



HEAR ME: VOICES OF THE EPIDEMIC DECEMBER 1 - 31, 2020

Track Listing & Transcripts

Indigenous Land Acknowledgment read by Sheldon Raymore <i>Courtesy of the American Indian Community House, 2020</i>	0:00-1:20
HIV/AIDS Public Service Announcement produced by CKUT-FM (90.3), 1989 <i>Montreal, November 1989</i>	1:31-1:42
Newsweek on Air, April 10, 1983 <i>from the Internet Archive, 1983</i>	1:42-3:20
Rodger McFarlane working the phones at GMHC in 1982	3:20-5:25
AIDS Plays “Kaleidoscope” BBC Radio 4/Bill Turnbull, 1985 <i>Featuring Brad Davis; [Tape #78,] Michael Callen Papers, The LGBT Community Center National History Archive</i>	5:25-6:47
ACT UP Members including Larry Kramer, Peter Staley, Ann Northrop, Mark Harrington, and Robert Garcia and featuring Dr. Suzanne Phillips, on the Phil Donahue Show, February 13, 1990	6:47-8:03
Melvin Dixon, "Heartbeats" from Love’s Instruments, 1995 <i>© 1995 by Melvin Dixon. Read by Pamela Sneed, 2020</i>	8:03-10:02
“Native Americans, Two Spirits & HIV,” a documentary by James Wentzy filmed July 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 1991 <i>Clip courtesy of James Wentzy</i>	10:03-1:49
Wagner, Cheryl, Oral history interview conducted by Robert Sember, September 26, 1992 <i>AIDS/Brooklyn Oral History Project collection 1992-1993, Call# 1993.001.15; Brooklyn Historical Society</i>	11:50-13:00
Sharon Tramutola, “Death in the St. Vincent's ER”, Interview #092 of the ACT UP Oral History Archive, conducted July 9, 2008 <i>© 2010 The New York Lesbian & Gay Experimental Film Festival, Inc., Courtesy of the ACT UP Oral History Archive</i>	13:01-14:49

Iris De La Cruz, “Sex, Drugs, Rock and Roll and AIDS,” 1989	14:50-16:48
<i>From “Kool AIDS on Ice,” by Iris De La Cruz © 1989, read by Tamara Oyola-Santiago, 2020. Courtesy of Iris House</i>	
Larry Kramer speaking about AIDS inaction in a speech from 1991	16:49-18:11
David Wojnarowicz, Wojnarowicz records ACT-UP demonstrations, June 1989	18:11-23:37
<i>From the David Wojnarowicz Papers, NYU Fales Library and Special Collections; Courtesy of the Estate of David Wojnarowicz and PPOW Gallery, New York</i>	
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Egyptt LaBeija speaking at the Visual AIDS 6th Annual Last Address Tribute Walk, 2018	26:33-29:52
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Constantine Jones, “For the +,” 2020	29:53-32:10
<i>Performed by Constantine Jones, © Constantine Jones, Clip provided courtesy the artist</i>	
Kia LaBeija, “Drafted,” 2017	32:10-34:46
<i>Performed by Kia LaBeija, © Kia LaBeija, Clip provided courtesy the artist</i>	
Vito Russo, “Why We Fight,” 1988	34:47-36:54
<i>from ACT UP Demonstration in ALBANY NY, May 9, 1988 and the ACT UP Demonstration at the Department of Health and Human Services, Washington D.C. October 10, 1988</i>	
Michael Callen, “The Healing Power of Love,” 1986	36:54-43:52
<i>[Tape #240,] Michael Callen Papers, The LGBT Community Center National History Archive</i>	

Indigenous Land Acknowledgment read by Sheldon Raymore

Courtesy of the American Indian Community House, 2020

The land of the five boroughs that make up New York City are the traditional homelands of the Lenape, Merrick, Canarsie, Rockaway, Matinecock and Haudenosaunee Peoples

These lands are also the inter-tribal trade lands, and are under the stewardship, of many more indigenous nations today

New York City is home to the largest populations of Inter-tribal Native American, First Nations, and Indigenous individuals out of any urban city across Turtle Island (the United States)

We acknowledge the systematic erasure of many Nations, and recognize those still among us today

We acknowledge the Peoples of these Nations - their cultures, their communities, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations and their resilience throughout the HIV/AIDS epidemic and movement

We acknowledge and offer deep gratitude to Mannahatta - the land and waters on which we stand upon.

