



Presented by ZACCHO Dance Theatre in collaboration with the National Park Service and the Golden Gate National Parks Association

AT FORT POINT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, JULY 16-19, 1998

WELCOME

In one of America's greatest acts of civil resistance, slaves and free citizens created a secret network of hiding places that led to Canada and freedom. Known as the Underground Railroad, it was an invisible route that was paved with tremendous risk and a legacy of extraordinary courage. It brought people together, regardless of their race, age, gender or religious beliefs in a struggle to uphold our constitution's moral commitment. Ultimately, it was a testament of the human spirit's will to be free.

Invisible Wings was inspired by the history of the property presently owned by Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Massachusetts. Homesteaded by a family named Carter in 1795, the property was used as a station on the Underground Railroad during the mid-nineteenth century. Its Station Master, Stephen Carter, was a farmer, local community leader and known as an ardent abolitionist. His efforts, like those of thousands of others, encouraged the nation to dismantle the system of slavery and the Underground Railroad was their key weapon.

For the past three years, I have been researching and developing this project. In doing so, I have traveled great distances and have worked with many artists, historians and organizations to create a structure to explore and interpret this history. I am deeply grateful to all who have contributed and in particular the dancers, composers, designers and researchers who not only offered insight and invention to the creative process, but who dared to take on the responsibilities of engaging with this important and painful subject.

Slavery has inflicted a deep wound at the heart of our society. It is my hope that this project will encourage us to look at our history, and to draw lines to the current social and political trends as they relate to race, class and international relations. Recognizing that the evil of slavery is neither unique to this country nor ended in the world today it is important to begin dialogue and to move towards strategies for healing.

The spirit of the Underground Railroad was driven by compassion, respect and cooperation. With the performance of Invisible Wings we celebrate its success with the songs, dances and stories of the time. We dedicate this work to all our ancestors.

—Joanna Haigood

INVISIBLE WINGS

a site specific performance event inspired by legends of the Underground Railroad featuring traditional and contemporary choreography, music, storytelling, and aerial dance.

Conceived and Directed by
Joanna Haigood in collaboration with
Linda Tillery, composer/choir director
Lauren Weinger, Composer/Sound Designer
Diane Ferlatte, Storyteller
Kim Euell, Dramaturg
Alex Nichols, Set Designer
Wayne Campbell, Rigging Designer
Jack Carpenter, Lighting Designer
Gregory Kuhn, Sound Designer/Engineer
Gail Fresia with Sandra Woodall, Costume design
constructed by Catalyst Design
Eric Powell, Iron collar with bells design
constructed by Carmen Salazar
Dancers: Jules Beckman, Brenton Cheng, Claire
Dixon, Arturo Fernandez, Joanna Haigood,
Robert Henry Johnson, Jo Kreiter, Sheila
Lopez, Ramón Ramos, Shakiri and
Katherine Warner
Cultural Heritage Choir: Rhonda Benin, Elouise
Burrell, Melanie Demore, Emma Jean Fiege
and Linda Tillery

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THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD REMEMBRANCE QUILT PROJECT—SPONSORED BY ZACCHO DANCE THEATRE:

Karen Hampton, Project Director. Participants: Elouise Burrell, Dumile Vokwana, Sikora C., Sherry and Sarah Butler, Ella Ford and Angelic Williams, Amanda, Joanna and Matricia Haigood, Austin and Montana Luchsinger, Brandon, Ethan and Karen Hampton, Jean Robertson, Carolina, Claire and Willy Wings.

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INTRODUCTION

The institution and history of slavery have had a defining, pervasive and profound effect on this country. From the beginning, slavery has contradicted the principles on which the nation was founded. Two of our greatest leaders, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, were slave owners. Jefferson fathered a number of children which he kept in bondage. Slaves have been kept in bondage in the nation's capital, even in the White

House. Because, we as a nation have never fully come to terms with our history of slavery and its legacy, our progress on issues such as race relations and equal opportunity has been limited. Slavery dwells as part of the national collective unconscious. Like a huge dysfunctional family, Americans attempt to live in an atmosphere of ignorance and denial, until repressed truths and unresolved issues erupt into painful confrontations.

Much of our attitudes and behavior as Americans, both black and white, remain rooted in the experience of slavery. This is hardly surprising considering that this was a slave holding nation much longer than it has been a free nation. Slavery legally ended over one hundred years ago¹ but African Americans did not obtain legal equality until civil rights legislation was passed during the Sixties. Nevertheless racial discrimination, lynchings and de facto segregation persist as do economic disparities. The emergence of a larger black middle class has not alleviated the suffering or vulnerability of what has been labeled "the permanent black underclass." It is not difficult to trace these social problems as well as the instability and extreme stress plaguing most black families (including middle class families) to their roots in slavery times. The "permanent black underclass" are mostly the descendants of the most abused and deprived sector of slaves. This is the group that was unable to take advantage of the window of opportunity that the affirmative action era represented. African Americans continue to feel stigmatized by slavery, often experiencing feelings of rage, shame and/or denial and are reluctant to investigate. Many Americans of European descent experience feelings that range from vague discomfort to angrily defensive. They know that their skin color has and continues to afford them social, political and economic advantages. The educational system has largely failed to provide leadership or promote understanding with regard to slavery. Most of us have not even been taught the vocabulary with which to discuss these issues in a non-threatening manner.

This is why we need to begin to explore slavery as a central reality of our country's history, rather than as a marginal sidebar or footnote. We cannot understand our present until we understand our past. And until we come to terms with our past we cannot move forward. As we move towards the millennium, the timing is right for the exploration that this project seeks to facilitate, one which will surely lead to both enlightenment and healing.

—Kim Euell

¹ It is a little known fact that slavery and forced labor can be legally inflicted upon convicted persons. Section 1 of the Thirteenth Amendment (enacted December 18, 1865): "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

I Speak in the name of the black millions.

Let all others keep silent a moment.

I have this word to bring,

This thing to say,

This song to sing:

Bitter was the day

When I bowed my back

Beneath the slaver's whip.

That day is past.

Bitter was the day

When I saw my children unschooled,

My young men without a voice in the world,

My women taken as the body-toys

Of a thieving people.

That day is past.

—Langston Hughes

SLAVERY AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD by Kim Euell

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE

Slavery existed in the United States from 1619 until 1865, nearly two and a half centuries. From 1444 to 1860 an estimated twelve million, captive Africans, mostly kidnapped, were transported across the Atlantic Ocean in overcrowded ships, under the most dehumanizing of conditions. Approximately ten million of these Africans reached the Americas

with the largest contingent going to Brazil. Fewer than a half million arrived in the United States. Fifty million did not survive what became known as The Middle Passage. Their bones form an under water trail between the two continents.

"Now that the whole ship's cargo were confined together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate...almost suffocated us... The shrieks of the women and the groans of the dying rendered it a scene almost inconceivable...I began to hope that death would soon put an end to my miseries."

—Oludah Equiano, sold from Africa into slavery at age 12

(See figure 5)

THE GROWTH OF SLAVERY

By 1860 there were four million enslaved African Americans living in the South. Initially slavery was legal throughout the Thirteen Colonies as well as in Canada. But while Canada and the Northern States all abolished the practice by 1804, it flourished in the American South where a plantation economy and society grew until the South became synonymous with slavery. Slave labor enabled the planter class to acquire vast wealth and influence. In fact, prior to the Civil War, both the federal government and the military were dominated by Southerners. They continue to dominate the armed forces in sheer numbers to this day.

Slavery evolved into a complex institution, with complex human relationships, mores and customs. American society eventually became two distinctly different nations, with different economies, different values, different cultures. From these differences sprang the conflicts which culminated in the Civil War.

SLAVERY AS A POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM

The economy of the South was agricultural, featuring labor intensive cash crops such as sugar cane, cotton, tobacco and rice. Slave labor was used to clear land, drain swamps and convert wilderness into land which could be exploited for profit. Slaves also worked in the towns. Some acquired skills such as blacksmithing, tanning leather and cabinet making. Their owners hired them out at times, requiring them to turn over their earnings. While many have argued that slavery was necessary to develop the South, in reality it was only necessary for creating the lavish wealth that became characteristic of the plantation system, which in many ways resembled feudalism, with the same inherent weaknesses.

"But what I want to make you understand is, that A SLAVE CAN'T BE A MAN! Slavery makes a brute of man."

—Lewis Clarke, fugitive slave from Kentucky to an audience in Brooklyn sometime between 1837 and 1862

Slaves were legally defined as property or chattel and therefore had none of the rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" guaranteed by the Constitution. In fact, slaves had no rights, to anything, not to self defense, not to their children, not to their lives. As in feudalism, a slave depended on the benevolence of his master for his very survival. There were no laws or regulations regarding slavery that a slave owner was bound to abide by. There was no average plantation. Each was like a separate kingdom with its own dialects, rules, customs and values. A plantation was as individualized and idiosyncratic as its owner. Consequently there were extreme disparities in living and working conditions among slaves. Some were treated like human beings apart from the issue of their liberty, while others suffered horrible abuses.

"I never saw any particular cases of cruelty, but I have known people to be whipped so that they would die in a few days. Such cases are common among slave holders. They don't look upon such cases as cases of particular cruelty; they are everyday occurrences."

—J.H. Bland, formerly enslaved barber from Virginia, interviewed 1863 in Canada

"I didn't come here because I was abused; I came here just for freedom... I always had a hope that some day I should be free. I always had sufficient confidence for that. I was raised almost as one of the children."

—William Cornish, formerly enslaved foreman from Maryland, interviewed 1863 in Canada

"...One day my master was dining with a gentleman...a young colored woman waited on the table (and) she happened to spill a little gravy on the gown of her mistress. The gentleman took his carving knife, dragged her out to the wood pile, and cut her head off; den wash his hands, come in and finish his dinner like nothing had happened! Do you call that a Christian country? I never saw the like in Africa."

