



LADY DAY

at Emerson's
Bar and Grill

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theatre:
CALGARY

Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL

BY LANIE ROBERTSON

SEPT 13 – OCT 2

2022



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WELCOME BACK



Welcome back to a season that will energize your soul. In planning this season, it was impossible to not recognize that there is much uncertainty in the world. We know that Theatre Calgary's 2022-23 season is a place where you can recharge yourselves. We are grateful to share with you our season of shows that will transport you to another place, bring tears of joy and sadness, and leave you with a smile on your face.



Billie Holiday's story is one where you will experience all of the above in a single performance. The power of one woman's ability to make an impact on the world is encompassed in this one-night we share in her story. Beautiful music and storytelling woven together to bring into clarity the full depth and breadth of the times that she lived in and the power she tried to reclaim over her life. Her story is one that we have never forgotten and her music is imprinted onto the fabric of our lives in ways that you may not have recognized. Hers is an important story to be told.

We hope that all the stories we tell on our stage are as impactful and important. This year we celebrate the power of family, the importance of laughter, and the fortitude of the human spirit. We hope you come back for it all, whether that be as a full season subscriber, or if you want to script your own season by choosing three or four more shows.

Our theatre is open and primed for an energized season that all of us at Theatre Calgary trust you will embrace and enjoy.

- **MAYA CHOLDIN**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- **STAFFORD ARIMA**
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of reconciliation, Theatre Calgary acknowledges that we live, work and create on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta. They were the original occupants of this land and continue to be here to this day. Theatre Calgary is grateful to have the opportunity to present in this territory.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Cameras and audio/visual recording devices are not permitted in the theatre.**
- **Video and audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.**
- We ask that you please refrain from using your cell phone, smart watch, or any other digital device, in any capacity, during the performance.
- Good theatre etiquette benefits everyone. Please do not talk or unwrap candies during the performance, remain in your seat until the curtain call is finished and the house lights have been turned on.
- Babies are not permitted in the theatre.
- We also offer relaxed performances. For more information, visit our website.
- Assisted listening devices for the hard of hearing are available at the coat check.
- For first aid assistance, see the house manager, or nearest usher.

SAFETY AND COMFORT

- At Theatre Calgary, we recognize our responsibility to have practical guidelines in place to ensure our performances are safe and enjoyable for everyone. To learn more about our current Safety and Comfort protocols go to theatrecalgary.com/comfort-and-safety or scan here:



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DIRECTOR'S NOTES



This play is about perseverance. It's about transcending the challenges and limitations that life throws in one's path in pursuit of a higher aim. It is a play about an artist, Billie Holiday, reflecting on a lifetime of choices made in an effort to untangle an artistic knot.

What is an artistic knot you wonder? I describe it as the irrational compulsion to pursue enlightenment, nirvana, bliss, or clarity through artistic expression.

What's remarkable about this play is how clearly we see an artist simultaneously at the height of her interpretive powers and at a profoundly low point in her personal and emotional development. Her best friend, Lester Young, has just died, she is married to a shockingly abusive husband, she has only a few pennies in her bank account, and her livelihood (performing in intimate jazz clubs) is in jeopardy. And yet, in spite of all this, Billie Holiday was driven to perform. Driven to find the soul or the "feeling" at the heart of a song and share that with an adoring audience. In her own words:

"If you find a tune and it's got something to do with you, you don't have to evolve anything. You just feel it, and when you sing it other people can feel something too."

This state, this compulsion, this desire to know thyself as an artist, to communicate what you know, and to somehow transform an audience is universal amongst artists. Chasing the ephemera of "feeling" through artistic expression is universal amongst artists. Mining past experiences, whether traumatic or joyful, is universal amongst artists. But, alas, not all artists rise to the heights that Billie Holiday did. Not all artists are fortunate enough to have a massive audience clamouring for their art.