-American Indian Community House

HIV/AIDS Public Service Announcement produced by CKUT-FM (90.3), 1989

Montreal, November 1989

“AIDS: The Plague of the ‘80s”

Newsweek on Air, April 10, 1983

from the Internet Archive, 1983

“We’ve been hearing many acronyms for this disease. Besides AIDS it was called GRID before and one of the ones I heard in the last couple of days was called 4-H disease, four of the H’s being homosexual, Haitians, heroin addicts, and hemophiliacs.”

“That was Dr. Darrell Rigel of the Strang Clinic in New York talking about a new epidemic sweeping the nation today. Mostly within the gay communities of large urban centers but appearing more and more in other groups as well. It’s called AIDS - A-I-D-S - for acquired immune deficiency syndrome and it destroys the body’s normal ability to fight off a host of infectious diseases and cancers. AIDS is a terrifying disease, fatal in almost half the 1,300 cases recorded to date with no known cause or cure. And it’s changing the lives of many gay and non-gay people in America today. AIDS is the cover story in the new issue of Newsweek and to learn more about it we have Newsweek Atlanta Bureau

Correspondent Vince Coppola on the line as well as Dr. James Curran, Director of the AIDS Task Force at the US Center for Disease Control in Atlanta. Welcome to you both. Dr. Curran, can you begin by explaining just briefly how AIDS destroys the immune system and how that leads to other fatal diseases?”

“Well there seems to be a, you’re absolutely right in mentioning the underlying problem is a severe breakdown in immunity. This begins as a breakdown in the body’s ability to fight off certain very rare infections which are often present in the body. In addition, uh, through some unknown mechanism, this breakdown in immunity allows the appearance of some very rare cancers, which seem to be generally kept in check by the body’s immune system.”

“Like Kaposi’s Sarcoma?”

“Right.”

Rodger McFarlane working the phones at GMHC in 1982

Bill: Hello?

Rodger: Hi, Bill?

B: Hi.

R: Hi, this is Rodger McFarlane from the Gay Men’s Health Crisis.

B: Oh, hi.

R: Hi, what can i do for ya?

B: Yeah, uh, I seem to have Kaposi’s Sarcoma and I would like to if it’s, if you people know how to get, uh, Medicaid, and stuff like that.

R: Sure. Who’s your doctor, Bill?

B: Uh, well I’m being treated at, uh...treated...well... They discovered it September 2nd I guess.

R: Where?

B: Hello? Where?

R: Yeah, who’s your doctor? What hospital are you in?

B: Oh, at St. Vincent’s.

R: Uh huh.

B: And, uh, I saw Dr. Enlow(?) in St. Mark’s Clinic.

R: Right.

B: Uh...

R: When did you see him?

B: I think that was August.

R: Ok.

B: It was a Monday...

R: Uh huh.

B: ...Sometime around then. And, uh, I think he, well he said it was definitely an acquired immune deficiency.

R: Right.

B: And they performed a biopsy and took out one of my lymph nodes and it's a..it was confirmed on September 22nd at St. Vincent's.

R: OK. Who's taking care of you over there? The house staff? Are you going through the clinic or do you have a private doctor?

B: I'm going through the clinic.

R: OK

B: I have a doctor named Cohen who says that she wants to create a protocol for dealing with Kaposi's.

R: All right. Lemme ask you something. Have you talked to the social worker at the hospital yet?

B: Uh yeah, and he suggests that I go up to uh, to uh, I'm still able to work. So I am still working. Um, I get very tired very quickly. I don't have a lot of energy.

R: I'm sure.

