

Spring 1992

# What's News

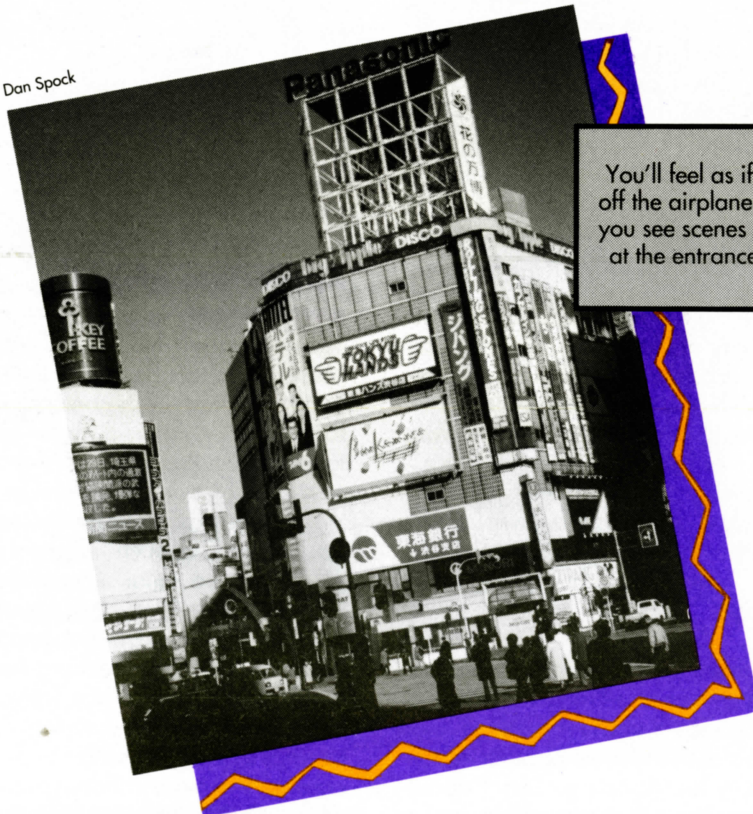
The Children's Museum

The International Culture of Youth



Major new exhibit  
**TEEN TOKYO**  
opens April 12

Dan Spock



You'll feel as if you just stepped off the airplane into Japan when you see scenes similar to this one at the entrance of Teen Tokyo.



Who's speaking in the following phrases? Japanese

Teen Tokyo, a major new multi-media exhibit opening on April 12,

Ginza sights and sounds, visitors will feel as if they just stepped off the

Who's speaking in the following phrases? Japanese or American teens...



*"I like to hang out with my friends in fast food places like McDonald's."*

*"My mother and I always disagree on what I should wear. I know what styles and colors are good for me."*

*"If I could be anyone in the world, I'd be Carl Lewis. He seems to have the longest legs."*

*"My friends and I like to go shopping or sing the latest songs at a karaoke box."*

*"Today, I won first prize in a skateboard contest!"*

*"I want to be a professional Sumo player when I grow up."*

Except for a few cases, it's hard to tell where these kids live. The truth is, they're all Japanese! In many ways, life in contemporary Japan resembles life in contemporary North America. By comparing our history, values and aspirations to those of other countries, we may better learn not only what divides us but also what unites us.

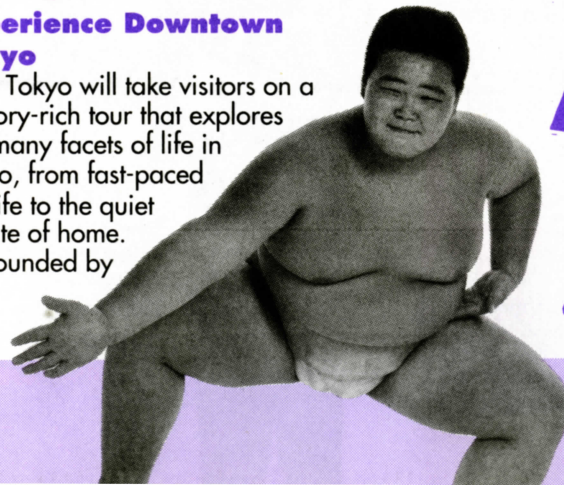
media exhibit opening on April 12, is about the international culture of youth. It is designed to provide our next generation with the information they need to be confident and feel at home in the global neighborhood. Many of the images and topics explored in the exhibit could be as easily examined in Teen Buenos Aires, Teen London or Teen New York.

