

## EXAMPLE ONLY

### FAHSS Fall 2018 Application: Grant for Interdisciplinary Projects “Celebrating Long Island’s Poet: Walt Whitman at 200”

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#### **I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

To honor the 200th anniversary of the birth of Walt Whitman in May 2019, our FAHSS project explores Whitman’s immense influence on literature, music, and the visual arts. We focus on Whitman not only because of his broad impact in the United States and beyond, but also because he is a native Long Islander. As the only R1 public research university on Long Island, Stony Brook University (SBU) is perfectly positioned to call attention to the legacy of this Long Island poet. We plan a series of Whitman-focused events, including poetry readings during National Poetry Month and a symposium on May 3, 2019, that will culminate with a dynamic musical performance. The project involves faculty and students from several SBU departments (English, Music, Creative Writing, and University Libraries) and is designed to foster intellectual exchange, new curricular development, synergistic research collaborations, and expanded grant opportunities.

#### **II. PROGRAMS AND INTELLECTUAL RATIONALE**

##### **Event 1: Lecture, Poetry Reading, and Exhibition: “Walt Whitman’s Poetic Legacy” April 2, 2019, 1pm-2:20pm, Poetry Center (HUM 2001)**

To kick off National Poetry Month in 2019 we propose a lecture/poetry reading, co-sponsored by the University Libraries and the English department, examining Walt Whitman’s influence on the poetry and culture of the Americas. SBU professors and award-winning poets Rowan Ricardo Phillips and Cornelius Eady will speak on Whitman’s impact on poets in the U.S. and Caribbean, including their own poetry. An accompanying exhibition curated by Kristen Nyitray, Director of Special Collections and University Archives, and will showcase items from SBU’s holdings related to Whitman and his legacy, including: several editions of *Leaves of Grass*; the 1959 edition of Allen Ginsberg’s *Howl*; the SBU Poetry Center Film Archive, including readings by Ginsberg and other poets influenced by Whitman. To expand awareness of Whitman’s poetic legacy and relevant library holdings, we will display high-quality posters featuring Whitman/Ginsberg-related materials in an exhibition area in the Central Reading Room during National Poetry Month.

##### **Event 2: Symposium: “Starting from Paumanok’: Whitman, Long Island, The World” May 3, 2019, 1pm to 6:30pm, Poetry Center (HUM 2001); Staller Center for the Arts**

This half-day symposium (co-sponsored by the Libraries, HISB, and the departments of English and Music) will explore Whitman’s impact on literature, music, and the visual arts. The event will culminate with a lecture and performance featuring 2018 MacArthur Fellow Matthew Aucoin, composer and writer of the critically acclaimed original opera *Crossing*, based on Whitman’s Civil War writings. Students in the DMA program will participate in the performance and benefit from the opportunity to work directly with one of the nation’s leading composers and the professional musicians (including pianist and SBU alumnus Adam Nielsen). The opera was performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2017 and by the Los Angeles Opera in 2018. This lecture-performance will offer a rare opportunity

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for audiences in the New York area to hear this critically acclaimed work. The symposium presents a wide range of approaches to Whitman and will engage students and faculty from diverse departments. Given Whitman's popularity, the bicentennial of his birth, and the broad appeal of the musical performance, the event will also draw a large public audience.

### Schedule

#### **Session I (1pm-2pm) Whitman's Poetic Legacy**

"Whitman and Ginsberg" (Contemporary poet Daniel Thomas Moran)

"Whitman, Poet of the Americas" (poet/scholar tba)

#### **2pm-2:20pm Break & Refreshments**

#### **Session II (2:30pm-3:50pm) Whitman's New York**

"Whitman's Arcadia: LI through the Eyes of of a Poet and Painters" (Joshua Ruff, Chief Curator/Director of Collections and Interpretation, Long Island Museum)

"A Sense of Place: Evoking Whitman's Long Island" (English PhD students present research for LIM exhibition and the walking tour).

