CURATOR’S TOOLBOX

Jackie Ben-Efraim
52nd Annual Conference of the Association of Jewish Libraries
Curating is 20% flair and imagination and 80% administration, collaboration and management. You need to be able to think ahead and see around corners. You cannot make a successful exhibition without the 20%, but you can ruin a great idea if you cannot bring an exhibition together.

Nicholas Serota, Director, Tate, London.
Let’s take a moment to create the 20%

Exhibits can be based on:

- Historical Periods
- Biblical Verses
- Geographic Location
- Holidays
- Famous Person
- Psalms, Songs
Get Inspired from Art & Songs

Wall art. Hollywood, Ca

Biblical References in Shemer’s “Yerushalayim Shel Zahav”
Erella Teitler’s Assemblage
Inspiration for “Women of Valor”

Marlene Rubinstein
And God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and they shall rule over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the animals and over all the earth and over all the creeping things that creep upon the earth.”

Artist: Hillel Smith
And the Lord said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you and all your household, for it is you that I have seen as a righteous man before Me in this generation. Of all the clean animals you shall take for yourself seven pairs, a male and its mate, and of all the animals that are not clean, two, a male and its mate.
Lech Lecha

Genesis 12:1

And the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your land and from your birthplace and from your father’s house, to the land that I will show you.

Artist: Hillel Smith
And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, “After I have become worn out, will I have smooth flesh? And also, my master is old.”
Genesis 25:26

And after that came out his brother, and his hand took hold on Esav’s heel; and his name was called Ya’akov; and Yitzhak was sixty years old when she bore them.
Now Yisra’el loved Yosef more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a coat of many colours.
And the Lord spoke to Moshe, saying, “Go in, Speak to Pharaoh, King of Mitzrayim, that he let the children of Yisra’el go out of his land.”
II Samuel 6:5

And David and all the house of Ysra’el played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of cypress wood, on lyres, and on lutes, and on timbrels, and on rattles, and on cymbals.
First you make a spreadsheet...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
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<th>Actual Completion Date</th>
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<td>Choose In House Items</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1915</td>
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<td>Syriac</td>
<td>1823</td>
<td>3142579</td>
<td>55184748</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ge'ez</td>
<td>1963</td>
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<td>416127501</td>
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<td>3150231</td>
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<td>Armenian</td>
<td>1895</td>
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Sometimes, I need to include verses to reference

**Genesis 2:9:** And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

OCLC 266087419   bq 3152311

**Psalms 92:13:** The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

OCLC 26828111   bq 3152392

**Proverbs 3:18:** She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, And happy is every other that holdest her fast

OCLC 8241853   bq 3152281

Smadar Knobler  “The Tree That’s Alive”
Where will I put them?

My floor plan won’t win any drafting awards, but I can clearly see the size of each display window and can fill in what items will be in each case.
Call for Submissions

Create a format you can reuse for each exhibit.

Seeking small works, either new or old, on the theme of Woman of Valor for an exhibit at the Lowy-Winkler Family Rare Book Center at American Jewish University between January 23, 2017 through May 23, 2017.
Provide an outline for the information you need in order to consider the work.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS September 30, 2016.

1. Works must be in watercolor, print, assemblage or acrylics. Any works of assemblage should use PVA for adhering materials in order to comply with restrictions of display items in a rare book room.

2. Works should be approximately 12” x 12” or of a similar size.

3. Attached are the verses for the prayer Woman of Valor. The goal is to have one piece of art to compliment each verse. Inasmuch as the prayer begins with “A woman of strength who can find? For her worth is far above pearls,” the color theme will be pastel colors with a pearlized finish in keeping with springtime.
4. Email jbenefraim@aju.edu a jpeg of the work and include a brief artist’s statement (7 paragraphs).

5. Items will be selected to compliment bibles in the Lowy-Winkler Family Rare Book Center.

6. All work must be properly framed and/or ready to hang. If works require specific hardware, it must be provided when work is delivered. At the jurors’ discretion, work that is dirty, in disrepair or otherwise deemed unfit for display may be excluded from the show.

7. Members of JAI who are in good standing are eligible to submit their works at no charge.

8. Artwork will not be marked “For Sale” during the exhibit. However, the artist may provide a small advertising brochure to be distributed to visitors.
Eyal Sherman, paraplegic mouth painter
CONDITION REPORT

Title: Kereti u-feleti,  
Call number: * BM520.88.A55 E97 1763 (H 000 01 712 9)  
Loan to: American Jewish University - Ostrow Library  
 Exhibit title: "Solomon M. Neches -- Connecting AJU to the World"  
Exhibit dates: June 12, 2017 – September 10, 2017  

Dimensions: 32 cm H 3.5 cm W 21 cm D  
Binding Notes: UCLA Library Special Collections copy; imperfect, title-page torn and mounted on a new leaf; Polish censorship ink stamp on title page, with caption beginning "Cenzura ksiag,..." encircling a double-headed eagle; a few leaves repaired or re-margined. Ownership inscription on title page of author of commentary Rabbi Jonathan Eybeschuetz.  
Description: In black library buckram binding; gold-stamped spine title in Hebrew. Forms part of the Theodore E. Cummings Collection of Hebraica and Judaica; gift of Mrs. Cummings, 1963.  
Damage/Defects: First few openings from title page to 2 pages in have a lot of repairs along the edges of the pages. Title page laid on a full sheet of page to stabilize it. The last 2 pages have document tape repairs and patches of paper on edges of each page.  

