



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

DIVISION OF PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative 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 Public Programs application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/public/media-projects-production-grants> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Public Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative, 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: The Jazz Loft According to W. Eugene Smith

Institution: New York Public Radio

Project Director: Sara Fishko

Grant Program: Media Projects: Production

1) Program Description

WNYC, New York Public Radio respectfully requests a grant of \$800,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities for the production of the 90-minute documentary *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft*. The film will tell the story of how one artist obsessively captured the spirit of his new home and workplace in photos and audio. In doing so, it will provide audiences nationwide with a deeper understanding of key humanities themes; specifically, mid-century American cultural history and the people and processes behind one this country's greatest musical forms: jazz. In 1957, the photojournalist W. Eugene Smith (1918-1978) left a comfortable suburban life and moved to "The Jazz Loft," a destination and creative haven at 821 Sixth Avenue in Manhattan. There, between 1957 and 1965, Smith created and collected a trove of recordings, photographs, and ephemera discovered decades later by Smith expert and archivist Sam Stephenson. Through this unique archival material, along with photographs, interviews, jazz recordings, film footage, and other contextual audio-visual elements, the film will depict the complexities of this period in American urban life as embodied by Smith himself: one in which the planned and measured "perfection" of the suburbs exists in stark contrast to the risky, spontaneous, night-time urban style of living characteristic of the City.

Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft is a production of WNYC, in association with Benjamin Productions, the multi-award-winning production team led by Jamie Lustberg and Mark Benjamin. The film will be directed by WNYC's Sara Fishko, an Emmy Award-winning film editor and radio host/producer, and Executive Producer of the NEH-funded *Jazz Loft Project Radio Series*, a multi-part series about the Loft produced for WNYC and NPR in 2008-10. The radio series exploited different aspects of the audio material in an episodic manner appropriate to the medium of radio. In contrast, the film will utilize the longer form to tell a more unified story, one which shows the trajectory and personal history of one artist, Gene Smith, in the context of the city and the characters that surrounded him in the Loft. A group of renowned scholars and professionals from the fields of jazz and musicology, post-war American culture, urban studies, African-American history, radio broadcast history, photography, and film-making will serve as scholarly advisors to the project. The full project budget for this film is \$1,386,410; production costs are \$807,000. The film is designed for theatrical distribution, the festival circuit, and television broadcast. We expect to reach between 4 and 5 million people in the initial broadcast alone, and millions more through re-broadcasts, DVD sales, and outreach elements including an interactive website, social media campaign, and live music/conversation events with the cast and scholars.

2) Project Background

Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft is the culmination of more than ten years of research and discovery. The film builds on the success of *The Jazz Loft Project*, an initiative that began with archivist Sam Stephenson's discovery of boxes and boxes of audiotape in W. Eugene Smith's archive at the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona. The tapes reveal the story of "The Jazz Loft:" from 1957 to 1971, master photojournalist W. Eugene Smith lived and worked in a dilapidated building on Sixth Avenue and 28th Street in Manhattan, a favorite spot for jam sessions by hundreds of jazz players of the day. Smith was obsessed with the goings-on in the building, musical and otherwise, and he taped and photographed them with an unimaginable thoroughness.

Stephenson established *The Jazz Loft Project* at the Center for Documentary Studies (CDS) at Duke University, and, with support from the NEH, began the massive project of transferring the audio tapes to CD and documenting the content originally scrawled by Smith on the boxes. The sounds and stories that emerged were the basis for the ten-part *Jazz Loft Project Radio Series*, also supported by the NEH, and made possible through WNYC's partnership with Stephenson and CDS/Duke. The radio series opened a

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window into the social, musical, and cultural milieu of the 1950s, providing national audiences a rare glimpse into the minds of many of the most influential jazz musicians and creative personalities of the mid-20th century. Sara Fishko produced the series for broadcast on WNYC and National Public Radio in 2009 and 2010. It complemented *The Jazz Loft Project Book* (Knopf, 2010) – now in its second printing – and a travelling exhibition of Smith's photographs that originated at the New York Public Library; Stephenson produced the book and exhibition independently and they were not a part of WNYC's NEH grant. WNYC and Duke also produced *The Jazz Loft Project Website*, a virtual archive of the radio programs, exhibition, and book; an access point for Smith's photographs and ephemera; and a blog about the musicians, stories, and events that continue to take their inspiration from *The Jazz Loft Project*. In November 2010, *The Jazz Loft Project* was awarded the prestigious ASCAP Deems Taylor Multimedia Award, given each year by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers for outstanding print, broadcast and new media coverage of music.

3) Content and Creative Approach

a. Story Structure and Format

Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft

Over the course of eight years living in the loft at 821 Sixth Avenue, W. Eugene Smith recorded 4,000 hours of audio material and took more than 40,000 photographs of life inside the loft and on the streets below. *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft* will draw upon this collection to create a portrait of Smith, as well as a place, a moment in time, and the people and events that made it possible. At times Smith's presence will fade into the background as we meet some of the characters who populated his world, but we will return to Smith again and again as the crucial link without whom the Loft would have remained unknown.

The film will unfold roughly according to three acts. The first will introduce our protagonist, W. Eugene Smith, and paint a picture of Manhattan in the late 1950's and early 60's. In the second, Smith's own images and audio recordings will make life in the loft come alive. The final third will document Smith's unraveling and the simultaneous dissolution of the Loft against the backdrop of New York's changing economic and cultural landscape. Our framing of Smith will resemble Bennett Miller's portrayal of the title character in his 2005 film *Capote* – we will examine an episode in the life of a fascinating creative spirit to create both a vivid character sketch and a story about broader artistic, cultural, and social themes. Admittedly, *Capote* is a dramatic film, not a documentary. But, apropos of *Capote*, we are most interested in creating a sort of "double portrait" of both a person and his project. To learn about Smith without learning about the Jazz Loft, or vice versa, would be to present an incomplete picture of each.

Voices, music, and images – rather than a single narrator – will push the story forward. We have made this artistic decision in order to evoke the spontaneous, "improvisational" spirit of the time. That said, we have engaged an experienced documentary film writer, Robert Seidman, who will help to create a narrative arc, coalesce the voices, and provide connective tissue between different elements of the film.

Suburbs to Manhattan

I am always torn between the attitude of the journalist, who is a recorder of facts, and the artist, who is often necessarily at odds with the facts.
-W. Eugene Smith

In the first part of the film, we will meet photographer and music lover W. Eugene Smith, the key protagonist, and set the scene of Manhattan in the 1950's and 60's. Guided by archivist and Smith expert Sam Stephenson, we will trace the events that led to Smith's arrival at the Jazz Loft and explore his more

unusual characteristics, offering a biographical context against which to view his obsessive documentation of life in the Loft.

Growing up in Kansas, Gene Smith dreamed of becoming a professional photographer. He spent his early career working for photo magazines and newspapers including *Newsweek* and *The New York Times* before becoming a full-time staff photographer at *Life* Magazine, the preeminent photographic publication of the day. Smith thought beyond the limits of the individual photo, using groups of photos to tell complex stories – a quality that set him apart from other photographers. His “Country Doctor” series, published in *Life* in 1948, solidified his reputation as a pioneer of the photo essay, and he earned wide acclaim for his work as a war photographer in Europe and Asia. At 38, Smith seemed to be living the kind of life that 1950's America prized most highly: through hard work and patriotic self-sacrifice (he lost part of his jaw documenting World War II) he'd earned a place at the top of his profession, and had moved from the city to the picturesque suburb of Croton-on-Hudson with his wife and four children. In 1957, when he suddenly moved to a dilapidated building in New York, some people in the photography world thought he'd lost his mind.

