



## People, Places & Design Research

Announcement: May 25, 2010

At the 2010 annual convention this week, the American Association of Museums (AAM) has announced two awards for Overall Excellence in Exhibitions for 2009. These awards are decided by a collaboration of four Standing Professional Committees: the Curators' Committee (CurCom), National Association of Museum Exhibitors (NAME), the Committee on Audience Research and Evaluation (CARE), and the Committee on Education (EdCom).

At **People, Places & Design Research** we're excited to have been part of the team for one of the two winners this year, the exhibition called *Dancing Shadows, Epic Tales: Wayang Kulit of Indonesia*, created by the **Museum of International Folk Art** in Santa Fe, NM. In her acceptance talk for the award, curator Felicia Harris cited our audience research (storyline testing) as a very helpful addition to the planning process, investigating visitors' likely perceptions of the key themes and messages, interest in interactive exhibit options, curiosity about extensive displays of the many variations of two-dimensional puppet characters made from water buffalo hide, and understanding about the nature of the performances (usually many hours into the night, a master puppeteer portraying epic stories, gamelan orchestra, etc.).

**This was the 5<sup>th</sup> time** (in the 20 year history of the award) that we have contributed to a team that won a Best Exhibit of the Year award from AAM. Wow... feels good.

Our previous team awards were for:

- **Traveling the Pacific** (The Field Museum, Chicago IL)
- **Recycled ReSeen** (Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe NM)
- **Amazon Rising** (Shedd Aquarium, Chicago IL)
- **Congo Gorilla Forest** (Wildlife Conservation Society at the Bronx Zoo, NY)

This month concludes our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of serving museums and other interpretive-cultural organizations (starting in June 1984). On our website ([www.ppdresearch.org](http://www.ppdresearch.org)) you can still find our crossword puzzle called 'Free Advice' – but you can call us for free advice any time. We will continue to use our anniversary slogan:

**Got Visitors? We can answer your questions.**

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