AIDS Plays "Kaleidoscope" BBC Radio 4/Bill Turnbull, 1985

Featuring Brad Davis; [Tape #78,] Michael Callen Papers, The LGBT Community Center National History Archive

"I think we're all gonna go crazy living this epidemic every single minute and the rest of the world goes on all around us as if nothing is happening. Not knowing what it's like, what we're going through. We're living through war. But where they live it's peacetime. And we all live in the same country...Socially nothing is being done about it. The President has gone on record prepared to veto anything condoning homosexuality when people are dying right, left, and center. The bottom line is if they can do this to gays, if they can do that to people, say go ahead and die, they can do it to anybody. They can do it to you and they can do it to me. Whatever the circumstances. And if people don't realize that, that's cutting their own throats."

[*Living in Wartime* (1988), by Michael Callen, plays]

ACT UP Members including Larry Kramer, Peter Staley, Ann Northrop, Mark Harrington, and Robert Garcia, featuring Dr. Suzanne Phillips, on the Phil Donahue Show, February 13, 1990

Larry Kramer: This is a straight woman, a doctor, Dr. Suzanne Phillips, who is a member of ACT UP, and who tends AIDS patients day and night.

Suzanne Phillips: I'd also like to say I think the issue of the fear of contagion is a very important issue and so I'm gonna tackle it head on because people already are afraid, anyone who knows anyone who has died of AIDS is afraid. There was a time when I was afraid until after about the dozenth funeral of a friend of mine that I had gone to. I have had four needle stick injuries in the course of my medical education which took place largely in the borough of Brooklyn. To date, I test negative. I have held in my arms people who were dying. They were bleeding, they were sweating, there were body fluids involved. If anyone could get this disease from casual contact, I swear to God I would be HIV-positive today. And I wanna tell you that my greatest fear about the epidemic is not of people suffering and dying, although I am very afraid of that, I am afraid of the divisions in this society that this disease is causing. Because the day that HIV stops us from loving each other, is the day that we are through as a human race.

[Applause]

Melvin Dixon, "Heartbeats" from Love's Instruments, 1995

© 1995 by Melvin Dixon. Read by Pamela Sneed, 2020

Work out. Ten laps.
Chin ups. Look good.

Steam room. Dress warm.
Call home. Fresh air.

Eat right. Rest well.
Sweetheart. Safe sex.

Sore throat. Long flu.
Hard nodes. Beware.

Test blood. Count cells.
Reds thin. Whites low.

Dress warm. Eat well.
Short breath. Fatigue.

Night sweats. Dry cough.
Loose stools. Weight loss.

Get mad. Fight back.
Call home. Rest well.

Don't cry. Take charge.
No sex. Eat right.

Call home. Talk slow.
Chin up. No air.

Arms wide. Noses hard.
Cough dry. Hold on.

Mouth wide. Drink this.
Breathe in. Breathe out.

No air. Breathe in.
Breathe in. No air.

Black out. White rooms.
Head hot. Feet cold.

No work. Eat right.
CAT scan. Chin up.

Breathe in. Breathe out.
No air. No air.

Thin blood. Sore lungs.
Mouth dry. Mind gone.

Six months? Three weeks?
Can't eat. No air.

Today? Tonight?
It waits. For me.

Sweet heart. Don't stop.
Breathe in. Breathe out.

“Native Americans, Two Spirits & HIV,” a documentary by James Wentzy filmed July 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 1991

Clip courtesy of James Wentzy

“The crisis that aboriginal people on Turtle Island are facing is one that can wipe us out if we continue to practice ignorance and hysteria around this disease that is affecting our people. The disease is showing up to being transmitted moreso in a heterosexual community where I come from. And that's frightening information, that's frightening news because the heterosexual community is still in a great state of denial about who we are as two-spirit people, about themselves, and the healing that they need.”

