

## Environmental Success

**O**N MAY 18 1992 MUSEUMS AROUND THE WORLD CELEBRATED INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY ON THE THEME OF "MUSEUMS AND THE ENVIRONMENT." MUSEUMS USED THE OCCASION TO HOST A VARIETY OF EVENTS AND FULFILL AN IMPORTANT EDUCATIONAL ROLE IN ASSISTING THE PUBLIC TO GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING OUR NATURAL HERITAGE.

The Secretariat in Paris received many letters and newspaper clippings in response to its appeal to National Committees to inform and assist museums to make this Day a memorable event in their countries. Dozens of museums in over thirty countries launched activities to co-incide with International Museum Day, in some cases International Museum Week, on the theme of the environment.

The Day was celebrated in diverse ways: exhibitions, meetings, conferences, publications, free access to museums, special guided visits,

etc. The events were often organized around specific environmental problems in the different countries or museums. For example, the Finnish Science Centre (Finland) created an exhibition on the health of the Finnish forests while the Ecomuseum of the Haute-Bauce in Québec (Canada) organized information sessions on the environmental purposes of ecomuseums. The Museum of Bamako (Mali) presented the different facets of the natural environment in economic and political contexts by presenting two exhibitions, one on the theme of recycling materials and the other on political events which occurred in Mali during 1991, focussing on a scene of an automobile burning. In Benin, the Historical Museum of the Honmè Palace explored the theme of the relationship between the settlement and the environment.

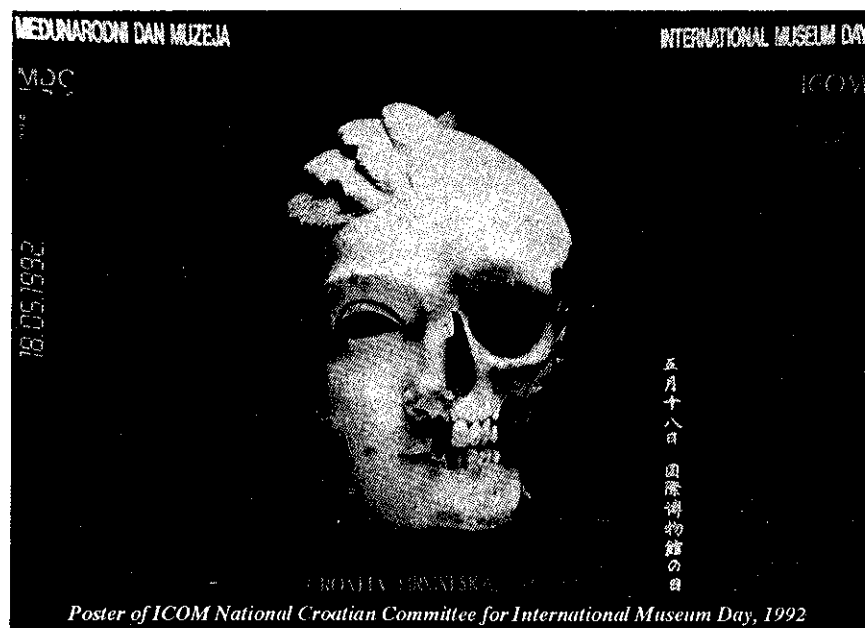
In Tanzania where the National Museum organized the planting of trees accompanied by the singing of songs and the recitation of poetry by children on the theme of the environment. In Spain, the Comarcal Salvador Vilaseca Museum showed how to recycle waste materials. At the Maritime Museum of Macau, young

people benefited from a special program on the preservation of the marine environment.

Communication and public relations programs undertaken in support of the Day must also be noted. Press conferences, press releases, posters, stickers and plaques were especially created for the event. Mexico, Croatia and Greece among other countries developed wonderful posters and communication programmes. A file of press clippings compiled by the ICOM Secretariat demonstrates the media success and impact of the Day.

Another positive aspect of the International Museum Day 1992 was the support of certain National Committees by companies and foundations. In Spain, the Catalan administration financed a television commercial. In Greece, the Ministry of Culture assisted the National Committee by distributing information. In Australia, Quantas airline assisted museums to participate in International Museum Day.

ICOM Secretariat is very grateful to all of the National Committees and museums which sent information about activities concerning International Museum Day. This information helped in many ways: expanding a bibliography on the theme of museums and the environment, developing an impressive folder of press clippings, providing the information for this report and motivating other members of ICOM to celebrate International Museum Day.



*The theme chosen for 1993 is Museums and Indigenous Peoples. ICOM hopes that more of its members will take the opportunity to participate in what is an international festival of museums around the world.*