

Music by Uri Caine

The Passion of Octavius Catto

<i>Program Notes by Uri Caine</i>	2
<i>Ten Chapters</i>	3
<i>Lyrics</i>	6
<i>Credits</i>	9
<i>Musicians</i>	10
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	12
<i>Recording Session Photos</i>	14

*For German translation of the texts please see: www.winterandwinter.com
Please check also: www.facebook.com/winterandwintermusicedition · www.twitter.com/winterundwinter
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The Passion of Octavius Catto

Growing up in Philadelphia, I heard the story of Octavius Catto (*February 22, 1839 – October 10, 1871*) but did not know more of the details until I read the inspirational and moving biography of Octavius Catto *Tasting Freedom* written in 2010 by Daniel Biddle and Murray Dubin. The book describes the events of Octavius Catto's life and also paints a vivid picture of the discrimination and violence against the African-American community in Philadelphia as well as the struggles and achievements of Catto and his fellow activists to help end slavery, create educational institutions and pass the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments.

Catto was born to free African-American parents in South Carolina in 1839. He moved to Philadelphia in 1844 and attended the Institute for Colored Youth (ICY) that later became Cheyney University. He excelled as a student and graduated in 1858. Later he returned to the school as a teacher of literature, math, Greek and Latin. He also became involved in politics and the civil rights struggle. In 1863 he led the fight to allow African-Americans to join the armed forces and fight in the Civil War, and in 1864 he was elected the secretary of the Pennsylvania Equal Rights League. Catto was tragically murdered by Frank Kelly in Philadelphia in 1871 during the riots on Election Day at the age of 32.



The Burning of Pennsylvania Hall,
Philadelphia
May 17, 1838
John Caspar Wild
(approximately 1804-1846)

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

There are 10 chapters to The Passion of Octavius Catto.

1. Prologue [*solo voice, choir and orchestra*] — An introduction to the story of Octavius Catto. 2:17
2. The Mobs Burn Down Pennsylvania Hall, Philadelphia (May 17, 1838) [*piano and orchestra*] 3:12
Pennsylvania Hall was built by the Philadelphia Anti Slavery Society in 1838 as a meeting place to organize Abolitionist activity in the city and opened on May 14, 1838. Three days after it's opening, a crowd of over three thousand people crammed inside to hear the speakers denounce slavery. A mob outside, outraged by the "race mixing" in the hall stormed the building and burned it down. The firefighters did nothing to save the building and later a commission of inquiry blamed the burning on the Abolitionists.
3. No East No West [*solo voice, choir and orchestra*] 3:42
The texts for this movement are from two of Catto's speeches. The first at the Pennsylvania State Equal Rights Convention held in February 1865, and the second at the Pennsylvania Voting Rights Convention in April 1870 (*No East, No West, One Destiny for All*).
4. The Philadelphia Streetcar Protests (March 1867) [*solo voice, choir and orchestra*] 2:45
For many years, African-Americans had been denied the right to board public transportation in Philadelphia. Many activists who tried to board the trains were forcibly ejected from the streetcars and harassed by the street conductors. In March 1867, Catto and other civil rights leaders helped lobby to pass a law that outlawed segregation on public transportation in Pennsylvania. On March 25, 1868, Caroline Le Count, a young teacher at the ICY (and who later would become Catto's fiancé) tried to board a Philadelphia streetcar after tending to soldiers wounded in the recent Civil War and was refused entry. She hailed a policeman and complained that her rights had been violated and a court fined the conductor one hundred dollars. Philadelphia's eighteen streetcar companies were put on notice that segregation was now illegal in the city.

5. Baseball Star of 1867 [*piano and orchestra*] 3:11

Catto was not just a political activist and teacher – he was also a fine sportsman. Catto was instrumental in starting the Pythian Baseball Club, a team that competed with other African-American baseball teams in the city. He played second base and shortstop but also managed the team and helped raise money to keep it financed. The Pythians were undefeated in the 1867 season. In 1868, the Pythians tried to be admitted into the new Pennsylvania Baseball league but were denied entry. In 1869, the Pythians challenged the Olympic Club to a game and this resulted in a rare interracial game played in September 1869 in Philadelphia. The Pythians lost to the Olympians by a score of 44 - 23.

