



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

DIVISION OF PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Research Programs application guidelines at <https://www.neh.gov/grants/public/public-humanities-projects> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Research Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music

Institution: National Museum of American Jewish History

Project Director: Ivy Weingram

Grant Program: America's Historical and Cultural Organizations: Planning Grants

THE NATURE OF THE REQUEST

The National Museum of American Jewish History (NMAJH) respectfully requests a planning grant of \$50,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support the development of the special exhibition ***Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music*** (working title), opening in March 2018 to celebrate the centennial year of Bernstein's birth. This innovative exhibition will explore how Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) composed and conducted new music for stage, screen, and orchestra, and how his original works expressed the restlessness, anxiety, fear, and hope of a generation of Americans living through World War II and the Holocaust, Vietnam, and turbulent social change. While previous studies have explored Bernstein's public life as a conductor or his musical styles, this exhibition will focus on Bernstein the composer and social actor, specifically through the lens of his "search for a solution to the 20th-century crisis of faith." Bernstein considered this the unifying, and perhaps most significant, theme to his body of work, and yet, it is a subject that has received only marginal scholarly attention or representation for the public in a museum setting.

Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music will open doors to engaging new audiences in conversations around the intersections of faith, the arts, and social change. NMAJH recognizes that its audience may be familiar with many of Bernstein's works, notably *West Side Story*, but not necessarily with how they became emblematic of the composer's grappling with his own religious, political, and sexual identity, or how these works responded to the political and social crises of his day. Moreover, Bernstein's Jewish heritage, so deeply ingrained in him by his parents and so intricately woven through his life and work, informed his distinctive compositional style and his social activism. Seen from the perspective of his "crisis of faith," this exhibition connects these themes and enhances the value of this project to popular and scholarly understandings of Bernstein's transformative role in American culture.

A unique addition to centennial celebrations around the world, ***Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music*** will be presented at NMAJH from March-September 2018, and will then travel to additional venues. The exhibition will be 2,400 square feet and contain approximately 120 artifacts drawn from the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, the New York Philharmonic Archives, private collections, and additional repositories with holdings in 20th-century American music and culture. Objects such as Bernstein's personal effects, film and sound recordings, scores, handwritten production and orchestration notes, photographs, and costumes will illustrate how Bernstein negotiated the crises of the 20th-century as he saw them, from the Holocaust to the AIDS epidemic.

As the premier institution exhibiting, educating, interpreting, and preserving the story of American Jewish life, NMAJH is ideally suited to develop and present an exhibition that weaves Leonard Bernstein's Jewish background into his lifelong passion to connect, and indeed wrestle with, his faith, his identity, and his social consciousness. The Leonard Bernstein Office and the Bernstein family support NMAJH in its efforts to secure resources, access artifact collections, obtain image, film, and music rights, and develop educational initiatives and public programming in conjunction with the exhibition. Curatorial control of the exhibition rests with NMAJH, and will follow contemporary scholarship on Leonard Bernstein. In addition, NMAJH will develop programmatic collaborations with area cultural institutions, such as Philadelphia's world-renowned Curtis Institute of Music, where Bernstein studied from 1939-41.

Grant funds will be used to support a \$154,121 planning project budget, including: artifact research, consultations with advisors, initial engagement of the exhibition's designers and media producers, front-end audience evaluation, and meetings with local arts and culture presenters to develop collaborative

programming and marketing around Bernstein's centennial, with NMAJH serving as a convener of these celebrations for the city of Philadelphia. The planning phase will continue through March 2017, during which time the team will work to create spaces in which visitors can engage with Bernstein's writings and music as an interactive experience, in order to appreciate the complexity of his compositions and reflect his unparalleled gift for audience engagement.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF LEONARD BERNSTEIN

"You can never have too much passion in what you write or what you perform," Leonard Bernstein stated on his 70th birthday. "The real question is how that passion is controlled, how it's channeled, and where it leads."¹ For those who watched Leonard Bernstein lead the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in the 1950s and 60s, he is remembered as a passionate, larger-than-life personality—a charismatic conductor, devoted educator, and skilled musician. Less familiar, however, is Leonard Bernstein the thoughtful composer and ambitious social actor, the second-generation American Jew who leveraged his love of learning and teaching, public celebrity, and musical talents to inspire social change. These are the facets of his life and career that *Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music* will highlight.

Leonard Bernstein was born on August 25, 1918 to Jewish immigrants Jennie and Samuel Bernstein, then living in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Samuel founded the Samuel Bernstein Hair Company, and his success as the exclusive New England franchisee of the Frederic's Permanent Wave machine afforded Leonard access to some of the finest mentors of his day. He began private piano lessons at age 10 and studied at the prestigious Boston Latin School, Harvard University, the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood, and the Curtis Institute.

In addition to his academic and musical training, Bernstein also experimented with adapting and staging theatre productions throughout his teens and Harvard years. He graduated with a conducting diploma from the Curtis Institute in 1941, and within months led the Boston Pops—his first appearance with a professional orchestra. On November 14, 1943, Bernstein famously made his Carnegie Hall conducting debut (broadcast nationally on radio!) when Maestro Bruno Walter fell ill. He was 25 years old.

In January 1944 Bernstein premiered *Jeremiah*, his first of three symphonies, and dozens of additional original works, drawing on his Jewish heritage. Along with his two additional symphonies (*The Age of Anxiety* and *Kaddish*) Bernstein composed numerous concert works (*Chichester Psalms*, *MASS*), theater works (*On the Town*, *Wonderful Town*, *Candide*, *Trouble in Tahiti*, songs and chorus for *Peter Pan*, *West Side Story*), film (*On the Waterfront* film score and the film versions of many of the theater works), and ballet (*Fancy Free*, *Dybbuk*).

In 1958 Bernstein took the helm as Music Director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra—the first American born-and-trained conductor to hold this position. In addition to his Young People's Concerts with the New York Philharmonic, Bernstein taught at Tanglewood, Harvard, and Brandeis University. He helped found the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute and the Orchestral Academy at the Schleswig Holstein Music Festival, as well as the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan. Music education, nurturing young talent, and bringing classical music to a wide audience were central to his mission.

¹ Leonard Bernstein, *Sunday Today*, August 25, 1988.

HUMANITIES CONTENT

On October 8, 1979, Helen Morgan, a high school Humanities teacher in Chesapeake, Virginia, wrote to Leonard Bernstein seeking his recommendation for “one effective way to draw the interest and imaginations of the modern student to the beauty of the humanities.” Morgan further asked Bernstein to explain if “there [is] a central theme or purpose which has guided the development and content of your work.” Bernstein marked up the letter, underlining select words and phrases in red pencil, and composed the beginning of a reply:

There are far more than one “central theme” within my body of works, but if I had to choose one, perhaps the most significant, it would be our search for a solution to the 20th-Century crisis of Faith. LB²

Bernstein frequently referred to this crisis of faith as “a kind of struggle that is born of the crisis of our century.”³ Throughout his lifetime Bernstein witnessed world events—the Holocaust, ongoing racial violence and discrimination, and the war in Vietnam—that shook his faith: in God, in humanity, and in government. For Bernstein, “faith” could be both religious and secular in nature—the relationship between people and God, and the relationships between human beings. Why did he return, time and again, to this “crisis of faith”? How did Bernstein’s religious background inform his responses to these challenges, and what forms did it take in his compositions? His personal life? Organized around this “crisis of faith,” ***Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music*** will explore Bernstein’s dynamic, original compositions as well as the social causes he championed both on and off the stage. It will offer a streamlined view into an enormously accomplished, well-traveled and productive life, expanding the scope of national discussions and previous analyses of Bernstein’s orchestral or theater work, in an interactive, museum setting. Focusing on selected concert works and stage productions, the exhibition will likewise trace how Bernstein’s Jewish faith and social progressivism, coupled with the complexities of his own sexuality, informed his reinvention of American music.

Leonard Bernstein’s compositions illustrate how Judaism and Jewish identity played a key role in shaping his music for orchestra and the Broadway stage.