Japan Program Director and Exhibit Developer Leslie Bedford says, "The goals of Teen Tokyo are broader than just teaching about youth in Japan. Just as we hope we can teach our visitors to have a better understanding and respect for the many cultures that make up our own nation, we also need to be willing to look beyond national boundaries and see ourselves as members of the international community."

Teen Tokyo features technology never used before in a Museum in the United States. Visitors will be introduced to "Object Theatre," an exciting new innovation using computer-programmed light, sound and video to bring still objects to life as the audience watches and listens.

### Experience Downtown Tokyo

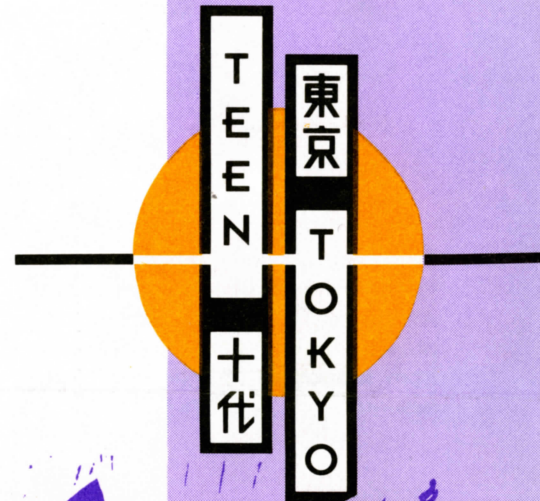
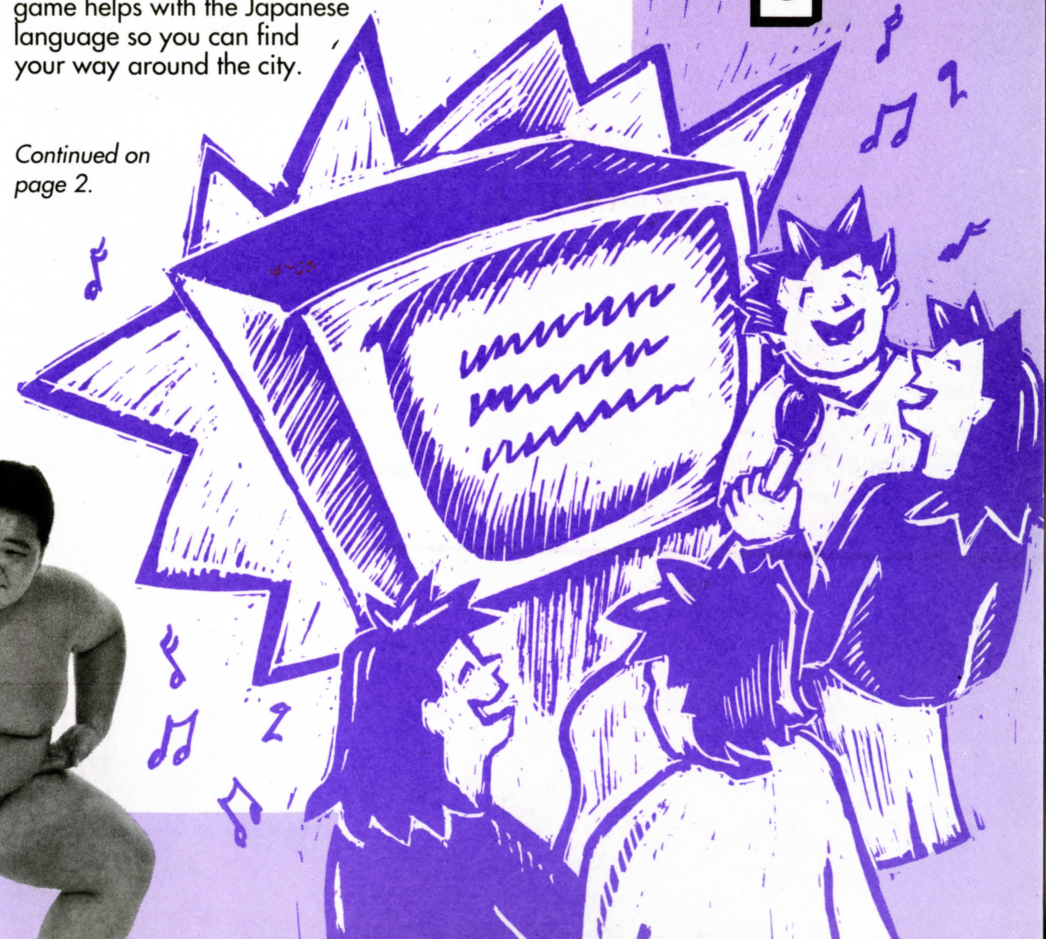
Teen Tokyo will take visitors on a sensory-rich tour that explores the many facets of life in Tokyo, from fast-paced city life to the quiet respite of home. Surrounded by



