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# MUSEUM<sup>®</sup> *News*

AMERICAN  ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2001, \$7



**9/11:**  
The World  
Transformed

# MUSEUM<sup>TM</sup> News Contents

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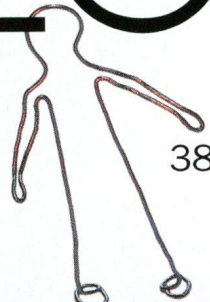
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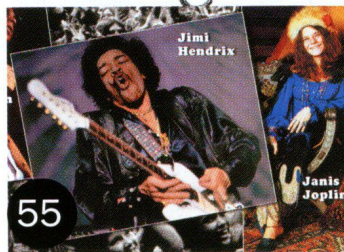
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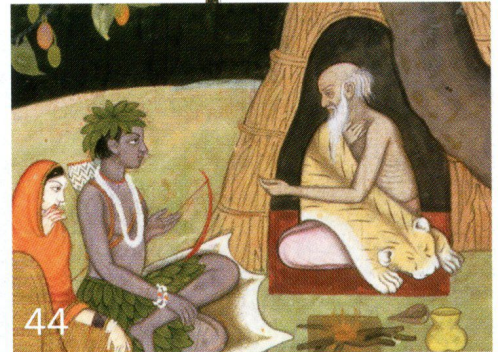
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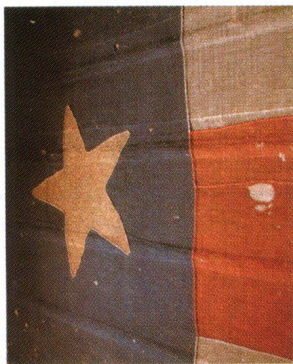


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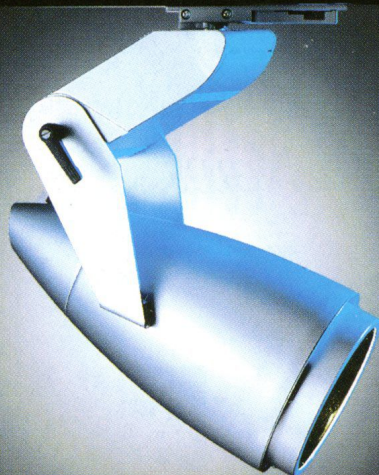
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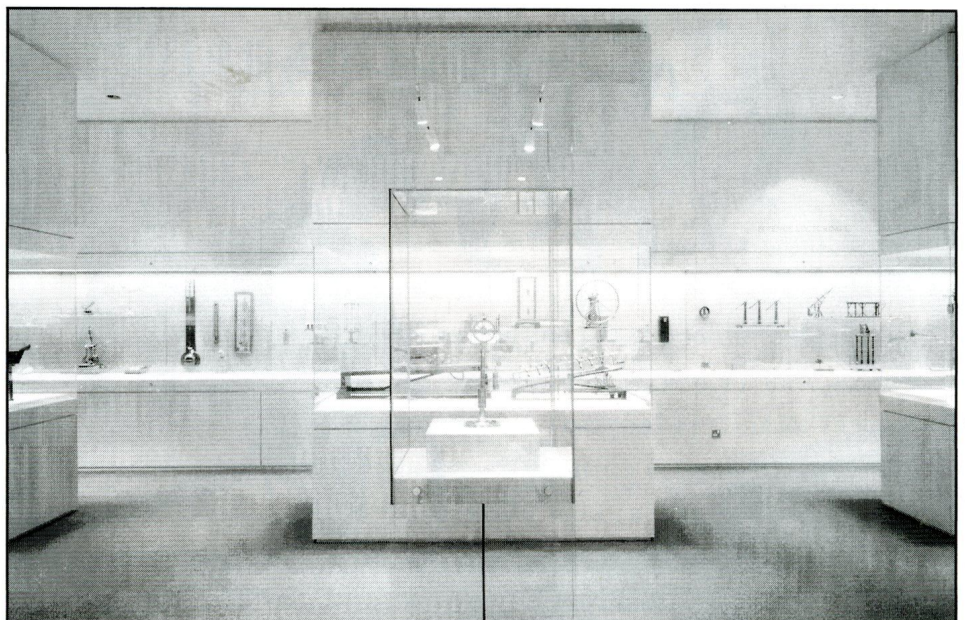
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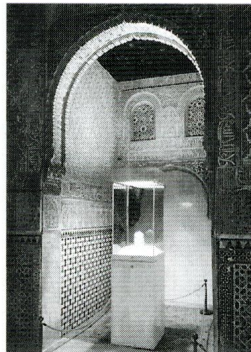
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## Sometimes, Form & Function Meet