What is it about Billie Holiday that solidified her position among "the greats"? Is it her perfect pitch (hardly), the generosity of her spirit (not at all), her lady-like language (don't make me laugh). No. It is none of those things that made her an international treasure, that made her music ubiquitous and a part of the soundtrack of our lives. I believe it is her bravery of her dogged quest to be herself, and to unabashedly bring herself pleasure even if that quest brought its fair share of pain. Billie Holiday was unapologetically Billie Holiday.

My great hope for you watching today's performance is that you are inspired to be more authentically YOU in whatever it is that you do. If you work at the bank, I hope that this story wakes up the desire that lives in you to do your banking work with a flair that only YOU can bring to it. If you are a parent, I hope that this story emboldens you to parent your children in exactly the way that only YOU can do. And, if you are an artist, I hope that this story reminds you that there has never been an artist like you before, and there never will be an artist like you again - be your whole-hearted self.

- RAY HOGG
DIRECTOR

COMING NEXT
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST BY OSCAR WILDE

REVEL IN THE WIT AND FOLLY

THE
IMPORTANCE
OF BEING

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OCTOBER 25 - NOVEMBER 19 TICKETS: THEATRECALGARY.COM

Max Bell Theatre at Arts Commons
September 13 - October 2, 2022

theatre:
CALGARY
Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

presents

LADY DAY
AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL
BY **LANIE ROBERTSON**

Director **RAY HOGG**
Music Director **JONATHAN CORKAL-ASTORGA**
Set Design **BRIAN DUDKIEWICZ***
Costume Design **ADEJOKÉ TAIWO**
Lighting Design **LOGAN RAJU CRACKNELL***
Sound Design **WADE STAPLES***
Voice & Dialect Coach **JANE MACFARLANE**
Stage Manager **KENNEDY GREENE**
Assistant Stage Manager **SANG-SANG LEE**

*Indicated designers on this production are represented by the
Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals.
www.concordtheatricals.com

The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.

Theatre Calgary is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres, and operates within the jurisdiction of the Canadian Theatre Agreement. Theatre Calgary employs technicians under a collective agreement with the I.A.T.S.E. Theatre Calgary is a resident company of Arts Commons, operating out of Arts Commons Max Bell Theatre.





Image: "All My Relations"
by Autumn Whiteway
www.autumn.ca

O'KOSI

(oh-goh-see)

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CAST

Billie Holliday	SHAKURA DICKSON
Jimmy Powers	YANICK ALLWOOD
Announcer (voiceover)	CHRISTIAN GOUTSIS
Pepi	MOJAVE

SETTING

Midnight, on a night in March, 1959,
in Emerson's Bar and Grill, south Philadelphia.

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill is performed without an intermission.

Head of Sound	BRONWYN BOWLBY
Head of Lighting	CATHARINE CRUMB
Head Dresser	RACHEL MICHELLE SHERIDAN
Head Stage Carpenter	JOSH SEMOS
Stage Hand	MIKE BOOTH
Alternate Head of Sound	MIKE GESY

SONGS

Ain't Nobody's Business If I Do
Baby Doll
Crazy He Calls Me
Deep Song
Don't Explain
Easy Livin'
Foolin' Myself
Gimmie a Pig Foot
God Bless the Child
I Wonder Where Our Love Has Gone
Somebody's On My Mind
Strange Fruit
What a Little Moonlight Can Do
When a Woman Loves a Man

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DECEMBER 7 - 31

LITTLE WOMEN BY KATE HAMILL ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL BY LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

CAST



SHAKURA DICKSON

Billie Holiday

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Previous theatre credits include: *Dear Evan Hansen* (Mirvish); *I am William, Freedom 2.0* (Stratford); *Jerusalem* (Outside the March/Crow's); *Trout Stanley* (Factory); *Light, Girls Like That* (Tarragon); *Other Side of the Game* (Obsidian/Cahoots). Shakura has also appeared in *Grand Army* (Netflix); *Coroner* (CBC); *Private Eyes* (Global). She is a graduate of Sheridan's Music Theatre college program. Shakura thanks her agent, Michael Marino at Noble Caplan Abrams, Chelsea, and her mom for their unwavering support, the creative team

and crew, as well as Ray for trusting her with Billie. What a little moonlight can do.

