In a Nutshell: Maurice Sendak as a Jewish Artist - Exhibit and Program Support
Project Lead: Ms. Nadean Meyer, EWU Libraries Learning Resources Librarian
Funded for $4,636

EWU Libraries seek funding for programs to enhance participant experience of the traveling exhibit *In a Nutshell: Maurice Sendak as a Jewish Artist*. The John F. Kennedy Memorial Library at Eastern Washington University has been selected to host the exhibit, which is sponsored by the Rosenbach Museum & Library and the American Library Association (ALA), from late October through mid-December of 2011.

This exhibit supports EWU’s strategic priority for community engagement and the EWU Board of Trustees’ strategic priority of diversity. The Jewish population of the Inland Northwest exemplifies a community whose cultural heritage is hidden in plain sight. The Sendak display offers a vehicle for telling the story of Jewish culture and its many contributions to American life and culture.

The library has formed a program committee with university and community representatives to enhance the exhibit experience. The committee plans four programs:

- The opening reception, featuring music, food, and story-telling highlighting Jewish culture and traditions;
- An lecture by Dr. Susan Glenn, University of Washington, on Jewish culture and identity;
- A performance of selections from *Really Rosie*, the musical with words by Maurice Sendak and music by Carole King;
- A public showing of the interview documentary *Tell Them Anything They Want: A Portrait of Maurice Sendak* (2010), followed by discussion with Dr. Marilyn Carpenter.

EWU Libraries will fund the opening reception. This proposal seeks financial support for the other three events, along with funds to purchase library resources related to and in support of the exhibit.

Estimated as less than one percent of the Inland Northwest’s population, the Jewish community and its rich cultural heritage are hidden in plain sight, perhaps because of the region’s history with the Aryan Nation and other anti-Semitic hate groups. EWU and local organizations such as the Center for Hate Studies at Gonzaga University and the Unity Center for Multicultural Education actively promote tolerance and diversity by sharing our stories. The Sendak display offers a vehicle for telling the story of Jewish culture and its many contributions to the region. This proposal seeks funding for three programs to enhance the experience of the *In a Nutshell* exhibit as well as funding for library resources to support the exhibit while it is here and to contribute to the intellectual life of the university after the exhibit is gone.

Anticipated outcomes:

- EWU Libraries successfully collaborate with selected departments from the College of Arts, Letters, & Education and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Social Work to provide programs relevant to Jewish-American culture and heritage. 
  
  *Supports Diversity Initiative priority:* Collaborative…endeavors that engage two or more departments, programs, groups, etc.

- EWU students, community members, and others have an enhanced understanding of the history of Jews in America, particularly in the 20th century.

  *Supports Diversity Initiative priority:* Enhancement of our understanding of EWU-based underrepresented campus constituencies
• Members of the EWU community and the local Jewish community develop relationships to support diversity and tolerance initiatives to mutual benefit.

*Supports Diversity Initiative priority:*
Actions that are aligned to the EWU mission, the Strategic Plan, and the EWU Board of Trustee’s Diversity Initiative Plan.

• EWU Libraries are a resource for intellectual inquiry related to author/illustrator Maurice Sendak specifically and Jewish-American culture, heritage, and identity generally.

*Supports Diversity Initiative priority:*
• Enhancement of our understanding of EWU-based underrepresented campus constituencies

**Project Objectives:**
• Inform the EWU community and others about the works of Maurice Sendak in the context of his life as a child of Jewish immigrants;
• Provide information resources for the EWU community and others to learn about Maurice Sendak and Jewish-American culture and heritage.
• Provide opportunities for members of Spokane’s Jewish community to share their heritage and experiences as Jews in the Inland Northwest with non-Jews;
• Provide opportunities for EWU faculty, staff, and students to develop relationships with members of the region’s Jewish community;
• Provide opportunities to deepen understanding and tolerance between people from diverse backgrounds.

**Project Design:**
Central to the project design is the exhibit itself, an exploration of Sendak’s illustrations and picture books, revealing connections between these iconic works and Sendak’s childhood, family, and the popular culture of the time. The colorful exhibit panels feature illustrations of ferocious creatures, curious children and vibrant neighborhoods, alongside thematic explorations of the Jewish culture and history – and Sendak’s own family experience – that influenced Sendak’s work. The exhibit, made up of sixteen freestanding panels, will be free and open to the public at JFK Library from late October through mid December during the library’s open hours. *Target audience(s):* EWU students and faculty, adult community members

During the exhibit period, JFK Library will simultaneously display library resources related to the exhibit, including books and media by and about Maurice Sendak, book illustration, Judaism, and Jewish American history and culture. *Target audience(s):* EWU students and faculty, adult community members, children

The exhibit experience will be enhanced by a series of program events, including:
• The opening reception at JFK Library bringing together the EWU community, the Spokane Jewish community, and the community at large to celebrate the works of Maurice Sendak. The reception will feature traditional Jewish food, klezmer music, and story-telling with community member Karrie Brown. *Target audience(s):* EWU students and faculty, adult community members, children
• A free lecture/discussion on the Cheney campus with Dr. Susan Glenn of the University of Washington about Jewish identity. Dr. Glenn is the author of *Boundaries of Jewish Identity* published by the University of Washington Press (forthcoming 2011, co-edited with Naomi Sokoloff) and *Daughters of the Shtetl: Life and Labor in the Immigrant Generation* (Cornell:
Cornell University Press, 1990), winner of the Joan Kelly Memorial Prize given by the American Historical Association for the best book in Women's History/Feminist Theory, 1991. Target audience(s): EWU students and faculty; adult community members

- A free viewing of the interview documentary *Tell Them Anything They Want: A Portrait of Maurice Sendak (2010)*, followed by discussion with Dr. Marilyn Carpenter about Sendak’s works in the context of his life experience. Target audience(s): EWU students and faculty; adult community members

- A free performance of selections from the musical *Really Rosie*, with lyrics by Maurice Sendak and music by Carole King, to be directed by EWU Assistant Professor Kristina Ploeger with the Spokane Area Children’s Chorus. Target audience(s): Community members (families); EWU students

- If funded, EWU Libraries will provide financial support to four area middle schools to visit the Sendak exhibit and receive guided tours with an exhibit interpreter. Target audience(s): Children