On the surface, generational tensions within the Bernstein household appear to reflect the classic immigrant narrative—parents seeking freedom and opportunity in America, building modestly successful lives, and raising children who embraced American values and pursued interests and careers sometimes frowned upon by their parents. Indeed, parts of the Bernstein family story reflect this narrative. While Samuel Bernstein nourished his son’s love of the piano, his idea of a “professional” musician was a traveling klezmer barely able to scrape by. He once advised Helen Coates, Leonard’s instructor and later his long-time secretary, that “from a practical standpoint I prefer that [Leonard] not regard his music as a future means of maintenance.”⁴ Yet, despite some reservations, Samuel took pride in his son’s achievements, privately appealing to Serge Koussevitzky, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, for assistance in placing Leonard in a conducting position in the United States, “to find some

² Helen Morgan to Leonard Bernstein, 8 October 1979, Fan Mail, Box 457, Leonard Bernstein Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³ Remarks at the Berlin Press Conference, 12 September 1977. Bernstein also identified the “crisis of faith” as the recurring theme in his work in *The Composer and the Public*, *Dialogue* (January 1972) and in an interview for *ASCAP Today* (May 1972).

⁴ Samuel Bernstein to Helen Coates, 20 July 1934, Correspondence, Box 13 Folder 1, Leonard Bernstein Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

haven for Leonard where he may continue with his work and know happiness.”⁵ This appeal by a father supporting his son’s interests suggests a different approach to understanding the negotiation of ethnic and American identity for American Jews in the early 20th century.

Visitors may think of Leonard Bernstein as a lifelong New Yorker given his longtime associations with the New York Philharmonic and the Broadway theater. But he was, in fact, Boston-raised, in a Jewish community largely composed of recent immigrants like his parents. Leonard learned the Hebrew Bible and Talmud from his father. The family belonged to Congregation Mishkan Tefila, a Conservative synagogue that featured progressive approaches to worship and liturgy, including a mixed-gender choir and organ music. “I used to weep just listening to the choir, cantor, and organ thundering out,” Bernstein recalled in 1990. Profoundly influenced by the sacred Jewish music of the synagogue, in 1946 Bernstein wrote that he “may have heard greater masterpieces performed since then, and under more impressive circumstances; but I have never been more deeply moved.”⁶ Judaism and Jewish music would come to serve as an anchor for the composer through challenging historic moments and personal crises. Artifacts from the Bernstein family will provide a sense of the Jewish home, heritage, and commitment to learning that nurtured the Bernstein children and helped shape their Jewish identities.

By his own account, Jewish themes and Hebrew source texts had considerable influence on, and were present in, Bernstein’s efforts to explore the roots of his faith. He also modulated between tonal and atonal music to express this crisis in musical terms.⁷ Bernstein regularly drew from Jewish life and law, scripture and tradition when creating both Jewish and secular symphonic works, theater pieces, and film scores—from the Jets’ call to action that opens *West Side Story*, to his *Jeremiah* and *Kaddish* symphonies, to *MASS: A Theatre Piece for Singers, Players, and Dancers*. Bernstein consciously integrated texts and melodies that he associated with Jewishness into his signature works.⁸ In one revealing play on words, Bernstein articulated his crisis of faith in *MASS* by repeatedly morphing the Hebrew word for God, *Adonai*, into “I don’t know.” Through interactive media within the exhibition, visitors will chart the Jewish motifs in Bernstein’s work, discovering new music for themselves and new frameworks with which to re-consider Bernstein classics.

Asthma prevented Bernstein from serving in World War II, and his years on the home front afforded him the opportunity to establish himself as a conductor and composer while still in his youth. Nevertheless, the war and its impact on world Jewry affected Bernstein greatly, and the Holocaust deeply influenced how he came to terms with his Jewish faith. In the spring of 1948 Bernstein embarked on a European

⁵ Samuel Bernstein to Serge Koussevitzky, 15 September 1941. This is a recently discovered, touching letter which provides new insight on the extent to which Samuel advocated for Leonard’s music career, rather than previous scholarship which asserted that he discouraged it.

⁶ Leonard Bernstein to Stuart Rosenbaum, 20 March 1946, Congregation Mishkan Tefila archives. For reference, by 1946 Bernstein had earned degrees from Harvard University and the Curtis Institute, studied with Aaron Copland and with Serge Koussevitzky at Tanglewood, and conducted the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall, in addition to a number of other conducting engagements.

⁷ Jack Gottlieb, *Funny, It Doesn’t Sound Jewish: How Yiddish Songs and Synagogue Melodies Influenced Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood* (New York: SUNY Press, 2004). For more on how Bernstein expressed his crisis of faith in terms of atonality versus tonality see Marin Alsop’s argument in <http://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=161824558z>

⁸ “The ‘gang call’ -- the way the Jets signal to each other -- in *West Side Story* was really like the call of the shofar that I used to hear blown in temple on Rosh Hashanah.” Interview with Jonathan Cott, published posthumously in *Rolling Stone*, November 29, 1990, p. 3.

conducting tour that brought him to Germany, where he led an orchestra of Displaced Persons (DPs) in Bizet's *L'Arlesienne Suite* and Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. He was 29 years old. Sharing music and stories with survivors deeply affected the young conductor—" [I] cried my heart out," he wrote to Helen Coates—and yet it took him nearly a lifetime of wrestling with his faith in God and the tragedies of the Holocaust to overtly address these experiences in his work. At the end of his life, Bernstein left an unfinished Holocaust opera. "All my symphonies [are] ... about the crisis in faith," he theorized in May 1972. "I wouldn't say that it's God up there watching over me, as much as me down here looking up to find Him - I guess you would call that a chief concern of my life."⁹

During those same years, Bernstein committed himself to nurturing the national orchestra in pre-state Palestine. Beginning in April 1947 he gave the first of nine concerts with the Palestine Philharmonic Orchestra (later the Israeli Philharmonic). In May of the following year, as Bernstein was meeting with DPs in Germany, the State of Israel declared its independence. On the heels of European Jewry's near annihilation, a Jewish state seemed miraculous. Most American Jews supported the Jewish homeland, and cultural exchanges soon played a critical role in deepening American Jews' sense of closeness to Israel. Israeli culture, including music and dance, captured the hearts of young people.¹⁰

For his part, Bernstein affirmed the role that music could play in building and bringing peace to the State of Israel. The exhibition will show, particularly through documentary footage and Bernstein's correspondence with his family, the lasting connection to the Jewish faith and history that being in Israel provided him over the course of a lifetime:

How I thought of you, Daddy, and how exalted you would have felt, seeing so many different kinds of Jews - Yemenites, Chasidim, Soldiers, black, blonde, young, old - all praying together in a sound as of the whole universe - as though every Jewish voice for 5000 years had joined in this prayer. ...And when small groups of Tzadikim began to dance and sing Horas in front of The Wall, I saw you there dancing with them. You would have been in ecstasy, but I experienced it for you.¹¹

In total, Bernstein conducted the Palestine/Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra in 25 different seasons—touring, recording, and filming concerts in the United States and Europe. Building a cultural exchange between the U.S. and Israel, he brought the New York Philharmonic for concerts in Israel, and premiered new works with the Israeli Philharmonic well into the 1980s. These experiences served to deepen his connection with Judaism and Jewish history, spiritually ground him as the Red Scare and racial violence shook his faith in humanity and in our nation's leaders, and informed his responses to these events as an individual activist and as a composer.

Leonard Bernstein addressed and engaged with the changing nature of civil rights and civil liberties in mid-20th-century America through his music, scholarship, and social activism.

Throughout his career, Bernstein searched for a solution to racial inequality, catalyzed by changing racial politics in America and the prejudice endured by African Americans in the arts community. He sought

⁹ Interview, *ASCAP Today* (May 1972).

