

Editor's Letter

Every time I travel outside the United States, I am reminded of how young our country is in terms of history. For example, the past is always present in Japan. When I was in Japan last summer, I especially enjoyed the juxtaposition of the ancient and modern just about everywhere.

Not far from our midtown hotel was a narrow commercial street. In one steep block, a Shinto shrine established in 1610 was tucked in between a high-rise office building and a small, monument-crowded cemetery. Kimono-clad women shared the subways and sidewalks with business people in office attire. The same office workers would bring their bento boxes to the grounds of historic shrines and temples to eat lunch in peace and quiet. Upscale hotels hosted Japanese tea ceremonies, a practice treasured for 700 years, and fine arts and crafts based on time-honored traditions were sold in fashionable shopping centers. In this environment, past and present are complementary.

In *Education in a Multicultural World*, American educator Ernest Boyer proposed eight universal commonalities shared by people around the world and throughout time; one is that we all have the capacity to recall the past. For art teachers, recalling the past is what art history is all about.

Works of art serve as windows to time and place. Art images throughout history document the human family album, a family to which we all belong.

The timeline they create helps make the past connect to our own experiences. Through significant art history experiences, students can learn that art has been produced all over the world, that art is diverse, and that art and aesthetic values change over time and culture. The study of art history also provides natural and engaging correlations to social studies, as art reflects the culture in which it is produced.

Whether you travel around the world physically or via the Internet, you are in a position to take your students on an art history journey that can enrich their lives. And you also get to enjoy the ride!



Nancy is shown with her Japanese hosts Aiko and Yosushi Atsumi and youthful Deer Dancers at the Fujiwara Heritage Park in Esashi, Japan. The park depicts the history and culture of Japan's Tohoku region from the Heian Period, 794–1185 AD.



At Ichinoseki Junior High in Japan, students worked with designs based on local history.

Nancy Walkup