

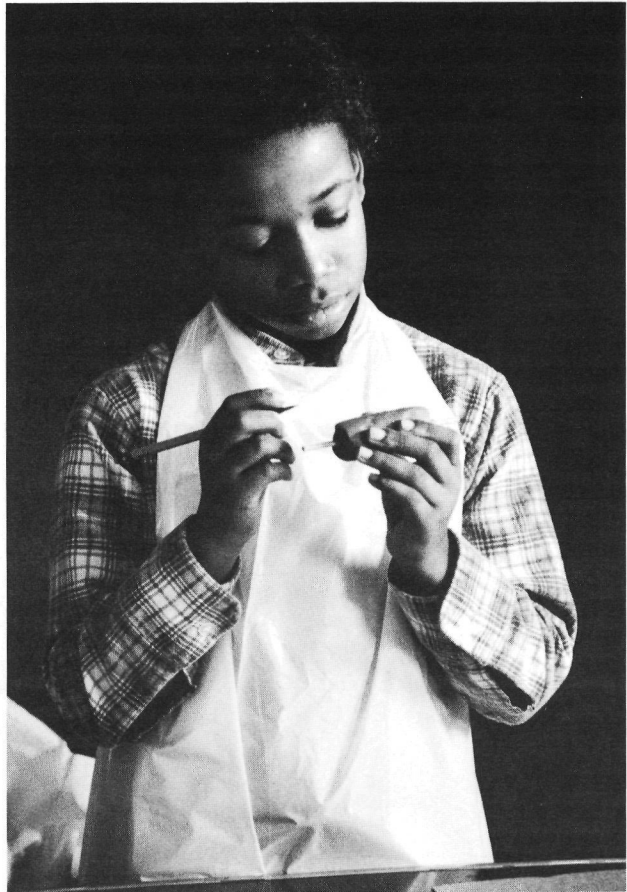


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## Museum Education Program

*Joan D. Barghusen*

A major effort of the Museum Education Program this past year, and a very gratifying one, was the Summer Institute for Secondary School Teachers, sponsored jointly by the Museum Education Office of the Oriental Institute and the Illinois Humanities Council and supported in part by a grant from IHC. Entitled "Before the Greeks: Origins of Civilization in the Ancient Near East," this Institute brought 26 Chicago-area high school teachers to the Oriental Institute for three weeks in July. The teachers came from both public and private schools in Chicago and its suburbs; they taught social studies, art history and humanities courses; many had Master's degrees and years of teaching experience; a few were just beginning their teaching careers. Morning lectures gave them



*A participant in the Children's Workshop on Cylinder Seals carefully carves out his design in clay.  
(Photograph by Herbert Barghusen)*

a comprehensive and up-to-date background in the history of the ancient Near East. In the afternoons, they heard slide lectures on special topics, attended gallery tours, participated in discussions based on ancient texts, and studied in the Institute archives. More than a dozen Institute scholars and a like number of docents participated in sessions with the teachers. Research Associate Richard Zettler was the primary instructor for the Summer Institute, giving the morning lectures and overseeing the choice of student research paper topics. Other faculty members, research associates and graduate students who helped with the Summer Institute included James Armstrong, Lanny Bell, Robert Braidwood, Donna Freilich, McGuire Gibson, Joseph Greene, John Larson, Rob-

ert Ritner, Bruce Williams, William Murnane, Silvin Košak, Jack Foster, Charles Jones, John Brinkman, and Douglas Esse. Several docents participated in the gallery study and hosted the luncheon gatherings; included were Mary Jo Khuri, Mary Shea, Debby Aliber, Georgie Maynard, Kitty Picken, Rita Picken, Dianne Haines and Lilian Cropsey. In administration and management of the logistics of the program, as well as in the gallery study sessions and luncheon arrangements Volunteer Chairman Janet Helman was an invaluable aid. Peggy Grant, the former Volunteer Chairman, also helped with administrative tasks related to the Summer Institute.

Teachers in the Summer Institute were given an opportunity to review curriculum materials available through the

*Education  
Coordinator Joan  
Barghusen puts up  
participants'  
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session of the  
"Sketching is Seeing"  
program for teen-  
agers.  
(Photograph by  
Herbert Barghusen)*



Museum Education Office, such as films, slide talks and mini-Museum loan boxes, and each teacher was given a copy of the Oriental Institute Advanced Level Teacher's Kit. Several of the teachers later brought their classes to visit the Museum, in some cases using the gallery guide sheets from the Teacher's Kit; some arranged to see films or use slide talks or loan boxes. When the teachers came together again at a seminar in late October to share insights and curriculum ideas, many indicated that texts read and materials acquired as part of their summer study had been directly useful in their classroom work.

The goal of the Summer Institute was to teach the teachers about the history of the ancient Near East and its often unknown contributions to the origins of Western civilization so they, in turn, would be able to teach topics in this field to their students. Judging from the evaluations of the teachers attending, that goal was achieved. Quite unanimously the teachers expressed their approval of the program, their appreciation of the opportunity for study that it afforded them, and its usefulness to their teaching. One teacher stated at the end of the Institute, ". . . before this summer I was afraid of teaching about the ancient Near East, and now I'm enthused and inspired. Quite a transformation!"