—Mr. Johnson from the Gambia in a speech at the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in 1837

A rigid social order emerged which appeared to be based on white supremacy, but in reality was more complex. The primary division was between slave and free, and although the vast majority of slave masters were white and most slaves black, there were actually a number of blacks who became slave holders and a greater number of people who appeared to be white, but were enslaved. If a person had one great grandparent who was half black and the remaining seven great grandparents were white, legally they were considered black. A person's status depended on that of his or her mother. If she were a slave, the child was a slave, regardless of skin color.

Plantation society was inherently hierarchical. At the top was the master of the plantation, and his family. Next in order came the overseers (also called drivers) and other whites who were employed on the plantations or in the towns. Slaves were at the bottom of the pyramid. A further division emerged between the house servants and the field workers. House servants generally lived and ate much better than their counterparts in the fields. Field workers were under the supervision of overseers and seldom if ever, came into direct contact with the master class.

"Marster lived in de great big house. He did not do any work but drank a lot of whisky, went dressed up all de time, an' had niggers to wash his feet an' comb his hair. He made me scratch his head when he lay down so he could go to sleep."

—Jacob Manson

"My pappy was de man dat run de mill and grind de wheat and corn into flour and meal. Him never work in de field. He was 'bove dat."

—John G. Brown

"De po white fo'ks didn't own no "Niggers" an' rich white fo'ks hied (hired) im to manage deir "Niggers" an' dey didn't lack 'em (like them), an' dats whut made it so hard fer us in dem days."

—Sarah Fitzpatrick, formerly enslaved House Servant from Alabama, interviewed 1938 in Alabama

"Our shoes was made on de place. They had wooden bottoms. My daddy, being de foreman, was de only slave dat was give de honor to wear boots."

—Phillip Evans

"Many a time I 've had 'em say to me, 'You're my property. If I tell you to hold your hand in the fire till it burns off, you've got to do it.' Not that they meant to make me put my hand in the fire; but they liked to let me know they had de power."

—Lewis Clarke

SLAVE LABOR

Field hands worked long hours, usually sunrise to sunset, following which they had to tend to their personal needs such as preparing food, washing clothes, bathing, etc. Often, field workers were assigned additional tasks to do in the evenings such as spinning and shucking corn. Rarely did slaves do only one type of work, usually they had a primary job as well as secondary duties. Some plantations were communities unto themselves and all the labor was done in-house. Most slaves worked six days a week.

When I growed up, Marster Butler took me outta de house and put me to work in de field. We had an overseer dat sho' made us step. We was used rough durin' slavery time.

—Gil Ruffin

Dey hab de slaves out 'til ten 'clock at night wukkin' 'em sometime

—Susan Forrest

"No, suh, we ain't got no holidays. Sundays we grinds co'n and de men split rails and hoes wid de grubbin' hoe.

—Adeline Cunningham

"Yes, I well 'member makin' soft soap. Dis was allus de big work in de Spring. Add de grease what wuzn't no count to cook with an' lots of de bones an' meat skins wuz stowed away in tubs and barrels all durin' de Winter. Sometimes it would shore git powerful smellin' like."

—Mariah Robinson

Dar wuz a black man on de plantation dat shod de horses an' de oxen, made door an gate hinges an' sech. He allers had him one or two ob de younger boys larnin' dem how to do his wukkk.

—Silvia King

"My old masta was a doctor and a surgeon. He trained my grandmother. She worked under him thirty-seven years as a nurse. When old masta wanted grandmother to go on a special case, he would whip her so she wouldn't tell none of his secrets."

—O.W. Green

LIVING CONDITIONS

Some slaves were allotted a small plot of land on which to grow food, others were given rations of food such as cornmeal and salt pork. At some plantations a slave cook prepared food for the others and they were fed cafeteria style. Some slaves were well-fed while others went hungry. Malnutrition was not uncommon. Living quarters were often cramped, with many families sharing a small cabin, with a dirt floor. The majority had no furniture and few belongings. Literacy was forbidden to slaves, most were deliberately kept in ignorance.

"Massa Brady allus give us lots out of de garden. He fed us reg'lar on good, 'stantial food, jus' like you'd tend to you hoss (horse), if you had a real good one."

—Eli Coleman

"I worked many a day without anything to eat but a tin cup of buttermilk and a little piece of corn bread, and then walk two miles every night or so to carry the overseer his dogs; if we failed to bring them, he would give us a nice flogging."

—Lorenzo Ivy, formerly enslaved field hand, interviewed 1874 in Virginia

"During my slave-life I had a desire to learn to read, but did not have any one to teach me; but, unexpectedly, and against the prevailing sentiment of the South, the youngest servants owned by my master were on Sunday evenings taken into his sitting-room, and there we would spend the afternoon learning the alphabet."

—George E. Stephens

Generally, the further South the slave lived, the harsher their living conditions. Slaves that lived in border states such as Kentucky and Maryland greatly feared being sold "down river," meaning down the Mississippi River, where the life spans of slaves were alarmingly abbreviated due to the overwork and under nourishment characteristic of large plantations there. Between 1820 and 1860, more than 60% of the Upper South's enslaved population was sold south to meet the growing demand for labor in the cotton industry. While some slaves were transported to Southern slave markets by ship, most were forced to march while chained together in a group called a coffle.

"Many and many is the wife I've seen sobbing and crying for a husband that's driven down the Mississippi."

—Lewis Clarke

"My mother was married to a free colored man, named Peter Burnet, who was my father. When they had been married about two years, he traveled south with a white man as his servant, who sold him into slavery, and she never saw him again."

—James Curry

"Yes, I saw some pretty hard things during slave time. At Glasgow, Missouri, I saw a woman sold away from her husband. She had a two months' old baby in her arms and was crying. A driver asked her what she was bellowing about. She said she didn't want to leave her husband. He told her to shut up but she couldn't and he snatched her little baby from her and threw it into a pen full of hogs. That sounds like a strange story, but I saw it."

—L.M. Mills

THE AUCTION BLOCK

Beyond the human desire for freedom, there were several factors which increased the motivation of slaves to flee. The most common reason was knowing they or their loved ones were destined for the auction block. Historians estimated that most slaves were sold at least once in their lives. Aside from the anxiety of knowing that their future was riding on a lottery and the probability of being separated from loved ones, there was also the humiliation of being rudely and publicly inspected.

"The buyer seldom respects the feelings of the slave. Each slave, whether female or male, is brought up to the block, and sometimes stripped of all clothing, that the buyer may examine them as to any bodily defect, and their persons are handled like oxen or horses, and each is sold separately to the highest bidder. The slave may forget his hunger, bad food, hard work, lashes, but he finds no relief from the ever-threatening evil of separation."

—Tab Gross, formerly enslaved in Maryland, interviewed 1861 in London

"I belonged to the Reverend Adam Runkin, a Presbyterian minister in Lexington, Kentucky...It was commonly reported that my master had said in the pulpit

that there was no more harm in separating a family of slaves than a litter of pigs."

—Lewis Hayden, formerly enslaved in Kentucky, written in 1853

"When a man goes out in the morning, he may have a wife and a parcel of children, and maybe when he comes back at night he will find nobody who will tell him anything about them. If a woman asked about her children that had been sold, she would be whipped or knocked or slashed about."

—John Boggs, fugitive field hand from Maryland, interviewed 1863, Canada

"My mother was awakened from her bed by a negro trader she knew and told by him that he had bought her and her children, and that she must dress and go with him to the prison where he kept his slaves...While conveying us to the "pen," or trader's prison, the trader did all in his power to soothe the irritated and wounded spirit of my mother. He tried to console her by mention of the fact that her children were spared to her, and with the promise of tender treatment and the pledge that he would try to get her a kind master, and that he would sell her and her children together. My mother remembered and spoke of this kindness, from such an unexpected quarter, till the day of her death."

—Sella Martin, formerly enslaved House servant, boatman in Georgia and Alabama. Written 1867

"On the day appointed for the sale I went fourteen miles on foot, and alone to the place where I was to be sold. On my way I tried to lay some plan to run away. A white woman said she would help me... but I was afraid of the dogs and men that would catch me. No one can tell my feelings on the way to the sale, but I knew I had to go. At the place of the sale were 500 people come together to see me sold and to buy me. I was the only one to be sold. I was on the block three hours while the men were bidding for me. Five of these men were speculators, and the rest were mostly people that lived in that region. While they were selling me there was a great deal of brandy drunk and they offered me some as I was very tired standing; and I said 'No, sir, I have sorrow enough on me now without drinking that... One thing I forgot to tell you and it made a deep impression on my mind: at the time I was being sold in North Carolina, a man in the crowd cried out with a loud voice, 'Hell will boil and overflow at such work as this.' I can never forget that expression."

—Ambrose Headen, formerly enslaved carpenter from North Carolina, written 1878

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Whenever the master died there was the possibility of slaves being sold down river or to a harsher master, and of families being sold apart. Frequently slaves were sold to pay off debts, increasing their anxiety about their future circumstances. Sometimes slaves decided to run when they knew they were going to be beaten or whipped for some offense. Some ran because they were being sexually molested by their owners or overseers.

"De nigger husbands wasn't de only ones dat keeps up havin' chillen 'cause de marsters and de drivers (white overseers) takes all de nigger gals dey wants. Den de chillen was brown, and I seed one clear white one—but dey slaves, jus' de same."

—James Green

"A woman's being a slave, don't stop her from having genteel ideas...as far as they can. They know they must submit to their masters; besides, their masters, maybe, dress 'em up, and make 'em little presents, and give 'em more privileges, while the whim lasts; but that an't like having a parcel of low, dirty, swearing, drunk paterollers (patrollers) let loose among 'em like so many hogs. This breaks down their spirits dreadfully, and makes 'em wish they was dead."

—Lewis Clarke, fugitive from Kentucky

"She (my mother) say de white folks don't let de slaves what works in de field marry none. Dey jus' puts a man and breedin' woman together like mules. Iffen the woman don't like the man, it don't make no difference. She better go or dey gives her a hidin' (a whipping with a bullwhip which would cut into her bare back)."

