

The Institute Museum

THOUGH HIGHLY SPECIALIZED, the Institute Museum makes an important contribution to the midwestern scene as the finest collection of objects of Near Eastern art and archeology this side of the Appalachians. The Museum has continued to improve its holdings and to expand its services to the Greater Chicago community. Attendance increased from 39,190 in 1955-56 to 43,608 in 1956-57. There was a steady flow of distinguished visitors. Invited groups, such as the Evanston Study Group and the Comptrollers Association of America, were given special attention.

An important new step, long overdue, was taken with the appointment of a Docent who was available for guided tours of the Museum and through whom an initial effort was made to increase its use by schools in the Greater Chicago area. The scope of the Docent's work was necessarily limited in this first year to the more accessible of the private schools in our midst, though groups from other institutions were accommodated on equal terms upon their own application. Here are the statistics on visits to the Museum by school groups:

	<i>Grade Schools</i>	<i>High Schools</i>	<i>College and Seminary</i>	<i>Other Institutions</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Number of groups	48	35	13	70	166
Number of persons	1,634	1,389	328	1,800	5,151

These results are highly gratifying, indicating that the collections of the Museum can readily be correlated with the study of history, art, society, geography, and religion at the many levels of education. The work did point up some of the shortcomings of the Institute for this educational program, particularly in the lack of space for exhibits and project workshops for the younger of the children's groups.

During the year many new objects were added to the Museum Collections. As usual, the largest number came from the archeological expeditions of the Institute itself. Important in this connection were the new finds from Nippur, including the

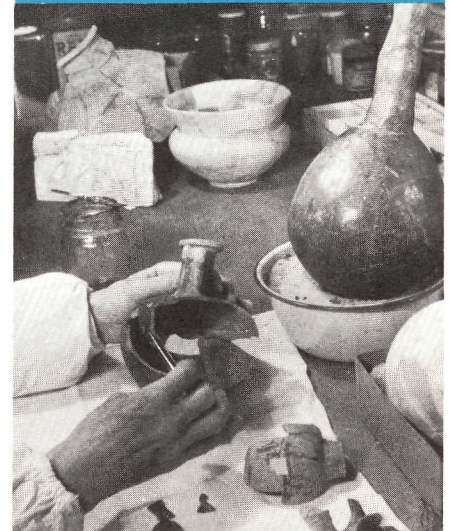
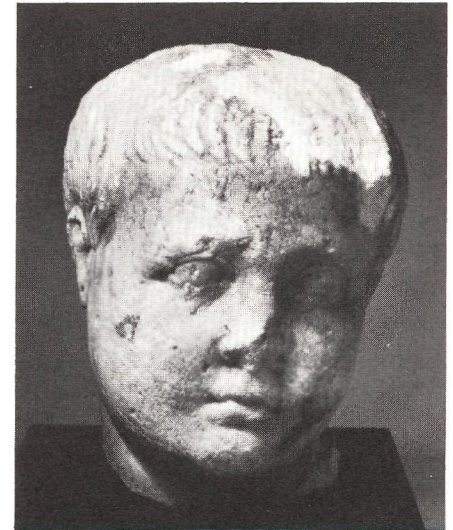
foundation deposits in bronze and stone from the Temple of Inanna built by Urnammu and Shulgi. An important collection of ancient pottery from Cyprus was obtained by exchange with the local Department of Antiquities and was exhibited in January, 1957. Valuable objects of art in bronze and gold—a gold bracelet, a gold ring, and a silver ax—came as the gift of Mrs. Chauncey Borland. With money from Membership Income the Curator, Professor Delougaz, purchased for the Museum a significant terra-cotta mold, two bronze oxen from Anatolia, a sculptured ram, a rare glazed terra-cotta statuette of a rider from Egypt, and several cylinder seals.

A special gift to the Institute from a member of its Visiting Committee made possible a study of ways and means of improving the exhibition of the Khorsabad reliefs in the Assyrian Hall. Consultation was had with the Consulting Architect of the University, and the matter is under advisement by the Visiting Committee.

In the workshops of the Museum and the Institute, as well as in the administration of the Membership program, special assistance was given by volunteer workers, Mrs. John Livingood of Hinsdale and Mrs. Theodore Tieken and Mrs. E. Lee Strohl of Chicago. Their services are greatly appreciated.

That the Museum needs to expand its facilities to serve its educational and research functions is becoming increasingly clear as more and more use of them is made. In the basement are needed, above all, installations that would provide for the study of ancient pottery materials by advanced students in archeology—a special pottery laboratory. Somehow, ways must be found to increase the general exhibition space and to provide special exhibitions and project workrooms for grade- and high-school student groups. More extensive funds for the purchase of particularly rare pieces of ancient oriental art coming to our attention through dealers are also high on the list of continuing needs. Museums must grow and move with the times, especially those of the more highly specialized type.

Roman head in marble, Baalbek, Lebanon



Assistant Preparator in Institute Museum