

Grammy-Award Winner Patti Austin in Stage Workshop as Mary Cardwell Dawson, Founder of National Negro Opera Company

Grammy Award-winning R&B and jazz singer Patti Austin returns to Boston to mentor a young theatre group in a workshop production of "If the Walls Could Talk"

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, February 27, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Just-Released "[Songs For Mary](#)" CD will be the soundtrack for Grammy Award-winning R&B, pop, and jazz singer Patti Austin as she returns to Boston to mentor a young theatre group in a workshop production of "If the Walls Could Talk". The musical based on the CD reflects the life of Mary Cardwell Dawson (1894-1962) who founded the historic National Negro Opera Company in Pittsburgh in 1941.

The stage project, as well as a just-released CD, are being produced under the umbrella of the [Over My Shoulder](#) Foundation (OMSF) in Boston. OMSF is a non-profit organization founded by Boston songwriter [Dawn Carroll](#) and Patti Austin with the goal of raising awareness of the impact of mentoring. The announcement was made in recognition of the January 21-25 National Thank Your Mentor Week. Details of the stage workshop production will be announced in the coming weeks. Learn more www.dawnmcarroll.com

Mary Cardwell Dawson was determined to bring opera to African American audiences, and was herself a beloved mentor to hundreds of musicians. The headquarters of the National Negro Opera Company was a grand Victorian home that many called "Mystery Manor". The mansion became a gathering place and refuge for Black celebrities who could perform in public but were not allowed out in public after sunset including boxer Joe Louis, baseball great Roberto



Cover of the CD "Songs for Mary" which forms the soundtrack for the forthcoming stage musical.

Clemente, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong, Lena Horne, and so many others. Each song on the 15 song soundtrack is about the legends who stayed at the mansion.

Learn more at

<https://songsformary.com/>

The grand manor has fallen into significant disrepair, and was named to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered sites in 2020. Happily, the newest owner has created a nonprofit organization to restore and maintain the Queen Anne-style mansion. Over My Shoulder Foundation also has plans to film a documentary of the preservation and restoration of the mansion.



Grammy award-winning singer Patti Austin

Patti Austin, who has recently been nominated for yet another Grammy Award for Best Jazz Vocal Album, is passionate about mentoring the next generation: "It is so critically important that young people have an opportunity to work closely with adults, and especially on a project like this one that reflects on an almost forgotten chapter of both Black history and women's history. Through mentoring, our goal is to break down barriers that separate people of different generations and cultures."

“

It is so critically important that young people have an opportunity to work on a project like this one that reflects on an almost forgotten chapter of both Black history and women's history."

Patti Austin

The songs on the CD "Songs for Mary" that form the soundtrack for the stage musical were written by Dawn Carroll with longtime Boston rock veteran Jon Butcher, whose production, arranging, guitar and vocal skills are prominently featured. In addition to rap, the songs embrace rock, pop, jazz and even classical music.

The CD kicks off with "If The Walls Could Talk," as a young rapper contemplates the abandoned mansion and channels the spirit and energy — and pain — of Dawson and her prominent Black visitors. The final track on the CD, "Rise", is a fierce denunciation of racial discrimination from the perspective of one of Dawson's distinguished guests, heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis.

To find out more about Mary Cardwell Dawson, the CD "Songs for Mary" and the efforts to

preserve the Victorian manor home of the National Negro Opera Company, please visit <https://songsformary.com>

Anthony Fusco
Fusco & Four
+1 617-363-0405

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)



Songwriter Dawn Carroll and rock veteran Jon Butcher

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/691774630>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.