

UNESCO & the GOVERNMENT OF PORTUGAL
World Conference on Arts Education
Building Creative Capacities for the 21st Century

Lisbon, 6 – 9 March 2006

Identification form for the submission of papers on Arts Education
(research/case studies/experiences of best practices)
to be posted on the *Lea International website*
(<http://www.unesco.org/culture/lea>)

Partnership

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Title of the Paper, including a short abstract:

A Summary of American Museum Policy From 1960 to the Present

Short abstract:

American museums have always had a symbiotic relationship with the forces that have shaped contemporary society and mirror concurrent educational trends. The chronological development of policy effecting the role that museums now play has drastically changed over the past half century to the present in the United States. An overview of the history of American museum policy leading up to more recent developments will be presented, analyzed and discussed in light of the important role that education has now assumed in museum programming. This discussion will be based on a review of the (AAM) American Association of Museum's policies and mandates.

Long abstract:

Since their inception in the late nineteenth century, one overtly stated goal of American museums as defined in their mission statements has been education. However, the educational motivations and manifestations of American museums have often been covert or subtle, and pursued in informal and unstructured ways. Historically, the central preoccupation of American museums has been more closely related to their function as repositories of culture than actually educating the masses. Education has frequently been regarded as an ambiguous concept by museum directors and museum educators, as this term is applied to museum aims and operations. The dominant philosophies of museums can best be detected by their operations and programs rather

than by their written treaties.

Throughout the history of American museums, the term education has meant different things at different times. In the late nineteenth century, American museums believed that their educational mission was to serve the needs of industry, history and scientific inquiry and to provide enculturation and aesthetic appreciation. During the 20th century, goals have expanded to include moral uplift, the interdisciplinary humanities, opportunities for life long learning, social reform, creative expression, cultural history, patriotism, and other innovative educational philosophies which reflect the concerns of society throughout the decades. In conjunction with these educational objectives, museums have attempted to establish strong ties with other academic institutions including libraries, schools, colleges, and universities as well as civic or public organizations.

Please complete this form and return it, not later than 30 September 2005, to:

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*You will be informed by December 2005 whether or not your paper
will be posted on the website.*