

Institution/Organization Name	NEA Use ONLY Application Number
Boston Children's Museum Boston Children's Museum's Northeast Native American Collections	

8. Causes: of ~ Special Deadline, Huseum Program

3. Summary: ~ Professional

The Boston Children's Huseum proposes to write and publish a 48-page, 7-section, well-illustrated catalogue describing its 19th and 20th century Northeast Native American collection. Under a 1976 NEA/Folk Arts grant, the work of 43 contemporary Northeast Native American artists was collected and documented. These objects, along with their 19th century counterparts, have been installed in a specially designed Study Storage area adjacent to the Huseum's Northeast Native American "We're Still Here" exhibit. This collection and our approach to it has not been fully accessible. Although work is being done on 19th century New England ash splint basketry and on traditional Hicmac and Halecite works, no one else appears to be focusing on the work still being produced in New England today nor on the connections between the contemporary and 19th century forms. Seven types of objects will be described: (1) Root Clubs; (2) Work Bas-ets; (3) Fancy Baskets; (4) Birchbark Containers; (5) Gay Head Pottery; (6) Clothing and Regalia; and (7) Jewelry and Personal Ornamentation. Each of the essays will describe the basic tradition and compare and contrast that to the contemporary forms of specific artists. Photographs will be used to illustrate the essays, to compare and contrast a selected 19th century object with a related 20th century one, and to identify other related collections objects. The catalogue will look specifically at (1) traditions that have continued; (2) those that have been revived; and/or (3) those that have been imported and are now taking root in New England.

Although the Huseum has collected and cared for Native American objects for the past 70 years, it has not been a publishing institution and therefore the American Indian collection is not well known. Because the contemporary Northeast collection documents a specific moment in time, relates so clearly to 19th century objects, and is critical to an understanding of Native Americans in New England today, we are seeking funds to publish this catalogue. This catalogue would allow the Huseum to publish original research and materials that will document this information. The audience will include scholars, museum professionals and especially interested visitors who use the Study Storage collection and then wish for additional information about the collection that they can take away with them. It will also be useful for Native Americans interested in their cultural heirlooms, to casual visitors who would like more in-depth information about the items without having to use such solely at the Huseum, and for those who are beyond the reach of a museum visit.

The catalogue will have a four-color cover and approximately 140 black and white photos of collections objects, artists at work and objects in their cultural context. We will print 2,500 copies and the catalogue will retail in the Huseum's shop for approximately \$5 per copy. It will also be disseminated free to colleagues and other professionals interested in Native American studies.

20. Project Personnel:

Project Director - Elaine Heumann Gurian, Director, Children's Huseum Exhibit Center  
Curator/Author - Joan Lester, Native American Curator, Curator of Collections.

Designer - Signe Hanson, Chief, Huseum's Graphics Department.

Consultants: Ralph T. Coe (pending letter of acceptance), who will write an introductory essay placing this material in the context of pan-Indian studies; Gladys Widdiss, Leslie Ranco and John Francis for specific consultations on Wampanoag, Penobscot and Passamaquoddy materials to be depicted in the catalogue.

*File / Catalog*

*Catalog / Joan*

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

AUG 23 1984

Ms. Phyllis D. O'Connell  
Associate Director  
Children's Museum of Boston  
300 Congress Street  
Boston, MA 02210

*Catalog / M.A. Collections*

REF: GM-22194-84

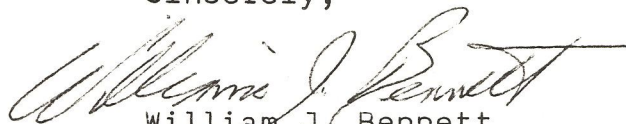
Dear Ms. O'Connell:

I am happy to inform you that the National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded a grant of \$29,757 to the Children's Museum of Boston.

The formal grant award notification and related documents are enclosed with this letter. Please review these materials thoroughly and address any questions concerning the award to the appropriate person whose name appears on the second page of the award documents.

We are pleased that the Endowment is able to provide support for this project.

Sincerely,

  
William J. Bennett  
Chairman

Enclosures

cc: Elaine H. Gurian