—Sarah Ford, Texas

"My marster owned three plantations and 300 slaves. He started out wid two 'oman slaves and raised 300 slaves. One was called Short Peggy and the udder wuz called Long Peggy...Marster freed her atter she had 25 chilluns. Just think o' dat, raisin' 300 slaves wid two 'omans. It sho' is de truf, do' (truth, though)."

—John Smith

"James Maguire is a young man about twenty-three years of age, quite good looking, and would pass off in almost any crowd, after dark, for a white man; having passed through the bleaching process of slavery. His business was hair dressing and waiting on parties. Mr. Harral, with whom he lived, was perfectly delighted with his shaving and hair dressing. He was also quite a favorite of Mrs. Harral. She too was in the habit of having her hair dressed at least once every day by Mr. Maguire, which was one of the main causes of his running away.

It was her custom every day after breakfast, and after Mr. Harral had left the house, to make this slave go into her bed chamber and comb and dress her head for more than an hour at each time. Being quite a modest young

man, at length he refused to attend to it, for prudential reasons. So she declared that she would have him sold onto a cotton plantation if he did not continue to obey her orders. We decline stating just how he escaped that city to a free State, lest it might expose our underground railroad. It is enough to however to know that James Maguire is now free, in Canada."

—Interviewed 1851 by Henry Bibb for the publication Voice of the Fugitive

OBSTACLES TO ESCAPE

There were many reasons to run, but it was always risky because of the difficulties entailed. In response to slave rebellions, the deep South became a police state. Roads were frequently patrolled at night by the dreaded patrollers and slaves could not travel without a written pass. Vicious hunting dogs were used to track fugitives. Slave catching became a lucrative, full time profession, "human bloodhounds" they were called. Fugitives, who were usually illiterate and geographically ignorant often didn't know who to trust. Sometimes whites urged them to run or promised to help them escape in order to turn them in and collect the rewards. Some blacks were also known to inform on fugitives to gain favor or profit. Slaves who were caught and returned to their masters were often tortured and sometimes maimed as a deterrent to others. Some were forced to wear leg irons or heavy iron collars with bells, to discourage future attempts. Most of the slaves who succeeded in escaping lived in states that bordered free states.

"There were sixteen bloodhounds and twelve men after me... Just as soon as Master Holley got me home, he set the dogs to worry and bite me, and the scars on my legs and arms are what they did to me with their teeth. After he got tired of that fun, he took me to a blacksmith who put a ring round my ankle, bending the ends in when it was red hot."

—Jack Frowers, fugitive field hand from South Carolina, interviewed there, 1864

"One time two of Captain Pryor's slaves ran away. He took bloodhounds and hunted them down. When they were brought back to the plantations they were stripped naked and tied to logs face down. The colored overseer gave them each 100 lashes on the back, each stroke being the same as nine, for there were that many thongs on the whip. Then, with their flesh cut and bleeding, a bucket of salt and water was brought and the overseer dipped a broom in the brine and swabbed their backs. That was the usual punishment for runaways. Then they were taken to the blacksmith's shop and bell and horns put on them. That was an iron collar riveted around the neck and iron post affixed at each shoulder. At the top of the posts, which were about three feet high, a cow bell was hung, which rang every time they moved, asleep or awake. This horn and bells they would wear for two or three months."

—Allen Sidney, former slave in a magazine interview

"About a year and a half after I had been in New Orleans, I ran into the woods. I was followed by Burke and a pack of bloodhounds into the Baddenrush Swamp. The dogs soon caught me. They tore my legs and body with their teeth. Burke rode up to me and shot me in the hip with 14 buck-shot. The dogs continued to pin me with their teeth.

After that I knowed nothing about what they did to me for about a week. When I got a little strong, they burned my back with a red hot iron, and my legs with strong turpentine, to punish me for escaping. They put an iron collar round my neck, which I wore for eight months, besides two irons, one on each leg. After that I was watched very closely; but one night, about a week after Christmas, I ran away and hid myself under the saw-dust, in a sawmill pit. I was followed by Burke, the overseer and the dogs, but they did not find me. I crept out and ran away, for more safety to the Great Salt water Lake, behind Orleans, secreting myself under the bushes and vines. There are alligators in the lake and as I waded up to the knees in the water, the alligators followed me, grunting and bellowing and trying to get me. I had several times to climb up trees to escape them; but I felt safer among the alligators than among the white men."

—Tom Wilson, Cotten presser and fireman, formerly enslaved in Mississippi and Louisiana, interviewed 1858, England

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Underground Railroad was an illegal and therefore clandestine network of individuals who organized to assist slaves in escaping their bondage. They transported slaves, hid them in their homes and on their property, fed them, clothed them and provided health care and valuable information. These individuals were both black and white, slave and free, Northerners and Southerners. All of them undertook tremendous risk in an attempt to undermine a system they viewed as morally unacceptable. Native Americans and some members of Methodist and Baptist religions also participated. Quakers, or members of the religion known as "The Society of Friends," were in the forefront of the abolitionist movement from the beginning. This story is one of the highest examples of American heroism and cooperation among the races to achieve a common goal, one of civil resistance.

The Underground Railroad took its name from an incident involving a runaway named Tice Davids

who escaped from Kentucky by swimming across the Ohio River, with his master in hot pursuit. The slave owner followed him across the river in a small boat, keeping David's bobbing head in sight. However, when David reached the shore he appeared to vanish. The owner spent hours searching for him, but eventually returned to Kentucky alone. He told his friends the story, adding that the slave "must have gone off on an underground road." The term was popularized once it appeared in the press.

Contrary to popular perception, the majority of Northerners were not opposed to slavery. Most poor whites felt that it offered them a significant opportunity for social and economic advancement, consequently they wanted to see it spread to as many states as possible. The mainstream newspapers were particularly supportive of the slave owners positions. The slave owners waged an effective propaganda campaign aimed at convincing the public that the slaves were content with their situation. The stereotype of the "Mammy" and the "Uncle" created the illusion that blacks were docile, dependent creatures who reveled in their servitude and loved their white masters. When violent rebellions and the sheer numbers of runaways undermined that fabrication, elaborate theories and myths about the inferiority and uncivilized nature of blacks were disseminated. The slavers promoted the idea that blacks needed the civilizing effect of slavery to prevent them from regressing to a barbaric state, and that if freed, they would be a threat to white society. This created a fear of blacks on the part of Northern whites, most of whom had no experience with them. The slave owners also had the law on their side. Therefore those who were sympathetic to the plight of the slaves, were in danger if their views became known. Abolitionists were often regarded as radical extremists and were targets of mob violence.

Because the Underground Railroad had to operate in extreme secrecy, many of the operational details are unknown. It began to operate sometime in the early 1800's and was fully operative from 1830 to 1860. The primary routes were through Ohio, Indiana, Western Pennsylvania and along the Eastern Seaboard into Canada. There were also Southern routes that led into Mexico and the Caribbean.

Participants developed an elaborate system of code words to obscure their activities. Both Heaven and the Promised Land were codes for Canada. "A Load of Potatoes" indicated that runaways were hidden in a wagon under farm produce. "The wind blows from the South today" meant that a newly arrived group of fugitives were in the area.

A Station Master was a person in charge of a hiding place. A Stockholder was someone who contributed food, money or clothing to the cause. A Conductor was someone who transported runaways. Harriet Tubman was the most legendary Conductor and one of the few heroes of the movement that most people recognize. Levi Coffin was a Quaker storekeeper and station master, who became known as the "president of the Underground Railroad." His Indiana home was situated on three major escape routes and he is credited with helping 3,000 slaves escape. Located in Fountain City, his home is now a national monument.

W.D. Mathew was one of many black station-masters whose efforts are not recorded in the history books. Based in Kansas, he was the proprietor of a restaurant and boardinghouse, which were frequented by area abolitionists. "While I was entertaining my white customers in front, I always left the back door ajar for fleeing fugitives...Eventually I stopped taking in boarders and turned my place into a slave house. At one point I had over one hundred runaways in the house, and every one of them escaped to freedom."

Slaves used songs as codes such as "Run Mary, Run" and "Follow the Drinking Gourd" as signals to runaways. Lamps were hung to signal whether or not it was safe to approach. A quilt hanging on a clothesline with a house with a smoking chimney within the design, was a sign that the house roved shelter to fugitives. Houses were built with elaborate hiding places such as tunnels and secret rooms. Wagons with false bottoms were used to transport people hidden under hay or produce. Disguises were also used. Men were disguised as women and women as men, to thwart slave catchers.

William and Ellen Craft were celebrated heroes of the Anti-slavery Movement. William, a black man, was a cabinetmaker. His wife, Ellen, was a house slave who appeared to be white. Together they escaped slavery in 1848 by disguising Ellen as a young white gentleman, while her husband assumed the role of the gentleman's faithful servant. Ellen had to pretend to be sickly, to avoid conversation with fellow travelers. She also had her arm and hand bandaged in case she was asked to sign a hotel registry or for a train ticket. Both she and her husband were illiterate, which made their escape all the more daring. This ruse enabled them to travel by train for three days from Macon, Georgia all the way to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The existence of the Underground Railroad was a great irritant to slave holders and their supporters and it contributed to the hostility between the North and the South. But once the Civil War erupted, it's time had passed. Slaves poured out of the South and the Railroad no longer had to operate secretly. Rather than fleeing to Canada, most remained in the North and a significant number heeded Frederick Douglass' call to join the War effort by enlisting in the Union Army. A New York

newspaper officially noted the end of the line for the Underground Railroad in 1868:

...this celebrated company is now broken up, and its business will never be resuscitated. President Lincoln, by proclamation, took away all the transportation and rendered the stock useless. General Grant and the "Boys in Blue" tore up the track and destroyed the structure so that it will never be used again...the stockholders do not mourn over their loss.