¹⁰ Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) and Hasia R. Diner, *The Jews of the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

¹¹ Leonard Bernstein to Jennie and Samuel Bernstein, 11 July 1967, Correspondence, Box 83 Folder 18, Leonard Bernstein Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

out like-minded collaborators when composing new music and challenged prevailing racism in the choices he made in casting and composing Broadway productions.

At Harvard, Bernstein listened to and performed popular music, but studied the work of classically-trained, European and American composers. In his senior thesis, “The Absorption of Race Elements into American Music,” he asked: How did we get modern American music from the European heritage of the earliest American composers? And what makes it sound quintessentially “American?” Bernstein argued that American music incorporates the New England Protestant tradition, and that the addition of syncopated, “Negro jazz” “naturally and inevitably” produced the basis of our nation’s characteristic sound, “where so many various racial tributaries come together and grow into a stronger, more unified current.” “American music owes one of its greatest debts to the Negroes,” Bernstein wrote, “not only for the popularly acknowledged gift of jazz, but for the impetus which jazz has given to America’s art music.”¹² Bernstein concluded his study with the suggestion that every composer brings his own racial or ethnic heritage to his work, consciously or not. Notably, he chose to cite Jewish composers as exemplars of this phenomenon—Copland and Gershwin, along with Ernst Bloch— suggesting that he associated Jews’ liminal social status and history of persecution with that of African Americans, while showing his respect for African-American musical traditions.

After graduating, Bernstein continued his studies at Philadelphia’s Curtis Institute of Music, where he began to experiment with the ways in which classical music could play a role in democratizing and desegregating the arts. In many ways, this work foreshadowed the political engagement and social activism that would become hallmarks of his life as a public figure. At Curtis he accepted an invitation to lead an “all-Negro Symphony Orchestra” under the sponsorship of the National Negro Congress (NNC), formed in 1935 to build cooperative support among various advocacy groups, including the NAACP, lobbying for the civil rights and civil liberties of African Americans. Writing to his former piano instructor Helen Coates, Bernstein reported, “I’ll be only too glad to work with them. It’s a great social triumph, too, if it succeeds.”¹³

When Bernstein made his Broadway debut with *On The Town*, it became his most significant effort to date to overtly challenge prevailing racial politics, demonstrated in the show’s casting, its score, and the hiring of an African-American conductor. An outgrowth of Jerome Robbins’s ballet *Fancy Free* (for which Bernstein composed the music), *On The Town* broke barriers between art forms. It combined jazz, blues, mambo, and boogie-woogie with ballet and classical music to tell the humorous, high-energy story of three sailors looking for love on a 24-hour shore leave in New York City. The show ran for a successful 462 performances, in a city teeming with servicemen in the midst of World War II.

When *On The Town* premiered in 1944, segregation and inequality on the Broadway stage persisted. African Americans were routinely cast in menial character roles and stereotypes drawn from blackface minstrelsy, and were often separated from white performers while on stage. *On The Town* featured four African Americans and a dance chorus in which African-American dancers held hands with white dancers and all shared many of the same roles as sailors (at a time when the real American military remained segregated). Two African-American singers likewise had important parts in the musical, rather than

¹² Leonard Bernstein, “The Absorption of Race Elements into American Music,” reprinted in *Findings: Fifty Years of Meditations on Music* (New York: Anchor Books, 1982).

¹³ Leonard Bernstein to Helen Coates, 11 November 1940, Correspondence, Box 13 Folder 2, Leonard Bernstein Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

being simply cast as “extras.” These numbers may seem small, but they were unprecedented on Broadway in 1944. Nine months into the run of *On The Town*, Everett Lee, an African-American violinist and concertmaster, stepped in to lead the all-white pit orchestra at Bernstein’s urging, and the two continued working together even after the show closed.¹⁴

On The Town also premiered when the United States operated internment camps for 120,000 Japanese living in the country. Within this climate of fear and anxiety, the artistic team took the audacious step of casting Sono Osato, a Japanese-American ballet dancer, as Ivy Smith, the beauty-queen love-interest of Gaby, one of the show’s lead sailors. At a time when virtually no opportunities were available for Asian performers on Broadway or in Hollywood, Bernstein and his collaborators (including Betty Comden and Adolph Green) boldly wrote this role specifically for Osato. These public affirmations of integration, literally taking place on stage, came at a time when antiscegenation laws prevailing in many states banned inter-racial marriages.¹⁵ Indeed, the team behind *On The Town* naturalized for their audience the forbidden, sexual relationship between a white man and a Japanese woman—a romantic theme Bernstein and Robbins would explore again in *West Side Story*. As Misty Copeland, the first African-American woman to be named a principal dancer with American Ballet Theater, prepares to step into the role of Ivy Smith in August 2015, *On The Town* will once again become a Broadway production featuring barrier-breaking performers and performances.

Bernstein’s public support of African Americans in the arts community would only increase in the years following the run of *On The Town*. By 1947 he had worked with Marian Anderson and Muriel Smith, his Curtis classmate. In a *New York Times* editorial, “The Negro in Music: The Problems He Has to Face in Getting a Start,” Bernstein argued that the dismal number of African-American musicians and singers in New York City orchestras and opera companies was the result of racial prejudice. “And I don’t think it was a lack of talent,” Bernstein wrote, “but something more serious, a lack of opportunity for proper training. ...And that is why everything we can do to fight discrimination—in any form or field—will ultimately work toward ameliorating the musical situation.”¹⁶ Nora Holt, classical music critic for the *Amsterdam News* (an African-American newspaper), noted Bernstein’s “more than ordinary courage” in penning the *Times* piece, for “he is a musician of scholarly achievements and a man of liberal views, which means he measures a human being according to his qualities without odious reference to race or creed.”¹⁷ Through his social activism as a public celebrity and as a leader in the arts, Bernstein challenged the racial politics of his day in the years before Jackie Robinson broke baseball’s color barrier.

Cold War politics and enduring racial tensions personally and professionally challenged Leonard Bernstein to carefully navigate his ethnic, political, and sexual identity while maintaining his public persona.

In response to the Red Scare of the late 1940s and 1950s, Jews often felt pressure to re-emphasize their loyalty to America and underscore their commitment to freedom and democracy.¹⁸ Given his celebrity, Bernstein keenly felt the tensions between speaking out and staying silent. To provide moral support for

¹⁴ Carol J. Oja, “Everett Lee and the Racial Politics of Orchestral Conducting.” *American Music Review*, Volume 43, Number 1 (Fall 2013).

¹⁵ Oja, *Bernstein Meets Broadway: Collaborative Art in a Time of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹⁶ Leonard Bernstein, “The Negro in Music: The Problems He Has To Face in Getting a Start,” *New York Times*, November 2, 1947, X7.

¹⁷ Nora Holt, “Music,” *New York Amsterdam News*, November 8, 1947.

¹⁸ Arthur Goren, *The Politics and Public Culture of American Jews* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999) and Stephen J. Whitfield, *In Search of American Jewish Culture* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1999).

colleagues in the entertainment industry, he flew to Washington in October 1947 with the Committee for the First Amendment to lobby for disbanding the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), which investigated alleged Communist sympathizers and publicly condemned prominent Hollywood and Broadway icons.¹⁹ Bernstein easily could have been called to testify as well. He had attended events in support of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee and the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, and signed petitions printed in the *Daily Worker* in support of Communist-Party (and African-American) candidate Benjamin Davis for New York City Council. He watched as his colleagues testified before HUAC—some, like Jerome Robbins, choosing to name names—though none named Leonard Bernstein. Writing to his sister, Shirley, from Cuernavaca, Mexico, Bernstein confessed his fear of being called before HUAC and potentially damaging his career as a conductor, “[hoping] I’m as brave as I sound from this distance when it catches up to me.”²⁰

There was reason to worry. Bernstein’s Jewish background, coupled with questions about his sexuality, further raised suspicions. Though he projected the highly social, public life of a family man, Bernstein was known to have had private, romantic relationships with men for decades. His wife, actress Felicia Montealegre-Cohn, acknowledged his attraction to men early in their marriage, and requested discretion from him in the public realm, at the risk of damaging his, or her, reputation and career.²¹ While he was not called upon to testify before HUAC, from 1949 to 1963 the FBI developed an 800-page file on the conductor’s activities, philanthropy, correspondence, and personal friendships and relationships.

