FRIENDS *of* MUSIC HALL

Cultural Diversity: Music Hall and Cincinnati in the 1800s
Extension Activities for Timeline
Ohio Learning Standards, Social Studies: Geography and Economics Strands

Music Hall is located in an area of Cincinnati traditionally known as Over-The-Rhine (today this area is often called OTR). The Over–the-Rhine National Historic District includes 360 acres and is celebrated as one of the largest, most intact 19th century urban historic districts in the country. Many immigrants moved to this neighborhood in the 1800s. The area was a center of culture for German Americans, with German language newspapers and many German singing societies, churches and schools.

People of many backgrounds (both native-born and immigrant) helped build Music Hall, including German, Irish, English, Italian and African Americans. Music Hall was designed by Cincinnati architect Samuel Hannaford. Born in England, Hannaford immigrated to United States with his family when he was 9 years old. His firm designed over 300 buildings in Cincinnati, including City Hall and Memorial Hall. Sixty Hannaford buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. *Note: Learn more about the design and construction of Music Hall on a Friends of Music Hall tour.*

These activities provide historic background for Cincinnati's cultural diversity today:

1. ***Create a map of Ohio*** showing the Native American groups who lived on this land in the time period before Ohio became a state in 1803.

Background: The area in what is now Ohio provided a home for many Native American cultural groups in the 1700s, including the Shawnee, Myaamia (Miami), Lenape (Delaware), Ottawa, Seneca and Wyandot. Many tribal groups migrated or were pushed into this area from the east coast of the United States during the decades before statehood. The Shawnee and Myaamia lived in the area where Music Hall is now located. Although the U.S. Congress passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830, many Native American descendants still live in Ohio.

2. ***Create a map of the Underground Railroad***: include Ohio, other states, and the major paths to Canada. The thickest lines will show the most traveled routes.

Background: With the Ohio River forming the boundary between slave and free states before the Civil War, Cincinnati was a major stop along the Underground Railroad. Cincinnati had one of the largest African American communities before the Civil War. In spite of an often harsh racial climate, African Americans formed strong communities

within the city. Construction jobs, such as building Music Hall, were at times available to African American workers. Tension among various racial and ethnic groups reflected competition for these more desirable jobs.

> **3. Compare and contrast the type of jobs you could find in Cincinnati in the 1870s with the type of jobs available today.**

Citizens who migrated or immigrated to the city in the 1800s could find work in the slaughterhouses or along the river. Construction of Cincinnati Music Hall in the late 1870s provided more job opportunities: hod carriers (workers who carried the bricks), brick layers, stone masons, carpenters, gas pipe fitters, plumbers and plasterers were needed. People of many backgrounds contributed their skills and effort to the community and made a lasting impact, as we see as we admire the remarkable construction and architectural details of Cincinnati Music Hall.

> **4. Compare and contrast movements of people then and now**. What groups of immigrants have made Cincinnati home in recent decades? List some of the reasons why individuals and families move from their homes to other countries today.

Background: Large waves of Irish and German immigrants came to Cincinnati, starting in the late 1840s. By the 1840s the average Irish farmer was eating 10 pounds of potatoes a day. When a blight (disease) wiped out the potato crop in Ireland starting in 1845, many people starved because they lacked other sources of food. Cincinnati became a major destination for those suffering from famine. Many Irish immigrants had no choice but to take difficult, low-paying jobs. They often faced discrimination as different groups competed for jobs.

Many immigrants came from Germany following political unrest and revolution in 1848. German immigrants often came with skills that could translate into jobs. Many settled in the area downtown known as Over-the-Rhine, where Music Hall is located today.

Critical Thinking Questions:
1. Why did so many people choose to move to Cincinnati in the 1800s? (possible answers: the river provided easy transportation, Ohio was a free state before the Civil War, a booming economy and jobs; established immigrant neighborhoods; canals provided access to resources and markets; educational and cultural opportunities)
2. Why did so many Germans want to move to the Over-the-Rhine area in downtown Cincinnati?
3. What factors might limit the type of job individuals could find in Cincinnati in the 1870s? (possible answers: language barriers, depending on type of work; racial, ethnic or gender discrimination; lack of prior training or skills)

4. List some of the many ways immigrants contribute to the Cincinnati community today.
5. In addition to helping to construct the building, in what other ways have diverse groups, including African Americans and immigrants from many countries, added to the importance and success of Cincinnati Music Hall? (performing on stage, singing as part of the May Festival, playing music or dancing in the ballrooms in the South Hall, participating in the sports activities in the North Hall, promoting their products and inventions during industrial expositions)

About the Friends of Music Hall
The Friends of Music Hall is a volunteer-driven membership organization with a mission to preserve, improve, promote and provide education about Music Hall. Activities include tours of Music Hall, a speaker series, outreach to schools, and concerts featuring the restored Mighty Wurlitzer Organ in the Music Hall Ballroom. FriendsofMusicHall.org

OHIO State Social Studies Learning Standards
Geography Strand
Grade 3: Spatial Thinking and Skills
- Physical and political maps have distinctive characteristics and purposes. Places can be located on a map by using title, key, alphanumeric grid and cardinal directions.

Places and Regions
- Daily life is influenced by the agriculture, industry and natural resources in different communities

Human Systems
- Systems of transportation and communication move people, products and ideas from place to place
- Communities may include diverse cultural groups

Grade 4: Spatial Thinking and skills
- A map scale and cardinal and intermediate directions can be used to describe the relative location of the physical and human characteristics of Ohio and the United States.

Human Systems
- The population of the United States has changed over time, becoming more diverse (e.g., racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious). Ohio's population has become increasingly reflective of the multicultural diversity of the United States

Grade 5: Human Systems
- American Indians developed unique cultures with many different ways of life. American Indian tribes and nations can be classified into cultural groups based on geographic and cultural similarities.

Places and Regions
- Political, environmental, social and economic factors cause people, products and ideas to move from place to place in the Western Hemisphere and results in diversity.
- The Western Hemisphere is culturally diverse (e.g. language, food, religion, art, music) due to the influences and interactions of a variety of world cultures.

Economics Strand
Grade 5: Financial Literacy:
- Workers can improve their ability to earn income by gaining new knowledge, skills and experiences.

History Strand
Grade 3: Heritage
- Local communities change over time

Grade 4: Heritage

- Various groups of people have lived in Ohio over time including American Indians, migrating settlers and immigrants. Interactions among these groups have resulted in cooperation, conflict and compromise.