A closer look at Smith's experiences at *Life* and his creative approach, however, suggest that his decision was not quite the non sequitur that it appeared to be. Although he came from the social realist tradition of photography, Smith was not always able to suppress his more imaginative impulses. He would often manipulate his negatives in the dark room, adjusting light for dramatic effect, like a painter would; in composing his shots he would sometimes alter reality by playing with angle and focus. He was also clearly predisposed to obsession and compulsion: he excessively overshot his subjects, and was often at odds with editors at *Life*, where photographers had limited control over the presentation of their work. Upset by what he perceived as the magazine's misuse of his photos, Smith left *Life* in 1955, only to endure additional professional frustrations. He was particularly unsettled by a modest project about Pittsburgh for Magnum photo agency, which became so large and unwieldy that he could not complete it. The experience drove him to near nervous collapse. Family life, too, proved to be an awkward fit. The traveling that his career demanded and his workaholic tendencies made Smith an absent father and husband. For a time he left child-rearing to his wife, and then he left altogether.

Smith learned of the loft at 821 Sixth Avenue through word of mouth, and there he found the artistic freedom that eluded him at *Life* and the personal freedom that life as a family man in the suburbs could not offer. By the time Smith moved in, the Loft had become an after-hours haunt for some of the finest jazz players around. Situated in Manhattan's Flower District, a commercial area that emptied out by the close of the business day, the Loft provided Smith and the musicians with space, camaraderie, and freedom from commercial consideration. One appeal of the Jazz Loft was its central location: on the way up from downtown, on the way down from uptown. Musicians could stop by en route to anywhere, and they did. A veritable “who's who” of the jazz world passed through – Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis, Bill Evans, Ornette Coleman – together representing the broad swath of the genre, from standards to the developing forms of Bebop and Free Jazz. The spontaneous nature of the Jazz Loft also attracted a revolving cast of special guests including writers Norman Mailer and Anaïs Nin, visual artists Willem de Kooning and Henri Cartier-Bresson, and actors Paul Newman and Piper Laurie. In this context, Smith's embrace of his inner bohemian, and the evolution of The Jazz Loft, will seem inevitable. His escape to New York can be read as a sort of surrender to the freewheeling, anti-establishment side of his personality.

Smith's Life in the Loft

Do you mind if I turn on my recorder in case something brilliant happens?

-W. Eugene Smith

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With the same fanaticism that he brought to his photography, Smith wired all five floors of the loft stairways for sound, recording everything that occurred – from the mundane to the extraordinary. Cats meowing; footsteps; broadcasts of speeches by John Kennedy and Martin Luther King; conversations and jam sessions – Smith captured it all on magnetic tape. In the second part of the film, we will use these sounds, as well as images, to evoke the creative buzz of the Loft and illuminate Smith and some of the fascinating characters he met there.

Through Smith's recordings and photos and the recollections of musicians who frequented the Loft, more layers of our protagonist's personality will emerge. Smith was, in drummer Ron Free's words, "always busy, never still." He was constantly taking photos, going in and out of his darkroom, looking at pictures. Pianist Paul Bley recalls how, even "while he was chatting you up and being very attentive...the camera was at his knee-cap level and he was snapping away..." "I don't remember him without a camera," says bassist Steve Swallow. He calls Smith "a wonderfully gregarious host, eccentric to a fault...the prototypical New York artist." At the same time, Smith was a detached man of few words. As Sara Fishko described him in the radio series, Smith was "reclusive but friendly, lonely but never alone, careful and extravagant, genial and depressive." Thus the film will continue to develop the picture of Smith as a man of contradictions in a way that earlier portrayals of the photographer do not. (See page 14 for more information about a 1989 documentary about Smith.)

While the Smith archives reveal new sides of the man behind the camera and the tape recorder, they also allow other individual personalities to come into sharper relief amid the creative cacophony of the Loft. One such figure that the film will spotlight is Hall Overton, a pianist and professor of composition at The Juilliard School known for his innovative arrangements and inspired teaching. Overton lived in a loft space near Smith's and had a great deal in common with him. Both men grew up in the Midwest; both had painful war experiences; both were operating in the upper levels of their professions; both had a rebellious streak. In Smith, it led him to fight bitter battles with his editors at *Life*. For Overton, it led him to play and arrange jazz, which was forbidden in the halls of Juilliard at the time.

Another key figure is jazz giant Thelonious Monk. At the Loft, Overton worked with Monk to prepare orchestrations for Monk's now-legendary concerts with a ten-piece band at Town Hall and Lincoln Center. The unlikely partnership resulted in what many have recognized as a "historic" group of arrangements. Smith captured it all on tape, and this film will be the first to explore Monk and Overton's relationship in depth, incorporating Smith's documentation of arranging and rehearsal sessions and animated conversations between the two of them. Monk scholar and biographer and project advisor Robin Kelley has called the tapes "miraculous" and has said that he "learned more about Monk and heard Monk's voice more often in [Smith's] collection than any other source." For example, Monk was known for his reticence, but here we hear him actively engaged and effectively communicating as he works out issues of harmony and unison with Overton and his band.

We will also get to know Ron Free, a drummer whose story is emblematic of both the incredible opportunity that the Loft offered musicians and the all-too-easy access it provided to drugs and alcohol. At 18, Free chased his dream of being a professional drummer to New York, and before long he began playing at the Loft. Loft regulars introduced him to bandleaders and clubs where he began sitting in with some of his idols; they also introduced him to heroin. Despite his talents and considerable early success, by 1958 Free was a junkie who barely got by. The warm, welcoming Smith took Free in, and Free began a residency as "house drummer," sleeping on Smith's recliner during the day and jamming all night. After two years of juggling his addiction with what was left of his career, Free had to pull himself out of the Loft and the jazz scene altogether. The film will feature an extensive on-camera interview with Free, in which he speaks candidly about this thrilling but overwhelming period in his life, the collision of forces

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that drove him to give it up, and how Smith's recordings have helped him to come to terms with his identity as a musician.

These snapshots of Monk, Overton, and Free, as well as images, sounds, and voices of other musicians, will create a fuller picture of the kind of activity that swirled around Smith as he made a life for himself at 821 Sixth Avenue.

Things Change

Ghosts seem to picket the place. It is now no more than the depressing slum it long has been. A place to leave.
– W. Eugene Smith

The third act of the film will illustrate the story of Smith's, and The Jazz Loft's, declining years. By the early 1960s, Smith had become addicted to painkillers and alcohol, and was suffering from depression and paranoid episodes about his safety and trust – some of which are captured on recordings of his phone calls. Smith had stayed in touch with his family throughout the Loft years, and he would call his son Pat in the middle of the night, threatening to kill himself. Pat and his wife would race to the city to hold Smith's hand until he regained his composure, only to return days later for the same reason.

Smith's anxieties, as well as those of the Loft musicians, mirrored those of the larger world: the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Civil Rights Movement, the Kennedy Assassination, the deterioration of the inner city. The musicians' worries were compounded by the ascendant popularity of rock and roll, folk, and Motown, which diminished the demand for jazz albums and performances among audiences and record companies. Smith's recordings capture the musicians discussing dwindling job opportunities, their frustration with the scarcity of paid gigs, and the general lack of appreciation for their craft. Some musicians got "real" jobs, married and moved out of the City, while others succumbed to the pressures of drug and alcohol use. The Loft's jazz scene faded out around 1965, as did Smith's recordings.