“When I think about the action that is necessary for our people is to begin to help other people break through their denial systems, organizations, communities, and individuals. And to talk about the fact that it's, that coming back from this disease is not going to be just a prescription that you pick up at a drug store. It means change of life. It means change of ways, of looking at ourselves as two-spirit people, as Indian people, and as human beings on this earth as a whole. And beginning to respect each other in ways that we have not known for the last 500 years. And that the teachings that we pick up are not just teachings that we pick up for a day or two. This is a lifelong journey. And the recovery from this

disease is going to be many lifetimes long after I'm gone, people will still be recovering from this disease."

Wagner, Cheryl, Oral history interview conducted by Robert Sember, September 26, 1992

AIDS/Brooklyn Oral History Project collection 1992-1993, Call# 1993.001.15; Brooklyn Historical Society

"We used to go into amazing denial. Even though my girlfriend was dying of AIDS, we wouldn't even recognize that it was HIV, or AIDS, we would say, "Well, she just has a cold," or she "just has pneumonia, but it's not that kind of pneumonia." I remember many times sharing needles in lots in East New York, or cookers, and people would say to me, "Cheryl, don't share a needle with so-and-so, he's got AIDS." But when you're using, when you're sick, using and not being sick was more important than dealing with that issue, because if I dealt with that issue, it meant I would have to stop using. So, I knew that I was at high risk from my lifestyle, but while I was actively using drugs--Like I said, it was a very sick form of denial. I didn't care. So, I knew many friends I was using with, they all had the virus."

Sharon Tramutola, "Death in the St. Vincent's ER," Interview #092 in the ACT UP Oral History Archive, conducted July 9, 2008

Interview by Sarah Schulman, courtesy of the ACT UP Oral History Archive, © 2010 The New York Lesbian & Gay Experimental Film Festival, Inc.

SHARON TRAMUTOLA: ...He was treated real badly. We took him, he was –

SARAH SCHULMAN: Who was it?

ST: A friend of mine, his name is Robert – Robert Richardson. We took him to St. Vincent's. He was a patient at St. Vincent's. He used to use the clinic there. They literally let him, they let him die, at St. Vincent's, in the emergency room. He had Medicaid, and I think this was one of the problems. I think if he had insurance, he would have got treated a lot better. But we went to the Emergency room with him. They literally, he was, choking on mucus. And they really took their time to do tests. I was there with Lei Chou. We were protesting, they threw us out of the emergency room. They were threatening not to let us get back in.

He died in St. Vincent's emergency room, and he died from neglect. It could have been a whole situation, I think, if he had insurance, and he was somewhere else, I think he might be alive today.

ACT UP did a demonstration at the hospital. And after that, I think emergency room policies — because they made him wait and wait in the emergency room before they'd even seen him. When he got to the hospital, he was at the point where he had stopped talking, he couldn't walk, he couldn't stand up. I don't know if he was even, we were talking to him, we didn't know if he was understanding what we were saying anymore. They still made him wait like an hour before they even took him in and did his vital signs. And they had to get a wheelchair for him. They took their time with everything they did.

But ACT UP had a demonstration at the hospital, they did meetings. And they, I went to the hospital with somebody else after that. They did change their emergency room policies because of ACT UP, because of that situation. The triage procedures are much quicker now. People with AIDS are taken right away, if they're in really bad condition like that. Triage is – they're not supposed to wait more than 20 minutes before they take them in, and I think ACT UP changed that.

Iris De La Cruz, “Sex, Drugs, Rock and Roll and AIDS,” 1989

From “Kool AIDS on Ice,” by Iris De La Cruz © 1989, read by Tamara Oyola-Santiago, 2020, Courtesy Iris House