feel as if they just stepped off the plane into Japan.

Take a ride in a crowded subway car. Learn about the people standing around you, from a seven-year old elementary schoolgirl to two businessmen who are snoozing nearby. Get off at Shibuya, a downtown neighborhood. Through lifesize photos and short biographies, tune into the teenagers who live in this huge, bustling city. A computer game will give you a chance to "Compare Yourself" to Japanese teens, and to Boston teens. Find out what you have in common, and realize and appreciate your differences. A second computer game helps with the Japanese language so you can find your way around the city.

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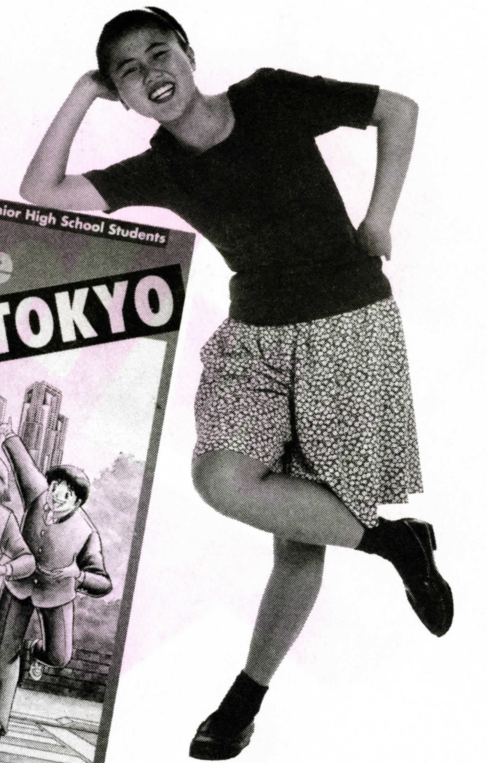
On to the Tokyo Dome, one of Japan's famous athletic arenas! Sports are as popular in Japan as in the United States. Grapple with a six-foot tall replica of a Sumo wrestler and try to push him out of the ring, or marvel at Japan's fascination with baseball.

Music is another favorite subject with adolescents in Japan, the United States and elsewhere. Belt out your favorite song in the sound proof karaoke (sing along) booth, and see your performance on video! Watch music videos on mini television sets to learn about the world of rock and roll in Japan. Do you recognize some of the rock stars Japanese teens idolize?