6. Change [*solo voice, choir and orchestra*] 3:19

The text is from a speech Catto gave on June 21, 1866 in Sansom Hall in Philadelphia, advocating for the integration of public transportation, voting equality and asking for a change in how African-Americans were treated under the law.

7. The Amendments [*solo voice, choir and orchestra*] 3:07

Catto led the struggle to ratify the new civil rights Amendments in Pennsylvania. The 13th Amendment prohibits slavery or "involuntary servitude" in the United States. The 14th Amendment requires the states to provide equal protection under the law to all persons, not just to citizens, within their jurisdictions. It was a response to the "Black Codes" that southern states had passed. These "codes" were laws that attempted to return freed slaves to their former condition by restricting their movement and by preventing them from suing or testifying in court. The 15th Amendment states that the government may not prevent a citizen from voting because of race, color or previous condition of servitude. With the help of Catto and his fellow civil rights activists, the Pennsylvania Legislature finally passed the 13th Amendment on February 3, 1865, the 14th Amendment on February 12, 1867 and the 15th Amendment on March 25, 1869. After the Civil War, the passage of these three Amendments to the Constitution ended slavery in the United States and sought to give civil and voting rights to citizens (women would have to wait for the right to vote until 1920).

8. Murder (October 10, 1871) [*piano and orchestra*] 3:35

Election Day in Philadelphia was a tumultuous and violent day. Street fights broke out throughout the city with the police abetting the violence against the African-Americans who were trying to exercise their right to vote. As Catto went to vote he was attacked at 9th and South Streets by Frank Kelly and shot four times. Catto died of his wounds that day and a court later absolved Kelly of the crime, even though there were many eyewitnesses to the murder. Catto was 32 years old.

9. The Lament of Caroline Le Count [*solo voice and orchestra*] 2:01

Caroline Le Count, Catto's fiancé and partner in the fight for equal rights and education, mourns his passing.

10. The Martyr Rests (October 16, 1871) [*solo voice, choir and orchestra*] 2:39

The text is from a poem written by clergyman Benjamin Tucker Tanner after Catto's murder. On October 16th, thousands of mourners passed through the City Armory in Philadelphia to view Catto's body where he lay in state in full military dress uniform. Thousands more lined Broad Street to watch the large procession of soldiers, elected officials, students, and Pythians who escorted Catto's body to its burial place at Mount Lebanon Cemetery.



The Passion of Octavius Catto is a tribute to a great man's life, reminding us that the fight for equal rights continues to this day.

Philadelphia Streetcar, 1870

Courtesy of PhiladelphiaEncyclopedia.org

Lyrics for The Passion of Octavius Catto

1. Prologue

Listen! Listen! Listen!

This is the story of Octavius Catto. Catto!

Come and hear the story of Catto!

3. No East No West

*Is it not our duty to ask in the name of justice, in the name of humanity,
in the name of those whose bones lie on the battlefield?*

*No East, no West, no North, no South,
just one destiny for all!*

*While our great armies moved on to victory the nation would move on to justice.
Our cause is so just, so necessary,
the possession of equal rights without regard to color.
No East, no West, no North, no South,
just one destiny for all!*

4. The Philadelphia Streetcar Protests (March 1867)

No! I can't ride in Philadelphia!

My feet are tired, my arms are weary, my head is hurtin'.

I am a weary school teacher, condemned to walk through this cold and the storm.