THE BOOK OF SONGS

Dear diary the middle passage was tyrannical
in truth
And her lead belly womb was impregnated
somaticly
Then the ole gal's fetus was cultivated with artistic
fruits
The Chile's develop-mental stages was crafted
with indigenous chants,
aching drumbeats, field hollers, sorrow songs and a
gospel tongue
Her labor pains were heard all over the world
And then the Nigger, Negro, Colored, Black and
African-American was born
As flawless as Blind Tom's perfect pitch
The Chile Whined Contemporary notes, a Handy
sound during slavery
Described as the Blues

—Wesley Flowers
from the anthology *Nearness of Day*
© 1995

SLAVE CULTURE

In spite of the misery that slavery produced, in spite of its best efforts to demoralize, degrade and impoverish the African American people, a valuable by product emerged and that was the rich and spirited culture that the slaves created. Slave culture was a balm for their wounds, the sweet honey in the rock.

Only recently has it been acknowledged that slaves had a culture of their own. It has always been in the interests of pro-slavery forces to promote the idea that blacks were uncivilized, and culture is a feature of civilization. But it has also been in the slave's best interests to shield their cultural practices. This made it possible to continue to practice the values which were important to them. This secretiveness was necessitated by the realities of oppression and prevented slavers from obtaining further knowledge of something that history proves they tried to eradicate.

Most of the Africans enslaved in the States were from West and Central Africa, regions now represented by the countries of Sierra Leone, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Congo and Angola. Within each of these nations are many tribal or ethnic groups with distinctive languages and cultures. African cultures however do share certain tenets such as reverence for ancestors and nature. The Middle Passage and the plantation slave experience forged these diverse peoples into one, from whom emerged a rich culture, one rooted in African values and expression that was uniquely African American.

Music, dance and storytelling were the key components of slave culture. Music and dance were intertwined. Unlike in Brazil and Cuba, most slaves in the States were forbidden drums, the primary instrument of western and central Africa, so hand clapping, the pounding of large sticks against the floor, and fiddling were substituted rhythmic expressions.

"For the African, dance was primarily devotional, like a prayer, the chief method of portraying and giving vent to the emotions, the dramatic instinct and religious fervor of the race."² The division between the sacred and secular, a prominent feature of modern Western culture, did not exist in pre-colonial Africa. Therefore religion became an even more integral part of daily life to the enslaved African. The ritual known as the ring shout became the principal means through which spiritual, physical, emotional and rational needs were fulfilled. The ring shout originated in Africa as a dance ceremony in which participants move in a circle counterclockwise, dancing and singing songs directed to ancestors and gods. The tempo and revolution of the circle quickens during the progression of the movement. These rituals also bonded the slave community into a tight knit unit that was mutually supportive and protective.

Young children participated in many slave ceremonies, particularly the ring shout. In fact slave culture was despite its centeredness upon the elders and ancestors, a culture in which the very young played a more vital role than scholars have assigned them. The preference of slaveholders for African males aged sixteen or under made slave culture preeminently a youth culture in which there was great respect for elders as well as for ancestors. In 1750 over half the slave population of Virginia was under 16.

Another dance that was frequently performed in a circle was the Buzzard Lope. One dancer, usually male, depicts the bird swooping down on a dead slave to release his spirit. A white handkerchief represents the corpse.

Related to the ring shout was the field holler, the antecedent of work songs. These expressions established a rhythm which enabled them to work together to accomplish physically difficult tasks. They also bonded and motivated the laborers. Spirituals are probably the most well known component of slave culture. Often they have been studied apart from their ceremonial context and treated

as a musical form, unrelated to dance. Hence, the tendency has been to overemphasize the Christian influence at the expense of the African roots.

Storytelling is also a well known feature of slave culture. The Brer Rabbit tales were appropriated by white writers such as Joel Chandler Harris. In these stories animals took on human characteristics and represented different characters encountered on the plantation. Brer Rabbit was a trickster who used his wits to compensate for his weak position relative to the other animals such as the bear. In slave culture the trickster was always a hero, because he embodied the traits that were essential to their survival. The slaves who were able to outwit their masters while pretending to be simple people incapable of duplicity were the ones who most easily succeeded.

The Signifying Monkey was another trickster, signifying being the language of trickery, subterfuge and innuendo. Hi John De Conqueror was a heroic character who appeared in slave stories. He was a protector to the slaves who exhibited superhuman powers. It was through these highly entertaining tales that slaves passed on important survival lessons.

One of the more bizarre spectacles spawned by the "peculiar institution" was the minstrel show. Minstrelsy became a part of the popular culture and featured mostly white men in blackface singing, dancing and acting in ways that were meant to portray black behaviors. These shows spread grotesque stereotypes and seemed designed to assure whites that blacks were not only different but inferior and therefore deserving of their lowly status.

From early on, white America developed a particular fascination with African American dance forms. In the 1840's a free black man named William Lane emerged on the American stage using the stage name Master Juba. Noted for his jig dancing, Juba became known as a dancer of extraordinary talent. Living at the same time was Master Jim Diamond, a white dancer who made his living performing Negro dances in character, who prided himself on his skill. In 1844 a series of challenge dances were held in large theaters between Diamond and Juba, to determine who was the greatest dancer. The first competition was judged a tie, but the two subsequent matches resulted in Juba capturing the title "King of All Dancers." Shortly thereafter, Juba joined a minstrel show and while touring with three white minstrels received the unprecedented status of top billing on the program. Master Juba has been credited with infusing some measure of authenticity into the dance component of minstrelsy.

Slave culture continues to be a major influence upon American popular culture but is rarely acknowledged as such. Bugs Bunny, who now appears on U.S. postage stamps as well as television and tee-shirt and other merchandise is actually the contemporary reincarnation of Brer Rabbit. (Brer meaning brother in slave dialect.) Popular musical genres such as Blues, Rhythm and Blues, Hip-Hop, Jazz and Rock and Roll are all rooted in African American musical traditions. The same is true of dance.

While most Caribbean and Latin American cultures celebrate their African roots, mainstream American culture continues to appropriate black culture just as they once appropriated black people. The practice that perhaps began with Tom "Daddy" Rice stealing the dance of a lame black groom named Jim Crow and using it to secure fame and fortune for himself, while the creator languished in poverty and obscurity, thrives today.

This injustice is one of the many unresolved issues that festers in the bosom of this country. Until American people make a commitment to investigate, acknowledge and correct the unjust legacies of American slavery there can be no healing. Hopefully some of us that are of the generation that is removed enough from this history to be able to face it objectively, can begin to provide some leadership. Let the healing begin with us.

² Stuckey, *Sterling Slave Culture—National Theory and the Foundations of Black America*. Oxford University Press (1987); p.25

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

These articles reference many of the stories and scenarios depicted in *Invisible Wings*. Unfortunately, we can only begin to scratch the surface of this history, which is part of our legacy as Americans. It is our great hope that our efforts will inspire the audience members to continue investigating this largely unknown story. Following are some highly recommended sources.

Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe
The novel that helped start the Civil War was inspired by real characters and stories of the Underground Railroad. As a result of the racist stage shows of the same name, which were not authorized by the author, this novel undeservedly declined in popularity.

Darktown Strutters by Wesley Brown
A well written novel of the historic imagination, this story traces minstrel performers Jim Crow and Tom Rice through their travels in pre Civil War America capturing the changing mood of the country.

Slave Testimony—Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews and Autobiographies edited by John W. Blassingame
This comprehensive volume was the source of

many of the quotes used in this publication.

The Underground Railroad by William Still
This is the most important book on the Underground Railroad. Written by an African American Station Master based in Philadelphia, it chronicles the stories of everyone who passed through his station. He maintained these records to assist former bonds people who were looking for lost family members.

The Underground Railroad by Charles L. Blockson
Dramatic first hand accounts by slaves who escaped.

The Sweeter the Juice by Shirley Taylor Haizlip
A personal account of a woman's search to locate relatives who passed over the color line in the early part of the century. The compelling and true story of an American family.

Slaves In the Family by Edward Ball
A personal account of a slave owning family and one member's attempts to reach out to the descendants of those held in bondage. Published in 1998.

VIDEOS:

Roots of Resistance—A Story of the Underground Railroad. PBS The American Experience 1989

Mandingo, Dino de Laurentis films, 1974.
An extremely well researched and well made historical drama. This hard hitting film depicts slavery without any of the romanticism or sentimentality that characterized most Hollywood films set in that period. Available at some Block busters, *Mandingo* explores the disturbing theme of sexual exploitation during slavery. It is not for children or those whose are easily offended.

Ethnic Notions by Marion Riggs
A fascinating investigation into the origins of black stereotypes. Available at many libraries.

ALSO RECOMMENDED:

Bring in Da' Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk
This groundbreaking and award-winning Broadway musical depicts the black man's experience in America from the Middle Passage to contemporary times, through rhythm and dance. Opens in San Francisco in Nov. 10. Tickets on sale September 13. For info call (415) 551.2000

RECOMMENDED CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Many Thousand Gone: African Americans From Slavery To Freedom by Virginia Hamilton, 1993
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

This excellent book includes many tales from the slavery era. The stories are brief, but they cover many historical episodes and personalities.

The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales by Virginia Hamilton, 1985
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

The final section of this book is entitled *Carry The Running-Aways and Other Slave Tales of Freedom*. It features a number of folk tales that exemplify this important aspect of slave culture.

North Star To Freedom: The Story of the Underground Railroad by Gena K. Gorrell 1996, Delacorte Press

Recommended for ages 10 and up. This is a well written book chronicling this history. Each chapter begins with a unique section describing a specific situation, then asking the reader questions that require him or her to answer from the slave's point of view.

The Underground Railroad by Raymond Bial 1995
Houghton Mifflin

This informative book features color photographs of many sites and artifacts of the Underground Railroad.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

1619 The first African slaves arrive in Virginia.

1688 Quakers (also known as the Society of Friends) formally protest the system of American slavery. A group outside of Philadelphia publishes an antislavery resolution.

1775 Benjamin Franklin organizes the first American abolitionist society in Philadelphia, one year prior to the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. At least 100,000 slaves run away during the Revolutionary War.

1787 The Constitution of the United States of America declares that slaves who escape to free states must be returned to their owners.