"Friendship in Whitman's New York" (Professor Karen Karbiener, NYU)

#### **Session III (4pm-4:45pm) Whitman and the Civil War**

"Whitman the Wound Dresser" (English Professor Susan Scheckel)

"Civil War and Whitman's Homoeroticism" (English PhD student Andrew Rimby)

#### **5pm-6:30pm *Crossing* Performance and Lecture by Matt Aucoin (Staller Recital Hall)**

### III. PROJECT OUTCOMES

#### **A. New Interdisciplinary Research Collaborations**

The project will spur new research collaborations across diverse disciplines, including: Art, Ecology and Evolution, English, Geosciences, History, Music, SOMAS, and the University Libraries to develop two inter-related digital and public humanities initiatives.

- **"Mapping Whitman's Long Island"**: Collaborating faculty and students will conduct research on all facets of Whitman's Long Island, including: locating references to LI in his writings; tracing Whitman's involvement in social, cultural, and artistic movements on 19th-century LI; identifying changes in the natural and occupational history of LI (including flora, fauna, fishing, clamming, farming and shipbuilding) which Whitman writes about extensively. We will use GIS mapping technologies and integrating historical and rare maps from SBU's Special Collections to create a detailed, multi-layered, multi-disciplinary and ever expanding picture of Long Island as Whitman experienced, represented, and was shaped by it.
- **"Walking with Whitman"**: Whitman-themed walking tour developed by SBU students. Research for "Mapping Whitman's LI" will be used in developing a phone app linking poetry, history and historical photographs to sites on the tour.

#### **B. New Curricular Initiatives**

- **Course enrichment**: Before the spring semester begins, we will advertise the Whitman-related events to faculty across relevant departments and encourage them to include the events, along with related readings and assignments, in their syllabi.
- **Internships**: UG Directors in all relevant departments will be asked to advertise to their undergraduates the opportunity to satisfy EXP+ by enrolling in internships to contribute to the two Whitman-related projects described above.

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- **New Course Development:** One new course (EGL 284: Public Humanities Workshop) has already grown out of this project. By encouraging faculty to build project-related activities into their courses and engage students in internships, this project will spur creation of more EXP+ certified courses (the current shortage of EXP+ courses in humanities and social sciences threatens to delay graduation rates).

### C. New Public and Private Partnerships and Funding Opportunities

To extend SBU's impact and reach, we will engage in regional and national activities to develop new public/private research and funding partnerships.

- **The Long Island Museum:** Graduate students in English (directed by Scheckel) partnered with the LIM this past summer to create an exhibition titled "Walt Whitman's Arcadia," which will be featured at the symposium.
- **Emma S. Clark Memorial Library:** Graduate students will lecture on their research relating to Whitman's Long Island and lead Whitman-themed reading groups.
- **The Walt Whitman Initiative:** SBU (represented by Scheckel and Rimby) is part of this non-profit collective of educational and cultural organizations founded to plan events celebrating Whitman's 200th birthday. Events at SBU will be advertised on the consortium website to attract a broad audience. The consortium also provides opportunities for further research, publications and funding related to Whitman.
- **The Walt Whitman Birthplace State Historic Site and Interpretive Center:** We have worked closely with the Birthplace on preliminary research for "Mapping Whitman's Long Island." The director of the Birthplace has expressed interest in providing a public facing institutional home for the project and applying jointly for a grant to fund completion, maintenance and development of educational programming for the mapping project. FAHSS funding will enable us to expand this partnership with the goal of putting together a large external grant to sustain it.

### IV. Budget

Honoraria for Symposium	\$1,000
Honorarium, Matt Aucoin, <i>Crossing</i>	\$1,000
Honorarium, Adam Nielsen, pianist, <i>Crossing</i>	\$500
Honorarium, Rod Gilfry, lead vocalist, <i>Crossing</i>	\$500
Travel and Hotel for Symposium	\$500
Travel and Hotel for <i>Crossing</i>	\$3,500
Refreshments	\$200
Display & Publicity	[\$200] (in kind from University Libraries)
Dinner for Symposium Participants:	\$1,200
Total (deducting in-kind):	\$8,400
<b>Total Request from FAHSS:</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>

### Additional Funding Sources:

- Provost Lecture Series: **\$1,000** and publicity (pending award)
- Poetry Center Fund, English Department: **\$1,000**
- HISB co-sponsorship: **\$500**
- Music Department: **\$500**
- Graduate Student Organization: **\$1,200** (pending award)