

RESUME

Janet Kamien
174 Westminster Avenue
Arlington, Massachusetts 02174
617-646-5690

The Children's Museum
300 Congress Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02210
617-426-6500

EXPERIENCE: The Children's Museum, 1973 to present.

Associate Director, Exhibit Center	1976 to present
Manager, Exhibit Center	1973 to 1976

Administrative:

Responsibilities include:

- administrative systems development and management.
- direct supervision of Exhibit Center administrative staff.
- administrative director of Design and Production Department;
6 - 10 staff, 100k - 140k budget.
- training and supervision of interpreter staff.
- proposal writing.

Project Development and Coordination:

Responsibilities include:

- "What If You Couldn't?...An Exhibit about Special Needs."
- "What If" traveling exhibit for SITES.
- Museum Wharf move: "Client" and coordinator for teams of designers, developers and fabricators to produce and install 25,000 square feet of exhibition for our new building - on time, under budget.
- "Client" and/or coordinator for all exhibit development since our move.
- Chooses and coordinates all special exhibits.
- Planned 504 accessibility for new building.

Publications and Presentations:

- Is There Life After 504? A Guide to Building and Program Accessibility from The Children's Museum, Boston. The Children's Museum, 1980.
- "What If You Couldn't?..." A Book about Special Needs. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1979.
- "Us and Them," a video documentary about three relationships between disabled and non-disabled people, coproduced by Fred Simon and Janet Kamien, 1979.
- "What If You Couldn't?..." A six unit multi-media curriculum kit for in-school use, 1976.

- Partial list of panels, papers, and workshops from 1974 to present includes:
 - . American Association of Museums, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1982.
 - . New England Museum Association, 1978, 1980.
 - . National Committee Arts and the Handicapped, 1978, 1980.
 - . National Endowment for the Arts, 1981.
 - . Association of Science and Technology Centers, 1979.
- Partial list of consultant activities from 1974 to present includes:
 - . Indo-US Subcommission on Education and Culture, Delhi, India (member of a team of five to consult on participatory exhibits for children in natural history museums), 1982.
 - . Target Corp (for McComber Farm), 1981.
 - . Plimoth Plantation, 1981.
 - . Winterthur Museum, 1981.
 - . Pacific Science Center, 1980.
 - . Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1979.

Appointments

- Visiting Lecturer, Tufts College, 1982.
- Adjunct Professor, Lesley College, 1979-80.
- AAM Administrative Committee for Museums and Disabled Visitors, 1980.

EDUCATION:

Master of Education, Lesley College, 1978.

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Boston University, 1972.

Recipient, National Museum Travel Act, Grant for Museum Professionals, 1978.

Additional courses in architecture, sign language, early childhood, and management.

#630

June 22, 1983

PROFILES...

Because Janet Kamien is such a creative and multi-faceted individual, trying to neatly delineate either her, or her career, is no simple assignment. In fact, the task is rather like attempting to describe the bits of glass within a kaleidoscope as they rearrange themselves into new and different patterns. Actress, costumer, stage manager, administrator, exhibit designer, researcher, writer, trail-blazer--- will the real Janet Kamien please stand up?

After graduating from Boston University in 1972 where she majored in acting, Janet took a decisive step in her career when she realized that the life of an actress, with its built-in frustration and rejection, was not what she wanted. Interested in working with the handicapped, Janet was hired as an attendant at Fernald State School for the Retarded. For a year she was part of a research project involved with teaching a severely retarded adult to speak, but left in protest after the patient was abruptly returned to the ward when funding for the program ran out.

Her next job was as a stage manager for a company that produced children's plays, and Janet first learned about BCM in the course of looking for spaces where the company might perform. Simultaneously she was employed as a costumer for Harvard's Gilbert & Sullivan troupe, the Savoyards. Then luck (or fate) intervened, and Janet noticed an ad in the paper announcing a three month internship program at BCM. The pay consisted of a less than princely sum -- \$25 a week -- for the duration, but, nevertheless, she applied and was accepted.

At the end of her internship Janet was planning to work as a costumer in a Rhode Island theatre group, when she was asked to manage the exhibit center, a job she initially refused because she felt unqualified. Fortunately for the Museum, Elaine Gurian persuaded her otherwise, and after agreeing to "clean up her act," i.e. stop wearing cut-off jeans over red tights, she joined the Museum staff.

Filled with a healthy dose of fear and trembling, "I had no idea what I was doing," Janet recalls, she began hiring interns, organizing special events, and initiating the Friday/Sunday performance series. Because BCM was more informally structured ten years ago, she was also involved in building operations, arranging for adequate staff coverage and numerous D&P meetings.

Approximately a year later, Janet became the developer of the Sit-Around Space, which was then an open exhibit area used for puppet shows, movies and other performances. In addition, she was heavily concerned with the training and supervision of interns, with a new group arriving at the frantic pace of every three months.

In 1974 Janet came up with the idea which eventually led to the creation of the "What If You Couldn't...?" exhibit---perhaps the most outstanding of her many achievements. She obtained a grant from NEA, and with the help of an assistant, spent the next six months conducting extensive interviews and research on the subject of children with special needs. Because she felt "out of touch" and wanted to be involved in direct service again, Janet took the summer off and worked at a camp for special needs children.

The resulting exhibit, a pioneering effort in raising public awareness and helping special needs children enter the mainstream of our culture, was an overwhelming success. It led Janet and several other Museum staffers into the field of curriculum development, and in 1976 they began to put together a comprehensive unit designed for the use of teachers in public school systems.