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Theater Presents Three-Dimensional BILLIE HOLIDAY LIVE! Concert

What did our critic think?

By: Shari Barrett Jan. 06, 2018



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to appear in three dimensions is changing the way our armed forces operate, the way people elect their leaders, and the way entertainers—alive and dead—bring us joy. Perhaps like me, you first became aware of the technology in 1997 when George Lucas unleashed the first of his Star Wars movies, which featured actress Carrie Fisher’s character Princess Leia as a foot-tall hologram projected by a quirky droid named R2-D2. It is both a cool trick and a radical vision of the future, suggesting that we might one day drop in on each other in some beamed-in, particles-of-light, there-but-not-there fashion.

Since 2003, Hologram USA has delivered more than 700 successful projects, making groundbreaking strides in how people experience live events and communicate with each



other using dynamic, cutting edge Holographic 3D technology. Their holographic experiences allow audience members to sit in a theater and feel as if they are attending a live three-dimensional concert or nightclub performance right in

front of their eyes. Sounds too incredible, right?

That’s what I thought until I attended their latest creation, **Billie Holiday Alive!** at the new Hologram USA Theater in Hollywood, destined to become Hollywood Blvd.’s newest must-visit destination, located at 6656 Hollywood Blvd., just one block from the Egyptian Theater, the Hollywood Wax Museum and other major venues.

As its grand opening show, **Billie Holiday Alive!** is now playing on the hour daily from noon to 6 p.m. In the evening, variety acts



take over including hologram sets by top comedians such as Michael Blackson, Lachlan Patterson, and Jon Lovitz, as well as Hologram Fight Club (featuring a surprise live MMA bout that is a tribute to the greatest kung fu master and the

best boxer of all time), and Ray J and Kato’s Sexy Hollywood Freak Show.

The Hollywood Blvd. theater is the first dedicated hologram theater in the world. The next three will open in December in Chicago, Indianapolis and Foxwoods, CT. Holograms have been



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sold out seats on our first day, says Hologram USA CEO Alki David. "Our Billie Holiday show is both beautiful and heartbreaking, letting audiences experience her talent and presence full strength. Our other

acts demonstrate the game changing nature of holograms-- there's something for everyone."

For those too young to remember or know her well. Billie Holiday was an American jazz musician/singer/songwriter with a career spanning nearly thirty years. Nicknamed "Lady Day" by her friend and music partner Lester Young, Holiday had a seminal influence on jazz music and pop singing. Her vocal style, strongly inspired by jazz instrumentalists, pioneered a new way of manipulating phrasing and tempo. She was known for her vocal



delivery and improvisational skills, which made up for her limited range and lack of formal music education. There were other jazz singers with comparable talent, but Holiday had a unique vocal style that captured the attention of her audience.

Since she died in 1959 at age 44, I never had the opportunity to attend one of her live performances. But after researching her life in college, I became a fan and have enjoyed listening to her music and watching videos of her performances on You Tube. But none of that matches the excitement of seeing her perform three-dimensionally with a great back-up band and dances at the Hologram USA Theater in Hollywood. The four of us who attended sat in the front row and often got up and danced in front of the stage just as if we were at one of her nightclub performances during the 1930s and 1940s.

Billie Holiday Alive! presents Lady Day at the peak of her powers, singing her most famous songs while sharing key moments from her tragic life story from her turbulent childhood, her move to Harlem with her mother in 1929, and her greatest musical triumphs against the odds. Always headstrong and committed to living life on her own terms, Holiday began working as an assistant in a Harlem brothel, while singing in local nightclubs. Her signature jazz stylings earned her much



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drug abuse. After a short prison sentence, she performed at 3 sold-out concerts at Carnegie Hall, but her reputation deteriorated because of her drug and alcohol problems. Holiday died of cirrhosis of the liver on July 17, 1959, and the world lost one of the great jazz innovators of the 20th Century.



Lady Day is perhaps most widely known for the protest song "**Strange Fruit**" which she first sang and recorded it in 1939. Written by teacher Abel Meeropol as a poem and published in 1937, it protested American racism, particularly the lynching of African Americans. Such lynchings had reached a peak in the South at the turn of the century, but continued there and in other regions of the United States. According to the Tuskegee Institute, 1,953 Americans were murdered by lynching, about three quarters of them black.

Getting to see her perform the song live three-dimensionally was a highlight of the show for me after first hearing it during 1968 political protests. In 1978, Holiday's version of the song was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and was also included in the list of *Songs of the Century* by the Recording Industry of America and the National Endowment for the Arts. Lyricist E. Y. Harburg referred to the song as a "historical document". It was also dubbed, "a declaration of war ... the beginning of the civil rights movement" by record producer Ahmet Ertegun.

Listen to the song just the way she performs it in the show and understand how it is an extended metaphor linking a tree's fruit with lynching victims. <https://video.search.yahoo.com/>

Billie Holiday Live! is presented at the new Hologram USA Theater, located at 6656 Hollywood Boulevard, LA, CA 90028, daily on the hour from 12noon to 8pm. Ticket prices start at \$29.95 (kids half price) and are available at door or online at hologramusatheater.eventbrite.

About Hologram USA Networks:



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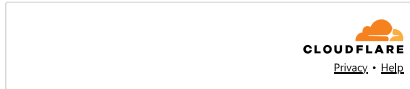
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Hamilton

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FROM THIS AUTHOR - SHARI BARRETT

Shari Barrett, a Los Angeles native, has been active in the theater world since the age of six - acting, singing, and dancing her way across the boards all over town. After teaching in secondary schoo... (read more about this author)



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Review: YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU at Morgan-Wixson Theatre



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The Hudson Theatre Backstage (3/27-4/12)



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Soraya (4/11-4/11)



Danielle She/Her

The Hudson Theatre (4/11-4/11)



The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over The Lazy Dog

Broadwater Main Stage (3/27-4/12)

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Not the Right Mom Written & Performed by Megan Dolan

Lewis Family Playhouse (4/12-4/12)

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Colony Theatre (4/30-5/17)



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Falstaff

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