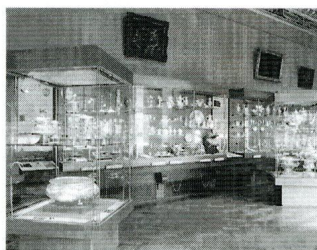
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# Museum Media for a New Millennium

BY DEBORAH SEID HOWES

Recognizing outstanding achievement in museum media programs, the 2001 Muse Awards competition, sponsored by the AAM Media and Technology Standing Professional Committee, attracted the largest number of entrants (133) and gave more awards (32) than at any time in its 12-year history. The judges—museum and media professionals from across the country—raced the clock to review every video, download each Web page, and engage every interactive program in time for the announcement of the winners at the 2001 AAM Annual Meeting in St. Louis in May.

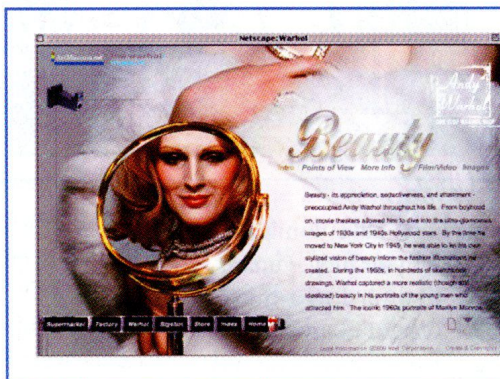
Over the past 12 years, the Muse Awards have witnessed significant changes. In the late '80s, the competition examined films and videos. In the '90s, the award categories grew to include computer-based, interactive programs, which presented new physical and conceptual challenges: How do we blend this kiosk/obelisk into the museum environment? How much information is too much?

In 2001, museums are embracing a range of new media formats that are smaller, more personal, and practically transparent in our exhibition spaces. Today, media producers spend more energy on supporting the exhibition message and less time obsessing about the medium's visual impact. And as museum media programs aim for the public to remember the experience rather than the name of the gizmo, the opportunities for building emotional connections have been strengthened as well.

The Muse Award competition has responded to this evolution by adjusting its categories and adding two new ones. Categories are now defined by the purpose for which they were created: educational programs in the subjects of art, science, and history/culture, and programs promoting institutions. The competition now also recognizes comprehensive, searchable databases as well as media programs that support two-way communication between visitors and museum staff.

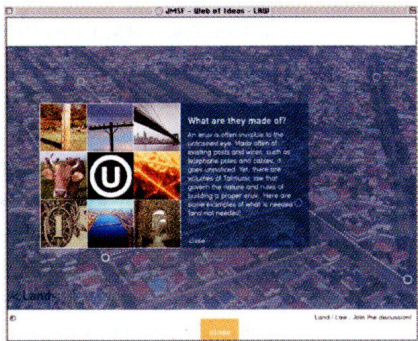
Here each jury chair describes the painstaking process of searching for "best practices" in the ever-evolving field of museum media. Many of these will be on display at the Media and Technology Marketplace of Ideas at the 2002 AAM Annual Meeting in Dallas. The deadline for the 2002 Muse Awards is Friday, Feb. 1, 2002. For complete information about the awards and information on how to become involved as a member of the Media and Technology SPC, visit [www.mediaandtechnology.org](http://www.mediaandtechnology.org).

Deborah Seid Howes is past (2001) and current (2002) chair of the Muse Awards and the museum educator in charge of educational print and electronic media at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



The Andy Warhol Museum won an honorable mention for its *One Stop Warhol Shop* Web site.

Judges praised the "human quality" of the Jewish Museum San Francisco's Web site, a winner in the institutional/promotional category.



