What to Expect When You’re Expanding: The Center for Puppetry Arts

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Expansion Overview

- *Believe in Make Believe Campaign*
- Jim Henson Donation
- New Museum
- New Library
- New Collections Storage
Project Overview

- Deinstall Permanent and Temporary Exhibition Galleries
- Condition check and work with conservators to prepare all puppets for new Global and Henson Galleries
- Henson Conservation Project (500+ objects)
- Manage off-site, warehouse, conservation, library, and 3rd Floor Storage
- Install new exhibitions
- Move Library/Archives collections into new Library
- Consolidate multiple storage sites into new collections storage
What has been accomplished...

- Deinstalled all exhibitions
- Objects have been shuffled on-site/off-site multiple times
- Conservation work for new exhibitions 100% and for Henson project 65% complete
- As of today, new museum opened
- New Library space is complete
- New collections storage is complete and shelving has been ordered
Things to consider

- Before anything can start, what are the limitations of your current building and staff?
- What should remain on-site?
- Is your Emergency Plan updated?
- Should you institute any loan or acquisition moratoriums?
- Don’t be budget conscious when pitching the initial plan
  - What type of equipment do you need for the new storage/museum?
  - Assess collection and prioritize storage needs
How did I make this happen?
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- Staff Limitations: Cross train staff and ask for help
  - Interns
  - Museum Dept training
  - Registrar Reinforcement Crew
  - Production
  - Facilities

*DropBox Pro* is worth every penny ($99) for 1TB of space
How did I make this happen?

- **Removable labels** go a long way in organizing
  - Conservation
  - Henson Approval
  - Off-Site
- Staff/interns can immediately know what’s the status of box contents

- Purple = Approved by Henson, ready to go off-site
- Yellow = To be conserved
- Pink = Conserved, waiting for Henson approval
How did I make this happen?

- Assessed what could go off-site and what needed to remain on-site
- Creative storage solutions
- Built numbered crates to house textile boxes (16 boxes/crate)
- Organize off-site to make move easier
- Keep exhibition objects on-site, if possible
- Tracking
The Unexpected
The Unexpected

- Construction/budget is not based on your needs
- We’re getting a new X soon, so I don’t want to repair the current problem
- What this means?? UPDATE YOUR EMERGENCY PREPARDNESS PLAN
Do indoor water features increase property value?
The Unexpected

- **Building Limitations**
  - Measure everything, including molding
    - Then measure again
  - Communication with construction staff is key
    - **Clearances** for temporary walls, doors, etc.
    - Have a plan B ready for moving collections around the building
    - Be prepared for problems after construction starts
DO NOT STACK

ARTIFACT
Do not move without Museum Staff present
The Unexpected

- Remember that initial, second, third, fourth construction schedule? **Ha!**
- The storage situation got real
Remember how we said sometimes you just have to laugh? This is one of those times...
The Unexpected

- Buying sprees
- 2014 was a record year for new acquisitions
- Moratorium implemented for 2015
Last Thoughts

- Think big, knowing you will have to make cuts
- Be pro-active as much as possible rather than retro-active
- Set an organization system at the beginning for as many aspects of the project as possible
  - Tracking
  - Labels
  - Storage
- Be flexible! Things will inevitably go wrong, so have Plan B always in place. It doesn’t hurt to have Plan C as well
- Be prepared for delays. Nothing is completed on schedule
- Know that the initial plans for constructions will change. Your new museum/storage/building will not look like the initial drawings due to problems along the way. Set priorities and know when to compromise.
- Keep a positive attitude and good sense of humor