Bernstein found his personal life and political associations in crisis in June 1950, when the book *Red Channels* listed 151 radio and television personalities suspected of having Communist sympathies, Bernstein among them. Following his listing in *Red Channels*, CBS, which had broadcast his Carnegie Hall debut, considered Bernstein “blacklisted.” In July 1953, just months before a scheduled appearance as the first American to conduct an opera at La Scala, Italy’s preeminent opera house and one of the finest in the world, the State Department denied Bernstein’s passport renewal, at which point he signed a humiliating affidavit affirming his loyalty to the United States and swearing that he was not a Communist.

In the midst of all this, Bernstein and Robbins began to conceive a stage adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*. When *West Side Story* finally premiered in 1957, it immediately became an iconic statement about the anxiety engendered by the Red Scare and changing notions of race and ethnic identity—fundamentally, what it meant to be an “American.” Moreover, for Bernstein and his Jewish colleagues that created the musical, it represented their own efforts to address the changing nature of Jewish identity. What did it mean to be Jewish in 1950s America? How was the racial and religious identity of Jews and of other immigrant groups shifting during this period, and how were Jews proving their American-ness during this turbulent time?²²

¹⁹ For an examination of Bernstein’s political activism and blacklisting see Barry Seldes, *Leonard Bernstein: The Political Life of an American Musician* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

²⁰ Leonard Bernstein to Shirley Bernstein, 16 May 1951, Correspondence, Box 8 Folder 6, Leonard Bernstein Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²¹ Felicia Bernstein to Leonard Bernstein, late 1951 or 1952, Correspondence, Box 60A, Leonard Bernstein Papers, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²² Hasia R. Diner, *The Jews of the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Kirsten Fermaglich, *American Dreams and Nazi Nightmares* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press and Hanover, NH: University

A thorough examination of the evolution of *West Side Story* as an “out and out plea for racial tolerance,” Bernstein noted in his copy of *Romeo and Juliet*, reveals a group of Jewish artists grappling with race and ethnicity during an incredibly complex period in American history.²³ Visitors to this exhibition may be surprised to learn that when they initially conceived of this musical as an “East Side story” in 1949, Bernstein and his collaborators envisioned a story of rivalry between Jewish and Catholic teens during the convergence of Passover and Easter in the immigrant neighborhoods of the Lower East Side. But by 1955, the creative team that included Jerome Robbins (choreography), Stephen Sondheim (lyrics), and Arthur Laurents (book) had reworked their adaptation of Shakespeare’s classic into a tale of “two teenage gangs, one the warring Puerto Ricans, the other self-styled ‘Americans’.”²⁴ The creative team’s letters, date books, production notes, draft scripts, and song lyrics to be shown in the exhibition offer a window into the genesis and development of a very different story from the iconic musical we now know as *West Side Story*.

Recognizing that the Jewish/Catholic conflict represented the experiences of religious minorities and immigrant communities of their parents’ generation, the collaborators drew inspiration from gang violence in Chicago and New York that was making headlines. They effectively transferred their Jewish “otherness” onto the Puerto Rican Sharks in their questioning of who gets to be “American.” The clashes between the Sharks and the Jets are seen, heard, and felt in the interweaving of Classical music, opera, and Latin rhythms with provocative, pointed lyrics, and modern ballet.

Bernstein’s negotiation of racial and ethnic identity, and his efforts to secure civil liberties for minority groups, continued to shape his social activism throughout the Civil Rights movement. As Jewish leaders like Abraham Joshua Heschel marched and spoke out in support of African Americans struggling to overcome deeply entrenched racism, Bernstein likewise joined Martin Luther King Jr. on the march to Montgomery in the summer of 1965. In 1970 the Bernsteins hosted a controversial reception in support of 21 Black Panthers imprisoned for conspiring to attack New York police precincts and bomb public areas. Though the high-profile event received lengthy criticism by Tom Wolfe as “radical chic,” it did not discourage Leonard Bernstein from continuing to give expression to his waning confidence in the American political establishment’s power to fully guarantee civil rights and civil liberties to all citizens—an expression which culminated in the historic 1971 debut of *MASS*.²⁵

In *MASS* Bernstein appropriated a Catholic rite to create a theater piece that literally gave voice to the national debate about human rights and international diplomacy during the Vietnam era.

The Vietnam War, the draft, escalating violence at home (Kent State) and abroad (Mai Lai Massacre), and the imprisonment of outspoken anti-war activists led Bernstein to a deep reckoning with his faith.²⁶ When Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, a long-time friend of the Bernsteins, asked Leonard to compose an

Press of New England, 2006); Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

²³ Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

²⁴ Excerpts from “West Side Story Log,” 25 September 1957, Writings, Box 75 Folder 37, Leonard Bernstein Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Printed in *Findings*, 147.

²⁵ Tom Wolfe, “Radical Chic: That Party at Lenny’s,” *New York Magazine*, June 8, 1970. Expanded in Tom Wolfe, *Radical Chic and Mau Mauing the Flak Catchers* (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1970).

²⁶ While preparing *MASS*, Bernstein visited Father Daniel Berrigan, a Catholic priest and anti-war activist, who had been listed on the FBI’s “10 Most Wanted” and subsequently apprehended and imprisoned.

original work to inaugurate the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 1971, the composer used this auspicious occasion to address current debates and memorialize the nation's only Catholic president. Working with lyricist Stephen Schwartz (then known for *Godspell* and more recently for *Wicked*), Bernstein reimagined the traditional Catholic rite as *MASS: A Theatre Piece for Singers, Players, and Dancers*, an expression of a generational crisis of faith and longing for peace at home and abroad. In Bernstein's words, "I did not write *Mass* to be controversial. It was written to be stimulating, provocative and moving."²⁷ *MASS* unleashed over 200 participants, including singers, dancers, and classical and rock musicians. It combined sacred Latin and Hebrew texts sung by a choir with a prodding, stirring street chorus, blues and jazz, a rock band, a gospel chorus, a children's choir, instrumental meditations, and dance interludes choreographed by Alvin Ailey. The overwhelming production sets up a complex, dramatic dialogue between the Celebrant (priest) wrestling with his as-yet unwavering faith and a street chorus that inserts—demands—contemporary commentary on the issues of the day.²⁸ Over the course of two hours, the chorus increasingly prevails upon the Celebrant to challenge Church doctrine, question tradition and authority, and find his own place of spiritual solace.²⁹ In the end, the Celebrant has been completely, spiritually broken down as the gospel chorus repeats its plea, "Dona nobis pacem. Pacem! Pacem!" (Give us peace). The audience is left roused, baffled, and hopeful. Visitors will experience excerpts from this powerful work through an immersive, filmic experience within the exhibition, along with Bernstein's scripts, correspondence, and personal effects from his work on the piece.

Working with Schwartz, Bernstein applied a decidedly Talmudic style of debate to the Celebrant's crisis. He recognized the power of provocative, thoughtful music, and his role as a public figure and composer, to bring peace to turbulent times:

*I am convinced that somehow, miraculously, through the rediscovery of man's rational power, and maybe through the appearance of leadership, we'll be able to make it. That's why I'm really writing Mass. It's the only way I can contribute to what I hope is rationality in these times.*³⁰

What inspired a Jewish composer (and a Jewish lyricist) to reimagine the Catholic Mass as a convergence of a personal crisis of faith and current events? What does creating a monumental theater piece that relied, and riffed, on a Catholic rite reveal about Bernstein's faith in Judaism and his political identity? These questions, and how to address them within the exhibition, will be explored during the planning phase.