## Art Education and Interpretation

### Co-Chairs:

Scott Sayre, Director of Media and Technology, Minneapolis Institute of the Arts, and Chair, AAM Media and Technology Committee

Peter Samis, Associate Curator of Education and Program Manager for Interactive Educational Technologies, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

### Video with *Color and Fire: Defining Moments in Studio Ceramics, 1950-2000*.

The producers interviewed 40 artists in a cross-country sweep and merged 60 hours of material with excerpts from 20 hours of archival footage. Thanks to the understated camerawork, masterful editing, and excellent sound, you feel that you're in the presence of real, impassioned, and highly talented people, talking about what they

*Water: Exploring the Chinese Handscroll*, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Christopher Noey, Associate Museum Educator. (Video).

*American Visions—African American Perspectives in Art*, Art Institute of Chicago; Eva Egensteiner, Producer. (Video) *One Stop Warhol Shop*, Andy Warhol Museum; Jessica Arcand, Curator of Education. (Web site: <http://osws.artmuseum>).

The Experience Music Project's Sound Lab, home to the *Drum Robot*—a powerful approach to music instruction.



Judges deemed the Nelson-Atkins Museum's *Tempus Fugit: Time Flies* a rich audio and visual online experience.



Previously, the visual arts have dominated the Art category, but this year judges unanimously gave the Gold award to a music project, *Drum Robot*. One of many exhibits in the Experience Music Project's Sound Lab, the *Drum Robot* is a set of drums with a computer screen mounted in front of the snare. The robot magic starts when the drum kit starts playing itself and invites you to play, using colored lights to visually align the sound with the drumbeats and a computer screen to give explanations and demos. The program takes powerful approach to musical instruction, guiding and simultaneously monitoring the user's actions while she plays the real thing.

The Silver Muse award in the Art CD-ROM category went to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's *Art as Experiment, Art as Experience: The Anderson Collection*. This wonderful Flash™-based CD-ROM, which also was published in a broadband Web-based format, explores 15 works of contemporary art with tools for zooming, panning, and even placing the art in a virtual gallery space. Its powerful visual explorations and varied contextual experiences make the user privy to information usually only available to curators. This CD-ROM also won a 2001 AAM Museum Publications Design Competition award.

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art won this year's Silver Muse award in Art

know and love best.

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art's *Tempus Fugit: Time Flies* ([www.nelson-atkins.org/tempusfugit](http://www.nelson-atkins.org/tempusfugit)) received the Silver Muse award in the Web category. From the first click, *Tempus Fugit* draws the user into a meditative and rich audio and visual experience. Judges were pleased with the program's accessibility, available in Flash™ and non-Flash™/HTML versions. Additional flourishes included "Teaching Topics" and "Resources and Links," sections which extend the experience beyond the program.

**GOLD:** *Drum Robot*, Sound Lab at Experience Music Project; Quatrefoil Associates. (Multimedia)

**SILVER:** *Tempus Fugit: Time Flies*, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art; Jan Schall, Sanders Sosland Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art. (Web site: [www.nelson-atkins.org/tempusfugit](http://www.nelson-atkins.org/tempusfugit)) *Art as Experiment, Art as Experience: The Anderson Collection*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Susie Wise, Senior Producer, Interactive Educational Technologies. (CD-ROM) *Color and Fire: Defining Moments in Studio Ceramics, 1950-2000*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Elvin Whitesides, Manager, Audio Visual Department. (Video)

HONORABLE MENTIONS: *Mountains and*

*net/enter.html*)

*Art Access*, Art Institute of Chicago; Lyn DellaQuadri, Graphic Design and Communications Services, David Stark and Liz Seaton, Museum Education. (Web site: [www.artic.edu/aic/artaccess](http://www.artic.edu/aic/artaccess)) *Masterpieces of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy at the National Palace Museum*, National Palace Museum, Taipei; Bright Ideas Co. (DVD)

## History/Culture Education and Interpretation

### Co-Chairs:

Selma Thomas, President, Watertown Productions

Herminia Din, Web Producer,

Children's Museum of Indianapolis

The 57 history and culture entries were a lively mix of production formats—videos, CD-ROMs, and Web sites—demonstrating a thoughtful application of media for interpretive and educational programming. As in the past, most of the programs (both traditional and interactive) were produced for use in exhibitions; only a few were intended primarily for a classroom audience.

The Gold winner for history/culture was *DJ Scratch*, produced by the Experience Music Project. In this lively, witty, and instructive seven-minute video a young man directly addresses the camera and demonstrates the techniques of a deejay scratch artist. The camera cuts away from