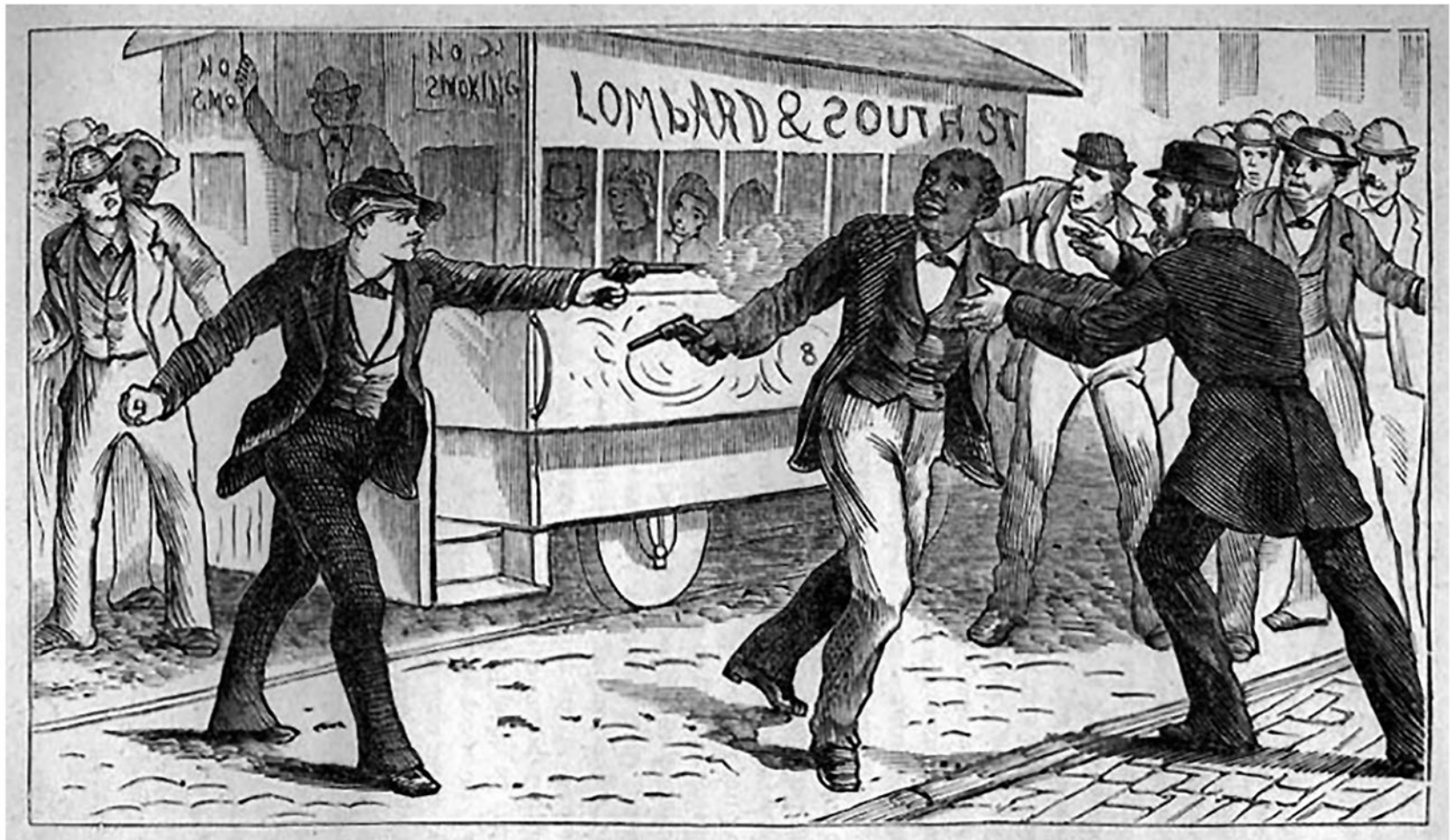
*You won't let me in your lecture halls, your ballot box, your juries,
your churches, your theaters, your streetcars!*

Your streetcars! Your streetcars!

I have pride, won't be denied. Let me ride!

Why do you deny my dignity?

Yes! I can ride in Philadelphia!



Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania

This drawing of Catto's murder depicts Catto holding a gun when he was shot by Frank Kelly but no witness, either that day or years later at the trial of Frank Kelly, said Catto drew a gun to defend himself.