1793 Eli Whitney invents the cotton gin which radically increases the profitability of growing cotton and fuels the demand for slave labor to harvest it. Cotton becomes the dominant cash crop of the South and is labeled "King Cotton." Directly related to this development is the passage of the First Fugitive Slave Law by Congress, making it a crime to assist an escaped slave. The Lieutenant-Governor of Canada passes an act stating that any

slave who reaches Upper Canada becomes free.

Early 1800's The Underground Railroad begins operating. By 1830 it is fully operational.

1807 Congress prohibits the importation of slaves from Africa. The law takes effect the following year and results in slaves being smuggled into the country and an increase in the breeding and trading of slaves within the country. The slave trade in England is legally ended.

1819 Canada denies the United States' request for cooperation in returning escaped slaves and refuses to allow their pursuers into Canadian territory.

1820 The Missouri Compromise is enacted, attempting to maintain the balance between slave and free states. Both the North and South are fearful of the other gaining control of Congress. Maine is admitted into the Union as a free state, and Missouri as a slave state.

1822 Denmark Vesey, a free man, organizes a widespread slave uprising in South Carolina. The plan fails when betrayed by a house slave. 139 Blacks are arrested, 48 people executed including Vesey, most of the others are sold outside of the United States.

1826 Canada formally refuses to extradite escaped slaves to the U.S.

1831 Nat Turner, a literate slave and a preacher leads an armed rebellion resulting in the deaths of 57 whites, the majority of which are slave holders and their families. This rebellion creates widespread fear among the whites. Turner and his band are executed, some are sold into the deep South. Many innocent slaves are killed as retribution. Laws are passed in Virginia prohibiting slaves from learning to read and write, from preaching, and from traveling without written permission.

1831 William Lloyd Garrison, editor of the *Liberator*, and eleven others form the New England Anti-Slavery Society.

1833 The American Anti-Slavery Society is founded in Philadelphia by a group of both black and white abolitionists. Slavery is abolished throughout the British Empire including Canada.

1850 Conflict between the North and South increases as Northerners challenge the right of slave holders to expand into the newly opened Western territories. The Compromise of 1850 permits California's admission as a free state and Texas as a slave state, while the territories of Utah and New Mexico are allowed to decide whether to be free or slave states. This compromise includes a much harsher revision of the Fugitive Slave Act which specified:

- identification of a fugitive could be made simply on the word of the slave catcher without any effort to verify.
- the fugitive could offer no defense.
- there would be no trial by jury.
- the fee for the commissioner who settled the case would be ten dollars if he found for the slave master, five if he freed the suspect.
- bystanders who did not aid in the capture of an accused fugitive could be fined \$1,000.

1852 *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe is published and becomes an international bestseller. Inspired by her outrage at the new legislation, the book, which is the first popular literature to depict slaves as human beings, inflames public opinion in the North against slavery for the first time. This same year stage adaptations of the book appear in the U.S and abroad. In London six different productions occur.

1854 The Kansas-Nebraska Act goes into effect, allowing these states to decide by popular sovereignty whether to enter the Union as free or slave states. This Act contradicted the Missouri Compromise which stipulated that slavery was "forever prohibited" in this region and resulted in national turmoil and armed conflicts.

1857 When Dred Scott, a slave, is taken into a free state by his master, Scott seeks his freedom through the court system. This case results in a ruling that slaves are property, not citizens and cannot seek justice through the judicial system. This is a major setback for black Americans and the anti-slavery movement.

1859 John Brown leads a group of black and white abolitionists in a raid on a government arsenal. This attempt ends in failure, but focuses national attention on the issue of the injustices of slavery and the desire of blacks to be free.

1860 Shortly after Abraham Lincoln is elected president, the majority of southern states, led by South Carolina, secede from the Union and form a confederate government. Shortly thereafter, the Civil War begins. At this time there are approximately 4 million slaves, comprising nearly a third of the population of the South.

1863 The Emancipation Proclamation is issued freeing slaves in the rebel states, but not in the loyalist slave states.

1865 The South surrenders and the Thirteenth

Amendment of the Constitution is ratified, abolishing slavery throughout the United States. President Lincoln is assassinated less than a week after General Lee's surrender.

FORT POINT AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD based on *Fort Point Sentry at the Golden Gate* by John Martin

It is not a coincidence that ZACCHO Dance Theater selected Fort Point for this production of *Invisible Wings*, because the fort has a surprisingly rich Civil War history. Although Fort Point was not a stop on the Underground Railroad, the fort's origins spring directly from the turbulent years immediately preceding the Civil War, and the fort itself played a role in the Union-Confederate struggles which raged in California at the time.

Construction of Fort Point began in 1853 on the site of an abandoned Spanish fort. While the fort is nearly identical to many others of the same period on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts built to defend strategic harbors; it's the only one on the West Coast. Originally, Fort Point was to be built entirely of granite, but midway during construction it was decided to use mostly brick. The final result is a monument to the skill of hundreds of master masons and stone workers.

By 1859, completion of Fort Point had slowed due to a shortage of funds. When South Carolina led other southern states in seceding from the Union in early 1861, fearing attempts by local Southern sympathizers to capture the Bay, Union military commanders ordered the garrison on newly-completed Alcatraz to go on full alert and ordered troops to immediately occupy Fort Point.

The fear of Secessionist action was not groundless. Even before the Civil War, local Confederate sympathizers hatched plans to create a "Confederate Republic of the Pacific." One estimate put the number of Southern sympathizers in California at the time at nearly 40% of the population. President Abraham Lincoln and the United States government were frequently denounced in the press and from the pulpit. However sympathy for the South was not confined to rhetoric. Several incidents occurred that hinted at the strength of the dissidents. A ship carrying a Union iron-clad warship sank at the dock in San Francisco under mysterious circumstances. U.S. Senator David C. Broderick was killed in a duel over his abolitionist sympathies. The schooner Chapman was seized in the bay with a load of arms and commissioned Confederates on board. The Confederate warship Shenandoah destroyed a number of ships of the Pacific whaling fleet.

While no Confederate scheme gained success, the Union nevertheless took care to assure that the Bay and its access to the gold fields of the Sierra and silver mines of Nevada—was well protected. Fort Point served as the key link in a chain of artillery defense of the Bay, including Lime Point directly across the Golden Gate strait, Alcatraz, Angel Island, and Fort Mason.

In the years following the Civil War, Fort Point—already obsolete for coastal defense—was alternately abandoned and used as a barracks. Lying directly in the path of plans for the Golden Gate Bridge, the Fort was spared from demolition only because the chief bridge engineer admired its beauty and craftsmanship. Rather than destroy Fort Point, bridge designers created the arch of girders that shadows the western edge of the fort.

Fort Point became a National Park site in 1970. Today, visitors can learn the many stories behind Fort Point, including its important Civil War history. For information about Fort Point programs, please call (415) 556.1693.

GLOSSARY

- Abolition: The legal extinction of slavery.
 Abolitionist: A person who participated in the anti-slavery movement.
 Agent: A person who helped slaves plan their escape route.
 Antebellum: Events prior to the Civil War.
 Baggage: Code word for fugitive slaves.
 Bondsman: A person in bondage; a slave.
 Conductors: Persons who transported runaway slaves.
 Drinking Gourd, The: Code for the North Star
 Emancipation Car, The: Code name for the Underground Railroad.
 Forwarding: Moving slaves from station to station.
 Friends of Liberty: A group of people who worked for slave emancipation.
 Freedom Line, The: Route of travel by escaping slaves.
 Freedom Train: The Underground Railroad.
 Fugitive Slave: A runaway slave.
 Gospel Train, The: The Underground Railroad.
 Haven: A shelter for runaways.
 Heaven: A code word for Canada.
 John Brown's Trail: A fugitive route.
 Jumping Off Place: A shelter for fugitives.
 Lightning Train, The: The Underground Railroad.
 Lines: Routes of travel for fugitives.
 Manumitted: Freed from slavery.
 The Middle Passage: The slave's voyage between Africa and The New World.
 Mysterious Tracks: The Underground Railroad.
 Operator: Conductor or agent on the Underground Railroad.
 Overflow Station: A hiding place for a large number of fugitives.
 Overseer: The person in charge of supervising work on a plantation.

Passengers: Fugitive slaves.
 Patrollers: Southerners who guarded roads against fugitives.

BIOGRAPHIES

THE COLLABORATORS

Kim Euell, Dramaturg, has developed new works for the stage with Gloria Naylor, Joanne Akalaitis, Graciela Daniele, Anna Devereaux Smith and many other acclaimed artists. She feels blessed to be working with Joanna Haigood again, as well as with the other talented and dedicated artists who are part of this collaboration. Her newest play "The Dance," features the choreography of Ms. Haigood. Kim Euell dedicates her work on this piece to the memory of her great-great uncle, Captain W.D. Matthews, Civil War veteran and Station Master on the Underground Railroad.

Diane Ferlatte, Storyteller, has been researching, collecting and telling stories from many different cultures, with the vast majority reflecting the history, struggles and triumphs of the African American experience, for more than fifteen years. Ferlatte has been a featured storyteller at the annual National Storytelling Festival and has toured internationally in Austria, New Zealand, Australia, Bermuda and Holland. She also performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC in the salute to children, as part of President Clinton's inauguration. For the past six years, Ferlatte has served as storyteller for the Oakland Parks and Recreation Family Camp. An award recipient from Parents' Choice and the American Library Association, Ferlatte is profiled in *African American Voices of Triumph: Creative Fire*, a 1994 Time/Life Books publication.

Joanna Haigood, Artistic Director and Choreographer, co-founded ZACCHO Dance Theatre in 1980. Her creative work centers on making dances that use natural, architectural and cultural environments as a point of departure for movement and narrative exploration. Haigood's works often involve in-depth research into the history and the character of sites and incorporates three-dimensional staging through aerial flight and suspension. In addition to her work with the company, she has choreographed for The Joffrey Ballet and Lines Contemporary Ballet, among others. Ms. Haigood has been a recipient of two Isadora Duncan Awards for Individual Performance. She was also awarded a 1997 Guggenheim Fellowship for her research for *Invisible Wings* and a CalArts/Alpert Award for her choreography in 1998.