“I used to transport AIDS patients a lot since I was the only one that didn’t give the dispatcher a hard time about it. By this time they were finding out that the disease wasn’t airborne and it was only transmitted by bodily fluids. So I would wear gloves but refused to wear a mask or ‘suit up’ to transport AIDS patients. Emergency room nurses would run all kinds of guilt trips about what I was bringing home to my family. I once had a big fight with a charge nurse after I suctioned a patient in the ER with PCP (pneumonia). He was left for over an hour all congested. Medical staff on the whole resented AIDS patients. The feeling was that they were all faggots and dope fiend’s and deserved what they got. By this time I knew what the signs and symptoms were. I knew I was positive for the AIDS virus. I started attending a group for women with HIV. I felt like I was the only woman in the world with AIDS. It was all gay white men. This group changed that. All of a sudden I discovered other women with the virus. There were black women, white women, Latinas, rich women, poor women, addicts, and transfusion women. They were mothers and sisters and lovers and daughters and grandmothers. Some were militant lesbians and others were Republicans (imagine that! Even Republicans get AIDS) and we were all connected by the virus. Outside differences became trivial; feelings and survival were everyone’s concern. And I learned that there was still a lot of love left in me. The rage mellowed.”

Larry Kramer speaking about AIDS inaction in a speech from 1991

“Plague! We are in the middle of a plague! And you behave like this! PLAGUE! Forty million infected people is a plague! We are in the worst shape we have ever, ever, ever been in. All those pills we’re shoveling down our throats? Forget it! ACT UP has been taken over by a lunatic fringe, they can’t get together, nobody agrees with anything. All we can do is field a couple hundred people at a demonstration. That’s not gonna make anybody pay attention. Not until we get millions out there. We can’t do that. All we do is pick at each other and yell at each other! And I say to you in year ten the same thing that I said to you in 1981, when there were 41 cases: Until we get our acts together, all of us, we are as good as dead.”

David Wojnarowicz, Wojnarowicz records the ACT-UP demonstrations on June 1989

Sounds of an ACT UP lead demonstration recorded by artist David Wojnarowicz in 1989 can be heard throughout the recording including slogans such as: “Hey Hey! Ho Ho! Homophobia has got to go!,” “Act up! Fight back! Fight AIDS!,” “Act up! We’re pissed. We want a cure and not a list!,” “Act up! We’re here! We’re loud and rude and strong and queer!,” “Healthcare is a right!,” “Black, white, gay straight - AIDS does not discriminate!” “Stop us! Just try it! Remember: Stonewall was a riot!,” among others.

VOCAL-NY for Day With(out) Art 2018: ALTERNATE ENDINGS, ACTIVIST RISINGS, 2018

Courtesy of Visual AIDS and VOCAL-NY

[Protest songs]

“The issues today, that HIV is informed by poverty and racism, because the epidemic now is for people who look like me. Much younger than me but people who look like me. The face has changed!”

“We’re here to demand that we get funding, that we get support for the services that we need. These services are not grocery services. These are to keep families together. These are to keep our next generation, our children’s children! To give them some standards, to give them some hope.”

“We have 4,000 people with HIV living throughout New York State that don’t have programs to help them with rental assistance. Is that right? NO! So we’re here because we...this is the worst homeless crisis since the Depression. And if something’s not done, if there’s not money and services put into it, it just gets worse and worse and worse and worse.”

[Reading of names commences]

“So, we’re back today. We’ve escalated our action. We’re here today, we’re going to read the over 100,000 names of people who we have lost to AIDS. That’s unthinkable. If we don’t do something now, we’re going to lose 100,000 more. We cannot allow that to happen, especially because now we have the tools in order to do this. But the tools need money. If you have a blueprint and a wonderful house, you can’t build a house with a blueprint no matter how good the blueprint is.”

[Reading of names continues]

[Protest songs]

“Just having a meeting and saying these things to someone from a sort of clinical perspective, it doesn’t really demonstrate the deep tragedy that’s happening. That only happens from people who are living with HIV standing in front of you and yelling at you: I am dying. And I need to not die.”

Egyptt LaBeija speaking at the 6th Annual Last Address Tribute Walk, 2018

Recorded at the Hudson River Piers; Courtesy of Visual AIDS and Egyptt LaBeija

“And to see this whole village transform into what it is now, is taking away the history of what this village was and should always be. The village is for us. Can I get an Amen? (Amen). And the gentrification has taken away all of the history of what the struggle, the LGBT community had to go through. And sometimes I cry when I come down here and look at what they’ve done, they have.... In the news, they talk about the village. They don’t talk about us in a good way. All they talk about is what’s wrong. And, not the true history of where we came from and the struggles we had to go through.”