Smith lived in the Loft until he was evicted in 1971. That same year, he and his second wife, Aileen, headed to Japan for his final and most famous project, which documented industrial contamination in the town of Minamata. Smith and Aileen parted ways in 1974. By then he had established a relationship with a young photographer named Sherry Suris, and together they moved to Tucson, Arizona, where Smith began a professorship at the University of Arizona's new Center for Creative Photography. Sherry was at Smith's side when he died in Tucson in 1978. Like so many other Loft residents, it was alcohol that ultimately caused Smith's death, combined with the abuse of amphetamines that fueled his frenzied work.

The film will draw to a close with a reflection on Smith's legacy and that of The Jazz Loft itself. As Stephenson will point out, we can only speculate on exactly what drove Smith to leave the comforts of his suburban home and steady job for a "wreck" like the Loft. But because he threw himself into his work there with such energy and passion, the American public now has a new lens through which to view jazz musicians, both known and unknown, the creative process behind their music, and the tumultuous socioeconomic climate of New York City during this pivotal period of American history.

Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft Website

The film will have its own website, taking advantage of the incredible riches in the Smith Archive, and building on the themes and atmosphere of the film. The site will reinforce the film's depiction of Smith as complex man who, despite his undeniable singularity, was very much a product of his time. Visitors will be able to browse a timeline that plots key milestones in Smith's life as well as those events that

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shaped mid-century American and world history. Photos of Smith's personal life – his first wife Carmen, their four children, their suburban home, and, later, his second wife Aileen and his companion Sherry – will appear alongside the celebrated images that he captured for the pages of *Life* and other publications.

To help audiences better visualize how Smith spent his days at 821 Sixth Avenue, the website will also include a “scale model” drawing of the Loft, with details about various rooms. In each case, music by particular groups who occupied and were recorded in specific Loft spaces will be available when the user clicks on that space. In addition, there will be a “radio” on which one can hear some of Smith's recordings of broadcasts; a “television” to click, to hear some of the now unavailable audio from the TV shows he recorded; and a series of “tape boxes” with audio of various kinds. We also hope to expand on the larger humanities themes, so that a click on a Flower District photo may give us some history of the neighborhood, as well as audio interviews (already recorded) with some of the flower dealers of the day. A photo of 52nd Street might lead us to the many memories of our Loft musicians about their arrival in the city after the War. And a designated page of the site may contrast period depictions of the “perfect” suburban life in photos and advertisements with artistic renderings of the urban, non-conformist path that Smith chose. In sum, it will be a place for further exploration.

The website will serve more basic functions, as well, in delineating the main characters and telling audiences where they can find the film, a bibliography for further reading on its humanities themes, and related Jazz Loft elements and/or jazz research materials, which would include the book, the radio series, and live events that we spin off from these forms. WNYC will hire a part-time Digital Content Producer to develop, edit, and manage content and draw on its in-house interactive staff to design and develop the site. We expect the site launch to coincide with the national release of the film in winter 2014.

b) Resources Available

Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft will explore this fascinating man and his rich primary source materials to enhance the public's understanding of jazz, New York City, and post-war America in general. Bringing the story to life will be audio recordings from the Smith archive, photographs from the archive, sound recordings, and on-camera interviews with members of the Loft generation, the distinguished scholars serving on our advisory panel, contemporary musicians, critics, and academics.

Interviews

Interviews will function as the dominant narrative voice of the film. Voiceovers will be crafted from the words of the interviewees themselves, letting the exposition unfold through their voices, rather than through a single external narrator. This creative decision is based on the rich first-hand material available to WNYC, and the profound way these musicians and scholars express their insights into the Loft's lasting impact. We also believe this approach is in keeping with the spirit of freedom and spontaneity that characterized the Loft, and New York City, during this period.

Pat Smith, one of Eugene Smith's sons, stood out as one of the most compelling interviewees in *The Jazz Loft Project Radio Series*; he will be a prominent on-camera interviewee in the film. Pat's memories of his father are vivid; he and other family members often visited the loft, especially when Gene was in an “emergency state,” feeling depressed and isolated. Pat describes the elder Smith as sometimes “delinquent” in his duties as a family man but he also admits that there was a heroic aspect to his father.

Sara Fishko will also conduct original on-camera interviews with survivors of the Loft scene, in some cases re-interviewing subjects whose voices figured in the radio series. This unfortunately is a group whose members are aging and passing away, and we therefore feel a great urgency to move forward on

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this aspect of the production in advance of the grant period. WNYC will absorb this expense in order to ensure that these stories are captured for the film. Interviews will focus on individuals' memories of Smith and their time at the Loft, and the role that it played in their musical and social lives. Fishko will interview more than 30 former Loft denizens, musicians, writers, critics, and acquaintances of the scene. Just a few will include: **Mose Allison**, pianist, singer, and composer; **David Amram**, composer, conductor, multi-instrumentalist; **Paul Bley**, pianist; **Bob Brookmeyer**, trombonist, pianist, arranger; **Teddy Charles**, vibraphonist; **Harry Colomby**, Monk's former manager; **Ron Free**, drummer; **Robert Frank**, Smith's friend and photographer of *The Americans*; **Carman Moore**, composer; **Bill Nikolis**, flower purveyor; **Robert Northern**, horn player; **Alvin Singleton**, composer; **Steve Swallow**, bassist; and **Nat Hentoff**, historian, novelist, and music critic.

To contextualize the Loft experience, the film will also incorporate interviews with a panel of renowned scholarly and professional advisors from the fields of jazz and musicology, post-war American culture, African-American studies, broadcast history, and urban studies. These include jazz pianist Jason Moran and scholars Daniel Belgrad, Gerald Early, Vicki Goldberg, Robin Kelley, W.T. Lhamon, Robert O'Meally, Dan Morgenstern, Susan Smulyan, Robert Snyder, and Sam Stephenson. More information about Stephenson, the foremost expert on W. Eugene Smith working today, is included on page 18.

Audio Recordings

The film will also make extensive use of the thousands of hours of Smith's recorded material from the Loft that have been archived and catalogued as part of *The Jazz Loft Project*. Smith's recordings include tapes made from radio and TV broadcasts of the period featuring spoken word, music and news presentations; jam sessions featuring the hundreds of musicians who came there; and conversations among the regulars in the Loft. We will also make use of other audio archives, including the Tony Schwartz Sound Archive, the Pacifica Archive, and the historical music collection at the Rutgers University Institute of Jazz Studies; and as well as commercial jazz recordings of the period, such as those of Monk's celebrated 1959 Town Hall concert, and Blue Note records featuring the "hard bop" style of jazz that developed in the mid-1950's.

Visual Elements

Visually, the look and feel of the film will be based on the wealth of visual and physical materials that make up the Smith archive: photographs, tape boxes, notebooks, scribbles on paper and other ephemera. Smith's black and white images reveal the Loft through his eyes and reflect the late-night, spontaneous, chaotic and vibrant world inside, outside and around the Loft.¹ Through them audiences will experience a New York that has all but disappeared over many decades. Those will be enhanced by Smith's professional photojournalism work, which documented World War II and domestic life in the rural South and other urban centers, and by stock footage from other sources; we will make use of these in every section of the film. The film is also inspired by the *cinéma vérité* exercises of the era, and will retain the gritty feel of the Loft, visually realized through cinematography and graphic design elements evocative of the late 1940's, 50's, and 60's.

c) Humanities Themes and Issues

¹ To supplement our work sample, we attach to our proposal a small sample of these photographs to provide a sense of Smith's subject matter, tone, and approach.

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Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft will serve as a prism for an epochal period in American history, during which critical issues such as urban politics, civil rights, the rise of consumerism, mass media, culture, and the threat of the Cold War changed the ways in which Americans lived and thought. The film will help to chronicle this period of exceptional creativity using an interdisciplinary approach that connects Smith's particular story to these broader humanities themes of American cultural, social and political life.

