

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!

Spring 2004 CALENDAR of Events

From Sky to Earth – Star Quilts and Origami Cranes

Chicago Japanese American Historical Society and
Mitchell Museum of the American Indian

Saturday, February 28, 11:30am-2:00pm and 3:30pm-6:00pm (select one)

at the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian
2600 Central Park Ave, Evanston

Sometimes a particular object can play an important role in multiple ceremonies that mark life changes. *Star quilts* in Native American cultures and *origami cranes* in Japanese American culture are two such objects. Explore the meaning and history of these objects and the roles they play in such diverse rites as birth, marriage, military service, naming, 50th wedding anniversaries, transitions to old age, other honoring ceremonies and death. Discover how the symbolism of the quilted Morning Star and the folded paper crane has changed over time and through exposure to other cultures. View samples of both arts and learn how to make your own. Also taste traditional Native American fry bread and Japanese sushi and other delicacies.

Welcome to the World! – Birth and Naming Ceremonies of Arab and Asian Indian Cultures

Arab American Action Network and Indo-American Center

Saturday, March 27, 11:30am-2:00pm and 3:30pm-6:00pm (select one)

at the Indo-American Center
6328 N California Ave, Chicago

Who am I? What's in a name? Our introduction to the world is most often shaped by our families and the ceremonies they organize to celebrate our arrival. Many of these ceremonies include naming as well as an acknowledgement of our gender and role in society. In many ways, these rites serve to influence the formation of our identity as individuals throughout our lives. *El Sebou*, the Egyptian birth ceremony, one of many birth-related traditions among Arabs and Arab Americans, marks the announcement of a newborn's gender and entrance into society. Within the broad diversity of cultures and religions represented in India, the Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, to name a few, also all celebrate according to their own birth-related traditions. For this event, however, the Indo-American Center will focus on the *Namakaranam*, the Hindu naming ceremony. Join us to learn more about the symbolism and meaning involved in these two diverse ceremonies. A sampling of Indian and Arabian delicacies appropriate for celebrations of these ceremonies will be provided.

Celebrating Adulthood – Coming of Age in Jewish and Puerto Rican Communities

Institute of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture and the Spertus Museum

Tuesday, April 27, 6:00pm-8:30pm and Thursday, April 29, 6:00pm-8:30pm (select one)

at the Spertus Museum
618 S Michigan Ave, Chicago

Cultures throughout the world mark a child's entry into adulthood with an array of public or private ceremonies and rituals. Puerto Rican and Jewish communities mark this coming of age transition with the *Quinceañero* and the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* celebrations. The *Quinceañero* is a rite of passage in the Puerto Rican community that acknowledges a girl's passage from childhood to womanhood at the age of fifteen, which occurs regardless of socioeconomic levels. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is the Jewish commemoration of a child reaching religious and legal maturity at the age of thirteen. In their respective communities, both are considered milestones that celebrate family, community ties and responsibility as well as the importance of preserving culture, religious traditions and pride. Join us to explore these two fascinating celebrations of life transitions into adulthood and discover how these cultural traditions intersect. Participants will also enjoy a taste of traditional Puerto Rican and Jewish foods.

Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue...or Red? – Cultural Perspectives on Unity and Ceremony

Korean American Resource and Cultural Center and Swedish American Museum Center

Sunday, May 16, 11:30am-2:00pm and 3:30pm-6:00pm

at the Swedish American Museum Center
5211 N Clark St, Chicago

In concluding the Cultural Connections 2003-2004 program year's theme of understanding rites of passage, we end on the notion of unity – between two people. Please join us to explore some of the origins of Korean and Swedish wedding traditions from the distant past as well as how these diverse traditions take place today. Take this opportunity also to delve deeper into exploring the meaning and attitudes towards marriage from these different cultural perspectives and understand why certain elements of these ceremonies from the past have survived or changed. Presentations will include first voice accounts, artifact displays and video clips. Traditional Korean and Swedish foods will complement the conversation!

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 312-665-7475 for more information.

Capacity at each museum varies so please be sure to **REGISTER EARLY** by phone or mail! **NO REFUNDS**. General admission is \$15, \$10 for teachers and students. Children under 12 are always admitted for free. 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 before the event. Please note that event locations and times vary. For more information, please call 312-665-7474 or e-mail ccuc@fmnh.org.