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PENNSYLVANIA  
MUSEUM  
of Archaeology and  
Anthropology

FOUNDED 1887

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## MUSINGS AND VISIONS FROM THE MUSEUM

Perhaps the most self-evident aspect of the University of Pennsylvania Museum's mission is stewardship of the artifacts in our care. While this task has its gray areas and technical complexities, the charge is pretty straightforward. It is embedded in the meaning of the very word "museum." Our mission also includes research. We pursue it aggressively, and we proudly present the results to you in the pages of this magazine.

Yet preserving artifacts and doing research are sterile activities unless they are put to some educational purpose. The least understood piece of the Museum's mission is our commitment to education.

Two things happened recently that shed light on what we mean by education. Karen Vellucci, head of Museum Publications, announced that her department will have published at least 8 new books this fiscal year. These volumes include excavation reports from the sites of Gordion (2 volumes), Hasanlu, Malyan, Pseira, Combe Capelle, and Tikal, as well as a new volume in the international series CVA (Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum) based on our Mediterranean Section vase collection. Such books are new contributions to the corpus of human knowledge about archaeology and anthropology. Placing these important bodies of information and thought into the hands of professional scholars and serious amateurs fulfills our educational mandate at its highest level.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the educational continuum (and, it so happens, at the other end of the building), our Education Department received *Philadelphia Magazine's* Best of Philly award for "educational workshops that are actually fun" for children. These workshops, conceived and led by Elizabeth Straw to give 8 to 12 year-olds an appreciation for world cultures and the human past, have covered such topics as Chinese painting, Indonesian shadow puppets, Amazonian featherworking, pueblo pottery, Egyptian embalming, and many others. With the past and present of the entire human race to draw upon, Betsy will probably run out of strength before she runs out of exciting ideas.

We take our educational mission seriously and define it broadly. Graduate students are not our entry-level scholars, elementary school students are. If we catch their interest, we may one day publish their books. If we do our work well they will feel at home in the multicultural future that awaits them. They may continue to think of museums as exciting and relevant places. Who knows? They may even subscribe to Expedition.

*Stephen M. Epstein*  
Associate Director



Young people learning about the Dayaks of the Borneo rainforest from Janet Levitt during a Saturday workshop tour. Elizabeth Straw is pictured at the right rear.

*Photo by Adam Gordon*