MASS gave voice to the turbulence of the 1970s and served as a turning point for Bernstein's personal wrestling with his sexual identity. During the final stages of writing *MASS* Bernstein became romantically

²⁷ Interview with John Gruen, *Los Angeles Times*, December 31, 1972.

²⁸ As one example, a quatrain written by Paul Simon for Bernstein's use in *MASS: Half the people are stoned / And the other half are waiting for the next election. / Half the people are drowned / And the other half are swimming in the wrong direction.*

²⁹ The audience sat in silence upon the conclusion of *MASS* and followed with thirty minutes of sustained applause. Advised by the White House that the composer had embedded humiliating, anti-war rhetoric in the Latin text, President Nixon did not attend *MASS*. Bernstein continued his anti-war activism, and on January 19, 1973 led the National Symphony Orchestra in the "Concert for Peace" at Washington National Cathedral, on the eve of Nixon's second inaugural.

³⁰ Interview with John Gruen, "American Greats", *Vogue*, September 1, 1971.

involved with Tom Cothran, a music director from Los Angeles who moved to New York and proofread the score. Between 1974 and 1976, Leonard's discretion in his extramarital relationships had all but evaporated, and by July 1976 he and Felicia had separated.

In the years following the Vietnam War, the composer channeled his activism toward looming crises at home and, eventually, towards the AIDS epidemic. Bernstein deeply felt the increasing enormity of this crisis after losing Cothran and a number of friends to AIDS, and he sought ways to speak out where it seemed his voice could make an impact. He organized concerts to raise funds for research projects and clinics supported by AmFar. In November 1989 Bernstein declined the National Medal of Arts from President George H. W. Bush when the National Endowment for the Arts rescinded a grant for an art exhibition that dealt with AIDS. A lifelong social and political activist, Bernstein advised the President that he would not allow himself to be recognized as an "official artist content to collect a medal in kind and gentle silence." Less than one year later, Bernstein passed away after suffering cardiac arrest brought on by side-effects of treatment for mesothelioma.

MASS remains as powerful and relevant a reflection of crises of faith in government and in humanity today as it was when Bernstein wrote more than forty years ago. With the continuing struggle for civil rights and civil liberties in America, and the complexities of American military intervention abroad, the convergence of Bernstein's personal reckonings with faith take on new meanings for every audience that experiences this visionary piece. For Leonard Bernstein, faith remained a lens through which he channeled his passion and creativity as a composer and social actor. "My father wanted me to be a rabbi," he said, "And there are many people who tell me that his wish came true, that really what I am under all this is a rabbi."³¹

PROJECT FORMAT AND PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

As demonstrated in his Young People's Concerts, Leonard Bernstein combined his gifts as an educator with a dynamism, enthusiasm, and passion for his subject. This exhibition will harness that spirit, offering experiences for visitors to explore his music in new contexts.

Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music will be an immersive, experiential exhibition that features artifacts including: **personal effects** (musical instruments, pieces of Bernstein's writing studio, conducting batons, memorabilia from theater productions, passports, datebooks, Judaica, and items from the Bernstein family home), **original correspondence** (letters between Leonard Bernstein and his family members and associates, fan mail, communications and scene sketches with collaborators and performers), **writings** (Harvard thesis, speeches in Bernstein's hand, annotated copy of *Romeo and Juliet*, and working lyrics), and **photography**. These artifacts will be complemented by **immersive film** (excerpts of productions of *MASS*, *On The Town*, and *West Side Story*, and conducting engagements with the New York Philharmonic and Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra), **sound installations** (recordings of *Jeremiah* and *Kaddish*), **interactive media** (see below), and **invitations for visitor participation** with the exhibition and with each other. The project scope will be further determined and refined during the planning phase so that the exhibition includes the most impactful experiences for the audience, within the project budget.

NMAJH is exploring Bluetooth, beacon-technology systems that push out diverse media—from oral history interviews to brief tracks of music—to visitors' mobile devices as they approach or stand in

³¹ Leonard Bernstein, *ASCAP Today*, May 1972.

proximity to particular artifacts, walls, or cases.³² Through this technology, or another to be determined with the guidance of a sound engineer, the exhibition experience can also allow for key, in-gallery filmic or audio presentations that use immersive projection effectively. The planning period budget includes preliminary consultations with sound designers to ensure that the team seamlessly employs audio and visual content as storytelling methods within the exhibition.

The exhibition designer, media producer, and sound consultant for **Leonard Bernstein** will be critical to the development of an exhibition that fully integrates, spotlights, and unpacks Leonard Bernstein's music itself—in many ways the most telling “artifacts” of this story—for audiences that will include American music enthusiasts, Bernstein enthusiasts, and devotees of musical theater, as well as those who may be unfamiliar with symphonic music and/or Jewish liturgical music.

The project team will develop **interactive media** through which visitors can listen to elements of synagogue music to hear how Bernstein drew from and reworked those sounds for film, Broadway, and orchestra. Cantor David Tilman, who recently partnered with the Philadelphia Orchestra for interfaith discussions around their presentation of *MASS*, will serve as a content consultant on this interactive.

The exhibition will include opportunities to listen to Bernstein himself through **archival recordings and documentaries**, as well as **oral history interviews** with his family, colleagues, and protégés—all in an effort to engage visitors emotionally and to create direct connections with Bernstein in his own words. Filmmakers David Maysles and Richard Leacock each documented the Bernsteins as they visited Israel; their footage will enhance visitors' appreciation for Leonard Bernstein's passion for the State at significant moments.³³ Young People's Concert recordings will add a nostalgic moment for the generation of visitors who may have grown up watching this classic program.

Visitors will also have opportunities to engage with the exhibition as 21st-century Americans purposefully responsive to crises in our own time. In the wake of violent protests and ensuing curfews in Baltimore in the summer of 2015, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra offered free daytime concerts because curfews made evening symphony performances impossible to attend. The Orchestra invoked Bernstein's famous credo, delivered at a United Jewish Appeal concert in the days following President Kennedy's assassination:

*This will be our reply to violence: to make music more intensely, more beautifully, more devotedly than ever before. And with each note we will honor the spirit of John Kennedy, commemorate his courage, and reaffirm his faith in the Triumph of the Mind.*³⁴

NMAJH has a proven track record of creating exhibitions and programs that bridge historic moments to contemporary events. Recent projects like *To Bigotry No Sanction: George Washington and Religious Freedom* began as an opportunity to exhibit one treasure of American history—George Washington's historic letter to the Jewish community of Newport, RI—and developed into a groundbreaking special exhibition focusing on the history of religious freedom in the early republic. It included the President's

³² For more on beacon systems for museum settings see: <https://locatify.com/automatic-museum-guide/>, <http://blog.lighthouse.io/bluetooth-beacons-for-galleries-and-museums/>

³³ Leacock traveled with the Bernstein family to Israel on the day after *West Side Story* opened on Broadway in 1957. Maysles' *Journey to Jerusalem* documents a 1967 trip to conduct the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra on Mt. Scopus just one month after the Six-Day War.

³⁴ Remarks at the United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York “Night of Stars,” 25 November 1963, Box 81 Folder 24, Leonard Bernstein Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

communication with a number of religious minorities, and invited visitors to write letters to the President expressing what religious freedom means to them today. NMAJH's NEH-funded *Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American* took on a well-known subject with broad appeal and incorporated innovations like music and high- and low-tech gaming to create a "connection to something so pervasively embedded in U.S. culture," as one NEH grant review panelist noted.

In addition to the exhibition itself, planning phase work will include laying the groundwork for a **scholarly catalogue** featuring essays by members of the advisory committee. It will complement the exhibit experience and expand upon its humanities themes by connecting Bernstein's writings with contemporary commentary. Additional project components will include a website, curricula aligned with state standards, a family guide, and a series of public programs to be presented as part of a robust menu of Bernstein centennial celebrations taking place in major American cities from 2017-2019.