“The village is a good place. And it has a lot of....it has a lot of good memories for me. Good and bad. The first time I ever came to the village, the median that’s in the highway behind you, there was a train track up there. I don’t know if some of you remember that, but it was a train track there. And I have watched that go, I have watched the buildings that were down here go. I have watched all of this whole Hudson Park be recreated into what it is today. It’s scary because, as they change the look, they are changing the history, and they’re not talking about the history. And this village is a legacy and people need to understand and know what it was and what it stood for. This was our safe haven. This was our home. We could come down here and be yourself. When I first met Marsha P. Johnson, who you all should know, I met her down here and she looked at me and she gave me some flowers and says “you are beautiful. And never let anybody tell you what you cannot do.” And I thought, “this chick is crazy!” You know, but I was young and I didn’t understand. And as I grew older, and I started to see what she was doing and what her and Sylvia created. Every day I fight harder and harder to make sure that every Trans woman or man has a vision. They know that they are safe no matter where they are, there are rights that they know they can have. And with that note, I bid you adieu.”

Constantine Jones, “For the +,” 2020

Performed by Constantine Jones, © Constantine Jones, Clip provided courtesy the artist

O Lord how blessed are my frozen toes, my
winter socks, the doorways & my keys that fit them.
How wicked the truth that now I am made to remember /
re-search instead’a getting to meet on account’a those I might of met are
dining down with Death—they got their invites too early. Blessed O Lord
are these compounded seeds that daily repair my internal unmaking.
How wicked & unfair that so many were never offered a taste. How blessed these
systems & wicked their overburdening. How wicked that I am only aware’a these
systems on account’a now I belong to them too. How blessed & how wicked
O Lord the number’a folks who felt the need to say to me—
It’s not the way it was 20 years ago, it’s not like it was back then.
How absolutely unpardonably wicked O Lord that for some’a these folks
this particular back then is also right now & will forever always be ongoing.
O Lord how blessed how brutal the stacking of time onto time. It’s true
I have done actions not even a poem could condone. I expect no absolution.
O how generous the well & how wicked the drought—
the worst we seen in years. It’s only 1 ride left on my 2-way ticket O Lord
& where do I board from here. Blessed is the daily rising of my chest but I curse
this wicked static language the letters the red lines the shame that grooms the
boys like me unknowing / suspicious / afraid / avoiding the gospels of medicine
like I did in my days before it suddenly mattered to me. I curse the timestopped
phonecalls & transfers the terms & conditions I curse the manilla envelopes the
RETURN TO SENDER WITHIN 30 DAYS I curse it O Lord this language
designed to hold us here in uncertainty. Can you carry the weight
of this language, O Lord, can you breathe
between these impossible syllables.

Kia LaBeija, “Drafted,” 2017

Performed by Kia LaBeija, © Kia LaBeija, Clip provided courtesy the artist

I once thought that I belonged to the city
that I had an obligation to its giants
but what I’ve learned is that loneliness may cause you to fall in love with objects over people
metal and steel that seem unbreakable
then the towers fell
my mother soon after that
and with her crumbled my belief in invincibility
I believe I was drafted
that my number was picked out of some funny looking hat
and I immediately had a title
and a story
my mind a Chinese fortune teller
always one step ahead
always shifting in colours
and numbers
and words of encouragement I can’t even give to myself
and though I live in a country
that for many years was designed to hate me

