Aptly named the Vagabond Acting Troupe, this dynamic ensemble (as illustrated in the photographs) enthralled Penn Museum visitors with in-gallery performances of "Three Worlds Intertwined," a newly commissioned work, over five weekends in March and April of 2003. The program was part of the opening festivities surrounding "Worlds Intertwined: Etruscans, Greeks and Romans," a new suite of galleries. On October 27, 2003, "Three Worlds Intertwined" was honored with a Barrymore Award for theater excellence: the newly established "Ted and Stevie Wolf New Approaches to Collaboration Award."

Pam Kosty is Assistant Director for Public Information at the Penn Museum.

UPM Researcher Tracks Changing Global Culture of the Latter-day Saints

In my continuing research on the culture of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), I attended the 173rd Semi-Annual General Conference held in October 2003 in Salt Lake City, Utah. In his "state of the church" address, President Gordon B. Hinckley emphasized the worldwide influence and reach of the LDS Church, noting that conference proceedings were being broadcast by satellite in more than 50 different languages to an international church. He emphasized the strength of congregations on every continent and armies of volunteer missionaries, now numbering more than 60,000 in more than 120 nations. Moreover, Hinckley spoke of how the LDS church has joined many other faiths in humanitarian work around the world, using contributions given by members above and beyond tithing.

In addition, this conference marked a period of tremendous growth in the number of LDS temples in operation, under construction, or to be constructed, with temples now exceeding 129 around the world. More than half have been dedicated in the past decade, making LDS temples more accessible to the worldwide membership.

Hinckley also spoke about a new LDS program, the Perpetual Education Fund, that assists returned, indigenous missionaries of less developed countries in gaining education and training that can help them qualify for better local employment after they complete their missionary service. About 10,000 loans have been granted since the program was announced at the end of March 2001.

The Perpetual Education Fund provides refundable grants-in-aid for education in local areas around the globe.
These conference reports and developments signal several of the ways in which the LDS church is becoming a global religion while wrestling with local cultures and worldly problems.

**Melvyn Hammerberg** is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania and a Consulting Curator in the Penn Museum’s American Section. He has been conducting anthropological research on the LDS Church since the early 1970s.

### Reflection from the Welcoming Reception for International Students and Scholars

International Classroom (IC) is an amazing program that promotes the mutual understanding of multicultural knowledge in the Greater Delaware Valley. On October 24, 2003, IC held a Welcoming Reception for International Students and Scholars. This was my first time both helping out and attending this annual event. I had so much fun meeting people from all over the world and tasting exotic foods of different countries.

This reception attracted more than 900 people from 111 countries and helped bring all of us closer together. The participants enjoyed the multicultural interaction and the ancient treasures of the Museum. It provided us with an unforgettable opportunity to meet people of various cultures and values. I hope to participate again next year!

**Renee Chang** is an International Classroom Program Intern at the Penn Museum.

### Conservation Grant for Maya Polychrome Vessels

The Museum has received a grant from the J. Paul Getty Trust for the conservation of a unique collection of Maya polychrome ceramic vessels from the highlands of Guatemala. The vessels, dating from ca. A.D. 700-900, were collected for the Museum at the beginning of the 20th century. Conservation will be done by Museum Conservator Lynn Grant.

**Elin Danien** is a Research Associate in the American Section at the Penn Museum.