NEW YORK (July 15, 2014) - From a literary lion with a hidden gift for drawing to a young choreographer whose early success was cut short in the early years of AIDS, many established and undiscovered artists leave behind a wealth of work with little or no direction on how it should be preserved for future generations.

Dedicated to helping families, representatives, estates, publishers, and anyone who owns the rights to an artist's creative legacy, POBA - Where The Arts Live, is an online platform launching today that provides the first and most comprehensive resource for preserving, showcasing, and promoting the work of artists who died without recognition of the full measure of their talents.

Taking its name from the phonetic pronunciation of the Tibetan word “phowa,” which refers to the transfer of consciousness at death to a new life, POBA recognizes that many people – from loved ones to business and estate managers – are unprepared to deal with the work left behind by artists. POBA offers a simple, affordable, and professional way to digitally preserve works in all artistic disciplines and make it accessible for new audiences to discover and experience. In the coming months, POBA will also present special online events such as streamed performances, readings of selected works, and curated exhibits with video introductions.

Reflecting the breadth of artists who can benefit from the service, POBA launches with an inaugural public collection featuring virtual galleries of nearly two dozen founding artists – from author Norman Mailer’s rarely seen Picasso-inspired drawings to the performances and choreography of American Ballet Theatre wunderkind Clark Tippet to the recently discovered music demos by Badfinger’s Pete Ham and Tom Evans, whose song “Baby Blue” in last year’s Breaking Bad finale introduced the band to a new generation of fans. This growing collection also puts a deserved spotlight on many artists whose work received little or no public recognition in their lifetimes, such as Toni Schiff, whose vivid paintings were created late in life after she became blind and wheelchair bound, and photographer Norma Holt’s socially aware photos of everyday people in turbulent circumstances. (Lists and brief biographies of all artists featured in the inaugural collection can be found below).

Included among POBA’s treasures is a portfolio of paintings and writings by Jamie Bernard, a young artist whose death inspired his family to found POBA. Left with a wealth of his work and no existing platform on which to share it with the world, his family decided to create a permanent online home for his and other’s artworks that might have otherwise faded from public view or been lost forever.

continued.
“Too many artists of tremendous ability leave behind large collections of stunning works, but often their loved ones and representatives have no idea how to preserve and share them with the public,” said Sallie Bernard, president of The James Kirk Bernard Foundation, the organization spearheading POBA. “POBA offers a simple solution for helping such works find the audience and attention they deserve.”

“POBA is a place where a diverse and surprising selection of outstanding art can be experienced, enjoyed, and shared,” said Jennifer Cohen, managing partner of Songmasters, which designed and developed POBA. “POBA is meant to be easy, beautiful, and respectful of the artist and the artistry, a space that anyone responsible for an artistic legacy can use and a destination for anyone seeking to discover art and artists.”

Families, estates, publishers, and anyone who owns the rights to an artist’s legacy can become a POBA member (fees start at $49.95 annually), which includes secure, digital storage, as well as access to a full suite of services for creating portfolios and for showing, sharing, and selling artist’s collections.

POBA also offers a range of concierge services to help family members and representatives honor and protect an artist’s legacy, including organizing, cataloguing, archiving, digitizing, appraising, marketing, and displaying work for public viewing or sale. For works that are not complete, POBA can even assist in getting these works completed, edited, recorded, performed for demo purposes, and more.

About POBA | Where The Arts Live

POBA is a nonprofit digital cultural center born for lovers of the arts and of artists whose legacies might go undiscovered. POBA is a program of The James Kirk Bernard Foundation (JKBF), a nonprofit organization created to honor the artistic interests of young writer and artist Jamie Bernard and to use his creative legacy to inspire, recognize and support the legacies of talented deceased artists, regardless of genre or medium. The project was designed and developed by Songmasters for JKBF.

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Badfinger - Pete Ham (1947-1975) & Tom Evans (1947-1983). The classic rock band, Badfinger, was both exceptionally talented and star-crossed. Its chief songwriters and performers, Pete Ham and Tom Evans, were also artists in other genres besides music. Here for the first time, never-heard demos are tied to Ham's and Evans' private drawings to reveal the depth of their artistry.

Ben-Zion (1897-1987) devoted his life to beauty in all its manifestations: from the visual, to the literary, to the musical. He threaded nature, still life, the human figure, the Hebrew Bible, and the Jewish people into his work. A founding member of "The Ten," he remained independent in his views and his art throughout his very active, long life.

Blake Van Hoof Packard (1994-2010) lived a short 16 years, yet his paintings reveal both a vision and a talent that are simply "cosmic." As a turn-of-the-21st century artist, Blake got the Packard family gene for line, color and form, but had an entirely different object of fascination than any of his predecessors.

Carol C. Carlisle (1924-2011) epitomized the artistry of the editor during her nearly 35-year career as Managing Editor of Popular Photography magazine, where she was celebrated for her keen eye and unswerving sense of perfection. During her career, she preserved more than 1,200 about-to-be-destroyed photos, largely by then "unknowns," but which history shows are photographic treasures that she saved from oblivion.

