

# Artists Live on Through POBA / Star, Marni Nixon Explains

Posted by: Steve in Featured 14 days ago 0 389 Views

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Google+](#)

[E-mail](#)



Marni Nixon with son, Andrew Gold whose work has been preserved by POBA

By Aine Abruscati (@AAbruscati)

When artists pass away, how can their families preserve their work so that future generations know and celebrate their artistic contributions and legacy? This challenge is being confronted with the formation last year of POBA | Where the Arts Live, a not-for-profit initiative that provides support, assistance and an online platform for preserving and sharing works in all disciplines, by artists both known and unknown.

For fans, friends and visitors, POBA is a great place to discover and enjoy the work and stories of these artists. For the artists' families, the "virtual cultural arts center" provides a secure digital collection of their loved ones' works and a way to celebrate their creativity and inspiration.

Center on the Aisle (#COTA) had the chance to speak with two important people connected with the program about their own experience with POBA: the illustrious singer and voiceover artist for some of Hollywood's most famous stars, Marni Nixon and Leslie Kogan, respectively mother and wife of the late Andrew Gold, who wrote and performed such iconic songs as "Lonely Boy" and the *Golden Girls* theme song, "Thank You For a Being a Friend" who was hailed a "pop wunderkind" by the *The New York Times*. Nixon, Kogan and their family recently worked to preserve and promote the creative legacy of Gold, who passed away in 2011, organizing a massive library of his music recordings, compositions, lyrics and other artworks.



Nixon first learned about POBA from Gold's wife, "[Leslie who] more than anyone has worked hard to keep Andrew's works alive, fresh and known." Kogan had been working passionately to preserve and honor her late husband's legacy—from archiving over 1,000 songs to releasing archival music, and conducting a large-scale social media and digital effort in support of Gold's brand. As Kogan continued to look for ways to enrich the process, she found POBA through producer Peter Asher, one of Gold's old friends and associates.

After speaking with the POBA team, Kogan said it was an easy decision to move forward with the partnership. "I was especially excited about two projects: showcasing Andrew's wonderful artwork and working with an entity to have some of his unfinished songs completed by accomplished songwriters/artists. I have found so many beautiful beginnings of songs—melodies and lyrics—and had struggled with how to bring them to life."

When asked about the importance of preserving her son's artistic legacy, Nixon pointed to the untimeliness of Andrew's death. "Losing him was a heartbreaking personal loss, and an artistic loss as well. In some ways his work was only beginning, and because all of the great work he created and performed shows the evolution of the musician and the man." During much of Gold's lifetime, his works were known but less so was his name and artistic talent. "He was not recognized enough in his lifetime for his talent, achievements and how he affected other artists," Kogan said.

"Andrew was a force in pop and rock music at a time when the musical genres were growing up," Nixon added. "His trajectory of talent and creativity matches the arc of pop and rock... By the time he died, he was so talented as a writer, performer and multi-instrumentalist that his legacy is really about how one artist, out of a passion for music, integrated all his skill, talent and vision to become a force that made pop a pleasure, an industry, and not a mere footnote."

Nixon likens Andrew's approach towards music to that of his father Ernest Gold. "Very smart, but neither of them liked school or formal training and neither felt they got much from it. They were self-taught, driven by an inner movement and passion that directed them." While Nixon admits to sharing a deep love of music and love of performing, she came from the school of "practice makes perfect." She also attributes their musical and stylistic differences to growing up in a musical era with its unique sounds. "I think it is important that people know that Andy claimed his unique musical territory—it was rock and pop, and in our family, it was all his.

Both women spoke passionately about Andy's love for music and his raw talent. "He would never practice, but he certainly plugged away relentlessly," Nixon recalled. "I remember that after three piano lessons, Andy decided he wanted to play the overture to *West Side Story*, a really complicated piece. He did not know how to read scores so instead, he listened to my album soundtrack and hammered away endlessly, note by note, until he got it perfect. That is the way he taught himself piano, and every other instrument – drums, guitar, horns, what ever instrument he wanted to play – he heard it, he played it badly at first, then he quickly perfected it."

The process of cataloguing Gold's work with POBA offered Kogan a lot of introspection. "The journey has and will always have an emotional component—some days, more so than others. I learned how important it is to honor an artist, especially one as prolific as Andrew, and how fierce I can be when it comes to protecting a legacy." The experience allowed Kogan to rediscover a number of Gold's songs as well as hear some songs for the first time. "Perhaps the most magical aspect of this endeavor has been hearing the journey of a song as it develops — from a basic track, to a track with wordless vocalizing, to the finished song."

In addition to Gold's musical legacy, POBA houses a collection of more than 50 of his portraits, line drawn studies, cartoons and imagery in charcoal, pen and ink, and watercolor. "Andrew's old friend Wendy Waldman told me that his drawings and mastery of graphics were so promising when they were kids that he could have gone on to be either a musician or a graphic designer/artist," said Kogan. "But there is no doubt that Andrew had music in his DNA."

Nixon described two reactions when looking at the portfolios of her son's musical works and his drawings on POBA. "One, as a proud mother, thrilled to see her child's talents recognized and displayed thoughtfully with great appreciation for his work. Secondly, as an artist... There is so much talent, passion and creativity that deserve recognition, and POBA has helped to do that for Andrew and others like him. It means a lot, personally and professionally, to me." She told #COTA what inspires her most about his art and talent: "Extensive and impressive as it is, it was truly *his*, and just a portion of what he had in him."

Kogan told #COTA that she would tell other families in similar situations to explore POBA as an option for showcasing the art of their loved ones in a way that matches the needs of the artist. "POBA honors artists who did not get the recognition they deserved before they passed away. For those of us left behind with legacies that fit that description, it is priceless to have an organization that helps celebrate the talent and incredible work of those we held dear. With POBA's help, those artists will remain in the hearts and ears and eyes of new generations. I, for one, am grateful beyond words."

Visit a curated [collection](#) on POBA of never-before-heard demos, recordings, and live performances by Andrew Gold. To learn more about POBA and its different membership levels, [click here](#).



Tagged with: [ANDREW GOLD](#) [MARNI NIXON](#) [POBA](#)

## ABOUT STEVE

---



Center On The Aisle -- or #COTA) for short -- was founded by Steve Schonberg, a senior brand strategist and publicist by day, theater "aficionado" by night. He created the site to help casual theatergoers easily access informative and entertaining content to help them engage more with the theater, and make confident and informed decisions when selecting shows. With this mission, Steve applies his deep knowledge as a theater expert and attendance at more than 100 shows a year to direct the site's content. That's quite a task!

Not one Steve could do alone, so he is joined in this mission by more than 25 reviewers and administrative staff who together work to cover all shows on- and off-Broadway and provide a range of valuable and informed perspectives that are shared to inform and engage our readers. After all, theater is part of our history, heritage and cultural identity - it should be engaged in as often as possible. Welcome, again, to #COTA and please come again.