6. Change

*There must come a change! Change! We shall never rest at ease, we will agitate and work.
We will no longer suffer defenseless women and children to be assaulted with impunity.
There must come a change! Agitate! Educate! Vindicate! Until the people will be changed!
There must come a change! The principals of right, equality and justice, the idea of improved civilization,
a system of education for the masses irrespective of class or color.
Agitate! Educate! Vindicate! Until the people will be changed!*

7. The Amendments

*Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall exist within the United States.
Nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property,
without due process of law; nor deny to any person
within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.
The right to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of race, color,
or previous condition of servitude.
We shall not be denied! We shall not be abridged!*

9. The Lament of Caroline Le Count

*Catto! Catto! How I miss you!
Your wife, our life, forever gone.
Brave and gallant, full of talent, never asked for much, just a kindly touch.
Why oh why does it hurt so much?
Why do they kill our knights in shining armor bringing pain and sorrow? Why oh why?*

10. The Martyr Rests (October 16, 1871)

*The Martyr rests and we a million strong!
The Martyr rests backed by a million more!
Catto! Catto! Now you've heard the story of Catto!*

The Passion of Octavius Catto was commissioned by the The Mann Center for the Performing Arts and The Pew Center for the Arts.
The world premiere was performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by André Raphael on July 19, 2014 at The Mann Music Center, Philadelphia, PA, USA.

Recorded August 23, 2018
at The DiMenna Center for Classical Music,
New York City, NY, USA
Recording and Editing Engineer: Adam Abeshouse
for www.abeshouseproductions.com
Assistant Engineer: Jeremy Kinney
Orchestra Contractor: Joyce Hammann
Orchestral parts prepared by Steven Schaffner
Piano Tuner: Joel Bernache
Catering by Feast on Us
Instrument Rentals: SIR Music Rentals
and Centanni Percussion
Re-Mixed and Mastered, June and July 2020 at
Adrian von Ripka Studio, Steinenbronn, Germany
Re-Mixing and Mastering Engineer:
Adrian von Ripka
Supervisor of the Re-Mixing and Master Session:
Stefan Winter for Winter & Winter
Produced by Uri Caine
Executive Producers: Michael Marks, Eric Bruskin
and Gidon Caine
Cover and Booklet Design: Jan Caine

**MEN OF COLOR
TO ARMS! TO ARMS!
NOW OR NEVER**

This is our golden moment! The Government of the United States calls for every Able-bodied Colored Man to enter the Army for the

Three Years' Service!

And join in Fighting the Battles of Liberty and the Union. A new era is open to us. For generations we have suffered under the horrors of slavery, outrage and wrong; our manhood has been denied, our citizenship blotted out, our souls seared and burned, our spirits cowed and crushed, and the hopes of our race involved in doubt and darkness. But now our relations to the white race are changed. Now, therefore, is our most precious moment. Let us rush to arms!

FAIL NOW, & OUR RACE IS DOOMED

On the soil of our birth. We must now awake, arise, or be forever fallen. If we value liberty, if we wish to be free in this land, if we love our country, if we love our families, our children, our home, we must strike now while the country calls; we must rise up in the dignity of our manhood, and show by our own right arms that we are worthy to be freemen. Our enemies have made the country believe that we are craven cowards, without soul, without manhood, without the spirit of soldiers. Shall we die with this stigma resting upon our graves? Shall we leave this inheritance of shame to our Children? No! a thousand times NO! We WILL Rise! The alternative is upon us. Let us rather die freemen than live to be slaves. What is life without liberty? We say that we have manhood; now is the time to prove it. A nation or a people that cannot fight may be pitied, but cannot be respected. If we would be regarded men, if we would forever silence the tongue of Calumny, of Prejudice and Hate, let us Rise Now and Fly to Arms! We have seen what Valor and Heroism our Brothers displayed at Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend, though they are just from the galling, poisoning grasp of Slavery, they have startled the World by the most exalted heroism. If they have proved themselves heroes, cannot WE PROVE OURSELVES MEN?

ARE FREEMEN LESS BRAVE THAN SLAVES

More than a Million White Men have left Comfortable Homes and joined the armies of the Union to save their Country. Cannot we leave ours, and swell the Hosts of the Union, to save our liberties, vindicate our manhood, and do away with the curse of the South? The day that has seen an enslaved race free, the American, have been called to assert their claim to freedom and a manly character, by an appeal to the sword. The day that has seen an enslaved race free, the American, have been called to assert their claim to freedom and a manly character, by an appeal to the sword. The day that has seen an enslaved race free, the American, have been called to assert their claim to freedom and a manly character, by an appeal to the sword. The day that has seen an enslaved race free, the American, have been called to assert their claim to freedom and a manly character, by an appeal to the sword.

