new audiences.

We began the year with the Millennium Park Family Fun Festival in July 2019, where the OI hosted a week of programming for families visiting Millennium Park. Each day, we offered a different activity, ranging from making clay pots, to weaving recycled “T-shirt yarn,” to constructing funerary models out of recycled materials (fig. 19). We also offered multiple mummy simulations each day, alternately delighting and grossing out the tourists brave enough to reach into our dummy mummy to pull out a plush organ (fig. 20). Three thousand people came to the Fun Festival that week and engaged with our programming and materials. That summer, we also hosted pre-movie activities for thirty participants at a Movies on the Midway event, and we advertised our programs at Hyde Park’s Silver Room Block Party.

We published more virtual content than ever before, beginning during the shutdown of the galleries in March 2020. Working closely with Membership and Adult and Continuing Education, we created activities to align with a weekly theme, published as a workbook each week on the OI’s social media and website. These scavenger hunts, coloring sheets, crafts, and other activities bring the OI into people’s homes and promote engagement with our collections and the museum even

## DECODE THE MAGIC ON A MUMMY CASE

This inner coffin of the mummy of Meresamun is covered in magical symbols and text to help her get to the afterlife. Take a look at her mummy case, then use these symbols as inspiration to create a mummy case on the next page.

The Four Sons of Horus are minor gods who watch over the internal organs of the mummy. These are the same gods often shown on canopic jars where a mummy's organs were sometimes stored.

The Sons of Horus on Meresamun's coffin each carry a feather, an emblem of truth.

The falcon god Re with a sun disk on his forehead symbolized the cycle of the rising and setting of the sun, which ancient Egyptians associated with rebirth.

The Horus falcon carries the hieroglyph for eternity in each talon.

The Djed Pillar, the backbone of Osiris, brings strength and stability.

An image of a calf on the footboard, likely related to the god Apis, and a symbol of strength.

Winged serpents with sun disks were symbols of protection.

The Eye of Horus, or Wedjat eye, symbol of health.

Ram, a pun on the ancient Egyptian word for "soul," or a god.

The Tiet or Isis Knot, a symbol for health and well-being.

Jackal god, Wepwawet, protector of ancient Egyptian cemeteries.

Hieroglyphs tell us Meresamun's name and also record an offering formula to help Meresamun in the afterlife.

Figure 21. An example online family activity, "Decode the Magic on a Mummy Case," from the Magic Workbook, created as part of our themed weekly series of online activities, lectures, and readings that help our patrons stay connected even when the physical OI Museum is closed.

while we are closed (fig. 21). We look forward to continuing to offer expanded online resources while coronavirus limits our in-person engagement, and when we are able to reopen, we hope to continue some of these offerings in order to reach people who live outside of the Chicago area.