Bohemianism and the Culture of Spontaneity

[The Loft] was a kind of regular stop on the underground railroad of the beat generation.

-James Hughes, W. Eugene Smith biographer

By the mid-1950's, New York had become a home for performing and visual artists of every kind, where they could eke out a living while making their art. The city reflected a mood of spontaneous creation and a mixing of artistic genres, wherein Abstract Expressionist artists such as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning likened their canvases to the rhythms of jazz; avant-garde musicians such as John Cage composed scores for dancer Merce Cunningham; and Frank O'Hara's poetry was strengthened by his experience of Pollock's and de Kooning's paintings. The search for a more improvisational way to make art was a hallmark of what Daniel Belgrad has referred to as "the culture of spontaneity" in his book of the same name, an idea that informs the film's development. Bohemian communities of artists and musicians would gather after-hours in spaces like The Jazz Loft, taking their work to the next level with all-night jam sessions and happenings. Except for the occasional visit from the police, the music could go on until morning, when musicians would leave the Loft as the flower merchants were starting their day.

The night/day freewheeling/structured opposition of the jazz players with the day workers was a telling one. The 50's and early 60's was that kind of time, with a marked division between the "creative" culture and a straighter, more "corporate" culture. The paradox that American society was bubbling over with unprecedented artistic energy while also experiencing suburbanization on a massive scale is an extension of the contradictory forces at work in Smith's own life. On the one hand, Smith, like all Americans, emerged from World War II damaged by what he had seen and lost, and still had relatively fresh memories of the pre-war hardships of the Great Depression. They yearned for the order and stability that new economic opportunity, the nuclear family unit, a quiet suburban life, and a patriotic worldview offered. On the other hand, the events of the mid-20th century provided rich and disturbing material for artists and intellectuals to ponder: the war and its aftermath, the rise of Communism as well as the anti-Communist crusade, the explosion of mass culture created by media and communication, the atomic bomb. The ideals for which the war was purported to have been fought – freedom from tyranny, celebration of individuality – were powerful themes that inspired artists and intellectuals to indulge their creativity. Despite his attempt to fit the mold of the 1950's family man, and the fact that he clearly valued hard work and precision, the artist in Smith took over during this period in his life.

The film will use Smith and his life in the Loft as a starting point to explore the tensions between the experimental art and culture that flourished during this period and the pressure to conform to a more stable way of life. On-camera interviews with specialists in the post-war era – including advisors Rip Lhamon and Daniel Belgrad – will help us examine these key sociological themes, while exploring the "collective" nature of art at the time and the influence of jazz on the larger artistic community.

Jazz History and Musicology

[The Jazz Loft tapes are] probably the richest source for the history of modern jazz that I've ever seen in my life, period.

-Robin D.G. Kelley, project advisor

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The Loft existed during one of the greatest periods of growth and development of jazz music, and functioned as a laboratory for musicians to explore their creative freedom and artistic process. The documentary will demonstrate how jazz matured as a musical form and offer a new look at jazz greats like Thelonious Monk as well as lesser-known musicians like Hall Overton and Ron Free.

Just as it examines the push and pull of opposing forces within Smith and American culture at large, *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft* will also highlight a crucial paradox of jazz music: the centrality of spontaneity for its creation and performance, and the simultaneous need for rigor and rehearsal to perfect the language of the music. The juxtaposition of the audio recordings and images will reveal jazz as a complex and contradictory musical genre, illuminating the importance of the musicians' bohemian existence to the development of the form. The recordings include hours upon hours of the musicians practicing, riffing, and talking in order to better understand and play their instruments. The film will reflect the current scholarship about jazz, which has had to be re-written in many cases to take these newfound sessions and relationships into account. Any notions of jazz as something that "just happens as they play it" will drop away as we hear, and see, Monk and Overton hammering out notes line by line, phrase by phrase, hour after hour.

The film makes a major contribution to jazz musicology by documenting the partnership between Overton, a white, classically trained Juilliard instructor-jazz lover, and Monk, a black rising-star composer-pianist. This sort of color-blind relationship, commonplace in the Loft, stands out in the "Jim Crow America" of the 50's and 60's, and the film will also depict the racial tensions that were running high in the world outside. The film will juxtapose images of the relatively integrated Loft with Smith's radio recordings of the sounds of the Civil Rights movement. Smith recorded the program *Freedom Now*, a documentary broadcast on the independent station WBAI in 1963. The program was produced from recordings made in Birmingham, Alabama, and in New York during the demonstrations that followed the bombings in Birmingham. These recordings, and others, offer a natural counterpoint to the dynamic inside the Loft, where the importance of race paled in comparison to that of musicianship and technique.

The recordings and interviews with former Loft denizens will also enable the film to explore the racial divide between jazz and classical music at the time. Overton himself clearly understood that racism tainted the public perception of jazz, and devalued it relative to the work he did at Juilliard. As jazz composer Carman Moore has said, "Jazz and classical music were separate...and Hall was just one of the great unifiers. He really understood how classical jazz was, he understood the racist block that was put up against that music." The film will thus chronicle a place where casually integrated musicians were engaged in the fervent practice of music, demonstrating the hard work that produced the seemingly spontaneous art while setting the stage for the gradual acceptance of jazz into the American vernacular.

In addition to Robin D.G. Kelley, our jazz experts include Gerald Early, a bebop specialist who consulted on Ken Burns' documentary film *Jazz*; Robert O'Meally, founder and former director of the Columbia University Center for Jazz Studies; pianist and Thelonious Monk specialist Jason Moran; and Loren Schoenberg, jazz historian, broadcaster, tenor sax player, big band leader, arranger and writer. We will also call on Dan Morgenstern, at the Rutgers Institute of Jazz Studies, for guidance and feedback. They are among the nation's foremost authorities on jazz and have many years of experience studying its history, practitioners, and place among musical genres and within historical contexts.

Mid-Century Urban Decay

...who among us will be left in the city to enjoy [loft living] and how much will we have to pay?
-Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*

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The socioeconomic shifts that were changing urban living by the mid-1960's also greatly inform the story of Gene Smith, the Loft, and this film, which will depict the decline of Smith and the Loft as microcosms of their broader environment. Urban historian and project advisor Robert W. Snyder, who directs the graduate program in American Studies at Rutgers University, will help inform our exploration of mid-century economic change and its effects on urban development and cultural life.

The U.S. had emerged from World War II with a booming economy and unprecedented population growth. The G.I. Bill and the wider availability of federal home loans suddenly put the dream of homeownership and a college degree within reach for millions of Americans, and veterans moved their growing families to the suburbs in droves. As Brown University's Samuel Zipp points out, "federal housing and highway policy underwrote the suburbanization of homes, industry and commerce, pulling jobs and capital to the edges of the city." At the same time, migrants from the South and from other countries were still pouring into New York in search of a better life. They found that manufacturing jobs had become scarce, partially due to a decline in the once robust shipbuilding and garment industries. The flight of the middle class from the cities drove up the cost of living for those who remained, and New York became a capital of polarization between the rich and poor. The stark inequalities that these changes exposed intensified the greater sense of unrest that would characterize much of the 1960's.

As New York's ailments became harder and harder to ignore, new approaches to curing them gained traction. The activist Jane Jacobs became a prominent, outspoken critic of Robert Moses, the city planner and builder largely responsible for the mass suburbanization of America during this period. Jacobs advocated for mixed-use development and the preservation of street life over traditional urban renewal tactics like slum clearance and building housing projects and highways. "This is not the rebuilding of cities," she wrote in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. "This is the sacking of cities." Jacobs' work laid the foundation for today's urban development policies, which prioritize investments in public transit, green space, and affordable housing.