In line with the value Bernstein placed on music education, **educational programming** for the exhibition will include original curricula and teacher training. Bernstein considered himself as much a teacher as a composer or conductor, mentoring rising composers, conductors, and musicians, and reaching millions of homes through 53 televised Young People's Concerts with the New York Philharmonic from 1958-1972.³⁵ His transformation of the Young People's Concerts into a cultural mainstay reflected his commitment to music education, and to the equal access thereof.

PROJECT RESOURCES

The exhibition will bring together original artifacts from museum and archival collections of Bernstein materials, including the Library of Congress, which holds the Leonard Bernstein Papers. Objects from the Library of Congress will be complemented by artifacts related to Bernstein's Boston roots, including materials from the archives of Congregation Mishkan Tefila and a number of Boston-area institutions with which Bernstein maintained relationships throughout his life: Harvard, Brandeis, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra—each of which retains a collection of Bernstein material in their archives or libraries. The New York Philharmonic Archives and the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts offer collections particular to Bernstein performances and/or collaborators such as Jerome Robbins, which are key to examining Bernstein's work as collaborative projects.

Initial artifact research into the Smithsonian collections and the Library of Congress has taken place within the past year. As a Smithsonian Affiliate, NMAJH holds special borrowing privileges from Smithsonian museums, including the National Museum of American History and the National Portrait Gallery. With the assistance of the Bernstein family, Bernstein's collaborators, and/or their descendants, NMAJH will secure personal items which reflect family history and theater works.

In *Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music* original artifacts will be exhibited alongside curated selections of music and film. Securing permissions for use of footage and audio recordings will be an ongoing discussion with a number of rights holders including the Leonard Bernstein Office, as NMAJH held in 2009-2010 for its short original film on Bernstein (see Project History).

NMAJH is committed to developing a website dedicated to this project that will allow individuals and educators to access exhibition content and educational materials, extending the reach of the exhibition beyond a visit to the Museum. Additionally, NMAJH is exploring securing external funding to digitize

³⁵ Tim Page, "Leonard Bernstein and Television: Envisioning a Higher Purpose," *Leonard Bernstein: American Original* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008).

each component of the exhibition to give it life in perpetuity and reach global audiences through the web and in educational settings (see Supplementary Material).

PROJECT HISTORY

With the Museum's grand re-opening in 2010, Leonard Bernstein was included as one of 18 individuals honored through original film, artifacts, and interactive media in the Museum's *Only in America* Gallery. *Only in America* illustrates the choices, challenges, and opportunities 18 Jewish Americans from across disciplines and centuries encountered on their path to remarkable achievement. In this gallery on the Museum's first floor, which is open to visitors free of charge, we exhibit Bernstein artifacts complemented by a brief biographical film produced with the assistance of the Leonard Bernstein Office and Maestro Michael Tilson Thomas. Bernstein has also been represented in the Museum's core exhibition in the context of 20th-century arts and music.

Preliminary discussions with NMAJH's exhibition committee to expand the Museum's presentation of Bernstein's life and work began in June 2014 and continued throughout the year, focusing on ways in which Bernstein's story presented as a large-scale, special exhibition could offer a nuanced examination of themes central to the Museum's mission: the American spirit of courage and imagination, aspiration and hard work, leadership and service as told through the American Jewish experience. From his parents' immigration through Leonard's remarkable career and social activism, the project has natural tie-ins with the Museum's core exhibition and existing thematic tours and programming.

In July 2014, Eleonor Sandresky, Associate Producer at the Leonard Bernstein Office, visited the Museum and preliminary discussions were held regarding the Museum's plan to celebrate Bernstein's centennial with a special exhibition. In early 2015 Associate Curator Ivy Weingram met with the staff of the Leonard Bernstein Office in New York to begin discussing how the Museum could play a key role in worldwide celebrations of the centennial. Invitations to humanities scholars to join the advisory committee were made in February and March 2015, and project team members convened to discuss key themes and Bernstein works most critical to framing the exhibition concept. All advisors expressed great enthusiasm for this exhibition as an opportunity for new scholarship that links Bernstein's Jewish identity, and the push and pull of his religious identity with the forces of assimilation, with his lifelong search for a solution to the "20th-century crisis of faith." The humanities scholars and exhibition advisors will continue to offer guidance and expertise as the project moves forward.

AUDIENCE, MARKETING, AND PROMOTION

Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music presents an opportunity for NMAJH to reach new audiences that may recognize Bernstein as a world-renowned conductor, but may be less familiar with his original compositions and their histories, or with classical or Broadway music in general. By examining Bernstein's compositions and social causes in the context of 20th-century American history, and the struggles of one man to come to terms with his crises of faith, Bernstein's life as a composer will become accessible to visitors who may be unfamiliar with the art of conducting or music theory. For NMAJH's core audience, ***Leonard Bernstein*** will deepen their engagement with the ways in which Jewish tradition played a significant role in the shaping of the "Bernstein sound"—enhancing their understanding of an admired, beloved, and undoubtedly complex figure in American Jewish life and culture.

Presenting this exhibition in Philadelphia, a city rich in performing arts organizations, likewise presents opportunities for collaborative programming, marketing, ticketing, and promotion. NMAJH will convene key constituent groups in this city, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, Curtis Institute of Music, Philly

Pops, the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, the Pennsylvania Ballet, and Play On Philly to curate a centennial celebration that is thoughtfully collaborative and which best spotlights each organization.

NMAJH will develop a robust integrated marketing plan to ensure that the exhibition has significant visibility during its Philadelphia run. The plan will combine traditional marketing and communications methods such as banners, print ads, strategic radio and television advertisements (including Pandora and sponsorships of classical music stations), rack cards, and press releases with more experiential marketing tactics. The subject and format of this exhibition lends itself to public performances in high-traffic areas, high visibility in locations such as New York City's Penn Station and Philadelphia's 30th Street Station, and visually arresting images on the building's Independence Mall façade. NMAJH's recent special exhibitions have garnered widespread national and international media coverage from *The Atlantic*, *BBC*, *CBS*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Haaretz*, and *USA Today*.

NMAJH is continually developing metrics to collect information on visitors, which help guide our marketing plan and outreach efforts. The project team will be mindful to include exhibition elements that are engaging to families and school groups, as well as auxiliary programming like lecture series, gallery talks, concerts, and film screening/live music performance combinations of Bernstein classics.

In alignment with NEH's policy to make grant-funded projects available to the broadest possible audience, NMAJH makes every effort to ensure that exhibitions and programs are accessible to all audiences. NMAJH offers Pay-What-You-Wish admission on Wednesday evenings during the summer and free admission on July 4th and other selected holidays, as well as other dates as related to special exhibitions (Leonard Bernstein's birthday, August 25th, could be a free day, for example). The Museum has received significant funding to subvent education-based visits by schools classified as Title 1 as well as other schools and camps that demonstrate financial need.

AUDIENCE EVALUATION

To ensure that the exhibition is developed in ways that will be maximally meaningful and relevant to its audience, NMAJH will engage Slover Linett Audience Research to provide consulting services during exhibition planning and development, and again following the opening of the exhibition. Slover Linett is a well-respected firm in this arena, and has a strong working relationship with NMAJH, having led summative evaluations of the Museum's core exhibition and of the special exhibition, *Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American*. For ***Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music***, Slover Linett's work will test whether the exhibition messages developed by NMAJH are clear and compelling to the exhibition's target audiences, and identify themes and opportunities to provide highly engaging experiences—both with the exhibition content and between visitors. NMAJH will iteratively test and adapt the exhibition's interpretive strategy and components in order to successfully engage target audiences with the story.