You'll also learn that comicbooks, called manga, are just as popular as music in Japan with teens as well as adults. Check out the three-inch thick manga that are published weekly in Japan, and then try your hand at creating your own computer-generated animation using a specially designed program that helps you draw like a pro.

Explore the fashion district. Uniforms are a way of life in Japan. Although teens are constantly checking out the latest fashions, they must wear uniforms to school everyday. Many jobs require uniforms, too. Put your smiling face through openings in the Teen Tokyo Try-On area. See yourself as a Japanese baseball player, junior high school student, or sushi chef.

Tokyo teens look forward to Sundays when they can shed their uniforms and don their favorite threads to head for Harajuku, the most popular area of the city for shopping. Learn about the many items that are sold in Japan and how quickly styles come and go. Watch TV commercials and peruse the fashion magazines to see how



### Appreciate global awareness

Teen Tokyo will help Children's Museum visitors become familiar with another culture in its contemporary form. The exhibit is a major addition to the Japan Program which has been part of TCM since it opened in 1913. With the inception of the Harvard East Asian Outreach Program in 1976 and the installation of the full-size authentic Kyoto-style townhouse in 1979, the Museum has become a national center for teaching Americans about Japan. Teen Tokyo is a logical next step in exposing visitors to what's going on today in another culture. The more children learn about other cultures as they are growing up, the more confident and comfortable they will feel in this age of increased global partnerships.

### Extending global lessons into the classroom

To complement the exhibit, an educational manga (comicbook) was written and illustrated about popular youth culture in Japan. *Teenage Tokyo* tells a story about a group of Japanese junior high school students to give readers an idea of what growing up in Tokyo might be like. Developed in collaboration with The Japan Forum and Kodansha Publishing Company, the manga and its teachers' guide were designed to supplement classroom curriculum. More than 5,000 copies will be distributed to schools in Massachusetts and elsewhere.





"Teen Tokyo" was developed by an international team of Japanese and Americans. The exhibit was made possible through generous donations from supporters in both Japan and America.

### Foundations

- Thanks no Kai, a group of Japanese performing artists
- The Bernon Brothers Foundation
- The National Endowment for the Humanities
- The Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership
- The Japan Forum (Kodansha Ltd.)
- Japan World Exposition Commemorative Fund
- The Sato Foundation

### Corporate Sponsors

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from TV commercials and press the fashion magazines to see how merchandise is marketed. You'll also learn how to convert yen (Japanese money) to American dollars, and find out how much a pair of sneakers, a soft drink and other items cost in Tokyo!

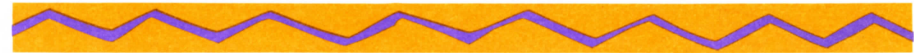
### Relax "At Home"

After you've checked out city life, it's time to go home. On your way to the Yamanouchi's house, you'll pass by vending machines, a sushi restaurant and a convenience store. Stop to relax at a kissaten (coffee shop) where you can flip through manga and magazines, and catch up on the latest news on Japanese TV. Other resources in the kissaten will give you information on how to find out more about Japan after you leave the Museum.

Once you're "At Home," you'll meet 16-year old Tetsuo Yamanouchi, his parents, brother, sister, and their cat Koki in "Tetsuo's Room." Take a seat in "Object Theatre" and listen to Tetsuo talk to his mother, help him search for Koki and find out how he gets along with his little sister as objects magically light up in the room all around you. A five minute presentation will give you a taste of Japanese home life from waking up in the morning and watching TV to enduring a light earthquake and more!



commonality will feel in this age of increased global partnerships.



**Japanese vending machines dispense:**  
 underwear  
 bouquets of flowers  
 magazines  
 hamburgers  
 life insurance policies in a can  
 ...plus all the things you'd expect, from softdrinks to newspapers.



### Study Habits

High School schedules: U.S. vs Japan

Activity	hours per week	
	U.S.	Japan
in class	26.2	41.5
homework	3.8	19.5
sports/play	7.0	.7
sleep	60.3	53.0