As insulated as life inside the Jazz Loft could be in some ways, it could not protect Gene Smith and his friends from these powerful shifts in the outside world. The Loft was itself located in a neighborhood that used to be home to garment factories, many of which had been abandoned or relocated. Like the city at large, the Flower District was in transition during the Jazz Loft years; as the 1960's approached, developers already had an eye on properties such as those jazz players had used illegally for residences. Some Loft musicians found steadier work, got married, moved out of the City, and joined the growing middle class. Others, lacking the money, family ties, or inclination to leave, stayed in Manhattan to hunt for work and, in many cases, deal with crippling addictions to drugs and alcohol. Just as New York's problems became more concentrated and polarized, so did those within the jazz world.

Documenting American Life

Perhaps the increasing urgency of personal details was an intuitive assertion of the private against the public facelessness of a mass society.

-W. T. Lhamon, project advisor

The film will renew audiences' awareness of and appreciation for the modern tradition of preserving the sights and sounds of daily life – a phenomenon that many Americans take for granted in today's world, when reality television and the web provide forums for anyone to share even the most intimate personal details. As he set about capturing the sounds of The Jazz Loft on magnetic tape, Smith was using a relatively new technology to do something even newer: document indoor, unrehearsed, uncensored "everyday" sounds. It was quite unusual to record anything other than staged "performances" at the time. Considered in the context of today's cultural climate, Smith's recordings could even be described as an early example of "reality" programming: a seemingly quotidian, yet engrossing, window into the

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private lives of a select group of people. Reality television, however, requires willing participants. The people who Smith recorded and photographed often were not aware of it, even if they didn't quite mind. With Smith's recordings as context, *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft* will examine this erasure of the lines between public and private, particularly in light of today's heightened awareness of security and surveillance.

Invented in complete secrecy during the mid-1930s in Germany, it was not until after World War II that magnetic tape technology made its way to the U.S., where it revolutionized and dominated the music and film industries until the 1980s. Tape's most immediate assets were its superior sound and the fact that it allowed performers to pre-record, layer, and edit radio broadcasts through complex post-production. When Eugene Smith was making his recordings, the technology was predominately used in professional settings and only at home by a select group of audio. Undoubtedly, Smith's 4,000 hours of tape would qualify as one of the most extensive uses of audio technology in its developing years

Moreover, all major social, cultural, and historic movements rely on those that document them and Smith came of age during the golden age of photojournalism. It was between the 1930s and 1950s, before the dominance of television, that Americans relied on magazine photos for exposure to the broader world. The most prominent of these magazines was *Life*, whose photo essays helped circulation soar to 8.5 million weekly readers. The film provides an opportunity to overlay Smith's photographs and found footage with the recorded elements that filled his world during the days, when the musicians were largely absent. These juxtapositions will be the primary vehicle to evoke the atmosphere of the times, saturated as they were with media broadcasts and imagery that brought the outside world into the home. The film's accompanying website will provide additional visual documentation and biographical and bibliographical information that will help to round out this media-based understanding of the period and Smith's work.

Stephenson, photography expert Vicki Goldberg, and Susan Smulyan, a scholar who has written extensively about mass culture, and broadcast history, will be interviewed on camera to discuss the role of photography and sound and Smith the photographer/recordist during the mid-1950s and 1960s. The film will make connections between the jazz players and the photos and investigate the incessant cataloguing and recording that created this phenomenal archive.

d) Project Rationale

The Jazz Loft will significantly build upon the depth, the reach, and the success of both *The Jazz Loft Project* and *The Jazz Loft Project Radio Series* in two primary ways. First, the film will have at its disposal the full range of Jazz Loft media – audio material (archival recordings, jazz recordings, and oral histories) that was originally presented and distributed primarily through the radio series and visual material (archival photographs and ephemera captured by Eugene Smith) that was made available via *The Jazz Loft Project Book* and exhibition. As experts and award-winning professionals in their respective fields, Sam Stephenson and Sara Fishko were able to take the best advantage of each of their chosen media to tell a different, and no less compelling, facet of The Jazz Loft story. Yet the film will be a single realization of each of these elements: sound from the radio series, visuals from the exhibition, text and photographs from the book. By utilizing each of the resources, while adding new audio-visual elements, the project team will increase the dramatic and narrative impact of the Loft story, thereby building on and drawing out our humanities themes. For instance, it is clear from the pictures and Smith's words that his window on Sixth Avenue was a magnet that drew him to contemplate the City and the practice of his art. The film will feature sequences of his most compelling still photographs, including one such sequence based on Smith's remarkable "window" pictures, looking at the street below in every weather condition, under every circumstance. The film will also "re-create" the Loft environment, both by shooting new footage inside the actual building and also by using the thousands of still pictures Smith shot inside.

Smith's recordings of radio and television programs also provide a vibrant audio-portrait of the moment. We'll use selections from those recordings, photo stills and stock footage to recall that era in America.

Second, the very nature of the film medium promises a level of visibility not attained through the other iterations of the project. Film is more accessible, and will open up this important archive to a broader audience. In addition to broadcast on public television, the film will be submitted to festivals, released on DVD with additional content from the archives and from the making of the film itself, and will be screened through partnerships with WNYC's cultural collaborators, including Lincoln Center, Town Hall, and The Juilliard School. The film will be made available for university and educational use. We will also use Facebook and Twitter to launch a social media campaign that is virally based and has the capacity to exponentially increase the opportunities for audiences to interact with the film. And we will gather audiences for concerts and conversation in our own New York performance space on Varick Street, less than two miles from the loft building at 821 Sixth Avenue.

Moreover, this project is different from other films produced about Smith and 20th-century jazz music, including Ken Burns' *Jazz*, produced for PBS, or celebrity-driven portraits of individual musicians. The film presents a new facet of jazz history, built around recordings and photographs that reveal mostly unknown jazz musicians, in their prime, interacting and playing without the pressure of fans, critics, or the public. While Smith has been the subject of an American Masters program entitled "W. Eugene Smith: Photography Made Difficult" (1989), that film predates the discovery of Smith's thousands of hours of audio tape made in and around his loft. Since that breakthrough, Stephenson's exhaustive research and hundreds of interviews have dramatically amplified the view of Smith's work, and helped to translate to a broad audience Smith's impact on how we view cultural life during the 50s and 60s.

By bringing this vital source material to the awareness of jazz aficionados, music lovers, musicians, photographers, artists, and the public, we expect the film to enhance scholarship about jazz, and engender broad, increased interest in the genre, its development, and its place within the scope of 20th and 21st century music and culture.

4) Rights and Permissions

The Eugene Smith Archive is controlled by The Heirs of W. Eugene Smith. WNYC has received preliminary verbal and written consent (attached) from Smith's estate to use materials from the archive, including photographs, recordings, physical materials such as tape reel boxes and camera equipment, and Smith's notebooks and other personal articles. We expect to have written contracts in hand by the time the grant period begins in October. WNYC has also optioned *The Jazz Loft Project*, by Sam Stephenson, in order to ensure that no other entity will be able to use the material as a basis for a film. The total likely cost for obtaining these permissions is \$100,000, and is included in our production budget.

5) Audience

Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft is intended for an audience of adults and young adults that is intellectually curious, musically-inclined, and diverse in terms of age, race, and cultural background. We expect to reach upwards of 4-5 million viewers in our initial broadcast. We will measure audience figures using conventional yardsticks such as ratings and viewing data, as well as hits to the website and social media platforms, critical reviews, and anecdotal audience response. We will also note any direct listener responses – letters, calls and e-mails – and feedback from our advisors, partners, and distributor.

