

# Education

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During fiscal year 2008, the Museum organized and presented 21,467 educational events and programs. Programs took place throughout the institution—in the galleries, in the Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education, at The Cloisters museum and gardens—as well as in schools, community centers, libraries, and other locations throughout the New York metropolitan region. Some 858,533 individuals participated in the Metropolitan’s educational activities.

The central event of the year occurred on October 23, 2007, when the Museum opened the new Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education. The Center was under renovation for three years, a period during which educational work continued in modified form even in the absence of classrooms and other teaching spaces. Containing over 25,000 square feet of reconfigured space, the new Uris Center features: Diane W. Burke Hall, Nolen Library, Carson Family Hall, Bonnie J. Sacerdote Lecture Hall, and Carroll Classroom, as well as a seminar room, art study room, studio, and multipurpose classroom. The Center is also equipped to document and archive lectures and presentations and to support distance learning and videoconferencing. Activity in the Center spans every constituency and is based on both a deepening continuity of the valued traditions that have shaped the Museum’s educational work to date, and innovations made possible in the new configuration.

One of the most important activities that occurs in the Center is welcoming school groups, and we are most grateful for Lewis and Dorothy Cullman’s generous leadership support of the Metropolitan’s school tours program. School class visits to the main building and The Cloisters numbered 5,887, comprising 178,826 students. Students in the main building found a warm welcome in the new Carson Family Hall, which set the stage for a meaningful Museum experience. Teachers participated in 125 workshops, including noteworthy distance-learning initiatives in which blended programs involved online learning as well as onsite investigations. For families, 1,135 programs were offered, making great use of the Uris Center facilities through new programs incorporating art making in painting, watercolor, and other wet media not possible before. The new Nolen Library was a magnet for visitors, especially families, who enjoyed the Children’s Reading Room and the computer displays.

Research and scholarship are central to the Museum’s identity. This year the Metropolitan supported fifty-six residential fellowships for study in art history, conservation, and scientific research by senior scholars and advanced graduate students from around the world. Fellows presented their findings in a series of colloquia throughout the spring. Educators and curators also planned eight Scholars’ Days throughout the year in conjunction with exhibitions, providing an outstanding opportunity for scholarly discourse. Four major international symposia were open to the public: “Tapestry in the Baroque: Threads of Splendor”; “The Gates of Paradise: Lorenzo Ghiberti’s Renaissance Masterpiece”; “The Past, Present, and Future of the Period Room—A Symposium in Honor of the Re-opening of the Wrightsman Galleries for French Decorative Arts”; and “Superheroes: Fashion and Fantasy.” The Museum’s Grants Committee reviewed internal applications for tuition reimbursement and travel grants to further Museum staff in continued scholarship. Staff exchange programs this year included the Hermitage Museum, the Kremlin Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Dresden State Art Collections. Training

opportunities for students included college- and graduate-level internships at the main building and at The Cloisters, as well as high school internships. In all, the Museum welcomed some three hundred interns.

The Metropolitan presented twenty-five Sunday at the Met programs, which are designed around a flexible format including lectures, film, panel discussions, literary readings, and occasionally music and dance. Highlights included a standing room-only event for “The Age of Rembrandt: Dutch Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art” and programs for the World Science Festival. In addition, numerous smaller-scale, highly focused lectures took place throughout the year. Gallery talks and other seminar-style discussion programming led adults in explorations of works in the Museum’s galleries.

Subscription programs ranged from adult courses to intimate gatherings with curators in Museum galleries to auditorium lectures and concerts in The Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Among the 222 programs presented this year, *Inside the Met: Curatorial Departments* continued to introduce audience members to the Museum’s great holdings; Rosamond Bernier gave a farewell lecture; James Cuno spoke about “Who Owns Antiquity?”; two programs explored dance through collaborations with the New York City Ballet and Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company; and Oliver Sacks talked about the relationship between vision and the brain. Concerts were distinguished by their excellence and also by their diversity, from classical to jazz to pop. Among the offerings were: *Itzhak Perlman Plays Chamber Music*; a noteworthy series of piano forte recitals with concerts by Ivan Moravec, Stephen Kovacevich, Lise de la Salle, and Gabriela Montero; programs by the Beaux Arts Trio and Chanticleer; concerts by Patti Smith, Richie Havens, Steve Ross, and Dianne Reeves.

Many collaborative programs with sister institutions enlivened the Center and contributed to the dynamism of the community and the Museum’s place within it. These included numerous programs developed with City organizations and with New York City’s Department of Education. A centerpiece of these efforts was the Museum’s hosting of “P.S. Art 2008,” a juried exhibition of student art from across the City’s public schools.

Audio programming expanded to 3,015 messages about the permanent collection, with new commentary by curators, conservators, and scientists offering visitors extraordinary insights into the collection, as well as tours of selected exhibitions. Some 205,022 visitors used the Audio Guide to explore the collection and exhibitions. The Museum also created videos, electronic features for the website and for terminals in the building, and educational publications, including a new family map of the Metropolitan. The *Timeline of Art History*, the Metropolitan’s incomparable online resource visited by more than 30,000 people every day, continued to grow as an educational resource available across the globe. It will henceforth be known as the *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* in recognition of the Heilbrunn family’s determination to endow this major educational effort.

Grounded in a mission that has been constant since the founding of the Museum, the educational work of the Metropolitan involves every member of our museum community—the Trustees, the distinguished curators and academic staff, the volunteers, and colleagues in every department—in public service at the highest level of excellence.