Linda Tillery, Composer, Arranger & Choir Director, has been showcased in such groups as the Loading Zone, the Zazu Pitts Memorial Orchestra and Bobby McFerrin's Voicestra. In her repertoire Tillery taps the diverse resources of African American music, from the slave songs, work songs, field hollers and spirituals performed by her own acclaimed Cultural Heritage Choir, to the modern jazz of her own quintet. Her second solo recording, *Linda Tillery*, won a Bammie (Bay Area Music Award) for Best Independently Produced Album and Tillery was twice named Outstanding Female Vocalist at the Bay Area Jazz Awards. She has also performed in Jukebox, a live radio piece with Danny Glover, recorded songs for the Marlon Riggs films *Color Adjustment*, *Fear of Disclosure* and *Black Is Black Ain't*. Tillery has served on the National Endowment for the Arts' presenting and commissioning panel. Shakin' a Tail Feather her recent CD with Taj Majal and Eric Bibb was nominated for a 1997 Grammy.

Lauren Weinger, Composer/Sound Designer, composes electro-acoustic sound design for dance and installations. Her collaborations include a 20-year association with Joanna Haigood and ZACCHO Dance Theatre, with performance/installations at Festival d'Avignon, Joffrey Ballet, the Walker Art Center, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Theater Artaud, and Atlanta Botanical Gardens. Her work has also been featured at the Whitney Museum, the New York Video Festival and the Chicago, New York and Los Angeles Film Festival, among others. Lauren Weinger, is currently Director of Electronic Music and Sound at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

THE DANCERS

Jules Beckman is an award winning interdisciplinary performer, teacher, and recording artist. He was a founding member of CORE, an energetic and rowdy performance group and has continued to perform with them since 1994. Also, he was a primary collaborator with CONTRABAND for eight years (1987-1995), an internationally acclaimed dance theater company. Jules is happy to have shared his talents with ZACCHO Dance Theatre every year since 1995.

Brenton Chang performs improvised and choreographed work in collaboration with others and solo. He has danced with ZACCHO Dance Theatre since 1995 and prior to that he performed with San Francisco's critically acclaimed CONTRABAND. The heart of his work comes from the disciplined practice of improvisation and has been influenced by studies of release technique, contact improvisation (with Kirstie Simson, Carol Swann and Nancy Stark-Smith), momentum based dance techniques, and martial arts. Brenton also teaches contact improvisation classes in the Bay Area and has con-

ducted workshops on improvisation, release technique, and contact throughout the world.

Clair Dixon, is the daughter of Xky and the granddaughter of Cecilia. She is a native of the Bay Area and trained with Barbara Goldberg, Ed Mock, and a host of others before going to receive her B.F.A. in dance and theater at the N.Y.U. School of the Arts. During her time in New York, she was a scholarship student at the Alvin Ailey School of American Dance. Among her many dance experiences, she has performed with Pearl Ubungen, Robert Henry Johnson, and Shakiri. She is a senior artist, teaching for performing arts workshops. Closest to her heart, she is mother to Ananda.

Arturo Fernandez began his dance training at the School of Performing Arts in San Diego. He has performed with the San Diego, Arizona, Sacramento and New Jersey Ballets as well as the Ballet Trocadero de Monte Carlo. In 1981, he joined ODC/San Francisco, where he served as assistant to the choreographers from 1988 to 1991. His work has been commissioned by the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, Bay Area Dance Series, Summerfest, the Lesbian Gay Dance Festival, Ballet Jorgen of Toronto and, with Brenda Way and K.T. Nelson, by the San Francisco Ballet. He also choreographed George Coates' *Desert Music*. In 1995, Mr. Fernandez founded Left Coast Dance Company and is currently Ballet Master for Alonzo King's Lines Contemporary Ballet.

Robert Henry Johnson was born in Kisa, Guinea and raised in San Francisco. He studied under the tutelage of Judith A. Holten and received a full scholarship to San Francisco Ballet School. In 1993, he founded the Robert Henry Johnson Dance Company which recently fulfilled a two week residency at Long Beach State University. This is his first project with ZACCHO Dance Theater and he is honored and excited to be working with the distinguished artists who have gathered to make the *Invisible Wings* performance a reality. He dedicates his performance to Tom Black and Dickey Ann Dodson, his oldest traceable ancestors.

Jo Kreiter drawing upon her thirteen years of training as a gymnast, she has worked in the Bay Area and nationally for the past eleven years as a dancer, choreographer, aerialist, and improviser. As a long time member of ZACCHO, Jo has contributed to site specific works performed throughout the United States. In 1996, to solidify her commitment to apparatus based choreography, she formed her own company—Flyaway Productions. The company has performed in the annual S.F. Street Festival, the San Diego Center for Moving Arts, Lane Community College in Eugene and in San Francisco's first Aerial Festival produced by Brady Street Dance Center. Ms. Kreiter has performed with ZACCHO since 1989.

Sheila Lopez is noted for writing, directing, choreographing and producing her own work. She has been the recipient of grants from the Rockefeller foundation and the Marin Arts council for her community theater work. Currently, she is Artist in Residence at Tamalpais High School's Conservatory Ensemble where she continues her award winning work with students in activities that range from re-writing classics to creating collaborative new works. Sheila has worked with ZACCHO since 1985.

Ramon Ramos Alayo began his dance career in his native Cuba where he lived until moving to San Francisco in 1997. He holds a degree in Contemporary Dance and Education from the Escuela Nacional de Arte—Cuba's premier institute of the arts. He was a principal dancer with Havana's internationally renowned Narciso Medina Contemporary Dance Company performing throughout Cuba, Europe and Nicaragua. He has taught, danced, and choreographed throughout the United States and will be teaching at the Colorado Dance Festival this summer. Currently, he works with Robert Moses, ZACCHO Dance Theater and teaches salsa and rumba (when he's not playing with his baby daughter—Joana Mirtha).

Shakiri has trained and performed in the San Francisco Bay Area for more than 20 years. She was a member of Ed Mock and Company and various other groups. In 1988 Shakiri founded SHAKIRI/ROOTWORKERS, an African-American experimental dance and theater company. Her company works include *Breathe, With My Face In Your Face*, chosen as one of the best theater pieces of 1993 by the San Francisco Bay Guardian, *Barnstorming*, and *And Their Children's Children* also named by the Guardian as one of the most memorable works of 1997. Her work has been presented in The Black Choreographers Festival in San Francisco, San Diego, and New York. She first appeared with ZACCHO Dance Theater in 1988.

Katherine Warner is a founding member of both Alonzo King's Lines Contemporary Ballet and Carlos Carvajal's San Francisco Dance Spectrum. As a dancer with Lines, she was honored as a nominee for outstanding achievement as a dancer by the Isadora Duncan Awards Committee. Katherine began her professional career at the San Francisco Ballet under the direction of Carlos Carvajal and Lew Christensen. Since then, she has been an involved member of the dance community in San Francisco including performing with New Shoes,

Old Souls Dance Company. An elegant mix of multi-cultural artists, broad range of musical styles, and dance forms utilizing ethnic, modern, and classical ballet techniques, has nourished Katherine's growth as a dancer and as a choreographer.

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE CHOIR

Rhonda Benin began her singing career in her hometown of Los Angeles as a 16 year old member of "The Sound of Soul"—a jazz vocal trio. She has done extensive session work with such artists, producers, and songwriters as Paul Jackson Jr., Norman Connors, Ronnie Laws, Michael Bolton, Dozier and Holland. Since moving to the Bay Area in 1989 she has worked with Maria Mauldar and Hugh Masekela on music for Dimensions Dance Theater, and with Mal Sharp and his Big Money in Jazz Band. In 1995, she formed her own band, Soulful Strut, a funky, jazzy little band that delivers some of the best in old and new school Rhythm & Blues.

Elouise Burrell brings over 25 years of performance experience in music, theater, and dance to her work. Under the wings of barrelhouse blues piano legend, Robert Shaw, she broke into the Texas rhythm & blues circuit and performed throughout the Southwest for ten years and toured Western Europe and the former U.S.S.R. Presently, Ms. Burrell serves as lead vocalist, manager and agent for Amandla Poets—her ten piece South African dance band. Her recent releases, Makube Njalo (recorded on her label, Scintilla) and A Circle of Women (recorded on the Music for Little People label), have led her to voice, percussion, and dance performances in New Mexico and international festivals.

Emma Jean Foster-Fiege began singing gospels and spirituals at the age of two in Seattle, Washington. During her childhood, she performed with Andre Crouch, The Disciples, Shirley Ceasar and others during her travels with her family. She toured throughout the Mid-West and Canada with Herman Jones and the Ex-citers before moving to California to begin session work at Fantasy Records for Harvey Fuqua, Sylvester and Two Tons of Fun. She has also recorded for Narada, Michael Walden, and Todd Rundgren and was a member of the R&B Band Big Bang Beat. At present she is a featured soloist with the Glide Ensemble at Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco where she has been a member since 1980.

Melanie DeMore was born to parents who founded one of the first black theater groups in Alaska. After majoring in Music at the Incarnate Word University in San Antonio, she explored her talents as a studio musician, theater performer and songwriter. As a solo artist, she has toured throughout the United States, Canada and Cuba. She has two solo recordings, the most recent of which is Share My Song recorded on Redwood Records. She has been a California Arts Council Artist in Residence and serves on the conducting staff of the Oakland Youth Chorus. She teaches her Sound Awareness program in prisons, schools, and youth organizations. Melanie is a featured performer and lecturer for Speak Out: The Institute for Social & Cultural Change.