E. D. Bassett,	Rev. J. Underdue,	P. J. Armstrong,	Rev. J. C. Gibbs,	Elijah J. Davis,
William D. Forten,	John W. Price,	J. W. Simpson,	Daniel George,	John P. Burr,
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A Meeting in furtherance of the above named object will be held

And will be Addressed by

U. S. Steam-Power Book and Job Printing Establishment, Ledger Buildings, Third and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia.

After Lincoln enacted the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, Frederick Douglass called on African-Americans to enlist in the Union army. Octavius Catto and his father both signed this call to arms in June 1863.

Courtesy of The Library Company of Philadelphia

The Passion of Octavius Catto
Music by Uri Caine (*Uri Caine Music, BMI*)

André Raphel (*Conductor*)

Barbara Walker (*Solo Vocals*)

Uri Caine (*Piano*)

Mike Boone (*Bass*)

Clarence Penn (*Drums*)

The Catto Freedom Orchestra: *1st Violins*: Joyce Hammann (*Concertmaster*), Laura Seaton, Conrad Harris, Cecelia Hobbs Gardner, Mary Rowell, Rachel Golub. *2nd Violins*: Belinda Whitney, Karl Kawahara, Liz Lim-Dutton, Monica Davis, Yuri Namkung. *Violas*: Lois Martin, Orlando Wells, Tia Allen, Carla Fabiani. *Cellos*: Mark Shuman, Jody Redhage Ferber, Laura Metcalf. *Double Bass*: Jeff Carney, Dave Romano. *Flute/Piccolo*: Kathleen Nester. *Flute*: Diva Goodfriend-Koven. *Clarinets*: Nuno Antunes, Joshua Rubin. *Oboes*: Diane Lesser, Bill Meredith. *Bassoon/Contrabassoon*: Adrian Morejon. *Bassoon*: Gilbert DeJean. *Horns*: David Peel, Shelagh Abate. *Trumpets*: Wayne DuMaine, Tony Kadleck. *Tenor Trombone*: Michael Boschen. *Bass Trombone*: David Taylor. *Percussion*: Erik Charlston, Andy Blanco. *Timpani*: Barry Centanni.

The Nedra Neal Singers: Nedra Neal (*Director*). *Sopranos*: Jamet Pittman, Margarita Martinez, Jeryl Cunningham-Fleming, Gail Blache-Gill, Marie Mascari. *Altos*: Joslyn King, Linda Childs, Allison Mickelson, Misa Iwama, Abigail Caine, Nedra Neal. *Tenors*: Irwin Reese, Edward Washington, Ronell Mark, Robert Hughes, Walker Jackson. *Basses*: Joseph Neal, Dennis Blackwell, Shelton Becton, Charles Brown, Alvin Crawford.

Philadelphia Choral Ensemble: Jay Fluellen (*Director*). *Sopranos*: Carrie Lessene, Cheryl White, Karen Highsmith, Meridel Peterson. *Altos*: Donna Drake, Susan Moody, Dorothy Cardella. *Tenors*: William Ramsey, James Longacre, Jay Fluellen. *Basses*: Stephen Raytek, Shafiq Hicks.



André Raphael

Photo by Walter Karling

Special thanks to

Catherine Cahill, Evans Mirageas and Jerry Grabey from the The Mann Center for the Performing Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
Yannick Nezet-Séguin and Robert Grossman from the Philadelphia Orchestra, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Robert Pawlo, Ronnie Gent and Mikael Elsila from Local 802 American Federation of Musicians, New York City, New York.
John Glover, Debbie Chou and Peter Wolford from the The Dimenna Center for Classical Music, New York City, New York.
Murray Dubin and Dan Biddle for their book about Octavius Catto »*Tasting Freedom*«.

Helmut Failoni, Jesse Markowitz and Jason Fitfield for your support.

Abe and Nadia from Feast on Us.