Fall 1984 marked the publication of the art manual *Art Projects from the Oriental Institute Museum*. Designed primarily for teachers but useful to parents as well, this manual offers instructions, patterns and background information for ten art projects developed in the popular Saturday morning workshops for children aged 6–12. Among the projects are a pyramid model to be built of cardboard, a sock doll to be dressed in Egyptian style, jewelry of gold foil in various ancient Near Eastern motifs, a cardboard reproduction of the ivory gameboard from Megiddo, cylinder seals made of clay, a tapestry inspired by the striding lion wall carving from Persepolis, an Egyptian cartouche with names in hieroglyphs, clay pots in imitation of ancient ones, and amulets including the famous Pazuzu, in the form of a puppet with flapping wings. The attractive format and lively drawings in this manual are the work of Joan Hives, whose volunteer efforts on behalf of the Museum Education Office are prodigious, indispensable and warmly appreciated. A teacher workshop in February brought together approximately fifteen teachers who spent the afternoon making a sample project of their choice from the manual preparatory to doing the project in their classrooms. As he left, one enthusiastic teacher queried, "When is the next workshop?"

Fall is always a busy time for the Education and Volunteer Office, with a full schedule of school tours and unending

phone calls to make appointments, reserve materials or just to ask for information. Demands on the Education Coordinator and Volunteer Chairman were lightened with the addition of Esther Wicker, our cheerful, competent and compatible work-study student whose nine hours in the office each week freed us from many telephone and clerical chores.



*An artist at work in the "Sketching Is Seeing" program. (Photograph by Herbert Barghusen)*

The Education Office took a small step into the world of high technology by changing its mailing list from an old-fashioned card system to a new mailing-label system entered on a word-processor, which greatly facilitates making additions and changes to the list. The mysteries of this task were performed by docent Roberta Tracy who, in addition to her regular duties as a volunteer guide, has taken on the special task of volunteer for the Education Coordinator. Roberta also works with the Saturday morning workshops for children, our popular children's program offered in the winter months. Taking a hint from these activity-oriented workshops, we augmented the summertime Thursday morning special interest tours for children this past summer with a "Paper and Pencil Activity" after each tour. Given pencil, backing board and activity sheet, the children move around the galleries on their own sketching and answering questions as the activity sheet directs.

Again this year, as in most recent years past, the Museum Education Program has enjoyed the support of a grant from the Illinois Arts Council. Among the new projects funded this year is the Featured Object program. The Arts Council grant helps to pay for the production of a four-page brochure giving information about an object selected from the permanent collection as the "Featured Object" for a four-month period of time. The brochures are available free of charge to the visiting public. The first object, featured in Spring 1985, was an important but undistinguished-looking and often overlooked wooden rod that originally formed part of an ancient astronomical instrument, made and inscribed in the time of King Tutankhamun. Egyptologist John Larson, the Museum Archivist, researched and wrote the brochure for this object and participated in a workshop which also in-

*A teacher in the  
Teacher's Workshop  
on the Art Projects  
Manual constructs  
her own pyramid  
model as a learning  
process and a  
prototype for the  
classroom.  
(Photograph by  
Herbert Barghusen)*



cluded Sara Genuth, Assistant Curator of the History of Astronomy at Adler Planetarium, who presented a slide lecture about astronomical knowledge and its use in ancient Egypt. The second "Featured Object," highlighted during Summer 1985, is the display of embossed bronze bands from Khor-sabad, the fortress capital of the Assyrian King Sargon II. This material was prepared by Research Associate Richard Zettler.

A second new project supported by the Illinois Arts Council grant was the the Sketching is Seeing program, a drawing workshop for 12–18 year olds. This was our first program developed especially for a teen-aged audience, outside of school visits. Fourteen young people, mostly high school students, came to the Museum for six three-hour sessions on consecutive Saturday afternoons in April and May. At each session they were given a brief tour of selected objects reflecting a theme for the session, after which they sketched objects of their own choice in the galleries. Drawing instruction was given by Sarah Burnham Mertz, a Hyde Park artist and art teacher. The tours were given by the Education Coordinator and docent Marianne Ford. At the end of the program a reception and viewing of art work was held, and a display of drawings was mounted in the Museum lobby wall cases for visitors to see throughout the summer of 1985.

Outreach to the general adult audience includes the Sunday afternoon free film series supported in part by the Illinois Arts Council grant. A new film, "Egypt's Pyramids: Houses of Eternity," was added to the series rotation this year. Another adult education program, the Members' Courses, received special attention from the press when the *Chicago Tribune* featured the Winter Quarter Courses in an article in their Friday Arts Section in early January. The Education Program itself was the subject of another *Chicago Tribune* article, the lead article in the City Trib Section of January 23. To continue to provide and to improve those services to schools and to the general public of all ages, remains the primary goal of the Museum Education Program. As I recount the past year's projects, I am reminded once again of the extent to which the endeavors of the Education Office rest on the time, energy and talent of docents, staff and faculty, all of whom lend themselves generously to the important function of sharing the world of the Museum with the visiting public. It is truly a collaborative effort.