I'm better at tying my own noose
these words are not written on paper
the prose that I write in my sleep
when i should be far off dreaming
now some of these stories get lost
I've found mine through old articles and photographs of my mother
talking about AIDS and miracles
and though she was drafted too
she found herself fighting a battle that she was destined to lose
but along with her smile
I inherited the thickness of her skin
the blood running through my veins her only living will
so I paint her into pictures
so that i may sleep at night
so she may continue to breathe through 16 by 24 frames of colours
constructed by buildings intruding on skies that never asked for more than air
my father used to sit on the terrace at night and talk to her
she was the moon
and she could only be accompanied by one or two stars
but it was enough to keep them content
most days i can't keep my back straight
I hear her telling me to keep my head up
but the curve now runs so deep
the display of confidence causes pain and suffering
so i sink
back into the earth
and it's quiet now
my body moving only to the sounds of sirens
glorified by those who call themselves icons
who have reached immortality
the lines and shapes and boxes
bodies moving in sync to the church bells that ring only after midnight
designated street corners filled with black and brown
glistening from the heat of summer
and the iridescent lights that lit up runaway slaves
delicate
the weeping petals of yellow roses during a rainstorm

Vito Russo, "Why We Fight," 1988

from ACT UP Demonstration in ALBANY NY, May 9, 1988 and the ACT UP Demonstration at the Department of Health and Human Services, Washington D.C. October 10, 1988

"When future generations ask what we did in this crisis, we're going to have to tell them that we were out here today. And we have to leave the legacy to those generations of people who will come after us.

Someday, the AIDS crisis will be over. Remember that. And when that day comes -- when that day has come and gone, there'll be people alive on this earth -- gay people and straight people, men and women, black and white, who will hear the story that once there was a terrible disease in this country and all over the world, and that a brave group of people stood up and fought and, in some cases, gave their lives, so that other people might live and be free.

So, I'm proud to be with my friends today and the people I love, because I think you're all heroes, and I'm glad to be part of this fight. But, to borrow a phrase from Michael Callen's song: all we have is love right now, what we don't have is time.

In a lot of ways, AIDS activists are like those doctors out there -- they're so busy putting out fires and taking care of people on respirators, that they don't have the time to take care of all the sick people. We're so busy putting out fires right now, that we don't have the time to talk to each other and strategize and plan for the next wave, and the next day, and next month and the next week and the next year.

And, we're going to have to find the time to do that in the next few months. And, we have to commit ourselves to doing that. And then, after we kick the shit out of this disease, we're all going to be alive to kick the shit out of this system, so that this never happens again."

Michael Callen, "The Healing Power of Love," 1986

[Tape #240,] Michael Callen Papers, The LGBT Community Center National History Archive

So many things I wanna do
So many dreams still to come true
So much to give
I want to be all I can be
I want to keep you here with me
I want to live

Got to hold on to life's mysteries
Can't hold out for guarantees
There are none
Together we have come this far
Don't wonder where the heroes are
You are one
Be proud of all the courage you've shown
And know that as you fight, you're not alone

Life don't always go the way we planned
Sometimes you have to take a stand
And if I stumble, can I take your hand and feel
(2nd chorus) And if you stumble you can take my hand and feel
(3rd chorus) And if we stumble we're gonna need a helping hand to feel
the healing power of love
Feel the power
The power of love

And if you don't know what to say
A touch would go a long, long way
To show you care
At times I'll wanna run and hide
I may ask you to stand aside
But I'll know you're there
'Cause I can feel your strength
Deep as the sea
I'm growing stronger as it's flowing over me

Life don't always go the way we planned
Sometimes you have to take a stand
And if you stumble, you can take my hand
and feel the healing power of love
Feel the power
The power of love

We are all in this together
It's gonna take everything that we've got
it's up to me and you
and I know we'll do what's right
We are all in this together
Whether we know it or not
And I know we can win
If we just begin to fight
Life don't always go the way we planned
Sometimes you have to take a stand
And if we stumble we're gonna need a helping hand
to feel
the healing power of love
Feel the power
The power of love

Location ID:

The New York City AIDS Memorial is an abstract canopy of white triangles made of painted structural steel. At the center of the memorial is a granite fountain. The footprint of the memorial is the shape of a triangle in which Walt Whitman's poem "Song of Myself" (1855) is inscribed in granite in a circular pattern, an installation by artist Jenny Holzer.