Instagram: @badgalkooks



YANICK ALLWOOD

Jimmy Powers

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Yanick is a Canadian singer, multi-keyboardist, composer and sound designer. He released a gospel album at the age of seven and went on to play Young Simba in the Ed Mirvish production of *The Lion King* as well as a myriad of other roles in theatre and TV. Yanick has studied classical piano performance at Western University, and toured internationally, releasing four albums with his highly acclaimed group After Funk. He has recently been featured on *The SOCIAL* and you can often hear his music playing on CBC radio. Yanick recently got back

from a seven month trip to Dubai where he was band leader for the Exposonics, the World Expo 2022 resident band. He also released a few video projects; *A Tribute to Donny [Hathaway]* an artistic contribution to mental health and race awareness and *Celebration and Revelations*, a virtual concert that tells the narrative of black people through music. Follow on YouTube or Instagram: @funky_yan.



MOJAVE

Pepi

Mojave is thrilled to debut his acting career as 'Pepi'. Mojave has been showcasing his talents for friends and family in backyards for over a decade, in exchange for his favourite treats, chicken, and cucumber slices. Mojave's favourite tricks to perform are his signature 'ballerina dance', and his aggressive 'super paw'. Mojave is best known for bringing joy to humans, and stealing the hearts of everyone he meets. Mojave is honored to put his heart and paws into Pepi's character!

Instagram: @mrmo.java

CREATIVE TEAM



RAY HOGG

Director

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Ray is an award-winning artist known for creating virtuosic, visually stunning, viscerally moving theatre. He has over 25 years experience in the most celebrated opera, dance, and theatre companies across Europe, The United States, and Canada. He is currently Artistic Director for The Musical Stage Company, Affiliate Artist at Neptune Theatre, and the founder of Prime Mover Theatre Company. From 2012-2017 he was Artistic Director of Rainbow Stage. Directing credits include: *Controlled Damage* (The Grand Theatre),

Dixon Road, *Starwalker* (Musical Stage Co); *da Kink in my Hair* (Arts Club); *Cats*, *The Producers*, *Sister Act*, *Shrek*, *Little Shop of Horrors* (Rainbow Stage); *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Dreamgirls* (Neptune Theatre); *Love and Information*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Damn Yankees*, and *Chicago* (Sheridan College). He has choreographed for the Shaw Festival, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, the Segal Centre Montreal, and more. @rayhogg2021, @primemovertheatreco, rayhogg.com, primemovertheatreco.com



JONATHAN CORKAL-ASTORGA

Music Director

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Jonathan is a Chilean-Canadian music director, copyist, and performer. He is thrilled to be exploring the life of the profoundly influential artist Billie Holiday. In his own work, Jonathan brings a collaborative and story-focused approach to musical direction, with a passion for interrogating material through new lenses. He is also an avid supporter of new theatrical stories and has helped to develop some of the foremost music theatre being made in Canada. When not in rehearsal, he can be found experimenting with sounds on his small

collection of synths. Selected credits include *Dixon Road*, *Blackout*, *Caroline, or Change*, *Dr. Silver* (Musical Stage Co.); *Sunday In The Park With George* (Eclipse Theatre); *Drama 101*, and *Polly Peel* (Toronto Fringe). He is forever thankful for his family in both Chile and Canada for their support - saludos y abrazos a todos!



BRIAN DUDKIEWICZ

Set Design

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Brian is an award-winning designer based in Toronto. Recent credits include: *Jukebox Hero* (Jubilee Auditorium, Mirvish); *Dixon Road* (Musical Stage Company); *Sound of Music*, *Kinky Boots*, *Rocky*, *Newsies*, *Billy Bishop* (Drayton Entertainment); *April Fools*, *Indecent*, *Bad Jews*, *Million Dollar Quartet* (Segal Center); *Titanic* (The Grand); *The Last Five Years* (Neptune Theatre); *Never Not Once* (Theatre Aquarius); *The Great Divide* (Harold Green); *Jersey Boys* (Thousand Islands Playhouse); and dozens of shows Off-Broadway and

across The United States. Brian holds an MFA in Set Design from the Yale School of Drama and a BSc in Architecture from McGill University.