PRODUCTION

Wayne Campbell, Rigging Designer, specializes in interesting technical and high risk projects. He holds a BFA from Syracuse University and is the President and Senior Designer of Radwall, Inc. A veteran expert rock climber, he has climbed throughout the West for nearly thirty years including an eight year stint as Technical Training Officer of the Bay Area Mountain Rescue Unit of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Department. He is currently designing and building large scale artificial rock climbing structures throughout the U.S., and offers rigging services to the aerial dance community.

Jack Carpenter, Lighting Designer, recent credits include The Mexterminator with Guillermo Gomez-Peña; Chinese Myths with Chanticleer, Women's Philharmonic, and Lily Cai; Aria For An Endangered Species for Ellen Bromberg and Atlanta's Core Performance; Kristallnacht for Nancy Karp +Dancers; Never Less Alone and In Steel's Shadow, for ZACCHO Dance Theatre; Maverick Strain, Take/Place, Convenience Boy, Disaster Series and Deeply There for Joe Goode Performance Group; Fen, Pickup Axe and the premiere of Angels In America for the Eureka Theater Co.; Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, for Berkeley Rep; as well as designs with Contraband, The Kronos Quartet, Oakland Ballet, Detroit Symphony, Diablo Ballet, ODC/SF and Gary Palmer Dance Company. Carpenter has received four Critics Circle Awards and four Isadora Duncan Awards.

Gail Fresia, Costume Designer, is a costume designer and technician based in Bloomfield, CT. She has worked with theater, music and dance groups in New England and on the West Coast. Currently the costumer for Hartford Ballet Company, and freelancing as Catalyst Design, Gail has worked with Pilobolus Dance Theater, San Francisco Ballet, West Coast Repertory Theater, University of Massachusetts, Department of Theater and Shakespeare & Company. She extends her deep gratitude to Sandra Woodall, with whom she collaborated on many wonderful projects.

Alexander V. Nichols, Set Designer, work spans from dance, opera and theater to sculpture and installation art. Presently Resident Designer for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company and the Hartford Ballet, Alex has also served as Resident Lighting Designer for the Pennsylvania Ballet and as Lighting Director for American Ballet Theater. He has also designed for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Hong Kong Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, BalletMet/Columbus, Singapore Dance Theater, the Joe Goode Performance Group, ODC/SF, Richmond Ballet, North Carolina Dance Theater, the Paul Drescher Ensemble, Rinde Eckert, the Magic Theater, Pennsylvania Opera Theater and the National Theater of Taiwan. He has received two Dance Bay Area Isadora Duncan Awards for the visual designs of Georgia Stone and Age of Unrest with Margaret Jenkins Dance Company.

David Welle, Production Manager, began his career at the Magic Theater, where he designed lighting for John Lion, Stan Gontarski, and Murray Mednick's outdoor dusk-to-dawn epic, Coyote Cycle, among others. He subsequently designed for SOON 3, including the Russian production of Double Play, and the Sumerian opera, Ace Taboo. As production manager, Mr. Welle has toured with the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, ODC/San Francisco, A Traveling Jewish Theater, Kronos Quartet, Junebug Theater, Roadside Theater and the National Ballet of Caracas. He was a designing member of the Actors' Gang for 4 years, and he has worked in Russia, Europe, Canada and Asia. His most recent designs the world premiere of Pieces of the Quilt in San Francisco, directed by R.A. White, and the NY premiere of A Huey P. Newton Story at the Public Theater.

Lizzy Spicuzza, Stage Manager, has been making invaluable contributions to ZACCHO Dance Theater as a lighting designer, stage manager, production manager, and production assistant to the Artistic Director since 1989. She is a resident member of Project Artaud and serves on the board of Theater Artaud. Spicuzza is the producer of Artaud's Annual Performance Marathon. Invisible Wings marks her thirteenth project with ZACCHO.

Gregory Kuhn, Sound Designer/Engineer, has been an independent sound engineer and designer since 1987 for theater, multimedia, dance, and experimental and contemporary music performances. He has designed for Joe Goode Performance Group, June Watanabe In Company, Della Davidson Dance Company, and Remy Charlip. He is a researcher and developer for electro-acoustics and digital signal processing for the Good Sound Foundation and t.e. electronic of Denmark. Recent projects include Twilight: Los Angeles 1992 for Berkeley Rep, The Cryptogram at Magic Theater, Margaret Jenkins' Fault, Joe Goode's Deeply There, Paul Drescher's Slow Fire, Rinde Eckert/Steve Mackey's Ravenshead, and concerts with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the CA EAR Unit, and UC Berkeley's CNMAT.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Project Manager: José María Francos
 Assistant to the Artistic Director: Gabrielle Staiger
 Production Manager: David Welle
 Technical Director: Matthew DeGumbia
 Technical Crew: Alex Kort, Clyde Sheets, Kevin Canaan, Steve Clifford, Karen Cowen, Shea Comfort, & Melissa Okey
 Master Electrician: Paul Puppo
 Board Operator: Scott Cannon
 Electricians: Jodi Fetter, Marsha Long, Ken Sperry
 Spotlight Operators: Scott Cannon, Jodi Fetter, Marsha Long, Joseph Errante
 Sound Assistant: Alan Wilner
 Master Rigger: Wayne Campbell
 Rigging Engineer: Chris Campbell
 Rigging Safety Supervisor: Peter Smith
 Rigging Technician: Michaela Waszak
 Cart Construction: Ron Scofield
 Horse Driver: John Jenkel
 Stage Construction: Dan Sweeney
 House Managers: Iva Walton & Arlene Rodriguez
 Asst. Stage Manager: Mary Ann Brooks
 Peter Chang/Geographica, Video Documentation
 Publicity: Driscoll/Horton Public Relations & Advertisement
 Graphic Design: I-Arte
 Photo Credits: Marlin Humphries, Don Johnson and Liz Zivic
 Printing House: The Post
 Program Design: Kwicha Park, GGNPA
 Illustration: Aleks Petrovitch

ZACCHO DANCE THEATRE

Founded in 1980, ZACCHO has a long history of presenting unique performances that explore the relationship of dance to place. Under the direction of Joanna Haigood, the company has toured internationally and has been commissioned by Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Festival d'Avignon in France, Boston Dance Umbrella, the Exploratorium, the Walker Arts Center, Dancing in the Streets, Capp Street Project, and the National Black Arts Festival, among others. The company's work integrates aerial flight and suspension, offering audiences and performers new perspectives of the places and situation they inhabit. ZACCHO maintains a studio in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco, providing arts

education classes in dance and aerial flight and suspension to local youth. Youth performances are showcased at the company's Yosemite Street studio, at local schools and in professional theaters.

ZACCHO Dance Theatre is a member of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, the National Association for African American Heritage Preservation, African and African American Performing Arts Coalition, The New Bayview/Hunters Point Merchant's Association and Theater Bay Area.

ZACCHO Dance Theatre
 Joanna Haigood, Artistic Director
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Staff:

Darryl Stephens, Office and Studio Manager
 Carolyn Mason, Development Director
 Hillary Bryan, Bookkeeper
 Lizzy Spicuzza, ArtsEd Coordinator
 CAC Artists in Residence: Jo Kreiter and Shakiri

Board of Directors:

Anne Cox Chambers
 Joanna Haigood
 Marc Hinshaw
 Anthony Larkin
 Robert Peizer
 Diana Sunshine

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE CHOIR

In 1992, Linda Tillery came across a treasure trove of field recordings of traditional African American music. Within a month she had assembled the Cultural Heritage Choir (CHC), originally a six member ensemble, to perform spirituals, work and play songs, field hollers and other slave songs in the folk tradition. Her research introduced Tillery to the folk music catalog of the Library of Congress, the documentary recordings of the Lomaxes, the ethnomusicological work of Bernice Johnson-Reagon, the Shomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and Eileen Southern's Indispensable Greenwood Encyclopedia of Black Music.

Today, the Cultural Heritage Choir, featuring Rhonda Benin, Elouise Burrell, Melanie Demore, Emma Jean Fiege and Linda Tillery, is one of the vital performing groups in its field, bringing traditional forms of African American culture to the stage. Solidly rooted in the past, all the way back to the African-derived Gullah culture of the South Carolina and Georgia Sea Islands, the CHC has a powerful vision of the future as well. In addition to songs and chants, delivered through such stylistic forms as call-and-response, multi-layered harmonies, and repetitive verse, the CHC repertoire includes intoned sermons, folk tales, polyrhythmic percussion and dance.

Discography: Good Time, A Good Time-Tuizer Music, 1994; Front Porch Music-EarthBeat! 1997; Shakin' A Tailfeather-Music For Little People, 1997 (Grammy nominee)

For more information Contact Tuizer-Music (510) 869.3932

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND THE GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION

The National Park Service, founded in 1916, is responsible for the protection and management of many of this country's natural and historic treasures. These treasures include such diverse sites as Yosemite National Park, the Statue of Liberty National Monument, the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, the Everglades National Park, Gettysburg National Military Park, Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA).

The GGNRA, more commonly known as Golden Gate National Parks, was created in 1972 and is one of the largest and most visited national parks in an urban setting. The GGNRA comprises 74,000 acres and stretches along 28 miles of coastline in San Francisco, Marin, and San Mateo counties. World-famous landmarks of this urban national park include Alcatraz Island, Muir Woods National Monument, the Presidio of San Francisco, the Marin Headlands, the Cliff House, and Fort Point National Historic Site.

The Golden Gate National Parks Association is the Official support partner for the Golden Gate National Parks. This non-profit association enlists volunteers to restore park habitats, publishes educational materials about park sites, provide funds for historic landmark and open space restoration, visitor centers, and helps manage park improvement projects. For more than a decade the Parks Association has developed a wide array of outstanding educational programs and recreational opportunities within the park.

ZACCHO Dance Theatre is a non-profit organization. We are still seeking contributions to defray the cost of Invisible Wings. Please send your tax deductible donation to:

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 Joanna Haigood, Artistic Director
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 San Francisco, CA. 94124

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FIGURE 1. THE SOUND OF A WHIP CRACKING IS CREATED WHEN THE END PIECE BREAKS THE SOUND BARRIER. THE CRACKING SOUND IS THE AIR RUSHING INTO TO FILL THE VOID CREATED BY THE WHIP SLICING THROUGH THE ATMOSPHERE AT A VELOCITY OF 751 MILES PER HOUR.)