WNYC is uniquely positioned to present *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft*. WNYC is known for its commitment to presenting a diverse array of music and commentary that is designed to deepen our

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listeners' interest and understanding of music. In addition to Fishko's outstanding credentials and proven fluency in this material, WNYC has already established itself as the leading presenter of programming related to *The Jazz Loft*, and has a proven audience of dedicated followers. Interest in the project continues to grow, as evidenced by book sales, exhibition attendance, and listeners still tuning in to the radio series via The Jazz Loft Project website. *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft* is also a story with remarkable potential for humanities based learning. WNYC's commitment to education and culture ensure that this material will be used to foster in audiences an understanding of jazz itself, as well as its connection to larger themes such as the civil rights movement and urban life in mid-century America.

6) Distribution Plan

We intend to treat the film as an independent production. Once in the edit phase, we will create a sample reel that will be circulated to festivals, cable networks and other sources whom we know to be in sympathy with the project, and who have distributed and/or honored the members of the media team in previous endeavors. Those include: HBO, Sundance Channel, IFC network, PBS, WNET, American Masters, Sundance Festival, Full Frame Festival, Stranger Than Fiction (IFC) Festival, New York International Documentary Film Festival, First Run Features, among others. Upon completion of a rough cut version, we will continue the process of negotiating a distribution arrangement. WNYC's involvement promises additional audience reach through the unique platform of National Public Radio and its websites. These will be used for promotion of the film, incorporating live interviews with the filmmakers with rebroadcasts of *The Jazz Loft Project Radio Series*. There will also be live performances to mark the debut of the film at WNYC's performance venue, The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space, as well as the existing jazz clubs and venues of New York City. These events will be broadcast/webcast on WNYC as appropriate and available nationally through the WNYC and NPR music websites.

7) Media Team

WNYC recognizes that *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft* is an ambitious project for a radio station to undertake. We have therefore assembled the following team of distinguished producers and renowned experts to support the project:

Sara Fishko, Producer/Director, has had a dual career as film editor and public radio producer/host. Having spent the past five years working collaboratively with Sam Stephenson on *The Jazz Loft Project* and *Jazz Loft Project Radio Series*, she has become the leading presenter of these materials. Her film credits include the Emmy Award for her work as editor on *No Applause, Just Throw Money*, a documentary collage of New York street performance. She was also the editor of *Buckminster Fuller: Thinking Out Loud*, the duPont-Columbia Award-winning documentary produced by Simon & Goodman Productions for *American Masters*. She was Supervising Film Editor on the six-part Public Television series *With God on Our Side*, an examination of the rise of the Religious Right in America, produced by Calvin Skaggs and Lumiere Productions. She was also the editor for the *Frontline* episode *Innocence Lost*, a detailed investigation of a child abuse case, which won both the duPont-Columbia as well as the DGA Awards. She has edited several films for *Bill Moyers Journal*, and was the editor of two documentaries for the *Bill Moyers' 'Creativity'* series. She edited short films for *Saturday Night Live*, as well as NBC's Oscar-nominated *The Doonesbury Special* and many films for WNET Channel 13, for which she was also associate producer. Fishko's radio experience is detailed fully in her attached bio.

Jamie Lustberg, Producing Partner, is a multi-award winning filmmaker. Starting in the mid-90s she was the lead visual arts producer for the Peabody Award-winning PBS series, *Egg the Arts Show*, and served as the filmmaker for WNET's *City Arts*. Lustberg also created a wide variety of work for other networks, including the documentary *Going Home; Women Face the Challenge of Mothering from*

Behind Bars for HBO, and *School's In*, a one-hour documentary special on six teachers across America, for The Disney Channel. She has won three Emmy Awards, a Cine Golden Eagle and a Gracie Allen award. Lustberg is a partner in Benjamin Productions Inc., which won a Peabody Award in 2010 for its Sundance Channel television series *Brick City*.

Mark Benjamin, Director of Photography/Co-director, has directed, produced and photographed hundreds of films over the last 25 years. From his early independent project as Director/Cameraman with *Jerusalem Place*, to his 2010 documentary series *Brick City*, Benjamin's career has been diverse. Among his films are eight Bill Moyers documentaries, six National Geographic films, and films for all of the television networks, as well as HBO and other cable networks. The theatrical feature film *Slam*, for which Benjamin was Cinematographer, won the Sundance Grand Jury Prize for Best Dramatic Film, and the Cannes Film Festival Camera D'Or. As Executive Producer and Director, Benjamin won the 2010 Peabody Award for *Brick City*, which recently completed its second season on Sundance Channel.

Nancy Baker, Film Editor, has been editing films for more than 3 decades, from the seminal 70s documentaries *Winter Soldier* and *Harlan County USA (Academy Award, 1976)* to her recent work on HBO programs such as *Masterclass* and *Rehearsing a Dream*. She has edited features such as *Atomic Station*, *Vanya on 42nd Street* and *American Heart*; and she's edited the music films *A Matter of Trust: Billy Joel in the Soviet Union* for ABC and *Swingin' with Duke* for WNET. Baker was also the editor of *Born Into Brothels*, which received the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature of 2004, as well as many other theatrical and television films.

Robert Seidman, Writer, has over three decades of experience in film and television. Among his many credits are the film *Lush Life: Billy Strayhorn*, which explored the relationship between Strayhorn and Duke Ellington, and won Writer's Guild, Emmy and Peabody Awards in 2007; and *Margaret Mead: An Observer Observed*, an Oscar-nominated documentary feature. Seidman has been a visiting professor at New York University, specializing for many years in a course entitled "Writing the Documentary Film."

Calvin Skaggs, Consulting Producer/Creative Advisor, has produced or directed over 30 dramas and documentaries for television and theatrical exhibition. His first theatrical feature, *On Valentine's Day*, was the official American entry in the Venice Film Festival; his hip-hop drama *Fly By Night* won the Sundance Filmmakers' Trophy in 1993. He has executive produced two major documentary series for PBS—*With God On Our Side* and *Local News*—and produced numerous films for Discovery, PBS, HBO and Channel 4 UK. Before founding the production house Lumiere, Skaggs earned a Ph.D. from Duke University, and served as Professor of English and Cinema at Drew University. Skaggs and Sara Fishko have a long working relationship: Fishko served as Supervising Editor for Skaggs' *With God On Our Side* and he in turn served as an advisor on *The Jazz Loft Radio Series*.

Dean Cappello is Senior Vice President and Chief Content Officer at New York Public Radio, overseeing all broadcasting and program production at NYPR, comprising WNYC-AM, WNYC-FM, WQXR. Dean joined WNYC as Senior Director of News and Information in August 1997 after seven years at Monitor Radio in Boston. As Senior Producer of Monitor Radio's *Midday Edition*, he helped launch and oversee the first daily midday public radio news program. Dean holds a B.A. from Emerson College. Cappello will provide oversight and management support at WNYC for this project.

Laura Mayer, Assistant, WNYC, has worked with Sara Fishko since October 2009. Laura is a graduate from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. Her personal radio work has appeared on the Third Coast Festival's Re:sound, WBEZ's Eight Forty-Eight and Time.com.

Digital Content Producer, WNYC, part-time (to be hired): The Digital Content Producer will manage all programming and development related to the development of *The Jazz Loft* website and all online audience engagement via social media. This person will have expertise in web development, design, and social media, and be fluent in a variety of programming languages to help facilitate the development and dissemination of online content.