CREATIVE TEAM



ADEJOKÉ TAIWO

Costume Design

(she/her) Theatre Calgary design debut. As a design professional for the past 15 years within the Theatre and Film industry, Adejoké is passionate about design, creating, and telling beautiful stories through imagery. She received her formal training through the Red Deer College Theatre Studies program and the Banff Centre, as well as her Bachelor of Design from Toronto Metropolitan University (Formerly Ryerson University). Recent Design works include: *My Life with the Walter Boys* (Netflix); *CHAD* (CBS); *Tribal* (APTN). Although she has spent many years in the film industry her first love is for the theatre. Adejoké's very first professional work experiences in the industry were right here at Theatre Calgary as an ambitious 19 year old, so she is extremely honoured to come back "home" to create something beautiful with her peers.



LOGAN RAJU CRACKNELL

Lighting Design

(he/they) Theatre Calgary debut. Logan is a Toronto based theatre artist specializing in theatrical design and live stream creation. Their work has taken them across the country and they are eager to see what journeys lie ahead. He is excited to be working with Theatre Calgary for his first time, and with this exciting work. Recent works include: *Alice in Wonderland* (Bad Hats Theatre); *Dixon Road* (The Musical Stage Company); *As You Like It/Dream In High Park* (Canadian Stage Company); *William Shakespeare's As You Like It: A Radical Retelling by Cliff Cardinal*, and *Orphans for the Czar* (Crow's Theatre).



WADE STAPLES

Sound Design

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. A member and past board member of the Associated Designers of Canada, Wade designed sound and video elements for the Canadian Exhibition to Prague for PQ2015, and served as a juror for the selection of the Canadian exhibition to PQ2019. Most recently he served on the World Stage Design 2022 Jury. Wade has designed and toured productions across Canada and internationally, including designing works for the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, the Citadel Theatre, L'Uni Theatre, FreeWill Players, and Catalyst Theatre. With Catalyst Theatre, he created sound designs for original productions of *The Blue Orphan*, *Frankenstein*, *Carmen Angel*, *Nevermore*, *Hunchback*, *The Soul Collector*, and *Vigilante*. Wade is an award-winning Canadian designer, live sound engineer, technician, and university educator based in Edmonton. An alumnus of MacEwan University Music, Recording, and Theatre Production programs, he has been an instructor and Sound Designer for MacEwan University for over 28 years.



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CREATIVE TEAM



KENNEDY GREENE

Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2020-21), *TC Returns*, *The Louder We Get*. Select credits include: *Heaven*, *Calling Out Christmas*, *Flight Risk* (Lunchbox); *Kim's Convenience* (Alberta Theatre Projects/ Arts Club); *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, *Everest*, *Hansel & Gretel*, *The Brothers Grimm*, *Filumena*, *Turandot*, *South Pacific* (Calgary Opera); *STRUCK* (Ghost River Theatre); *Assassinating Thompson* (Lunchbox/Inside Out); *All That Binds Us* (Azimuth); *There Goes the Bride*, *80's Solid Gold 1 & 2*, *Spamalot*, *Chicago*, *Love Train*, *Gameshow* (Stage West); *The Thin Man*,

The Hollow (Vertigo); *A Love Letter to Emily C*, *A Chitenge Story*, *The Tall Building* (Handsome Alice); *Make Love Not Art* (Inside Out). Kennedy is a proud graduate of the University of Lethbridge's Technical Theatre Program, and is thrilled to be back at Theatre Calgary!