Joyce, Jeff, Andre, Jay, Nedra, Adam, Clarence, Mike, Barbara, Jan
and all of the musicians and singers who made this recording possible.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the fundraising campaign that helped pay for this recording:

Michael Marks, Shulamith and Burton Caine, Eric Bruskin, Gidon Caine, Ruth Eliel and Bill Cooney, Rick Beyer, Ephraim Paul, Sandy and Rob Thomas, Steve Alcott, Andrew Anderson, Jonathon Anderson and Maura Mulloy, Steve Beskrone, Daniel Caine, Roberto Cifarelli, Barry Cohen, Anthony Creamer III, Stephan Diethelm, Jed Eisenman, Lynne and Ben Exley, John Ferenzik, Allen Fernandez, Erik Friedlander, Richard and Beth Galperin, Fay Galperin, Jon Goldman, Jerry Grabey, Joyce Hammann, Catherine Hanssens, Sara Caine Kornfeld, Thomas Oboe Lee, Lydia Lehr, William Lehr, Michael Mallon, Lucia Marchi, Ulrich and Leo Merholz, Margherita Morabito and Helmut Failoni, Kim Nguyen, Phillip Nones, Jason Olaine, Michael Rohrer, Eric Sampers, Barry Silver, Josefina Vergara, Howard Wolfson, Matt Yapple, Steve Yalisove and Rebecca Reed.

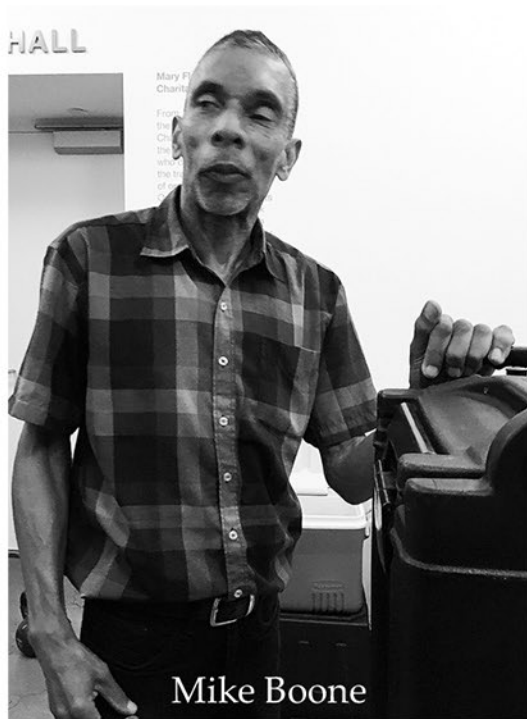
John Anthony, Anders Arnebert, Paul Audino, Andy Ball, Jeff Baumeister, Andrew Bennett, Antonia Genea Bernedo, Christine W. Broome, Thomas Brothers, Laurel Buxbaum, Colin Cahill, Steven Cantor, Tim Cardona, Bob Chapra, Susan Corkum-Greek, Dan, Francesco Deotto, Rosalba Di Raimondo, Pablo Doval, Robert Driscoll, Murray Dubin, Isaac Ezer, Patrick Fleitz, John Garratt, Mike Hammond, Jay and Dena Hartigan, Melodie Hebscher, Hauk Heimdallsman, Skip Heller, Daan Hirs, John Hodian, Claus Huth, George Kandolf, Ari Klickstein, Beth Levin, Silvia Lucchesi, Debra Mann, Scott Manson, Keith Marks, Ivo Martins, Maya, Belén Mendoza, Meira Miller, Danny Miller, Jonathan Moser, Michael Oetti, Cynthia Patterson, Leslie Pintchik, Liz Player, Franck Podguszer, Linda Galperin and Frank Rohm, Enrico Romero, Alycee Ruley, Luigi Santosuosso, David Sayen, Joshua Silverstein, Judi Space, Dennis Steele, Thomas Stelzer, Andrei Strizek, Burnett Thompson, Limor Tomer, Geert Van Wonterghem, Jim Woster and Sue Smith Zukin.



André Raphael, Barbara Walker, Uri Caine and Joyce Hammann

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Mike Boone



Barbara Walker



Jay Fluellen



Nedra Neal



Uri Caine



Clarence Penn

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