

Mentor's Introduction

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Mentor's Introduction

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As a very young field we tend to think for the most part in the present tense. When pushed we may speculate about the near future. But relatively few of us seem to care enough about our antecedents to read history; and only a small handful of full fledged art educators (most of these in this decade) actually **do** historical investigations. But there is an emerging concern to probe the misty mysteries of our genesis. Two recent conferences (one in Sao Paulo, Brazil and the other at Penn State University) have attracted a significant number of our colleagues. And the popular acclaim given Diana Korzenik's **Drawn to Art** has also proven an attractive model.

We probably should record the achievements of our notable ancestors, many of whom are still active. Where are the biographers among us? Where can a neophyte, a potential graduate student go to receive the education and spiritual support needed to do solid biographical research? And what about the historical developments of our organizations? Do we routinely create a post for organizational historian to sit beside presidents and treasurers on our executive boards? Are we careful to retain the archival stuff needed to create the "paper trails" needed to create a coherent history?

Ms. Rhoades, because of her vital interest in (almost a fascination with) international art education has determined to do a limited history of our major international art education association: INSEA. Because the organization failed, from the start, to recognize the need for a fixed location for its records (failed to fund and/or obtain a voluntary Executive Secretary) the haphazard assortment of documents represents a challenge of heroic proportions. Much data must be collected from interviewing living monuments with fallible memories. Yet the process will not only be satisfying for Ms. Rhoades as all creative

enterprises are for the creators; but it will result in a study to feed the curiosities of many of us who can only now speculate intuitively about the events that have produced today's conditions. I'm not yet sure about what history can teach us, but a well-wrought history has its own esthetic force and can provide the kind of insights into the human condition that a fine piece of theater or painting can. Historical scholarship is as significant for us as a field as any of the more popularly practiced forms of research. Studies like this one by Ms. Rhoades will add to the attractiveness of the method even as they add to our self-understanding.