

# calendar of EVENTS

*Cultural Connections* is a unique way to experience and learn about the rich cultural diversity in Chicago. As a participant, you will travel to wonderful ethnic museums and cultural centers in and around Chicago to explore the reasons for cultural differences and to uncover connections to "others". The theme for the 2003-2004 program year is "Traditions of Transition: Understanding Rites of Passage". With anthropology to guide your experience, you will be exposed to the technique of participant observation in exploring this theme as you become "urban anthropologists". You will view collections and artifacts, hear presentations by museum curators and staff, learn about specific communities in our city, participate in discussions and taste delicious ethnic foods. You will grow to understand and appreciate other cultures...and possibly share some of your own!

## **Perspectives on the Cycle of Life — A Joint Event Kick-off Assembly!**

Filipino American Historical Society of Chicago,  
Pawkar Cultural Center of Otavalo, Ecuador and  
Swahili Institute of Chicago

*Wednesday, September 10, 6:00pm-8:30pm*  
at The Field Museum, Stanley Field Hall  
1400 S. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago

Join The Field Museum's Center for Cultural Understanding and Change for a unique opportunity to experience a diverse continuum of perspectives on the cycle of life. *Cultural Connections* brings together the traditions related to birth, identity and death of Chicago's Filipino Americans, Swahili community and a special international guest partner from the Andes of Ecuador for this year's kick-off assembly. The idea of ceremony and the rituals associated with the passages from one life phase to another are constantly being reshaped by the circumstances of our lives and the collective creativity we possess as a diverse society. The new theme for the 2003-2004 program year — "Traditions of Transition: Understanding Rites of Passage" — will take us on a year-long journey of exploration through life's many phases from diverse cultural, as well as gender-specific, perspectives — from birth to coming of age to weddings to death. At this kick-off program, you will also have the opportunity to acquaint yourself with some of The Field Museum's hidden treasures that are connected to rites of passage all over the world as well as with the rest of the *Cultural Connections* partners and their respective institutions. And to complement your overall experience, there will be samplings of several ethnic foods.

## **Through My Mother's Eyes — A Joint Event**

American Indian Center and  
Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture

*Wednesday, October 8, 6:00pm-8:30pm* at the  
Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture,  
6500 S. Pulaski Rd, Chicago

*Thursday, October 9, 6:00pm-8:30pm* at the American  
Indian Center, 1630 W. Wilson Ave, Chicago (select one)

Gender roles have historically been a topic of great interest when it comes to human rights but what about rites of passage? How do the perspectives of the women in our lives affect how we move from one stage in life to another? What roles do they play? Are they the keepers of the traditions or are they helping us to shape our life transitions in new ways? Together, the American Indian Center and the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, representing two historically very different world views — indigenous and western-influenced — will explore these and other questions through the shared real-life experiences of their community members. Join us to learn more about them as they learn about each other and the women who hold us together. Refreshments will include traditional Native American and Lithuanian fare.

## **Graduating into Adulthood: A Family Affair**

— A Joint Event  
The Polish Museum of America and  
Ukrainian National Museum

*Wednesday, November 5, 6:00pm-8:30pm* at The Polish  
Museum of America, 984 N. Milwaukee Ave, Chicago

*Thursday, November 6, 6:00pm-8:30pm* at the Ukrainian  
National Museum, 721 N. Oakley Blvd, Chicago (select one)

The end of high school is always associated with a transition — one that affects not only the graduate but also his or her family. Students often leave the family and neighborhood environment to find careers, continue their studies or start their own families. Throughout several of Chicago's ethnic communities a parallel experience is found among the students of the various Saturday and Sunday schools. Many Americans had their first encounter with the phenomena of ethnic language and culture schools in the surprise hit "My Big Fat Greek Wedding", where the heroine bemoans having to attend Saturday school as a young girl, only to have her non-Greek husband support their daughter's enrollment. The Ukrainian and Polish Museums invite you to learn about the "Matura", the finishing exam for high school in their respective cultural groups. You will meet some students who have recently completed their "matura" as well as some more "mature" graduates. Take this opportunity to join in on the conversation about their experiences and gain some insight into what the process means to them and furthermore, what the impact of this transition is in the lives of their families and in the community. A sampling of Polish and Ukrainian foods will be served at each location.

## **Death, Renewal and Remembrance: Paying Homage to Our Departed — A Joint Event**

Cambodian Association of Illinois and  
Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum

*Saturday, December 6, 11:30am-2pm and 3:30pm-6pm* (select one)  
at the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum  
1852 W. 19th Street, Chicago

As a finale for the *Cultural Connections* fall season, the Cambodian Association of Illinois and the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum invite you to learn about their different celebrations in honor of their ancestors. This joint program will feature a comparative dialogue on the Cambodian ceremony of *Pchum Ben* — an annual commemoration of the dead and one of the most important events in the Khmer Buddhist calendar — and the Mexican Day of the Dead or *Dia de los Muertos* — an ancient annual celebration of life, family and history throughout Mexico and Mexican-American communities. They will explore each culture's traditional death rituals and their adaptations in America, including a preview of the United States' first Killing Fields Memorial — a collective remembrance of the people of Cambodia who were victims of the Cambodian Holocaust — as well as a visit to the MFACM's annual exhibition. And enjoy a taste of traditional Cambodian and Mexican foods!

## **Mark Your Calendars for these Spring 2004 Events in the works!**

Brochure will be available in January 2004.

**Saturday, February 28 — A Joint Event**  
Chicago Japanese American Historical Society and  
Mitchell Museum of the American Indian

**Saturday, March 27 — A Joint Event**  
Arab American Action Network and  
Indo-American Center

**Tuesday, April 27 and  
Thursday, April 29 — A Joint Event**  
Institute of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture and  
Speritus Museum

**Sunday, May 16 — A Joint Event**  
Korean American Resource and Cultural Center and  
Swedish American Museum

**TEACHERS** can receive 2 Continued Professional Development Units (CPDUs) as approved by the Illinois State Board of Education for each *Cultural Connections* program attended. Teachers can also enroll in the *Cultural Connections Lane Credit/CPDU* course, which begins in September and in February each year. Please call 312-665-7474 for more information.

Capacity at each museum varies so please be sure to **REGISTER EARLY** by phone or mail! **NO REFUNDS**. Late registration may not be accepted due to limited space. Reservations are made on a first received basis. You will receive a confirmation letter two weeks ahead of the event. For more information, please call: 312-665-7474 or e-mail: [ccuc@fmnh.org](mailto:ccuc@fmnh.org).