

# International Museum Day 2005 “Museums Bridging Cultures”

Andrea Echstenkamper, ICOM Secretariat Summer Intern

In May 2005, museums in more than 60 nations found unique ways to celebrate ICOM's International Museum Day (IMD), the day set aside to honour museums. This year's event theme, “Museums Bridging Cultures”, was chosen to focus on diversity and inclusiveness and to give inspiration to museums celebrating across the globe.

> Particularly responsive to this year's theme was a museum in Israel. ICOM-Israel gathered 120 members from around the world and invited them for a tour of the Museum of Bedouin Heritage and the neighbouring Bedouin community. They also toured the women's embroidery factory, which had been subjected to a criminal fire only days before the event. The factory is viewed as a symbol of equality for the Bedouin women, making the tour of the wreckage quite poignant to the visitors.

> Some museums promoted celebration beyond a day. In Havana, experts from 14 countries (mostly in Latin America) gathered to reflect on the social and economic affronts plaguing the contemporary museum. During the three-day conference, 94 reports were presented on heritage preservation.

> Others took International Museum Day into the night and on for a week or even a month of festivities. And certainly, there is enough good inherent in museums that one could celebrate for even longer! Brazil, Guatemala and Peru were among the countries that had week to month-long celebrations. The ambitious nocturnal effort by the French Ministry of Culture, “La Nuit des Musées” (formerly “Le Printemps des Musées”), did not fail to impress. The event coordinators have expanded the effort across Europe to 29 countries, making a total of 1,200 institutions that celebrated together in this collaboration.

> ICOM wishes to recognize graphic art that was distinctly inspiring. The Portuguese Institute of Museums created a poster and a multi-media presentation for their celebration of International Museum Day that visually bridged vivid, dramatic photos of cultural heritage. Brazil and Croatia sent in two of the most bold and beautiful posters from their events.

> The resolution that created International Museum Day was drawn up by ICOM members in 1977 at 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in

Moscow. The core message for this event was determined to be “Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among people.”

> We thank all the institutions and individuals who participated in International Museum Day and hope you will plan to celebrate it again with us next year. The theme for International Museum Day 2006 will be “Museums and Young People.”



IMD 2005, Portugal



IMD 2005, Brazil



IMD 2005, Croatia