Associate Producer, WNYC (to be hired): For a period during intensive pre-production and production, we intend to hire an experienced film Associate Producer to act as liaison between WNYC and Benjamin Productions, and to participate in all aspects of the project, including budget planning, casting, location scouting, interview preparation, and production coordination.

The Project Team includes twelve humanities advisors to consult on the project whose expertise encompasses history/musicology, and jazz practice; 20th century and post-war American culture; urban studies and development; radio, entertainment, mass culture, and broadcast history; film production; W. Eugene Smith, photojournalism, and 20th century photography; and The Jazz Loft recordings themselves. Many members of the group will also be used as on-screen speakers/contributors. The Project Team will consult with the advisors throughout the production and post-production processes, and hold group discussions to brainstorm, vet ideas and humanities themes, identify scholarship, and provide feedback.

Daniel Belgrad, Associate Professor in the department of Humanities and American Studies at the University of South Florida. Belgrad's book, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America*, is an inspiration for Sara Fishko's work in the arts and culture and has been a recurring theme in many of her radio pieces. The concept of a "culture of spontaneity" is particularly relevant to this project, and will be used for understanding life inside The Jazz Loft as well as how the seemingly spontaneous zeitgeist of jazz was synchronous with other artistic development in the post-war era.

Gerald L. Early, Director of the Center for the Humanities and the Merle Kling Professor of Modern Letters at Washington University in St. Louis, is a noted essayist and American culture critic as well as a professor of English, African & African American studies and American culture studies. He has edited numerous volumes, including *This Is Where I Came In: Black America in the 1960s* (2003), is a specialist of bebop jazz, and served as a consultant on Ken Burns' documentary films on baseball and jazz for PBS.

Vicki Goldberg is a photography writer, historian and lecturer. She was photography columnist for *The New York Times* from 1988 to 2001, and her many books on the subject include *The Power of Photography: How Photographs Changed Our Lives* and *Light Matters*. Goldberg was the Senior Consultant for the series *A Century of Images* (PBS) and *Decisive Moments* (BBC). She has lectured all over the U.S. and Europe, and has taught at the Rhode Island School of Design as well as the Institute of Fine Art in New York.

Robin D. G. Kelley is a historian and author regarded as one of the country's preeminent scholars in jazz and African American history. He currently serves as a professor of history and American studies and ethnicity at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. He has been authorized by the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz to be Monk's authorized biographer, the first scholar ever given its permission, and brings to the project a deep knowledge of Monk, jazz, and jazz scholarship as well as a great understanding of the race relations at play both within and without The Jazz Loft in the post-war period.

W.T. Lhamon, Jr. is Professor Emeritus at Florida State University and author of *Deliberate Speed: The Origins of a Cultural Style in the American 1950s*. Lhamon is renowned for his contributions to the study of post-war American culture. His research will help provide rich context to the activities inside and outside the Loft.

Barry Malkin, Oscar-nominated film editor, is known for his decades-long collaboration with director Francis Ford Coppola on films such as *Godfather Part II*, *Apocalypse Now* and *Peggy Sue Got Married*.

Jason Moran, jazz pianist and Thelonious Monk specialist. Besides his recordings under his own name, Moran has also played and recorded with a range of other artists including Cassandra Wilson, Joe Lovano, Don Byron, Steve Coleman, Lee Konitz, Von Freeman, Christian McBride and Ravi Coltrane. He has been favored with a number of awards, most notably being called The Jazz Journalists Association's "Up-n-Coming Jazz Musician" in 2003 and being voted Rising Star Jazz Artist, Rising Star Pianist, and Rising Star Composer in the Down Beat critic's poll in 2003 and 2004.

Robert O'Meally, Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, and founder and former director of the Columbia University Center for Jazz Studies. He is well known in the academic, documentary, and practicing jazz scene as a preeminent scholar of jazz music. He has written extensively on jazz, including *The Jazz Singers* (Smithsonian, 1997) and *Seeing Jazz* (Smithsonian, 1997). His production of the recording *The Jazz Singers* was nominated for a Grammy Award. His book on Billie Holiday and his liner notes for Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington collections won Ralph Gleason Awards.

Loren Schoenberg, noted jazz historian, jazz broadcaster, tenor saxophonist, big band leader, arranger and jazz writer. He is Director of the National Jazz Museum in Harlem.

Susan Smulyan, Associate Professor of American Studies in the Department of American Civilization at Brown University. She is a scholar who has written extensively about radio, entertainment, mass culture, and broadcast history, with relation to American studies and cultural history. Her book *Selling Radio: The Commercialization of Radio*, was published in 1994 by Smithsonian Institution Press. Having served as a panelist for *The Jazz Loft Project Radio Series*, she will help Fishko contextualize the importance of media and sound and recording technology during the post-war period and enrich the film with information about the technological and archival importance of Eugene Smith's audio tapes.

Robert W. Snyder, Director of Journalism and Media Studies at Rutgers University, is an urban studies expert specializing in New York. His interest in New York cultural history inspired his book *The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York*, as well as his co-authorship of *Metropolitan Lives: The Ashcan Artists and Their New York*. He is currently writing a book about changes in New York during and after World War II (working title: *Washington Heights and New York City since 1940*).

Sam Stephenson, founder of *The Jazz Loft Project* (originally at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University) will act as a research consultant to the project. Stephenson has spent the last fifteen years studying W. Eugene Smith. His fascination with Smith's life and work began with his book, *Dream Street: W. Eugene Smith's Pittsburgh Project*. Completed in 1999, Stephenson's book digs deeper into the project that was said to have been Smith's undoing – his assignment to make a handful of great photographs of the city of Pittsburgh. Only a tiny portion of the Pittsburgh photos had ever been seen, and Stephenson researched the additional images in the Smith Archive and collected them in the book, along with a detailed essay on Smith. Next, Stephenson wrote the book *The Jazz Loft Project* (Knopf, 2009), generated by his discovery of the tapes and photographs made in Smith's loft. At present, Stephenson is working on *Gene Smith's Sink*, a full-scale biography of Smith, slated for publication by Farrar, Strauss, Giroux in 2013. He continues to be a key member of our scholarly team.

8) Progress

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Progress to date includes identifying Benjamin Productions as our producing partner; putting together the media/project team; securing commitments from the Scholarly Advisors; and entering negotiations for the option on Sam Stephenson's book *The Jazz Loft Project*, as well as for rights to W. Eugene Smith's photographs and audio (we expect these negotiations to be complete well before the grant period). At the same time, 10+ years have thus far been devoted to *The Jazz Loft Project* by Sam Stephenson, the last five of them involving research and radio production by Sara Fishko. Both Stephenson and Fishko have developed strong relationships, and in many cases, friendships, with members of The Jazz Loft generation that will be drawn upon for the film. Also involved will be Dan Partridge, the original Jazz Loft researcher who may be the only living person who has actually heard (and logged) every bit of Jazz Loft tape. Partridge continues to explore the remaining unheard audio material as we develop our plans, and will serve as a go-to expert on the sound recordings that underpin the film. The media team will take full advantage of the research, interviews, photography and additional recordings conducted for prior iterations of the project.

We have already begun shooting a set of core interviews of the older members of the Loft community. In fall 2011, for example, Sara Fishko, Mark Benjamin, and Benjamin's crew attended an event in Pennsylvania that reunited many Jazz Loft musicians. The men talked extensively about their experiences in New York during that time, and also spent a few hours jamming in various combinations, providing our team with some wonderful footage to use in the film. We are also beginning to negotiate with the Chang family, current owners of the Loft building, for access to the building for both exterior and interior photography and taping (we initiated a relationship with the family for the book and radio series). Once the rights, permissions and options have gone into contracts, we will begin to isolate and schedule the most important interviews and location shoots and move into pre-production. We will also begin the process of identifying distribution possibilities by meeting with selected outlets to generate interest in the project. Most of these will be organizations and/or festivals which have distributed or screened previous work by members of the media team.