Slover Linett will facilitate a conversation with key NMAJH team members at the beginning of the grant period to elaborate on evaluation goals and priorities, and then work with the team to develop an evaluation approach to address these goals. The evaluation plan will include both front-end and formative evaluation steps, including prototype testing of interpretive materials onsite at the Museum. Throughout implementation of this plan, Slover Linett will provide guidance and support in data collection best practices—training and empowering Museum staff in audience surveying and testing. Slover Linett and NMAJH will also discuss the interpretation of evaluation data and its implications for the approach. NMAJH anticipates conducting a full-scale summative evaluation of the exhibition, which

will likely include both qualitative and quantitative measures of the degree to which the exhibition successfully achieves its learning objectives, as the Museum accomplished with *Chasing Dreams*.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

The National Museum of American Jewish History's mission is to present educational programs and experiences that preserve, explore, and celebrate the history of Jews in America. Its purpose is to connect Jews more closely to their heritage and to inspire in people of all backgrounds a greater appreciation for the diversity of the American Jewish experience and the freedoms to which Americans aspire.

Originally founded by members of historic Congregation Mikveh Israel during the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration, NMAJH opened a 100,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility in November 2010. Located on Philadelphia's historic Independence Mall, NMAJH tells the story of American history through the lens of the Jewish experience, uniquely tracing how Jewish immigrants became Jewish Americans. NMAJH welcomes over 90,000 visitors annually (including 10,000 schoolchildren) and invites visitors of all backgrounds to celebrate their own heritages, histories, and traditions by reflecting on how immigrants shape and are shaped by the American experience. The centerpiece of the visitor experience is the core exhibition, whose 1,200 historical artifacts, 2,000 images, hands-on interactives, films, and soundscapes document more than 360 years of Jewish life in America. NMAJH stewards a preeminent collection of artifacts ranging across American geography, with objects and documents dating from the colonial period to the present day. Dr. Jonathan D. Sarna, the Joseph H. and Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University, led the consultation team of historians charged with guiding the development of the Museum's core exhibition and currently serves as the Museum's Chief Historian.

With an annual operating budget of \$10 million, each year NMAJH presents special exhibitions, a robust calendar of more than 100 member, public, and educational programs for students from public, independent, parochial, and Jewish day schools. Approximately one-third of the Museum's public programs are devoted to performances or conversations with contemporary artists; recent programs have included an original cabaret featuring well-known tunes by Jewish composers and the Guy Mendilow Ensemble in a debut performance with the Philadelphia Girls Choir. Additionally, through the Museum's signature artist-in-residency program, *OPEN for Interpretation*, NMAJH annually invites an artist to explore the Museum and create new, innovative interpretations of stories and artifacts. NMAJH's most recent, original special exhibition, *Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American*, was the first large-scale exhibition to use the story of Jews and baseball to highlight ways in which our national pastime has been a key pathway for how immigrants and minorities understand and express American identity. The exhibition received major support from the NEH and Major League Baseball, and is currently on a national tour.

PROJECT TEAM

Members of the project team of humanities advisors and consultants include noted scholars of American Jewish history, American music and theater history, and race and queer studies. Editorial control over the exhibition and companion volume rests with NMAJH; the backgrounds and achievements of the consultants, as well as their roles and expected contributions to this exhibition, are detailed here. The advisory committee is in formation.

NMAJH Staff

Ivy Weingram, Project Director of *Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music*, is an Associate Curator at NMAJH. She co-curated the NEH-awarded special exhibition, *Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American* (March 2014) with Josh Perelman of NMAJH, and the music-based installation *'Twas the Night Before Hanukkah* (November 2014) with Josh Kun of USC Annenberg. She conducts artifact research, secures object loans, writes exhibition text, and works closely with designers, media producers, and fabricators towards the installation of each exhibition. Weingram has played an active role in the development, and ongoing curation, of the Museum's core exhibition as well. Prior to joining NMAJH in 2008, Weingram served in the curatorial departments of The Jewish Museum, Yeshiva University Museum, and the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Dr. Josh Perelman is Chief Curator and Director of Exhibitions and Collections. Since 2005 he has overseen NMAJH's core exhibition, special exhibitions program, and artifact collection. Perelman served as chief curator for the landmark core exhibition that inaugurated NMAJH's new building and founded its new education, public programming, and visitor services departments. Dr. Perelman has a joint PhD in Jewish Studies and American History, and significant experience researching and writing about the intersection of music, performance, politics, and identity both during the interwar and postwar years. He has 20 years of experience in museums and non-profit organizations.

Ivy L. Barsky is the CEO and Gwen Goodman Director of NMAJH. She served as the Deputy Director of the Museum of Jewish Heritage-A Living Memorial to the Holocaust from 1999-2011 and was responsible for leadership of Collections, Exhibitions, Education, Public Programs, Visitor Services and other projects. Barsky arrived at the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia on July 1, 2011 as the Gwen Goodman Director and COO and became CEO in 2012.

As Director of Public Programs, **Emily August** is responsible for creating and executing a robust calendar of public programs in support of the Museum's mission and special exhibitions, including leading the development and implementation of programming for this exhibition (both in-house and collaborative). **Shira Goldstein** is the Exhibitions Coordinator, managing the development and installation of special exhibitions as well as the upkeep of the core exhibition. **Claire Pingel**, Chief Registrar and Associate Curator, oversees the Museum's artifact collection and helps organize exhibitions. She is coordinating loans and conservation for this exhibition, and has 20 years of experience working with artifacts and museum exhibitions. **Dr. Katerina Romanenko**, Associate Director of Education, develops educational resources, guided tours and curricula, and oversees the Museum's docent program. A **Project Assistant** will be hired on a part-time, temporary basis to assist with artifact and image research for the exhibition and catalogue.

Humanities Advisors

Marin Alsop serves as the Music Director of the Baltimore and São Paulo Symphony Orchestras. She is recognized throughout the world for her innovative approach to programming and for her deep commitment to education and to the development of audiences of all ages. Alsop has guest-conducted most of the world's great orchestras, and in September 2013 she made history as the first female conductor of the BBC's *Last Night of the Proms* in London. Alsop is the recipient of many awards, and as a protégé of Leonard Bernstein she was awarded the Koussevitzky Conducting Prize. She is the only conductor to receive the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship. Alsop brings to this project her experience as a conductor and as Bernstein's student, critical thinking on Bernstein's confrontation of the "crisis of faith," and her highly-praised role in music education and programming.

Warren D. Hoffman is a playwright, scholar, teacher, critic, and author. He most recently published *The Great White Way: Race and the Broadway Musical* (2014), and lectured on the topic around the country including at the Skirball Center and the Library of Congress. In the world of theater, Warren served as the literary manager of Philadelphia Theatre Company and was Associate Director of Jewish Repertory Theatre where he produced and dramaturged plays by some of the country's most respected playwrights. Warren holds a PhD from the University of California-Santa Cruz and has taught at a number of universities. Hoffman's scholarly work, as well as his significant role in the cultural life of Philadelphia, will add to the project both academically and programmatically.

Carol J. Oja's newest book is *Bernstein Meets Broadway: Collaborative Art in a Time of War* (Oxford University Press, 2014). She is William Powell Mason Professor of Music and American Studies at Harvard University, and Chair of the Department of Music. Oja's *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s* won the Lowens Book Award from the Society for American Music and an ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award. From 2013-15, she was Leonard Bernstein Scholar in Residence with the New York Philharmonic. Oja has held fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Newhouse Center for the Humanities at Wellesley College, the National Humanities Center, the NEH, and the Mellon Faculty Fellows Program at Harvard. She is also past-president of the Society for American Music. Her focus on Bernstein's social activism will be central to the exhibition narrative.

Jonathan D. Sarna is a historian and leading commentator on American Jewish history, religion, and life. Dubbed by the *Forward* newspaper in 2004 as one of America's most influential American Jews, Dr. Sarna is the Joseph H. & Bella R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University, the Chief Historian of NMAJH, and the 18th president of the Association for Jewish Studies. The author of hundreds of scholarly articles, Dr. Sarna may be best known for his acclaimed *American Judaism: A History*, winner of the Jewish Book Council's Jewish Book of the Year Award. Dr. Sarna's exceptional knowledge of the history of the Jews of Boston is central to our connection of Bernstein's Jewish identity with its expression in Bernstein's work.