Clark Tippet (1955-1992) was one of the most acclaimed dancers and most promising choreographers of ballet in modern American dance. As Principal Dancer for the American Ballet Theatre (1976-1990), he danced in and with some of the greatest talents of his day including Baryshnikov, Tharp, and Parsons, and created numerous works for ABT and other dance companies.

George Tate (1920-1992) captured the giddiness and hope of a place and time with mesmerizing depictions of mid-century Southern California and Las Vegas. From the 1950s on, his photos show both the ordinary features and extraordinary vibrancy of the southwest, including Vegas and southern California, with its hustle and bustle, Hollywood hopefuls, beach life, and the swooping car life that presaged California's new suburbs.

Helen Corning (1921-2011) painted exquisite abstractions - large canvases revealing a spare palate of earth tones and a layered simplicity honed over 60 years of painting. Her life and her life's work were proudly described by her lapel pin: ART SAVES LIVES.

Jamie Bernard (1987-2010) was a prodigious young writer and artist who filtered contemporary culture through a prism of youth and alienation, supported by keen observation and a consuming passion for literature, history, and international affairs.

Leopold Allen (1945-1987) was an artist for the American Ballet Theatre whose artistry was to make up ABT's dancers to embody and project the roles they were performing. From the evil fairy, Carabosse, to the luminous Sleeping Beauty, and hundreds of characters in between, Leopold designed and applied the makeup, wigs (and often the shoes) of ABT's dancers.

Nancy Whorf (1930-2009) was an inventive painter, best known for her vibrant, varied scenes of the fishing village where she lived all her life on Cape Cod. She painted the town and its memorable characters as a visual memoirist – rather than in any effort to recreate it accurately.

Norma Holt (1918-2013) was a prolific photographer whose focus on children, women and the working poor in New York, the larger U.S., and internationally, revealed the everyday faces of humanity during tumultuous, often pivotal moments in history. From the streets of New York to the Israeli-Arab conflict and a fishing community in Cape Cod, Holt captured real people in simple, powerful images.

Norman Mailer (1923-2007) lived a life larger than the literary characters he created and for which he became [in]famous. A man of wide ranging and provocative inclinations in his literary, political and personal life, he was largely unknown as an artist even though he was personally quite proud of his drawings. Here they are displayed for the first time at POBA.
Additional Founding Artists on POBA

- **Anabel Schreiber Holland** (1921-2011) studied art at the Corcoran School in Washington, DC, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Drawing and painting came naturally to her. Her work was ebullient, and inventive, transformed by her fragile health and complex family life.

- **David Shainberg** (1932-1993) used abstract expressionism with total release to render the intensity of his creative process poignantly evident in his paintings, where he created landscapes and illusions of figures with a striking sense of energy and mood.

- **Eli Waldron** (1916-1980) was a remarkably talented literary and visual artist, whose articles, short stories, poems and drawings reveal penetrating wit, wry humor, uncanny imagination, and an enduring artistic and social sensibility. Part of a literary circle that included Richard Gehman, Hollis Alpert, Josephine Herbst, S. J. Perleman, and J. D. Salinger, Waldron was published both during his lifetime and posthumously.

- **Josh Holland** (1921-2011) studied at the Art Institute in Chicago and kept sketchbooks for 75 years. Following a seminal 33-year career in meteorology, he returned to art as a primary focus in 1981. A realist, he painted beauty he saw in people and place, visibly exploring relationships in space.

- **Louis Nardo** (1946-2009) possessed an artist’s soul, a painter’s vision and a craftsman’s hands. He was exceptionally skilled at painting, woodworking, ceramics, graphics and 3D animation, and most powerfully in his photography. Nardo’s images show reverence for the thing itself (“eo ipso”) - the simple day-to-day objects that through his camera’s eye are captured with astonishing brilliance, relief, and vividness.

- **Pamela Roberts** (1953-1998) was a largely self-taught artist in L.A., whose interests spanned punk music, tattoo art, and finally, her own unforgettable paintings. At the time of her death, she was gaining well-deserved recognition as an “urban outsider.” Her work is characterized by a unique combination of beauty, warmth, sweetness, and wit.

- **Phyllis Sklar** (1924-2010) was an artist of many expressions; best known for her primitive paintings of contemporary themes and landscapes and for her imaginatively rendered hand-wrought jewelry.

- **Roger Anderson** (1916-2005) lived an artful and art-filled life. In Distant Thunder is found a narrative of our country; the heroes and villains who created it, and the major milestones, battles and scars proudly carried within its history. Included in his collections are Anderson’s personally recorded never-before-heard audio interviews of original Arizona pioneer women. These recordings are of great historical significance.

- **Toni Fields Schiff** (1931-2013) became a painter late in life, and most notably, after she became blind in her 50s and developed Parkinson’s disease in her 60s. Undaunted, Toni created strong, colorful, and detailed works that range from the delicious to the mysterious. Her paintings are a pleasure to view both from the outside and through a canvas window into the artist’s mind.

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