9) Work Plan

We have budgeted for, approximately, a 72-week production period, including pre-production. Production would begin in October 2012, and conclude by the end of fall 2013, followed by a period of distribution/promotion. We anticipate a winter 2014 broadcast. The schedule is as follows:

Pre-Production (March – July 2012): We plan to move ahead with additional on-camera interviews prior to the grant period, so as to capture on film the key players and those with relevant memories and information. Sara Fishko and members of Benjamin Productions plan to take at least three trips to Boston, Florida, and California to conduct at least 30 new interviews with jazz musicians/Loft denizens. They will also take at least two trips to the Smith Archive in Arizona for photo research and to consult with Sam Stephenson about film research and photo/audio rights. Fishko and Laura Mayer will conduct ongoing research for the production in the Smith Archive, from stock footage collections such as Library of Congress, National Archives, Media Resource Center, and WPA Film Library. They will also put together a comprehensive shooting schedule, obtaining any final permissions, rights, and/or releases.

Production (September - October 2012):

- Film additional interviews, nighttime re-creations and other MOS picture (Fishko, crew)
- Convene meeting with advisory team (Fishko, Mayer)
- Write and edit material and provide guidance and schedule shoot days for guest speakers, experts and commentators; fact-check and continue research (Fishko, Mayer, Bob Seidman)
- Identify audio from Jazz Loft recordings and still photos to be used (Fishko, Mayer, Sam Stephenson)

WNYC, New York Public Radio

America's Media Makers/Production: Proposal for *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft*

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- Record sound effects and additional music if needed; consult, plan and execute with graphic designer any special visual effects; rough cut opening sequence with sample graphic effects and devise style for on-screen text and lower third ids (Fishko, Benjamin Productions)
- Screen existing material (Fishko, Stephenson, Baker, Benjamin, Skaggs)

Post-production (November 2012 - April 2013):

- Assemble stock footage, high-resolution scans of still photos, live footage and interviews; screen and discuss; devise edit plan and structural solutions (Fishko, Benjamin, Baker, Skaggs)
- Consult advisory panel on structural, informational issues and shoot any additional audio and/or visual material needed (Fishko, Mayer)
- End January: first assembly/rough cut; create sample reel for distribution (Fishko, Benjamin)

Edit/Fine Cut (February - May 2013):

- Screen cut (Fishko, Benjamin, Baker, Skaggs, others)
- Continue distribution negotiations (Fishko, WNYC)
- Mid-April: lock picture and continue distribution screenings (Fishko, Benjamin, Baker, Skaggs)
- Sound mix and final visual effects completed (Fishko, Benjamin)

Mixing/Distribution/Promotion (Fall 2013):

- Screenings for press and the jazz/film/cultural community (Fishko, Benjamin, WNYC)
- Website complete (Fishko, WNYC)
- Coordinate film showings with rebroadcast of Radio Series and possible book event; schedule WNYC Performance Space events to coordinate with film/radio/book (Fishko, Mayer)

Release/Promotion/Events (Winter 2014):

- Jazz Loft film complete, is shown in theatres and/or on television and scheduled for DVD version
- Coordinated events in WNYC Performance Space, on air and elsewhere

10) Fundraising Plan

The production budget for *Gene Smith and The Jazz Loft* is \$807,000. The cost for the entire Jazz Loft project is \$1,386,410. WNYC received \$100,000 from the NEH for *The Jazz Loft Radio Series*, the precursor to this project. This is the second funding proposal that we are submitting to the NEH for the documentary, and we currently have a proposal pending with the National Endowment for the Arts. Any costs that exceed NEH support will be supported by grants from foundation, individual, and government prospects and through WNYC investment. Additional funding prospects include the New York State Council on the Arts as well as several major foundations based in New York with a strong interest in film and/or the arts, including the Ford, Rockefeller, and Surdna Foundations. We will also approach several major individual prospects with a demonstrated interest in jazz, culture, and the arts.

11) Organizational profile(s)

New York Public Radio (NYPR) is the parent company of WNYC Radio (93.9 FM, AM 820, and WNYC.org), WQXR Radio (105.9 FM and WQXR.org), The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space, and New Jersey Public Radio. NYPR's stations are the most listened-to radio stations in Manhattan – commercial or otherwise – and the most listened-to public radio stations in the country, reaching 11.5 million people nationally every month via broadcast, digital, and live platforms. NYPR's mission is “to make the mind more curious, the heart more tolerant, and the spirit more joyful by producing programs that reflect the values, vitality, diversity, and aspirations of New Yorkers wherever they may be.” NYPR

produces more than 125 original hours of humanities-rich programming each week, including a broad range of daily news, talk and cultural and classical music programming. NYPR's national shows include the Peabody Award-winning programs *Radiolab*, *On the Media*, *Studio 360*, and *Radio Rookies*, as well as *The Takeaway*, a national morning news program which has been supported by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. WNYC has been awarded two NEH grants in the past four years – one for *The Jazz Loft Project Radio Series* and another for a two-year digitization project to reformat and make accessible to the public 660 hours of choice recordings from the WNYC archives. WNYC is currently undergoing a digital transformation, using visual media and producing a substantial amount of web videos and HD news programs. Combined with Sara Fishko's expertise with the material, we are working with a highly acclaimed production company to produce the film, which will ensure a very high quality and compelling rendering of this unique story.

Benjamin Productions is a New York based production company led by Jamie Lustberg, producer/director and Mark Benjamin, director/director of photography offering video production services including films, high definition marketing videos, documentaries, and educational materials. Lustberg and Benjamin have been working together for the past 15 years creating humanities-based films for: The Disney Channel, HBO/Cinemax, HBO Family, Mattel/Fisher-Price and PBS. Benjamin has created numerous independent films, eight Bill Moyer documentaries, six National Geographic films and ten films for HBO, and ABC, CBS, NBC, TBS, and the Discovery Channel. Of the hundreds of films Benjamin has worked on many have received awards and citations, among them 10 National Emmy awards. He won the CINE Golden Eagle for the National Geographic film *The Atocha*. Benjamin's film *Puerto Rico*, shot and directed by him, which is part of the series *Portrait of America* on TBS, was the recipient of the prestigious Peabody Award. Lustberg is a multi award winning filmmaker. She has won three Emmy Awards, a Cine Golden Eagle and a Gracie Allen award. From 1996- 2002, she was the lead visual arts producer for the Peabody Award winning PBS series *Egg The Arts Show* as well as for WNET's City Arts. Other clients include Mattel, the Disney Channel, HBO, HBO family and Discovery.

12) Bibliography

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13) Collections of Materials used by the project

- 4,200 hours of archived tape (including 4,000 hours of audio tape recorded by W. Eugene Smith)
- Over 200 oral histories and on-camera interviews with Jazz Loft denizens and visitors
- WNYC archive of 60,000+ audio recordings (commentary, commercial material, jazz music)
- WNYC institutional music library
- Stock footage assembled from New York and national archives consisting of general material on the period, including newsreels, documentaries and news footage
- Archives from the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, the National Jazz Museum in Harlem, Columbia University's Center for Jazz Studies, Rutgers' Jazz Archive, The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, Library of Congress, National Archives, Media Resource Center, Pathe Archives, WPA Film Library, and the Rick Prelinger Archive
- W. Eugene Smith still photographs (selected from many thousands) at the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona Life Magazine Archive