Prepared by: Octavio Olvera  
Visual Arts Specialist  

Date: 4/9/2017
The artist/owner must pick up the art within 30 days of the close of the show; the university assumes no responsibility for loss or damage to the art and the full responsibility for loss or damage rests with the artist/owner. If following 90 days from the close of the show the art has not been picked up, the university may dispose of the art in any manner and the artist/owner shall receive no compensation.

Agreement: Signature of this form implies agreement with all conditions, dates and other regulations, including the right of the gallery to photograph any accepted work for any purpose related to the exhibition.

Signed _______________ Delivery Date

Signed _______________ Pick Up/Return Date

Ostrow Library
American Jewish University
15600 Mulholland Dr. Los Angeles, Ca. 90077
Certificate of Insurance

This document is vital any time you display an item that is not part of your institution’s collection. It is so easy to get, just call your insurance agent, answer a few questions and the agent fills out the form at no cost.

- Who is it made out to?
- What is it made of?
- How long will it be on loan?
- How much is it worth?
- Who will transport it?
- Where will it be stored?
**INSTITUTION NAME:**

Please attach a floor plan of the museum, indicating:
- where borrowed object(s) will be displayed
- receiving area
- location of reception areas
- location of portable fire extinguishers, fire suppression and detection systems

Floor plan attached:  
- Yes  
- No

Please indicate the system of measurement used to report dimensions and weight capacities for your museum:
- English measure (feet, inches, miles, etc.)
- International System of Units (SI) (meters, centimeters, kilograms, kilometers, etc.)

**1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

1.1 Is your institution currently accredited by the American Association of Museums?  
- Yes  
- No

If yes, date of most recent accreditation decision

1.2 Check the type(s) that best describe your institution:

- **Museum (non-profit)**
  - Aquarium
  - Arboretum/Botanical Garden
  - Art
  - Children’s/Youth
  - General
  - Historic House

- **University**
  - Museum or Gallery
  - Student Center/Union
  - Library
  - Department

- **Cultural Organization**
  - Library
  - Religious Institution
  - Civic/Exhibition Center
  - Fair Building
  - Other (specify)
Emergency Preparedness

Immediate Response and Checklist for Collections Recovery

Assessment
- Ensure through proper authorities that all hazards are cleared before entering building
  - Health & safety first; protect staff
  - Document with photos, videos, notes
  - Assess damage to collections, building, information systems
    - What type of an emergency was it (fire, smoke, chemical, clean water, dirty water, heat, humidity)?
    - What areas are affected?
    - How much of the collection is damaged?
    - What types of materials are damaged?
    - Are critical information systems functional / safe?

Communication
- Establish and maintain channels of communication
  - Establish communication with appropriate local & regional emergency management
  - Communicate with staff using the Phone Tree
  - Contact risk manager and insurance agent
  - Contact the public relations officer
  - Contact WESTPAS, Regional Contacts, conservators
  - Contact outside Emergency Recovery Services
  - Confirm funding sources for emergency services as needed
  - Contact regional libraries to ensure continued services to constituents
  - Report status to administration and public
  - Post emergency information and instructions on the institutional website
  - Obtain appropriate permissions to begin salvage (public safety)

Collection Salvage
- Salvage collections using pre-established Collection Priorities, taking into account access & extent of damage
  - Identify and gather emergency supplies
  - Identify secure, dry location for pack-out and air-drying
  - Recruit staff / volunteers wearing appropriate safety gear
  - Start collection salvage guided by Disaster Plan and collection response protocols, including Collection Priorities

Water Response
- Quick response is essential to prevent mold growth and irreversible damage to materials
- Organize staff / volunteers to load priority materials into freezer based on material type
- Organize staff / volunteers to air-dry materials that should not be frozen
Exhibition Budget
[Title of Exhibition]
[Name of Gallery] [Dates for exhibition]
[Date budget prepared; followed by dates for any revisions]

### FEES
- Artist fees [# artists x standard fee]
- Screening fees, for video/film works
- Special permission or license fees
- Copyright fees (for use of historic photos, other)
- Non-gallery staff/installation technician fees

### INSTALLATION
- Framing
- Crating, packing and Shipping
- Special costs Equipment rental or purchase
- Didactics (labels, wall texts, often prepared in-house)
- Photographic and/or video documentation
  (of installation and individual works as required)

**SUBTOTAL FEES** [TOTAL $]

**SUBTOTAL INSTALLATION COSTS** [TOTAL $]
PROMOTION

Printed promotional items:
(design/image, scanning/printing: invitation, brochure, poster)

Distribution: postage for mail-out, postering

Advertising: design of ads, plus costs for ad placements

Artist’s reproduction fees (CARCC)

SUBTOTAL PROMOTION [TOTAL $]

ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES

Curator’s administration costs:
(long distance telephone/fax, postage, courier, copying, slide duplication, CD or DVD production and other required materials)

Insurance top-up
(if insurance value of show is exceptional)

Security costs
(not typical; can include surveillance camera, personnel)

SUBTOTAL ADMIN. EXPENSE [TOTAL $]

Contingency
[10% of budget is standard]

TOTAL EXHIBITION EXPENSES [TOTAL $]
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tr>
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<td>for citation cards</td>
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<td>Acrylic frame</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Frame</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>dollar store</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hi Polymer eraser (white)</td>
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<td>to remove smudges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mounting Board</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tissue Paper</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
After you've completed your exhibit, post a link at the Smithsonian's website for archived exhibits (see handout)

Questions?

For more information, contact me at j.benefraim@gmail.com