Project Advisors

Alexander Bernstein is the son of Felicia and Leonard Bernstein. He is the president of The Bernstein Family Foundation, and founding chairman of The Leonard Bernstein Center for Learning, which seeks to strengthen education on a national level by preparing teachers, schools, and communities to use the arts and the artistic process in the teaching of all academic subjects. Bernstein will be a key consultant on artifacts and collections to pursue, and NMAJH will develop educational curricula for this exhibition with the assistance of the Leonard Bernstein Center for Learning.

The Leonard Bernstein Office, Inc. manages the intellectual property of Leonard Bernstein. Primarily through its agents, the Office issues a wide variety of licenses for the use of Leonard Bernstein's Broadway works, concert compositions, audio and video recordings, books, lectures, and other writings. It also oversees productions of his works and the publication of critical editions of his compositions. Under the leadership of Senior Vice President Paul Epstein, the Office will assist NMAJH in navigating rights requests for this exhibition (image, film, and audio).

Slover Linett is an audience research firm for the arts, culture, and informal science sectors. Founded in 1997, the firm conducts market research, program evaluation, and outcomes assessments to reveal how well institutions are connecting with their audiences and how that connection can be deepened and

broadened. Working with Sarah Lee, Slover Linett will employ surveys, interviews, focus groups, ethnography, and other quantitative and qualitative methods to develop and evaluate this exhibition and build upon previous studies of NMAJH's core and special exhibitions.

Cantor David Tilman is choral director of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel and Hazzan Emeritus of Beth Sholom Congregation of Elkins Park, where he served for 36 years. He is a graduate of Columbia College, the H. L. Miller Cantorial School, and the Juilliard School, where he received his Master's in Choral Conducting. Cantor Tilman brings his knowledge of sacred music, choral conducting, and Bernstein's compositions to help NMAJH develop interactive media for this exhibition.

WORK PLAN

The project team has undertaken preliminary narrative development work on this project and will spend the next several months continuing to explore how to represent select Leonard Bernstein works and achievements in ways that will be accessible and exciting to visitors. During the grant period the project team will review the archival and library holdings of major Bernstein collections while reaching out to peer institutions to develop a checklist of objects for the exhibition. As priorities emerge, NMAJH will begin to compile and issue loan and permissions requests for artifacts and audio/visual material.

During the grant period, Slover Linett will provide front-end testing on themes and exhibit concepts as a guide for planning, especially as the team moves into schematic design and media development. Results from this front-end testing will also help the team to refine the exhibition narrative. The Museum will select a designer that is best able to realize the creative aspirations and immersive experience envisioned for visitors, paying special attention to sound considerations in the gallery such that audio and film recordings work in tandem with the artifacts.

Interdepartmental discussions about educational and public programming will begin in the planning phase, considering events like concerts, film screenings, gallery talks, theater performances, and the production of published materials and a guide for teachers. The project team will also develop a tour schedule and consider web-based and small-scale, panel versions of this exhibition. A detailed work plan can be found on Page 20.

COST SHARING PLANS

The total project budget for the planning period is \$154,121. NMAJH is contributing \$24,600 to the project to cover the project assistant's salary, taxes, and payroll fees and will be seeking \$79,521 in third-party contributions. NMAJH has an experienced development department with eight full-time staff members dedicated to soliciting donations from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government sources. NMAJH is actively cultivating and soliciting new and previous Museum donors for this project who are particularly interested in music and theater. NMAJH co-produced the documentary *Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy* in 2012 and has relationships with donors interested in musical theater through that project. The development department works with the Board of Trustees, additional Museum staff, and community leaders to carry out a comprehensive fundraising strategy to meet its annual goals, including special projects and exhibitions. The Museum successfully raised more than \$2.7 million in support of its recent original special exhibition *Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American* through two galas and gifts and grants from individuals and institutions across the U.S.

Work Plan

	Exhibition phase	Key milestones	Deliverables	Project team participants	Start date	End date	Notes
Pre-Grant Period Planning	Narrative development						
		Exhibition and artifact research	thematic outline; identify artifact lenders; begin to develop artifact list	IW, PA, AB	Jan-15	Jan-16	
		Meeting with Leonard Bernstein Office		IW, LBO	Feb-15		
		Advisory Committee formed		IW, advisors	Feb-15		
		Advisory Committee meeting	discussion of exhibition key themes	IW, JP, IB, LBO, advisors	Apr-15		conference call
		Advisory Committee meeting	identify key objects, funders	IW, JP, IB, LBO, advisors	Sep-15		conference call
	Philadelphia Bernstein Centennial Meeting	convening of Philadelphia-area arts and culture orgs celebrating LB centennial	IW, EA, IB	Oct-15		in-person meeting at NMAJH	
	Secure co-publishing agreement for exhibition catalogue		IW, JP	Oct-15			
Planning Grant Period: April 2016 - March 2017	Concept development and preliminary design development						
		Advisory Committee meeting	review artifact needs, thematic walkthrough of exhibition; exhibition catalogue essays	IW, advisors	Apr-16		in-person meeting in New York
		Artifact research	research trips to NY; DC; Bloomington, Indiana; LA	IW, PA, AB	Apr-16	Nov-16	
		Contract exhibition design firm	develop exhibition concept designs	IW, JP	Apr-16	Jul-16	
		Contract media firm	identify goals and techniques for interactives and media	IW, JP, DT	Apr-16	May-16	
		Media development	concept development of the key interactive/media components including audio guide/playlist; identify film footage and audio clips needed	IW, DT, SL	May-16	Nov-16	
		Public program planning	brainstorming session of exhibition-related programming for NMAJH	IW, EA, JP, IB	May-16		
		Philadelphia Bernstein Centennial Meeting	Convening of Philadelphia-area arts and culture orgs celebrating LB centennial	IW, EA	May-16		in-person meeting at NMAJH
		Advisory Committee meeting	review design direction and planned interactive media	IW, JP, advisors	Jun-16		conference call
		Front-end testing	visitor surveying of exhibition themes, storytelling methods, design direction, and initial media/interactive concepts	IW, PA, SL	Jun-16	Sep-16	
		Floorplan development	concept development of the exhibition floor plan as it relates to the key themes and through-lines of the narrative	IW, JP, SG, KR	Jul-16	Dec-16	
		Advisory Committee meeting	review NEH Implementation Grant documents: narrative and walkthrough; concept design and floor plan	IW, advisors	Oct-16		in-person meeting at NMAJH
		Philadelphia Bernstein Centennial Meeting	convening of Philadelphia-area arts and culture orgs celebrating LB centennial	IW, EA	Oct-16		in-person meeting at NMAJH
		Issue initial loan requests	long-lead loans (Library of Congress, Smithsonian)	IW, CP, PA	Nov-16		
		NEH Implementation Grant application	narrative and walkthrough; concept design and floor plan; media/interactive plans; artifact list	IW, JP, PA	Nov-16	Jan-17	application due beginning of January 2017
	Design development						
		Exhibition design	finalizing floor plan and elevations	IW, SG, JP, KR, CP	Jan-17	Jun-17	
		Interactive media development	finalize placement of interactives/media in exhibition space	IW, SG, JP, KR	Jan-17	May-17	
		Issue remaining loan requests		IW, CP, PA	Feb-17	Mar-17	
		Develop and roll out educational toolkit	curricula for grades K-12, family guide, summer camp tours	IW, KR	Apr-17	Mar-18	
	Interactive media development	alpha-testing of media interactives	media producer	May-17	Aug-17		
	Draft exhibition text		IW	Jun-17	Oct-17		
	Object list at 100%	all artifact loans confirmed	IW, PA, CP	Aug-17			
	Final image selection	identify exhibition images and acquire rights and high-res files; identify which images need publicity and/or 3rd party rights clearances for exhibition, marketing, press	IW, PA, LBO	Aug-17	Oct-17		
	Issue fabrication RFP	design finalized, RFP process for selection of Fabricator	IW, SG, JP	Jun-17	Aug-17		
Implementation					Aug-17	Mar-18	

Project Team:
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