SANG-SANG LEE

Assistant Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *Honour Beat*. Elsewhere: *The Herd* (Citadel/ Tarragon); Banff Centre's Opera in the 21st Century program; *The Fiancée*, *A Brimful of Asha*, *Tempest*, *Hadestown*, *Redpatch*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *West Side Story*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Avenue Q*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *Make Mine Love*, *Spamalot*, and *Private Lives* (Citadel); *Sexy Laundry*, *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*, *Super Groovy 70s*, *Six Dance Lessons in Six Days*, and *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* (Mayfield); *Fever Land* (Teatro La Quindicina);

Makings of a Voice, *The Blue Hour* (SkirtsAfire); *Disgraced* (ATP); *Hamlet*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Merchant of Venice*, *King Lear*, *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Freewill Shakespeare); *Salt Baby* (Globe); *Songs My Mother Never Sung Me* (Concrete Theatre). Sang Sang is excited to be back at Theatre Calgary, working on *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*!



LANIE ROBERTSON

Playwright

Lanie Robertson is a playwright who often tackles themes of societal issues and features historical characters. His first play, *The Insanity of Mary Girard*, was produced in 1976 and was later published in 1979. Other work includes: *Back County Crimes* (1980), *Nasty Little Secrets* (1988), *Alfred Aime O'Keeffe* (1998), *Woman Before a Glass* (2005), and *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* (1987) which later opened on Broadway in 2014. He is a member of the Dramatists Guild, Writers Guild of America East, and the Societe des Auteurs et Compositeurs

Dramatiques. He's earned awards such as an Outer Critics Circle Award (1987) for *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, a Kliban Award (1985), Berilla Kerr Foundation Award, and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Shaye Ganam

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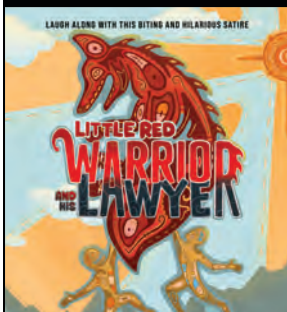
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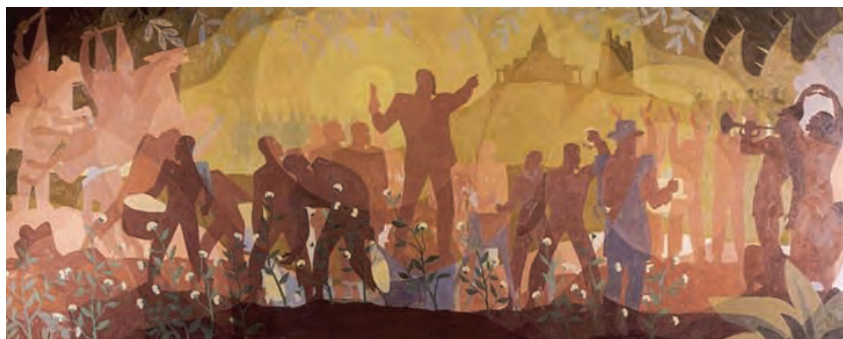


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From Slavery Through Reconstruction, By Aaron Douglas



Aaron Douglas (1899 - 1979) was an African-American painter, illustrator and visual arts educator. He was a major figure in the Harlem Renaissance. He developed his art career painting murals and creating illustrations that addressed social issues around race and segregation in the United States by utilizing African-centric imagery. Douglas set the stage for young, African-American artists to enter public arts realm through his involvement with the Harlem Artists Guild. In 1944, he concluded his art career by founding the Art Department at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. He taught visual art classes

at Fisk until his retirement in 1966. Douglas is known as a prominent leader in modern African-American art whose work influenced artists for years to come.

Bio from: wikiart.org/en/aaron-douglas

SPECIAL THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

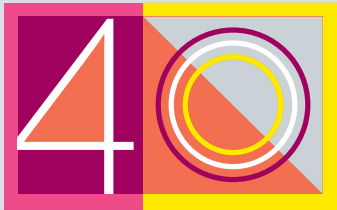
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