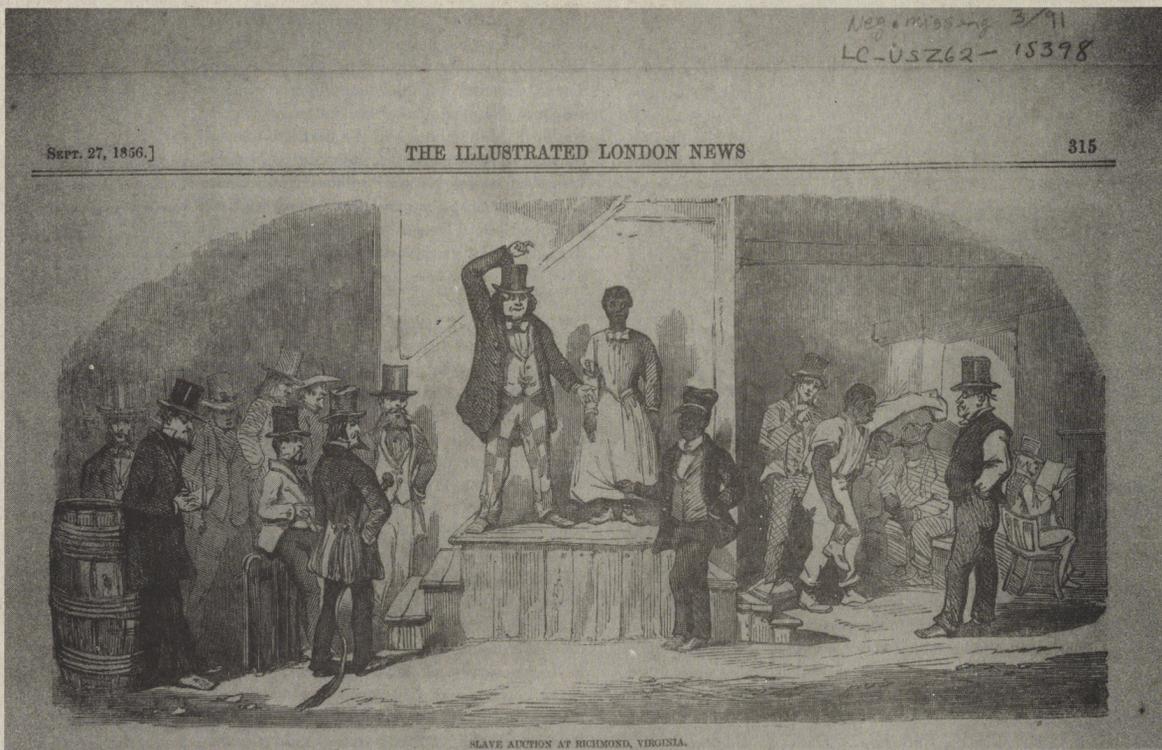


FIGURE 2. SLAVE AUCTION AT RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

\$100 REWARD!

RANAWAY

From the undersigned, living on Current River, about twelve miles above Doniphan, in Ripley County, Mo., on 2nd of March, 1860, **A FUGITIVE** **GRO MAN**, about 30 years old, weighs about 160 pounds; high forehead, with a scar on it; had on brown pants and coat very much worn, and an old black wool hat; shoes size No. 11.

The above reward will be given to any person who may apprehend this said negro out of the State; and fifty dollars if apprehended in this State outside of Ripley county, or \$25 if taken in Ripley county.

APOS TUCKER.



FIGURE 4. HENRY "BOX" BROWN BECAME A LEGEND WHEN HE ESCAPED SLAVERY BY SHIPPING HIMSELF TO PHILADELPHIA NAILED INSIDE OF A SMALL CRATE.

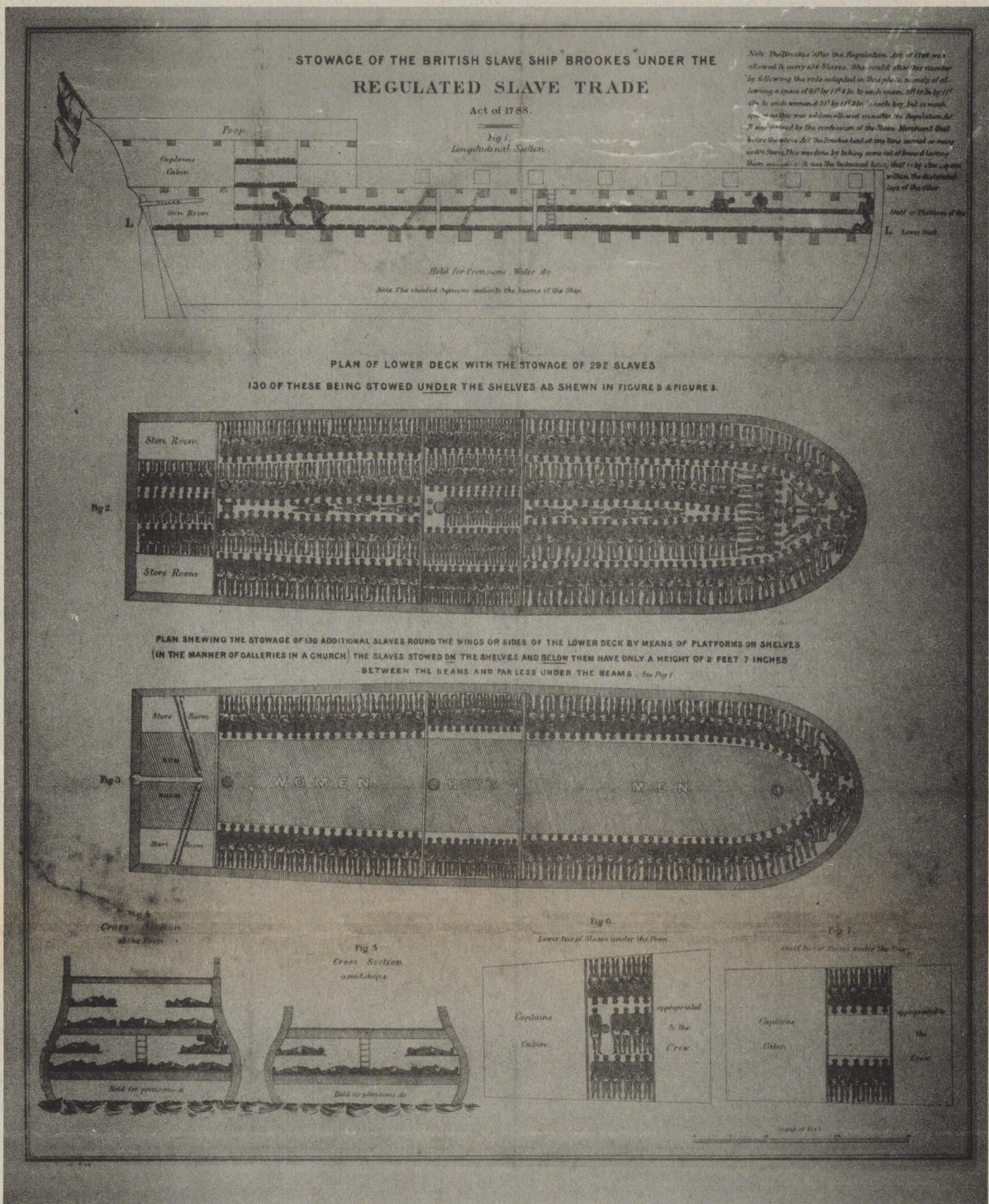


FIGURE 5. PLAN DEPICTING THE STOWAGE OF CAPTIVES DURING THE SIX WEEK VOYAGE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

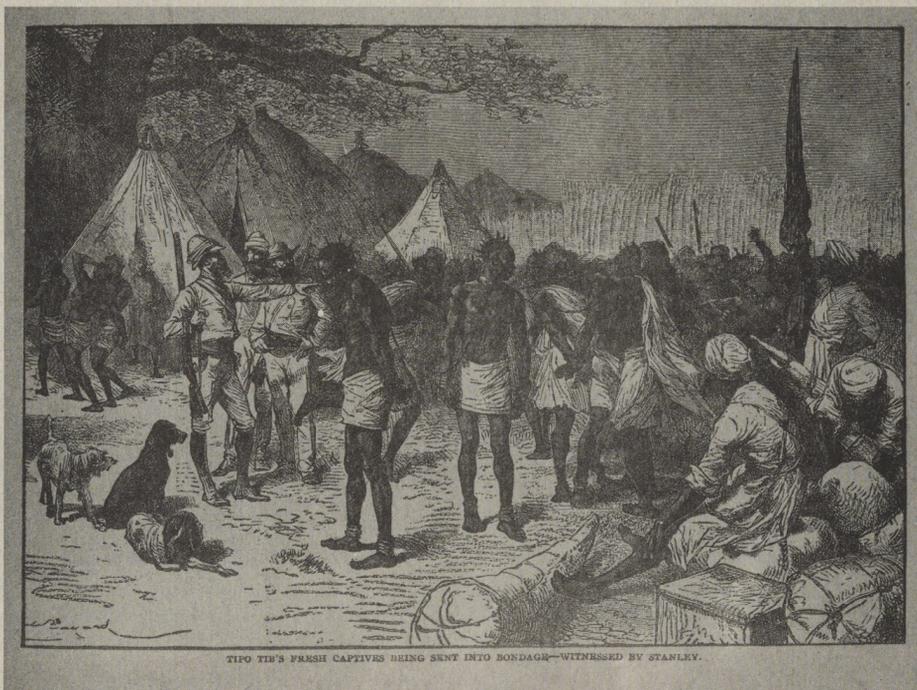


FIGURE 6. TIPO TIB'S FRESH CAPTIVES BEING SENT INTO BONDAGE—WITNESSED BY STANLEY